

## INVOKING THE SPIRIT: CLAIMING THE CALL

### Call to Prayer

*Prayer Bell is Rang 3 Times*

LEADER: Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful.

**ALL: And kindle in them the fire of your love.**

LEADER: Send forth your Spirit, and they shall be created.

**ALL: And you will renew the face of the earth.**

### Prayer Movement 1: Claiming Our Foremothers in Faith

#### **Candle Lighting**

*A member of the congregation lights the first candle.*

LEADER: We invoke the Holy Spirit of Creation, the breath of life.

**ALL: May She enkindle in us and in our church a desire for the wholeness God planned.**

#### **Hymn:**

*Veni Sancte, Spiritus*

(Text: Taize Community, Music Jacques Berthier © 1979 Les Presses de Taize)

**Ostinato Refrain:** *Veni Sancte, Spiritus* (repeat)

#### **Reading:**

The Creation of Humankind Genesis 1:26-31

#### **Litany of Our Foremothers in Faith:**

LEADER: In the name of God, in whose image women and men are wonderfully made; in the name of Jesus, the Word made flesh and born of a woman; and in the name of the Holy Spirit, the companion of women throughout time, we raise up our Foremothers in faith. We claim their stories as part of our story and we ask them to pray with us.

We claim the stories of our Foremothers in Scripture:

READER: Eve and Lilith, Mothers of Life, you claimed your own power by reaching for knowledge and found it was good.

**ALL: Eve and Lilith, pray with us.**

READER: Ruth and Naomi, your devoted love for one another renewed your faith in the working of the divine,

**ALL: Ruth and Naomi, pray with us.**

READER: Mary of Nazareth, you listened, pondered, and knew that you had been chosen to give birth to Jesus,

**ALL: Mary, pray with us.**

READER: Mary of Magdala, you were the Apostle to the Apostles, chosen by Jesus to be the first to witness and preach the Good News of the Resurrection.

**ALL: Mary, pray with us.**

LEADER: What other Foremothers from Scripture shall we name?

*3 members of the community gathered at the Ignatian Spiritual Life Center will name a woman from Scripture.*

**ALL respond "pray with us"**

LEADER: We pause now in silence, allowing our global community to lift up the names of additional Foremothers from Scripture.

*Pause for a minute. At the end of the pause, the prayer bell is rung 1 time.*

LEADER: We claim stories of our Deacon Foremothers in Faith:

READER: Phoebe, you were benefactor and sister to Paul in faith, called a deacon to serve and lead the Church at Cenchrea.

**ALL: Phoebe, pray with us.**

READER: Olympias, widowed at a young age, you resisted patriarchal pressure to remarry and instead responded to the call to the diaconate, became a friend and benefactor to St. John Chrysostom, and lived a simple life in service to the poor.

**ALL: Olympias, pray with us.**

READER: Macrina, as deacon you devoted your life to spiritual development, established a monastery, and cared for the sick and the poor.

**ALL: Macrina, pray with us.**

READER: Dionysia, your life was a struggle, still you did not lose hope or faith in God and became a deacon of the church at Militene.

**ALL: Dionysia, pray with us.**

READER: Radegunda, you were taken as a prisoner and forced to marry a king, yet your passion for the poor would not be silenced and so you liberated yourself, trading in your robes for monastic garb as a deacon serving the poor.

**ALL: Radegunda, pray with us.**

READER: Anastasia of Antioch; Sophia of Jerusalem; St. Irene of Constantinople; Sabinia of Syria; Anna of Rome; Agathe of Philippi; and all you holy women, known and unknown to us, who served God's people as deacons,

**ALL: pray with us.**

LEADER: We now pause for a moment of silence that all of us gathered here and around the globe may claim our own foremothers in faith-- women of history and women in our own lives, whose stories are a part of our story.  
*Pause for a minute or two. At the end of the silence, the prayer bell is rung 1 time.*

### **Prayer of Thanksgiving for our Foremothers in Faith**

LEADER: Let us pray,  
we thank you, O God, that throughout history, women have  
faithfully, generously, and courageously responded to your call in their lives.

**ALL: may their witness give us the courage, strength and resolve to claim your call in our lives and in our Church. AMEN.**

*Hymn:           **The Summons**            J. Bell*  
*Prayer bell is rung 3 times.*

### **Prayer Movement 2: Praying for the Commission**

#### **Candle Lighting**

*A member of the congregation lights the second candle.*

LEADER: We invoke the Holy Spirit of Pentecost,

**ALL: May She guide us, our Church, and those who lead it as we continue on our pilgrim journey**

**Hymn:**            *Veni Sancte, Spiritus*  
(Text: Taize Community, Music Jacques Berthier © 1979 Les Presses de Taize)  
Ostinato Refrain: *Veni Sancte, Spiritus* (repeat)

**Reading:**            The Coming of the Spirit            Acts 2:1-4

**Leader:**            In a moment we will call upon the Spirit to once again give new birth to the Church and guide the Study Commission on the Women's Diaconate in their work just as she guided Jesus' followers some 2,000 years ago. Let us now share the story of how this commission came to be and their task.

On May 12, 2016, during an audience with 900 women religious of the International Union of Superiors General (UISG), Pope Francis was asked: "In the church there is the office of the permanent diaconate, but it is open only to married and non-married men. What impedes the church from including women among permanent deacons, just as it happened in the early church? and, Why not construct an official commission that might study the question?"

Pope Francis responded, saying that the history was "obscure" and that it was not clear what role women deacons played in the early Church or whether or not they had been ordained. But he added that, "It would do good for the church to clarify this point.... It seems useful to me to have a commission".

The Study Commission on the Women's Diaconate was created on August 2, 2016 and tasked by Pope Francis with considering the historical questions and the possibility of ordaining women deacons.



### Prayer Movement 3: Claiming Our Call

#### **Candle Lighting**

*A member of the congregation lights the third candle.*

**LEADER:** We invoke the Holy Spirit of Liberation; the Spirit of Mary and her Son Jesus who both proclaimed the justice and equality of the Reign of God.

**ALL:** **May she free us to boldly claim our call to participate fully in God's reign**

**Hymn:** *Veni Sancte, Spiritus*

(Text: Taize Community, Music Jacques Berthier © 1979 Les Presses de Taize)

**Ostinato Refrain:** *Veni Sancte, Spiritus* (repeat)

**Reading:** Phoebe Delivers the Letter to the Romans Romans 16:1-2

**Witness/Reflection:** *A woman from the community gathered at The Ignatian Spiritual Life Center tells/reflects on the story of her call*

**Affirmation and Blessing:** *The leader invites women gathered at the ISLC and women gathered across the globe who experience a call to the diaconate or who are willing to discern a call to the diaconate to stand*

**LEADER:** Let us thank these women and affirm them in claiming their call.  
*(Allow for an applause).*

**LEADER:** Recognizing that we are each called by God in our own ways and that our Church is called to be the Body of Christ, where all are one, we now invoke the Spirit's blessing upon these women, each other, ourselves, and our Church that we may faithfully respond to God's call:

*Participants are instructed to turn to their neighbor, and make the sign of the cross or some other sign of blessing over each other as the leader prays the blessing. Those watching alone at home may bless themselves.*

**LEADER:** Blessing our foreheads, we invoke the Spirit of Wisdom, that we might come to know and seek the paths that lead to fulfillment and wholeness for us and our Church.

Blessing our eyes, we invoke the Spirit of Right Judgement that we might reject forces of darkness in our midst and live together as children of the light.

Blessing our ears, we invoke the Spirit of Understanding that we might hear her as She speaks to us as individuals and as a Church.

Blessing our lips, we invoke the Spirit of Knowledge that we might always speak the truth about our experience; and name our foremothers in faith, ourselves, and our God.

Blessing our hands, we invoke the Spirit of Courage that we might work for a new humanity liberated from fear, ignorance, and oppression.

Blessing our feet, we invoke the Spirit of Reverence, that we might humbly walk with God and with each other as we forge new paths.

In blessing each other, we invoke the Spirit of Wonder and Awe that we rely on the presence of God that dwells in each of us. We choose to extend the power of this presence in service to a church and world in need.

And may God, who is Mother and Father, Son, and Spirit bless us all,

**ALL:            AMEN**

*Closing Hymn:    **All Are Welcome**      J. Bell*  
*The prayer bell is rung 3 times.*

### **Announcements:**

#### **Group Book Discussion and Prayer Resources**

Over the next three months, women and men will gather at the Ignatian Spiritual Life Center to read from Phyllis Zagano's Book, "Women Deacons Past, Present, and Future" You are invited to join with us. Resources for discussion and prayer will be made available on the Ignatian Spiritual Life Center's website.

#### **Women Deacons Retreat in September**

FutureChurch will be hosting a retreat for women who are discerning a call to the diaconate the weekend of September 8<sup>th</sup> -10<sup>th</sup>. The retreat will take place in San Francisco, CA. Please visit [www.futurechurch.org](http://www.futurechurch.org) for more information.

#### **100 Women Deacons Campaign**

FutureChurch has launched a campaign to surface the names and stories of 100 women throughout the world who are called or are discerning a call to the diaconate. You can view these profiles or submit your own at [www.catholicwomendeacons.org/100](http://www.catholicwomendeacons.org/100).