



# WORSHIP SERVICE OUTSIDE A TRADITIONAL MASS

The Women Who Stayed ([the-women-who-stayed](#))  
FutureChurch ([FutureChurch.org](#))  
Call to Action ([cta-usa.org](#))  
Women's Ordination Conference ([Womensordination.org](#))

# WORSHIP SERVICE OUTSIDE A TRADITIONAL MASS \_\_\_\_\_

## OPENING SONG SUGGESTIONS

*Christ Be Our Light*, ©1993 Bernadette Farrell, OCP Publications

*All Are Welcome*, ©1994 Marty Haugen, GIA Publications, Inc.

## SIGN OF THE CROSS

**LEADER:** In the name of our God who creates all the Universe,  
And of Jesus who teaches us how to love one another,  
And of the Holy Spirit who blesses us and makes us holy.

*ALL:* Amen.

**LEADER:** Our God is with us.

*ALL:* And also with you.

## CALL TO PRAYER

**LEADER:** God of Wisdom, You breathe into our hearts in every moment, whispering the sacred power of the feminine.

*ALL:* Open our spirits to receive your grace in all the ways You invite women to be Your holy messengers and ministers.

**LEADER:** God of Creativity, You show us who You are in our mothers Sarah and Rebekah, Mary and Elizabeth, Phoebe and Prisca, and so many other women who came before us.

*ALL:* Open our eyes to see You in every woman, each of whom You created in Your exquisite image.

**LEADER:** God of Infinite Love, You bless us with the gift of diversity, showing Your face to us in every act of love and compassion.

*ALL:* Open our hearts to receive the wounded and the wounders, committing to love all as You have taught us to love.

**LEADER:** Gracious and loving God, we pray that you will bless our time with You. Help us to listen to Your Word with curiosity and a generosity of Spirit. Help us to remember that You are God and we are not. Help us to trust that You are in charge and to have the courage to turn our lives over to You. In faith and gratitude, for all this we pray in Jesus' name.

*ALL:* Amen.

## LITURGY OF THE WORD

**Reading 1— Mark 5:25-34**

**The Woman with the Hemorrhage**

Now there was a woman who had suffered from hemorrhages for twelve years; after long and painful treatment from various doctors, she has spent all she had without getting better – in fact, she was getting worse. She had heard about Jesus, and she came up behind him in the crowd and touched his cloak. “If I can even touch the hem,” she had told herself, “I will be well again.” Immediately the flow of blood dried up, and she felt in her body that she was healed of her affliction.

Immediately aware that healing power had gone out of him, Jesus turned to the crowd and said, “Who touched my clothes?”

The disciples said, “You see how the crowd is pressing you and yet you say, ‘Who touched me?’”

But Jesus continued to look around to see who had done it. Then the woman came forward, frightened and trembling because she knew what had happened to her, and she fell at Jesus’ feet and told him the whole truth.

“My daughter,” Jesus said, “your faith has saved you; go in peace and be free of your affliction.”

Reader: The Word of God.

All: *Thanks be to God.*

## **Reading 2 — Litany of the Anonymous Women by Karen Flotte**

Alternate sides, and after each phrase, ALL will say, “*Pray for us!*”

- SIDE A
- The midwife who put a baby in a rushbasket...
  - A teenaged girl who said yes to God...
  - Bereaved women who went out to anoint a common criminal buried in a borrowed tomb...
  - Women who welcomed the faithful, the widow, the orphan to the clandestine house church...
  - Women who teach their daughters and granddaughters even when it is unpopular or illegal to do so...

- SIDE B
- Women who share their arts as healers, midwives, and ministers at the time of death...
  - Women who refuse to work in unjust workplace and unionize against all odds...
  - Women who have transmit their traditional cultural heritage despite pressure to conform to the dominant society...
  - Women who organize campesinos to work for land reform...

- Women who led the Underground Railroad and those who managed stations along the way to freedom...

SIDE A

- Women who refuse to lose generations of daughters to the sex trade...
- Women who walked to work for nearly a year during the Alabama Bus Boycott...
- Women who preach despite being told not they cannot...
- Women who learned to feed their families from the scraps and passed on their knowledge...
- Women who taught themselves to read, studied “men’s” fields, and interjected a woman’s perspective into academia...

SIDE B

- Women who cook, clean and raise children so their husbands could work to change the world...
- Women who liberate themselves from oppression and then work to liberate others...
- Women who ask questions over and over again until they change the status quo to include their voices...
- Women who dare to confront abusive spouses in court to change the law at risk of their lives...
- Women who realize the strength of numbers and band together for social change...

SIDE A

- Women who refuse to be silenced even when it makes them unpopular with their own families...
- Women refugees who travel across borders while pregnant or nursing to assure a better life for their children...
- Women who plant flowers to beautify the world...
- Women who fight for a clean environment...

SIDE B

- Women who sacrifice so their children can be fed, clothed and educated...
- Women who place their babies for adoption so they grow up in a stable home...
- Women who refuse to dress themselves and their daughters in demeaning ways to follow fashion fads...
- Women who are unafraid to claim the truth of their experience and proclaim it with love...

ALL

- All holy women who say YES! to God...

**Gospel — Based on Luke 15:11-32 (*The Inclusive Bible*, modified)**

**The Parable of the Lost Daughter**

Jesus said: "A woman had two daughters. The younger of them said to their mother, 'Give me the share of the estate that is coming to me.' So the mother divided up the property between them. Some days later, the younger daughter gathered up her belongings and went off to a distant land. Here she squandered all her money on loose living.

"After everything was spent, a great famine broke out in the land, and the daughter was in great need. So she went to a landowner, who sent her to a farm to take care of the pigs. The daughter was so hungry that she could have eaten the husks that were fodder for the pigs, but no one made a move to give her anything. Coming to her senses at last, she said, 'How many hired hands at my mother's house have more than enough to eat, while here I am starving! I'll quit and go back home and say, 'I've sinned against God and against you; I no longer deserve to be called one of your children. Treat me like one of your hired hands.' With that, the younger daughter set off for home.

"While still a long way off, the mother caught sight of the returning child and was deeply moved. The mother ran out to meet her, threw her arms around her and kissed her. The daughter said to her, 'I've sinned against God and against you. I no longer deserve to be called one of your children.' But her mother said to one of the workers, 'Quick! Bring out the finest robe and put it on her; put a ring on her finger and shoes on her feet. Take the calf we've been fattening and butcher it. Let's eat and celebrate! This daughter of mine was dead and has come back to life. She was lost and now she's found!' And the celebration began.

"Meanwhile the elder daughter had been out in the field. As she neared the house, she heard the sound of music and dancing. She called one of the workers and asked what was happening. The worker answered, 'Your sister is home and the fatted calf has been killed because your mother has her back safe and sound.'

"The daughter got angry at this and refused to go in to the party, but her mother came out and pleaded with her. The older daughter replied, 'For years now I've done every single thing you asked me to do. I never disobeyed even one of your orders, yet you never gave me so much as a kid goat to celebrate with my friends. But then this daughter of yours comes home after going through your money and you kill the fatted calf for her!'

"'But my child!' the mother said. You're with me always, and everything I have is yours. But we have to celebrate and rejoice! This sister of yours was dead and has come back to life. She was lost and now she's found.'"

Reader: The Gospel according to Christ.

All: *Glory and praise to our Savior, Jesus Christ.*

## REFLECTIONS

LEADER will offer reflections on the readings and on feminism and faith; opening up the space for others who wish to contribute to the dialogue.

*Idea starters:*

- *What was it like to hear this Gospel reading from the feminine perspective? Did it change anything for you? Do you have any new insights about what Jesus wants us to know in the telling of this story?*
- *In the first reading, we witness Jesus “digging in his heels” with the male apostles. He is not ready to move. He is waiting to hear the woman who touched him speak. He awaits women’s voices! How does this land for you? How does it feel to know that Jesus is waiting to hear women’s voices? Your voice? What is God waiting to hear you say?*

## **PROFESSION OF FAITH**

by Joan Chittister, OSB (edited)

ALL: We believe in God who made us all  
and whose divinity infuses life with the sacred.  
We believe in the multiple revelations of God,  
alive in every human heart, expressed in every culture, found in all the wisdoms  
of the world.

We believe in Jesus, the Christ,  
who leads us to the fullness of humanity,  
to what we are meant to become.  
Through Christ, we become new people,  
called beyond the consequences of our brokenness, lifted to the fullness of life.

We believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the breath of God on earth,  
who keeps the Christ vision present to souls yet in darkness,  
gives life to hearts now blind, infuses energy into spirits yet weary, isolated,  
searching and confused. We believe in God who is life.

Amen to courage, to hope, to spirit of truth, to nature, to happiness, to  
wholeness,  
to the partnership of women and men in God’s plan, to the Christ who calls us  
beyond the boundaries of ourselves, to forgiveness, and to everything that  
stretches our hearts  
to the dimensions of God.  
In all of this, we can surely believe, as God does.

Amen.

## LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

If your community will share Holy Communion, be sure to use Mass settings and acclamations that are inclusive.

### Presentation of the Gifts and Preparation of the Table, Suggested Songs

*Blest Are They*, ©1985 David Haas, GIA Publications, Inc.

*We Are Many Parts*, ©1980 Marty Haugen, GIA Publications, Inc.

### Liturgy of the Eucharist, Suggested Songs

*A Place at the Table*, ©2001 music by Lori True, words by Shirley Erena Murray, GIA Publications, Inc.

*One Bread, One Body* ©1991 John B. Foley, SJ and New Dawn Music

## THE PRAYER OF JESUS

LEADER: Together we pray as Jesus taught us:

ALL: Our Mother, Our Father on earth and in heaven blessed be your compassionate presence, Your images and names.

Fill us with your Spirit, Show us the wisdom of Your ways.

Forgive us.

Teach us to forgive.

Shield us from temptation and protect us from all harm.

Prevent us from hurting the ones we love,

from injuring other in word or in deed,

from desecrating our planet. Be with us and within us now and always. Amen.

## PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

LEADER: Jesus prayed and so we now also pray, offering our petitions, our gratitude, and our longings to the God who whispers unceasingly into our hearts.

ALL: ***R. God of love and light, receive our prayers*** (after people share their prayers).

We pray in gratitude for all the women of the Church who have come before us as prophets and teachers. May their legacies inspire us to make known the ways God is speaking to us today through women.

***R. God of love and light, receive our prayers.***

We pray for the women of our parish, that all of our gifts may be welcomed, received, and put to work for God's greatest good. May our parish be a place of inclusion and affirmation.

***R. God of love and light, receive our prayers.***

We pray for Pope Francis, that he may continue to be guided by the Spirit of Sophia Wisdom and remain increasingly committed to creating a Church that welcomes all women as God's equally beloved children.

***R. God of love and light, receive our prayers.***

We pray for an end to poverty and homelessness, which disproportionately affect women, children, and oppressed populations around the globe. May we who have resources and influence work to create security and sustainability for our sisters and brothers.

***R. God of love and light, receive our prayers.***

We pray for an end to violence against all human beings, and especially against women. May we who are safe protect those in danger.

***R. God of love and light, receive our prayers.***

We pray for Church dialogue that is inclusive and welcoming. May we who seek justice have the patience to lead with love.

***R. God of love and light, receive our prayers.***

We pray for our priests and bishops, that they might have the courage to work with women as equal partners in teaching and sharing the faith of the Gospel.

***R. God of love and light, receive our prayers.***

We pray for those called to Catholic priesthood and ordained by God, who have been rejected by the institution or denied by us because of gender, sexual orientation, or other unjust disqualifiers. May we become a Church that recognizes the work of the Holy Spirit in all of God's people and strives to create the pathways that allow the fullness of God's plan to manifest.

***R. God of love and light, receive our prayers.***

We pray for those who have suffered emotional or physical abuse at the hands of someone they trust or persons of authority. May our hearts overflow with compassion as we accompany the wounded in their journey for healing and call for change.

***R. God of love and light, receive our prayers.***

We pray for those whose voices we do not hear in our parishes, workplaces, and communities. May the Spirit of Discipleship awaken in us the desire to seek the lost and forsaken and return them to the fold of God's love.

***R. God of love and light, receive our prayers.***

LEADER: For what else shall we pray?

ALL: ***God of love and light, receive our prayers.***

## **SILENCE AND SOLIDARITY**

In solidarity with the millions of women, and of all peoples, whose voices have been silenced, the community will sit together for a 5-minute period of silence.

During this time, consider praying for the wisdom to become aware of those women, and others in your life and community, whose voices could be louder. Pray for the courage to make room for the voices that are missing. See those around you, see their faces. See the faces of those who are not present. Realize and trust that we are moving forward in the company of Jesus.

### **CLOSING BLESSING**

by Sheila Peiffer, Women's Ordination Conference National Board of Directors President

LEADER: Gracious and Loving God of all,  
We ask your blessing on those [who march] to uphold the principle that  
"Women's rights are Human rights"  
We march together as your infinitely varied family,  
Acknowledging that the good of each is bound up in each.  
We march together to honor the legacy of all who have worked for justice before  
us,  
We march together to bring a spark of hope to the despairing,  
We march together to lift up gender equality, racial justice, LGBTQI rights,  
immigration reform and all the many issues that cry out for solutions of  
compassion, wisdom and right.

Holy One, send forth your Spirit on all those who march,  
grant us courage to be steadfast,  
make us gentle in confronting power,  
keep us safe and  
help us harness kindness and humor  
as we walk in solidarity to bring fullness of life to all.

### **CLOSING SONG SUGGESTIONS**

*Sing a New Church*, ©1991 Delores Dufner, OSB, The Sisters of Saint Benedict, OCP Publications  
*We Are Called*, ©1988 David Haas, GIA Publications, Inc.