

Listening Assemblies Lamentation Opening Prayer

(To the extent feasible, based on your circumstances, try to create a prayerful atmosphere for the duration of the prayer: Light a candle, display the bible, place a baptismal bowl of water near the front, or some other symbols of the Spirit and the People of God.)

Opening Song: “All Are Welcome”, verses 1 and 5

Let us build a house where love can dwell and all can safely live
A place where saints and children tell how hearts learn to forgive,
Built of hopes and dreams and visions, rock of faith and vault of grace;
Here the love of Christ shall end divisions;
All are welcome, all are welcome, all are welcome in this space.

Let us build a house where all are named, their songs and visions heard.
And loved and treasured, taught and claimed as words within the Word.
Built of tears and cries and laughter, prayers of faith and songs of grace.
Let this house proclaim from floor to rafter:
All are welcome, all are welcome, all are welcome in this space.

Reading: Luke 13: 10-13 (Cure of the Crippled Woman)

Two-minute reflection: Jesus wanted the “bent over” woman to stand erect. This woman had been crippled for a long time, but once healed was ready to stand tall and glorify God. What has been crippling our Church? (pause for silent reflection)
How can we help the Church to be open to healing and stand upright? (pause for silent reflection)

Leader’s Prayer: Brother Jesus, we gather together here today to explore the legacy that you have given us. We yearn for a Church “waiting to be” which would celebrate the values that you practiced. We mourn the many abuses of power within your Church that have prevented the work of your Kingdom from flourishing. Our faith and your example call us to find our voices, our energy and our commitment to build that Kingdom here and now.

Responsorial Prayer:

Presider: “My grace is sufficient for you, for power is made perfect in weakness.” (2 Cor 12: 9)

Reader 1: Weakened by structures that ignore your Wisdom speaking through the people of God, we cry....

R/ Send us your Spirit, bring forth power from weakness!

Session #1: Opening Prayer

Reader 2: Angered by church leaders who protect pedophiles and persecute prophets, we cry... R/

Reader 3: Denied the fullness of a sacramental life because of failure to address the priest shortage, we cry....R/

Reader 4: Aching for responsible pastoral care and ministry to the outcast to be a priority, we cry... R/

Reader 5: Wondering why we are closing parishes rather than opening ordination, we cry... R/

Reader 6: Longing to proclaim the rights of the Baptized in a Church celebrating the gifts of the Spirit given to all for the common good, we cry... R/

Reader 7: Betrayed by church structures that promote clericalism, marginalization and misogyny, we cry... R/

Reader 8: Dismayed by our own guilt and failure to confront the power of the Church, we cry... R/

Presider: Hear our prayer, Merciful God, and send forth the Spirit of Wisdom and Courage upon us as we gather in your name to do the holy work of building your Kingdom. Fill us with hope as we create a new vision and a new step in the unfolding of your Church on earth. Amen.

All: Vatican II Prayer to the Holy Spirit

We stand before you, Holy Spirit, conscious of our limitations, but aware that we gather in your name.

Come to us, remain with us, and enlighten our hearts.

Give us light and strength to know your will, to make it our own and to live it in our lives.

Guide us by your wisdom, support us by your power,

for you are God, sharing the glory of our Creator and Savior.

You desire justice for all, enable us to uphold the rights of others;

Do not allow us to be misled by ignorance or corrupted by fear or favor.

Unite us to yourself in the bond of love and keep us faithful to all that is true as we gather in your name.

May we temper justice with love, so that all our decisions may be pleasing to you and earn the reward you promised to good and faithful servants.

You live and reign with our Creator and our Savior, One God, forever and ever, Amen.

(Prayer composed by Pope John XXIII for Vatican II. Council Bishops prayed it at the beginning of every session)