*We gather in solidarity with women religious for*

***Communal Contemplative Prayer – Date, 20xx***

***Settle into the immense Love in which we live and move and have our being....***

Breathe in, and feel the air move into you…. simply that….

Breathe out, and feel the air emptying you… simply that….

Quietly focus on your breath filling you…. and emptying you….

In… and out…

Your body relaxing into breathing…. Only breathing….

*Notice if some words or images here lead you to rest in God. Follow them, or*

*just follow the Spirit.*

**“Back to the Past” by Amanda Gorman**

At times even blessings will bleed us.

There are some who lost their lives  
& those who were lost from ours,

Who we might now reënter,  
All our someones summoned softly.

The closest we get to time travel  
Is our fears softening,

Our hurts unclenching,  
As we become more akin

To kin, as we return  
To who we were

Before we actually were  
Anything or anyone—

That is, when we were born unhating  
& unhindered, howling wetly

With everything we could yet become.  
To travel back in time is to remember

When all we knew of ourselves was love.

***30 minutes of silence***

***We welcome one another’s reflections and prayers****,*

**Closing:** Dear God, may we never forget how much we need each other. After all, we are connected through your creation. Let us not be afraid to talk, to laugh, to cry, and to share stories and our lives with each other. Amen.

Or: Come, Holy Spirit. Fill the hearts of your faithful and kindle in us the fire of your love. Send forth your Spirit and we shall be created, and You shall renew the face of Earth. Amen.

Settling in: modfied from Sacred Space, a website of the Irish Jesuits

*Poem:* This excerpt is drawn from “[*Call Us What We Carry*](https://www.amazon.com/Hill-We-Climb-Other-Poems/dp/0593465067?ots=1&tag=thneyo0f-20&linkCode=w50),” by Amanda Gorman. Her reading is at [*https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2021/12/13/from-call-us-what-we-carry-poetry-by-amanda-gorman*](https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2021/12/13/from-call-us-what-we-carry-poetry-by-amanda-gorman)

Thanks to Kathleen Cross for introducing us to Francisco Albanez.

Image: Rocking chair in painting style black border, poster for sale on Zazzle,

First closing prayer option: Maria Shriver’s Sunday Paper <https://www.mariashriversundaypaper.com/>

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