*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....***

As I sit here, the beating of my heart,  
          the ebb and flow of my breathing, the movements of my mind  
          are all signs of God's ongoing creation of me.  
          I pause for a moment, and become aware  
          of this presence of God within me.

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

*just follow the Spirit.*

**“Heavy” by Mary Oliver**

That time  
I thought I could not  
go any closer to grief  
without dying

I went closer,  
and I did not die.  
Surely God  
had his hand in this,

as well as friends.  
Still, I was bent,  
and my laughter,  
as the poet said,

was nowhere to be found.  
Then said my friend Daniel,  
(brave even among lions),  
“It’s not the weight you carry

but how you carry it –  
books, bricks, grief –

it’s all in the way  
you embrace it, balance it, carry it

when you cannot, and would not,  
put it down.”  
So I went practicing.  
Have you noticed?

Have you heard  
the laughter  
that comes, now and again,  
out of my startled mouth?

How I linger  
to admire, admire, admire  
the things of this world  
that are kind, and maybe

also troubled –  
roses in the wind,  
the sea geese on the steep waves,  
a love  
to which there is no reply?

***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: modified from Sacred Space, a website of the Irish Jesuits

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