**Solidarity with Sisters, Sept. 20, the 25th Sunday in ordinary time**

**The Lord is near to all who call upon our God.**

 *Ps 145:18a*

**TECHNICAL CHECK-IN (Betty Thompson)**

I’m Betty Thompson and I welcome you here on behalf of Solidarity with Sisters.

* We sent the file of readings, responses, and lyrics.
* Camera: turn on if you want. Gallery view option. Arrow if multiple screens.
* Mute/Unmute: know how? Needed even during singing.
* **I will now mute everybody.** Unmute to speak.

Now let’s put technical things aside.

**QUICK NOTE** **(Suzie)**

At the end of today’s prayer, our program includes the song “We Are Called” by David Haas. There are credible accusations against him. Betty and I think back to the Sept. 6 liturgy we planned about confronting wrongdoers in the community with the goal of reconciliation. We pray with heartbroken love for those he has harmed and for all victims of sexual violence. And we pray for him, and for healing for the community. To skip the song, you could step away after the final blessing,

**QUICK THOUGHTS ON WHO WE ARE AND HOW WE ARE HERE (Betty)**

On behalf of Solidarity with Sisters, I thank you for being here today! Would everybody in Solidarity with Sisters wave? We hope to share with you the contemplative communal ways that we have treasured during our 8 years with each other and with the Leadership Conference of Women Religious. These quieter ways come from real certainty that the Spirit moves among us as a whole, if we pay attention. And so we slow the pace, with more silence. We invite mutual listening and personal reflection, not discussion and advice. And now there are more than 50 of us! It is great joy to hear new voices and familiar voices. So that we can hear everyone who wants to speak (and still keep to a reasonable time frame), it helps for each of us to share only once. We’re grateful to each of you for all your individual ways of being present here.

**WELCOME (Suzie De Quattro)**

* Welcome, everyone!
* Introductions – people who haven’t been here before?
* Thanks to George and Alicia for preparing today’s communal prayer.
* Thanks to Reggie Ott for leading us in music
* Thanks to the people who will be reading today – Karen and Dan McCarthy, George and Alicia Urban, Marilyn Voigt, Ann Jelen, Bob Gallagher, Lynn Bufka, and Judy Sholes. If you’d like to read on future Sundays, please get in touch.

**SETTLING IN: (Alicia Urban)**

We are here to let God be with us. So let’s open ourselves to Our Lord. Feel the comfort of your position and relax into it. Notice your body and any tension you are carrying with you – tighten as you inhale and relax the area as you exhale. Squeeze and release your head and jaw and neck, shoulders, arms and hands, stomach, hips, legs and feet. (Pause.) If something distracts you, put it in a wagon or on a train and let it move away. Notice your breath. Take a deep breath, hold for a moment; exhale slowly. Take 3 more gentle breaths. One to be here… one to be together….and one to be open to God’s love and call.

Now we begin our celebration.

**OPENING – “Seek the Lord” – First 2 Verses (Youtube played by Betty Thompson)**

[**https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nLjgnSKepow&feature=youtu.be**](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nLjgnSKepow&feature=youtu.be)

**GREETING (George)**

Sisters and brothers, rejoice!The Spirit of Christ is among us! Alleluia!

**All:** And all God’s people reply: Amen! Alleluia!

**CALL TO WORSHIP (George)**

We come together today because it is with each other that we experience ourselves as the people of God and the body of Christ. We gather to celebrate the great fact that God is in love with us. We are confident that in this next hour God will act in us and through us. We believe that God will give us light for our next step. And now let us pray.

**INVOCATION (Ann Jelen)**

I am called to seek you Lord,

I am called to find you

Sometimes while in the kitchen

Or walking in the summer garden,

Or about my daily chores.

It is difficult at times

As the world intrudes and silences me.

So now I need you to find me

And open my voice and my heart to you,

**INTRODUCTION TO THEME (George Urban)**

The readings from Scripture that we will hear today address God always being available whenever and wherever we call God’s name. We can seek and find God within **us**, in front of us, and with us. Remember that we often say: “God has no hands except ours.” This is a call to each of us to not only listen but to act. Today we will explore the deep reaction we feel when we hear that call, and then as we are moved to seek, find, and accept the challenge to work in the fields of the Kingdom. We will also reflect on the generosity of God: The Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

After each reading, Dan McCarthy will offer questions for our reflection.

**READING 1:** [**IS 55:6-9**](https://bible.usccb.org/bible/isaiah/55?6) **(Karen McCarthy)**

Seek the LORD while he may be found,
call him while he is near.
Let the scoundrel forsake his way,
and the wicked his thoughts;
let him turn to the LORD for mercy;
to our God, who is generous in forgiving.
For my thoughts are not your thoughts,
nor are your ways my ways, says the LORD.
As high as the heavens are above the earth,
so high are my ways above your ways
and my thoughts above your thoughts.

**REFLECTION QUESTIONS (Dan McCarthy) (Show picture of seeking– Betty)**

In a significant time in your life, how did you seek the Lord? How was the Lord there for you?

What feelings come to you right now about your quest to find God and God being there for you?

**(Show Slide 1 after first hearing Dan read the questions.. --Betty)**

**SILENCE**

**(Sound a chime and stop the picture after two minutes - Betty )**

**Alicia Urban:** Now George Urban will read from chapter 20 of the Gospel of Matthew.

**READING 2: Gospel** [**MT 20:1-16A**](https://bible.usccb.org/bible/matthew/20?1) **(George Urban)**

Jesus told his disciples this parable:
“The kingdom of heaven is like a landowner
who went out at dawn to hire laborers for his vineyard.
After agreeing with them for the usual daily wage,
he sent them into his vineyard.

Going out about nine o’clock,
the landowner saw others standing idle in the marketplace,
and he said to them, ‘You too go into my vineyard,
and I will give you what is just.’
So they went off.
And he went out again around noon,
and around three o’clock, and did likewise.
Going out about five o’clock,
the landowner found others standing around, and said to them,
‘Why do you stand here idle all day?’
They answered, ‘Because no one has hired us.’
He said to them, ‘You too go into my vineyard.’

When it was evening the owner of the vineyard said to his foreman,
‘Summon the laborers and give them their pay,
beginning with the last and ending with the first.’
When those who had started about five o’clock came,
each received the usual daily wage.
So when the first came, they thought that they would receive more,
but each of them also got the usual wage.
And on receiving it they grumbled against the landowner, saying,
‘These last ones worked only one hour,
and you have made them equal to us,
who bore the day’s burden and the heat.’

He said to one of them in reply,
‘My friend, I am not cheating you.
Did you not agree with me for the usual daily wage?
Take what is yours and go.
What if I wish to give this last one the same as you?
Or am I not free to do as I wish with my own money?
Are you envious because I am generous?’
Thus, the last will be first, and the first will be last.

**REFLECTION QUESTIONS (Dan McCarthy)**

The landowner says “I will give you what is just.” What do you feel he means by “just”? Do you feel the different workers were treated justly?

How would your feelings change if you heard the invitation to work in the field as a call to be the hands of Jesus Christ?

How does this parable make you feel about laboring in God’s Kingdom? What would you feel like doing?

**(Show Slide 2 after first hearing Dan read the questions.. --Betty)**

**SILENCE**

**(Sound a chime and stop the picture after two minutes - Betty )**

**Alicia:** Now Lynn Bufka will lead us in sharing.

**SHARING (Lynn Bufka)**

We invite you to share what emerged in **your** heart this morning as you reflected on these readings. We welcome new voices, and we also know that the wisdom of this community includes both words shared and silent listening.

To help us speak of our **personal** feelings, we can notice our language and use “I” or “me” instead of “we,” “you,” or “they.” That helps us to glimpse the many ways God is among us. Also, let’s leave a bit of silence between speakers. A bridge of silence allows us to take in what was just said and gives others the chance to gather their feelings to share.

So let's begin in silence as we gather our reflections. (Pause for 30 seconds) Now who would like to start our sharing, remembering to unmute yourself when you speak and mute yourself again afterwards?

Who would like to begin our sharing?

(Sharing)

Is there anyone else who would like to share? I will give a few more seconds for last thoughts.

Thank you.

Now Judy Sholes will lead us in prayer.

**PRAYERS OF THE COMMUNITY (Judy Sholes)**

Lord, we thank you for the breadth and depth of your love and for living and loving in us and through us. May all that we do flow from our deep connection with you and all beings. Help us become a community that vulnerably shares each other’s burdens. Listen to our hearts’ longings for responding to God’s call.

Now, as we offer our prayers, our response will be: Welcoming Lord, hear our prayer.

God of unsurpassed love, help us to welcome the call as God beckons us to be in the vineyard. Let us pray. All: Welcoming Lord, hear our prayer.

God with us, help us to welcome the work we are called to do in the field of the Kingdom. Let us pray. All: Welcoming Lord, hear our prayer.

God of the distressed, the poor, the sick, and the oppressed, abide with Catholic sisters and the Leadership Conference of Women Religious in their work and in their communities. And accept our gratitude for the model of caring discipleship that they provide to us. Let us pray.

All: Welcoming Lord, hear our prayer.

Now let us remember the feelings and prayers that arose in us as we shared reflections, and also the prayers that we carry with us. [Pause.]

For what else shall we pray? Please unmute yourself as you speak. Please end your petition with “For this we pray.” Then remute yourself!

(People speak.)

Thank you. We place all of our prayers, Lord, those spoken and those unspoken, into your loving care, and we entrust the outcome to you. Amen.

**Alicia:** Marylyn Voight will lead us in the Offertory.

**OFFERTORY (Marylyn Voight )**

Often, through our shared reflections, we discern a call to take some kind of action. The late John Lewis often quoted a West African proverb that says, “When you pray, move your feet.” How are we to move our feet this week? In response to the grace and goodness of God, how are we to share our abundance with a broken world? Let us take time to name within ourselves something we will offer to others in recognition of all that we have received from God. [Pause.]

In thanksgiving for the presence and power of Jesus Christ, and in unity with the Holy Spirit, let us pray. God of abundance, we commit to sharing our time, talents, and treasures so we that we may be a light and a witness to the transforming love of Jesus Christ. Amen.

**Show picture of the Last Supper -- Betty**

**CELEBRATION OF COMMUNION (Bob Gallagher)**

O Great Love, we are humbled and emboldened

to know that you trust us to be your body in this world.

We are part of that body as we let go of all that separates us from you,

and as we embrace one another and your entire creation with merciful love.

We give you thanks for your presence in us. [Pause.] **Stop picture - Betty**

We remember the night before Jesus died.

At dinner with friends, Jesus knew all that would soon be asked of them,

and, loving them to the end, Jesus showed them how to care for each other

as they went out into the world.

First Jesus washed their feet.

Then he looked at what was in front of them, the bread and the cup,

gifts of the earth and work of human hands and blessed them.

So let us, too, invite God right now into what is front and center in our lives

knowing that God will indeed enter what we offer – and bless it. [Pause.]

Let us invite God into ourselves so that we become God’s living presence. [Pause.]

Holy One, you transform us as you nourish us here.

May we nourish others with your love. Amen.

**OUR FATHER (George Urban)**

Let us pray in harmony with all Christians throughout the world in the words that Jesus gave us:

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be your name.

Your kingdom come. Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread

and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us,

and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.

**FINAL BLESSING (Alicia Urban)**

Filled with the presence of our generous God, and bathed in transformation love,

may we go forth seeking the Kingdom of God with openness.

May we reach out to an imperfect people who yearn for love, security and hope.

May every one of us experience God's welcoming arms.

May we grow and cultivate God's Kingdom and

offer communion and kindness to a wounded, hungry, divided world.

May God's love bathe us with energy, openness, and love. Amen.

**Alicia:** Reggie Ott will lead us in singing our closing song based on the prophet Micah.

 **Show slide - Betty**

**CLOSING HYMN “We are Called” (Reggie Ott)**

Come, live in the light

Shine with the joy and the love of the Lord

We are called to be light for the kingdom

To live in the freedom of the city of God **Stop slide -- Betty**

We are called to act with justice

We are called to love tenderly

We are called to serve one another

To walk humbly with God

Come, open your heart

Shor your mercy to all those in fear

We are called to be hope for the hopeless

So all hatred and blindness will be no more

We are called to act with justice

We are called to love tenderly

We are called to serve one another

To walk humbly with God