*We gather in solidarity with women religious for*

***Communal Contemplative Prayer – Date, 202x***

***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.*

A reading about **Prophets by Sister Sandra Schneiders** (slightly modified)

Biblical prophecy is not about foretelling the future…. The prophet is immersed in the life of the people in a particular place and time and is commissioned to interpret that situation in the light of the Holy One’s dream for this people and the whole of humanity. Listening to the holy voice, reading the “signs of the times” (see Mt. 16:13), and focusing the divine Word in the present are the defining features of prophecy….

Everything depends on the prophet’s obedience. The prophet’s “yes”… or Mary’s “Be it done to me according to Your word” (Lk. 1:36)… exemplify the partnership of the Holy One and the prophets….

Jesus often taught participatively, explicitly or implicitly asking his hearers, “What do you think?” Who showed himself neighbor to the one who fell among robbers? Would you, if you were the older son, go in to the celebration for your renegade brother? Was the father of the prodigal a naïve chump or a God figure? Which is the greatest commandment? What would that vineyard owner do to those wicked tenants? Would you have stoned her? Should the last shift workers have gotten as much as the first shift ones? The question, inviting the hearer to moral responsibility rather than the prescribed answer, is characteristic of prophetic engagement….

Jesus did highly provocative symbolic acts. He broke the Sabbath for the sake of people in need (e.g., Mk. 3:1-6). He even drove licensed functionaries out of the temple during a major feast, an unmistakably anti-temple act (Mt. 21:12-14). And he meekly rode a donkey into the Holy City through one gate just as the Emperor’s representative, Pilate, was riding into it in royal splendor through the opposite gate, a deliberately anti-imperial gesture (see Mk. 11:1-10 and Mt. 21:1-10). Such prophetic actions could hardly be taken lightly.

But what is this prophetic speaking and acting all about? To what, or better to whom, was Jesus’ bearing witness? Marcus Borg *(Jesus*, ch. 7) captures this well in two words: to God as compassion, and to justice as God’s dream for humanity.

***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/>