



JPIC PRAYER GUIDE

8 March 2024



INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

Today, cries for full equality between men and women run through the streets of our cities and towns; denouncing the suffering and injustice of women, for being born as women...

Each of us can name this suffering and injustice, because we have accompanied other women who have lived it, or because we have experienced it first-hand.

As long as this pain exists, celebrating Women's Day will make sense... As long as this cry of humanity exists, we wish to renew our compassionate listening as artisans of hope, as we work to transform our attitudes and ways of relating to one another.

The Synod also highlighted the situation of discrimination experienced by women in the Church, while at the same time calling for greater levels of participation and decision-making for them, with the desire to express more fully the call of Jesus to build the Kingdom from the diversity of gifts we have received.

In our life story we can recognize the impact and the mark that other women have left on us. As we begin this time of celebration, we invite you to name them, to renew our connection with them, to thank them for their inspiration and courage.

We remember Sophie, Philippine, women in our family, friends, sisters, mission companions...



Deepak Kumar | Unsplash

Song: "[Women on the Way](#)" by Ain Karem

We are united by so many lives, those of the past and the present, sustained by the sap (2nd time: encouraged by dance) of the Spirit of God!

Women who intertwine experiences and paths, wise, courageous, the women of your people; (2nd time: My Village)

Faithful, constant, rooted in your love.



Motivation: Listening to the Word

Many women have accompanied us in the course of our lives. They are with us today, and many others will accompany us in the future... In the text that we will read, the number of women that Paul names is striking, women who have helped him a lot in his mission and that he makes visible to the community of the Romans.

Reading the Word: Romans 16:1-4; 6-7; 12-16

I recommend to you *Phoebe*, our sister, deaconess of the Church of Cenchreae. Receive her in the Lord in a manner worthy of the saints, and assist her in whatever she needs from you, for she has been the protector of many, including myself.

Greet *Prisca* and *Aquila*, my fellow workers in Christ Jesus. They exposed their heads to save me. And I am not only grateful to you, but also all the Churches of the gentiles; Greet *Mary*, who has worked so hard for you. Greet *Andronicus* and *Junia*, my relatives and fellow prisoners, illustrious among the apostles, who came to Christ before me. Greet *Tryphaena* and *Tryphosa*, who have toiled in the Lord. Greet beloved *Perside*, who labored much in the Lord.

Greet *Rufus*, the Lord's chosen one; and his mother, who is also mine. Greet *Asyncritus* and *Phlegon*, *Hermes*, *Patrobas*, *Hermas*, and the brethren who are with them. Greet *Philologus* and *Julia*, *Nereus* and his sister, as well as *Olympas* and all the saints who are with them. Greet one another with the holy kiss. All the Churches of Christ greet you.



Sharing

Paul tells us about a multitude of women... Anonymous... Maybe we didn't know their names either. They, by their deeds and words, sustained their Christian communities... They are at the roots of our faith.

What do I experience when I hear their names? What concrete actions does it lead me to and invite me to?

Gesture

Just as Paul mentions several women, go back to your story and shared path with others and think about the names of important women in your life and ask yourself:

- What have I learned from them? How have they made their presence felt in my life? How have they influenced me? And write their names on one or more pieces of paper.
- Think and pray for the situations/realities of injustice suffered by many women we know. Also write these situations down on one or more pieces of paper.

Right now, as we write, we can listen to one of these songs...

By Breath, by Sara Thomsen

By breath, by blood, by body, by spirit,
we are all one.

The air that is my breath is the air that
you are breathing
And the air that is your breath is the air
that I am breathing

The wind rising in my breast is the wind
from the east, from the west
From the north, from the south,
breathing in, breathing out

By breath, by blood, by body, by spirit,
we are all one

The water that is my blood, my sweat,
tears from crying
Is the water that is your blood, your
sweat, tears from crying
And the rising of the tide is in our veins
and in the ocean wide
We are in the rising steam, rushing river,
running stream

By breath, by blood, by body, by spirit,
we are all one

The earth is dust, the earth is clay,
flow'rs blossoming and fading
We are dust and we are clay, we are
blossoming and fading
Every color, every sound, every place is
holy ground

Oh, every living thing, can you hear it
laugh? Can you hear it sing?

By breath, by blood, by body, by spirit,
we are all one

The fire in my heart, my soul flame
burning
Is the fire in your heart, your soul flame
burning

We are Spirit burning bright, by the light
of day, in the dark of night
We are shining like the sun, and like the
moon, like the Holy One.

One Voice, by Sarah Thomsen

This is the sound of one voice
One spirit, one voice
The sound of one who makes a choice
This is the sound of one voice

This is the sound of voices two
The sound of me singing with you
Helping each other to make it through
This is the sound of voices two

This is the sound of voices three
Singing together in harmony
Surrendering to the mystery
This is the sound of voices

This is the sound of all of us
Singing with love and the will to trust
Leave the rest behind it will turn to dust
This is the sound of all of us

This is the sound of one voice
One people, one voice
A song for every one of us
This is the sound of one voice.

We now invite you to light a candle, and put in front of it what we have written.
(If you are praying this guide with others, we invite you to share and say what you have
written) And to observe a minute of silence to welcome this moment into our hearts.

Conclusion

We invite you to end this moment with this prayer of Dolores Aleixandre rscj, entrusting our being women to the reality of injustices so many women in our world live, convinced that our God does not abandon us, but invites us to be salt and light in our daily lives. To walk together with other women and men who, with boldness and courage, joy and love, we want to proclaim and share what God has done in each one of us.



Woman's Blessing

May the Lord grant you
the boldness of Deborah
and the courage of Esther and Judith.
May he fill you with joy as he did to Hannah,
with loyalty and faithful love as with Ruth.

May you sing and dance by the sea,
like Mary the prophetess.
With Mary of Nazareth may
you proclaim the greatness of the Lord
in the triumph of the hungry and the humble.

May you come to meet Jesus, the Lord,
as Mary Magdalene and the Samaritan woman did;
He gave them back their dignity, their freedom,
and gave them a new name.

And like that hunched over woman whom He drew near and straightened,
may you live upright and help others to straighten up.

May you continue to reach out, keep the flame burning,
serve in a new way.

That you, we, and all of us, women and men,
are called to stand up and glorify our God. Amen



Women for Our Blessed and Wounded World

- On Women's Day, we cannot forget the suffering reality of our world, especially the situation between Israel and Palestine. So if it helps you can watch the music video for the Mother's Prayer in which Palestinian and Israeli women come together to pray for Peace.

[Yael Deckelbaum - Prayer Of The Mothers \(Official Video\)](#)

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Spain



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