

The Ministry of the Assembly

Yours is a share
in the work
of the Spirit of all that is holy,
for in who you are
and in what you do
is found the most powerful
experience of the sacred.

Yours is the kingdom community
whose very assembling
is sacrament of God's presence in the world.

In the living words, gestures, sacrifice,
and meal of your common prayer,
the living God is disclosed
as the faithful and redeeming Lord
whose tent is pitched among us.

Yours is to be nothing more
and nothing less than the body of Christ.

Yours is the ministry of being the beloved
and espoused of God.

Through your lives and in you midst
the tidings of salvation
are faithfully proclaimed.

Yours is the work of telling and handling on
the story of God's mercy.

You are the people
who embody the promise of life forever.

For the world you are evidence
that the word of judgment
is tempered with compassion.

Yours is the ministry
of celebrating again and again
the Passover meal of the new Covenant.

Your sacrifice of praise
is a hymn to the Lamb of God
who takes away the sins of the world.

Yours is the work
of gathering at the table which welcomes all
who turn their hearts back to God.

Yours is the ministry to bring bread and wine,
to give thanks,
to break and share the bread,
to bless and share the cup
-remembering Christ Jesus
broken and poured out for your sakes.

Yours is the proclamation of the
'mysterium fidei', the mystery of faith.

Come to your ministry from your personal prayer:
it is the home from which your journey
to the house of God's people,
to the tables of their common prayer.

Come prepared to be surprised
by God's word and presence
in the assembly of your neighbors.

Come as you are!
Come as sinners
who need to find mercy,
as the redeemed who need to give thanks.

Come with all that needs to be healed,
to the Lord who comes to heal you.

come with no expectations,
save the sure hope of communion
with the Holy One
in the family of God's people.

If your community's liturgy
is alive and beautiful,
take care
lest you begin to worship your worship:
this is idolatry.

If your community's liturgy
needs help-offer it!

Model your community's liturgy
on Christ's divine service,
not on the experience of neighboring parishes.

The Liturgy your parish offers
is often a mirror of the life your parish lives:
look into that mirror
and see what you will see;
then do what must be done.

When visitors praise and thank you
for the worship you have offered,
take delight in the blessing
they have received,
and rejoice in the work
the Lord has accomplished through you.

Be faithful in the work you do,
for through it the lord saves his people.