



# **Listening for the truth in love**

**Worcester Diocesan Listening Process  
on Human Sexuality**



*Most gracious God,  
whose love for us is a raging fire  
no waters can quench,  
look in mercy on us, your children.  
Our love for you often flickers feebly,  
our love for one another is easily extinguished.  
May our human loves  
be rooted and grounded in your love,  
purified by your Son's Passion,  
and fulfilled in your presence  
the true consummation of all our desiring,  
when Love shall be all in all. Amen.*

## **Resources for worship**

# **A simple form of prayer to begin a meeting**

## **Invocation**

In the name of the Father, and of the Son  
and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

*The following may be said by one person, or corporately, or with the response  
"Come, Holy Spirit" after each of the three biddings.*

Come, Holy Spirit,  
and renew in us the gift of wisdom.  
Come, Holy Spirit,  
and open our hearts and minds to your truth.  
Come, Holy Spirit,  
and help us to love one another.

## **Scripture Reading**

*The following are suggested as appropriate. There are many others, but readings  
directly touching on questions of sexuality should be avoided at this point.*

*Matthew 13:24-30 The parable of the wheat and the weeds*

*Luke 18:9-14 The parable of the Pharisee and the tax-collector*

*John 16:12-15 The Spirit of truth*

*Romans 14: 19 – 15:6 Pursue what makes for peace*

*James 3:1-10 Guarding the tongue*

*The reading is followed by a short period of silent reflection*

## **Prayers**

*Other prayers may be used.*

*The Lord's Prayer may be used here, or at the end of the meeting.*

## **Benediction**

*This may be said by the leader, by all together, or as printed.*

May God bless us  
with grace in speaking,  
with patience in listening.  
May Christ in his love send the Spirit upon us  
to guard our tongues, open our ears,  
and make his home in our hearts,  
today and forever. **Amen.**

## **A simple form of prayer to close a meeting**

### **Intercession**

We hold before God  
those who have been hurt by our words  
those whose words have hurt us  
those who find disagreement hard to bear  
those who differ from us  
those whose words and actions we believe to be sinful.

### *Silent Prayer*

Lord, hear us.

**Lord, graciously hear us.**

We stand before God  
sinners whom he has called,  
people in need of one another's prayers,  
needing to trust God alone  
unworthy, unrighteous, unholy,  
except through Christ  
our life and righteousness.

### *Silent prayer*

Lord, hear us.

**Lord, graciously hear us.**

*The Lord's Prayer may be used if it has not been used at the start of the meeting.  
Other prayers may also be used.*

*The meeting concludes with either all saying the Grace, the exchange of the Peace,  
or with this ascription of praise.*

Glory be to God whose power, working in us, can do infinitely more than  
we can ask or imagine; glory be to him from generation to generation in the  
Church and in Christ Jesus for ever and ever. **Amen.**

## **Selected Prayers**

Lord Jesus Christ,  
your church is a ship  
sailing uncharted waters.  
Like your disciples  
we fear the storms which surround us.  
Thank you that you walk towards us.  
We commit our passage into your hands.  
As you brought your disciples  
safely to shore,  
so give us confidence in your love  
and trust in your power,  
that we may journey in hope  
and arrive in peace,  
to your Father's glory. **Amen.**

Heavenly Father,  
much history lies behind us,  
and your future is still before us.  
Forgive us the failures of the past,  
our fear of others who are different,  
our condemnation  
of those we don't understand,  
the hurt and division that we cause.  
Give us a new security in your love,  
a sense of the depth of your forgiveness,  
a fresh understanding of ourselves,  
a willingness to be open to others,  
a deeper appreciation of your truth  
and a firmer faith  
that the future is in your hands.  
Through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

*The following short intercessions may be used with any well known response, such as "Lord, in your mercy: **hear our prayer.**"*

God of all, your truth transcends every culture, yet your word can only be heard when it is spoken in human tongues, in many different times and places. Guide our bishops and all your Church with your Spirit, that we may grow towards truth together.

God of the prophets, your word is often hard to hear. People mistake true prophets for false, and false for true. Grant to all your Church, and to us gathered here today, patience in listening, wisdom in speaking, and the gift of discernment.

God of peace, you call the Church to be one, and share the perfect unity of the Godhead. Help us to find that unity which is your gift, perfect in love, complete in truth, founded on justice, and rich in mercy, without which we can only bear a poor witness to your Son.

God of sinners, you show us your love made flesh in Jesus. Forgive us our failures to live as he lived, and love as he loved in his time spent among us on earth. Help us to follow him more faithfully, that our lives, and those of our brothers and sisters, may be transformed by his Spirit.