

A Litany of Women for the Church

Dear God, creator of women in your own image, born of a woman in the midst of a world half women, carried by women to mission fields around the globe, made known by women to all the children of the earth, give to the women of our time the strength to persevere, the courage to speak out, the faith to believe in you beyond all systems and institutions so that your face on earth may be seen in all its beauty, so that men and women become whole, so that the church may be converted to your will in everything and in all ways.

We call on the holy women who went before us, channels of Your Word in testaments old and new, to intercede for us so that we might be given the grace to become what they have been for the honor and glory of God.

Saint Esther, who pleaded against power for the liberation of the people,

-Pray for us.

Saint Judith, who routed the plans of men and saved the community,

Saint Deborah, laywoman and judge, who led the people of God,

Saint Elizabeth of Judea, who recognized the value of another woman,

Saint Mary Magdalene, minister of Jesus, the first evangelist of the Christ,

Saint Scholastica, who taught her brother Benedict to honor the spirit above the system,

Saint Hildegard, who suffered interdict for the doing of right,

Saint Joan of Arc, who put no law above the law of God,

Saint Clare of Assisi, who confronted the pope with the image of woman as equal,

Saint Julian of Norwich, who proclaimed for all of us the motherhood of God,

Saint Thérèse of Lisieux, who knew the call to priesthood in herself,

Saint Catherine of Siena, to whom the pope listened,

Saint Teresa of Avila, who brought women's gifts to the reform of the church,

Saint Edith Stein, who brought fearlessness to faith,

Saint Elizabeth Seton, who broke down boundaries between lay women and religious by wedding motherhood and religious life,

Saint Dorothy Day, who led the church in a new sense of justice,

Mary, mother of Jesus, who heard the call of God and answered,

Mary, mother of Jesus, who drew strength from the woman Elizabeth,

Mary, mother of Jesus, who underwent hardship bearing Christ,

Mary, mother of Jesus, who ministered at Cana,

Mary, mother of Jesus, inspirited at Pentecost,

Mary, mother of Jesus, who turned the Spirit of God into the body and blood of Christ,

-Pray for us. Amen.

by Joan Chittister, OSB