

A Blessing When You Don't Know How to Pray

Teach us how to pray, God,
when our faith doesn't feel like comfort.
when there are not easy answers or tidy scripts.
when there are no other words but lament.

Teach us how to pray, God,
when we see Christ in Gethsemane
at the center of it all.

Teach us how to pray, God,
when the Spirit groans alongside us,
speechless too, at the pain, at the inexplicable,
at the unfair.

Joining the chorus of others
in this agonized prayer.

Teach us how to pray, God,
May our words of lament turn toward acts of love,
as we remake this beautiful,
terrible world,
together.

Kate Bowler

Youth Litany of Righteous Anger and Lament

The world asks that each of us hold the weight
of more cares than any one of us can carry alone.

Our eyes and hearts are open to concerns
that awaken in us righteous anger. And so, we lament.

We lament a world we love,
a world where there is still so much
that is unfair and unfathomable.

Individually, it feels like too much to hold.

We hold out our hands to you,
our community of elders.

We ask, will you hold these concerns with us,
so we can carry them in a community?

May we learn to listen to one another
and be willing to be uncomfortable

when we hear something we don't understand.

Together, may we consider the possibility
of creative solutions.

May we learn to ask, *how much do I not know?*

How can I be willing to embrace this story as my own?

Today, we lament:

That Rockwool and other big industry companies

that are polluting the land;

That people do not value play for teenagers

and there are no places where teenagers

can play at school or in public;

The existence of pointlessly gendered objects;

Social cruelty.

Your story is my story; your story is our story

We lament:

Racism that is still so prevalent;

That many students in schools

aren't given the resources they need to learn;

The abuse of animals;

The fentanyl epidemic

and teens overdosing on this drug.

Your story is my story; your story is our story

We lament:

People vaping in school and the repercussions

this brings with school bathrooms locked

and free periods taken away;

That we're not heard or taken seriously

The existence of transphobia;

Friendships and relationships constantly changing.

Your story is my story; your story is our story

We lament:

That companies are replacing humans with technology

and taking away human interaction;

Homophobia and fears around sexual identity;

That people assume teens don't have any skills;

That our schools don't teach real-world skills

that we need.

That so many people are not willing to

understand others who think differently than them;

Your story is my story; your story is our story