We pray in the name of Christ, with whom there is no male and female,

and in whom we are all one.

We give joyful thanks for 30 years of the priestly ministry of women in the

Church of England, and that through their lives and witness we have

gained a fuller understanding of who we are as beloved children of

God and fellow heirs with Christ. We ask for God’s presence in a Church where mutual flourishing is still imperfect and contested.

We give joyful thanks for the courage and prophetic voice of individuals and organisations who over many years, inside and outside Synod, called on the Church to ordain women for the sake of the Kingdom. We ask for God’s strengthening of those who continue to call out gender injustice in the Church and all who work to enable women in ministry to thrive.

We give joyful thanks for the women who persevered in following God’s

call on their lives, overcoming obstacles of prejudice, self doubt and lack of resources, keeping hope and faith alive through long disappointment and frustration. We remember with sorrow those whose vocations were never realised, and the loss of ministry that could have been. We ask for God’s wisdom for all those who discern and encourage vocations to all forms of ministry within God’s Church today.

We give joyful thanks that for ten years the Church has

consecrated women as bishops, to share in the oversight of your

priests and people, helping the world to see the mutuality that women

and men have in Christ. We ask for God’s creativity and imagination for those who are responsible for nominations and appointments for all posts within the Church.

As we celebrate here today, we bring to mind those women throughout the world for whom God’s freedom is still far off. We hold before God all women who face poverty, discrimination, abuse, exploitation and gender based violence. We pray for girls denied education, for victims of female genital mutilation, for those subjected to childhood or forced marriage, for those bound in modern day slavery. We long for the day when all people, regardless of gender are treated with their full rightful dignity as children of God.

As Jesus Christ raised up women to fullness of life, fullness of vocation and fullness of ministry, so we commit ourselves to that same task.