

# RESOURCES FOR THE CELEBRATION OF THE 70TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE PRIESTING OF FLORENCE LI-TIM-OI

## Collect from The Episcopal Church where Li Tim-Oi's Priesting is Commemorated on 24 January.

Gracious God, we thank you for calling Florence Li Tim-Oi, much beloved daughter, to be the first woman to exercise the office of a priest in our Communion. By the grace of your Spirit inspire us to follow her example, serving your people with patience and happiness all our days, and witnessing in every circumstance to our Saviour Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you and the same Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

## Prayer for the Li Tim-Oi Foundation

Empowering God,  
you chose one woman to be the mother of your Son  
and another woman to witness his resurrection;  
you chose your beloved daughter Li Tim-Oi to be a  
priest in your church.  
Where the need is greatest you now call women  
to be ministers of change in your church and their  
communities.  
Enable the Li Tim-Oi Foundation to empower each of  
them to fulfil their vocation that your kingdom may  
come and your will done on earth as in heaven,  
today and in days to come. Amen

## 'Not Disobedient' a meditation on Jonah 2 written by Canon Nick Jowett for the anniversary of Li Tim-Oi's ordination at Zhaoqing China on 25 January 1944

**Jonah:** In my distress I cried to the Lord, and he answered me. From the depths of the grave I called for help, and you listened to my cry.

**Tim-Oi:** On the road to Zhaoqing, the road dark and dangerous: and I alone, a servant of God, following his way, with no disobedience. Alone at night, but in peace, knowing his protection.

**Jonah:** You hurled me into the deep, into the very heart of the seas, and the currents swirled about me; all your waves and breakers swept over me.

**Tim-Oi:** Alone, before Zhaoqing - and after: alone in Macao, alone, as protector of the refugees, nurse of the sick; alone as pastor of the lost and dying, alone as priest.

**Jonah:** I said, "I have been banished from your sight; yet I will look again towards your holy temple."

**Tim-Oi:** I who had stood with Isaiah in the temple and heard "Whom shall I send?" I who had said "I will go! Send me!" - I who was not disobedient - I had waited to serve, waited to serve in fullness, waited to serve in the temple.

**Jonah:** The engulfing waters threatened me, the deep surrounded me; seaweed was wrapped around my head.

**Tim-Oi:** Freely and gladly I gave up what was mine; my service in the temple I gave to a man - I, who was not disobedient. I left Macao, like Nineveh, saved.

**Jonah:** To the roots of the mountains I sank down: the earth beneath barred me in for ever. But you brought my life up from the pit, O Lord my God.

**Tim-Oi:** Alone I was brought out alive. A priest, I rejoiced with my bishop, with my people. Unseen, I serve, share, celebrate. Unheard I am a priest called by God.

**Jonah:** When my life was ebbing away, I remembered you, Lord, and my prayer rose to you, to your holy temple.

**Tim-Oi:** Let my name go forgotten, Lord; take no heed of rank or title; let others seek status, glory. Only hear my prayers to you for all who are my care. Lord, you hear my prayers.

**Jonah:** Those who cling to worthless idols forfeit the grace that could be theirs.

**Tim-Oi & Jonah:** But I, with a song of thanksgiving, will sacrifice to you. What I have vowed I will make good. Salvation comes from the Lord.

## HYMN

When one of us was called to bear  
God's own child, she said "Yes,"  
and all the world still honours her  
courage and faithfulness.

When one of us was touched and healed  
by Jesus, she said "Yes"  
to following the one who gave  
the gift of holiness.

When one of us poured perfume out  
for Jesus, she said "Yes"  
with love, to God's anointed one,  
the Christ whom we confess.

When one of us can shine and grow  
and flourish, she says "Yes"  
to God's abundance filling her  
to strengthen and to bless.

Thank God for each and every one  
whose life proclaims a "Yes"  
to hope and love and justice done:  
God's Good News, nothing less.

*words written by Elizabeth J. Smith with Li Tim-Oi in mind, reprinted  
with permission: music: Kilmarnock or St Agnes (Dykes)*

## Blessing

God of Sarah, Rebekah and Rachel  
God of Deborah, Ruth and Esther  
God of Mary, Priscilla and Phoebe  
Grant us

Your love to share  
Your power to proclaim  
the good news of your Kingdom  
Through Jesus Christ  
Son of Mary, your Son, our Lord. Amen.