

Dear Members of the Rocky Mountain region of the ECC,

I was moved to tears this morning when I saw the announcement that Pope Francis had died: Tears of joy for his dawning of a New Day and tears of sadness for our loss of a faithful guiding light. Pope Francis' legacy, for me, includes compassion, a willingness to dialogue, non-judgment, a lived preferential option for the poor, humility, and simple living. Serving a world-wide church with much diversity in culture, breadth of geography, and variety of expressions of Catholicism requires much prayer-soaking, discernment and courage. I greatly respect and appreciate his leadership.

I invite us to join with our Roman Catholic family in nine days of mourning and anticipation.

*Creator of All Life,  
we mourn the end of earthly life for Pope Francis,  
a shining light, a tireless laborer in your vineyard,  
a seeker of the lost and forsaken,  
a voice calling out in the wilderness for peace and love.  
We pray for your comfort for his family and friends,  
and the gathered and scattered Body of Christ who will miss him greatly.*



*Mother Jesus, welcome Francis into your arms of Love,  
a servant who modeled your Way to the best of his ability.  
We lift our hearts in gratitude.*

*Ever-Dynamic Spirit,  
we pray for grace in this moment of pause,  
a space of transition.  
We stand on the threshold,  
and we pray for openness to your inspiration  
as you swirl and shake up the hearts and minds  
of your worldwide church leadership.  
Raise up and shine your light on your anointed one,  
the papal successor to inspire and draw the worldwide church into Unity,  
in your Way, Truth and Life,  
building bridges inclusive of all,  
honoring the Catholic tradition in the midst of diversity.*

*We give thanks for your presence and action in our midst,  
in this time, this moment of Creation.*

*We pray in the name of Jesus, our brother.*

*Amen.*

Much love,

*Kae*