



Wednesday Prayer

6th Sunday of Easter – To Love One Another

As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you; abide in my love. If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love. I have said these things to you so that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be complete. "This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you."

John 15:9-12

This week's Gospel urges us to keep God's commandment to love one another. And the image of abiding in God's love brings comfort and also joy as I look at the beautiful trees blooming outside my window. I would love to just focus on this imagery and call it a day.

But really, what does it mean to love one another as God has loved us? I just signed off on a [letter urging Louisiana law makers to oppose HB67](#) which decriminalizes the exploiters – sex buyers, traffickers, and brothel owners – no longer holding them accountable for their exploitation. The theory is that decriminalizing all will make it safer for those in the sex trade, when in fact evidence has repeatedly shown otherwise as clearly illustrated in the letter. Further, in countries and states with full decriminalization, the most vulnerable human beings – children and communities of color – are harmed the most. In contrast, the successful Equality Model (or Nordic Model) decriminalizes the victims of this crime while holding the exploiters accountable. Survivors are provided comprehensive services and access to healing. This, to me, models the Gospel message of love.

It's a hard time to stay engaged with all the difficult news stories we're faced with. I've had family and friends need to "disengage" for a time for their own health and wellness. I pray for their physical health, their mental health, and for their way back to support our combined efforts to love one another, even in the hard places. I pray for each of you, for the strength to continue to advocate for survivors, to continue to keep our eyes open to those hurting in our midst, and to work for the safety of children everywhere. Our prevention work is needed more than ever as we come to terms with the many ways we have harmed the most vulnerable in our society. "Love is an action – a really difficult action" as stated [by Gennifer Benjamin Brooks in her commentary](#) on this week's Gospel text. She goes on to share the love she saw in the marches on Selma "people from all walks of life bound together by love...respond[ing] to the call to love, to be a life-giving friend in these times."

Loving God, you call upon us to love one another as you have loved us. Help us to recognize all the ways we can show our love, in our steadfast advocacy even in the hard times, to love and protect the most vulnerable. May we feel your comfort, and through our actions, share the joy of your love. Amen.

Written by Joy McElroy, Cherish All Children Executive Director, and community advocate for racial justice.