

October 26, 2024

Daily Reflections



Center for Spiritual Development

UNITY IN DIVERSITY

By Lucy Dominguez

Today's First Reading

Brothers and sisters:

*Grace was given to each of us
according to the measure of Christ's gift.*

Therefore, it says:

*He ascended on high and took prisoners captive;
he gave gifts to men.*

*What does "he ascended" mean except that he also descended
into the lower regions of the earth?*

*The one who descended is also the one who ascended
far above all the heavens,
that he might fill all things.*

*And he gave some as Apostles, others as prophets,
others as evangelists, others as pastors and teachers,
to equip the holy ones for the work of ministry,
for building up the Body of Christ,
until we all attain to the unity of faith*

*and knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood
to the extent of the full stature of Christ,
so that we may no longer be infants,
tossed by waves and swept along by every wind of teaching
arising from human trickery,
from their cunning in the interests of deceitful scheming.
Rather, living the truth in love,
we should grow in every way into him who is the head, Christ,
from whom the whole Body,
joined and held together by every supporting ligament,
with the proper functioning of each part,
brings about the Body's growth and builds itself up in love.*

EPHESIANS 4:7-16

Reflection

I joined the Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging (DEI&B) committee at St. Joseph Center a few months ago. At first, I was excited to be part of this important work and eager to share the news with family and friends. However, I was surprised to encounter opposition, as DEI&B has become politicized. As chair of the committee, I began to discern how to create initiatives that foster unity while acknowledging and celebrating our differences.

Today's first reading reminds me of the grace given to each of us according to the measure of Christ's gift. Each of us has been given unique gifts, not for personal gain but for the greater good, to build up the Body of Christ. We are all called to different roles—some as apostles, others as pastors, teachers, prophets, or evangelists—but each serves the same purpose: to strengthen the unity and growth of the Body of Christ.

I am reminded that we must learn to recognize the gifts and roles that each person brings to the table, knowing that together, we form a unified whole. The image of the Body of Christ shows us that we are interconnected, each of us essential to the flourishing of the whole. When we act in love and truth, we contribute to the growth of the Body, moving toward maturity and unity in Christ.

As I read the mission and charism of the Sisters of St. Joseph, I realized that DEI&B, much like the Body of Christ described in Ephesians, is about honoring the diverse gifts that each of us brings. Diversity is not a threat but a reflection of God's creation, where every person, regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, ability, or socio-economic background, is made in the image

of God and is valuable.

As we work to build communities of love and inclusion, we are participating in God's work of unity, ensuring that no one is left behind or unseen. This work, grounded in the mission of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Orange, is a response to the call to be more like Christ, who fills all things with his love and grace, who is the head of the Body, guiding and nurturing its growth.



Multicolored Abstract Illustration
By Alexander Grey

For Pondering

- How do you recognize the unique gifts that Christ has given you, and how are you using them to contribute to the Body of Christ?
 - How does the image of the Body of Christ -- where each part is essential to the flourishing of the whole -- help you to understand your role within your family, workplace, or faith community?
 - In what ways do you see diversity as a reflection of God's creation, and how can you better honor the diverse gifts within your community?
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For Prayer

*Christ has no body but yours,
No hands, no feet on earth but yours,
Yours are the eyes with which he looks
Compassion on this world,
Yours are the feet with which he walks to do good,
Yours are the hands, with which he blesses all the world.
Yours are the hands, yours are the feet,
Yours are the eyes, you are his body.
Christ has no body now but yours,
No hands, no feet on earth but yours,
Yours are the eyes with which he looks
compassion on this world.
Christ has no body now on earth but yours.*

ST. TERESA OF ÁVILA

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