



Daily Reflections

RESPOND IN LOVE!

By Sr. Jayne Helmlinger, CSJ

Today's First Reading and an Excerpt from the Gospel

Beloved, let us love one another, because love is of God; everyone who loves is begotten by God and knows God. Whoever is without love does not know God, for God is love. In this way the love of God was revealed to us: God sent his only begotten Son into the world so that we might have life through him. In this is love: not that we have loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as expiation for our sins.

1 JOHN 4:7-10

When Jesus saw the vast crowd, his heart was moved with pity for them, for they were like sheep without a shepherd; and he began to teach them many things.

MARK 6:34

Reflection

In the first reading from 1 John, we are once again asked to “love one another” because love is of God and was revealed to us through his Son. Just the words “love is of God” give me pause because the preposition “of” reminds us of how our love flows from the source of all being – God. We don’t manufacture or create love -- because God is love. Do we allow God’s love to flow through us and gently out into the world? I hope so, though it is a reminder for us to reflect on our presence as we make our way in life. Do we cast shadows or light? Do we bring a sense of steadfast love no matter the circumstances we encounter? Is our faith lived fully in the peaks, valleys, and plateaus of life? Do we slip into being the love we are called to be only in the good times of our lives?

In looking at Mark’s gospel for today, we encounter Jesus being “moved with pity” by what he was seeing and experiencing. His heart was open and ready to receive and to give. It prompts the question – are we ready? Would we turn away from the crowds needing to be fed, as Jesus’ disciples were hoping? This story of the loaves and fishes and feeding of the five thousand is a lesson for us to take in and reflect upon. Do we turn away when faced with such overpowering need from others? Do we face it head on as Jesus did, and find a way to respond in love and kindness?

It’s not easy and discipleship is often a challenging path to walk. It calls for us to respond with trust and faith in the hardest circumstances life delivers. One aspect of this story I find poignant is how the disciples worked together to distribute the food – it took community. How are you and I contributing to the communities in which we are involved? Are we willing to roll our sleeves up and enter into the chaos which often confounds us?

Respond in Love

O God of the journey, may our response to life circumstances flow from a heart filled with love for you. May we “feed” others through our concern, empathy, and interest in them, allowing our hearts to be moved so as to act.

O God of the journey, may we not turn away from the difficult circumstances that come our way. May we seek like-hearted and like-minded people to meet the needs of those we encounter within our capacity to do so.

O God of the journey, may we recognize the “food” others so desperately need. If this food is presence, let us slow down and experience the sacred encounter before us rather than passing it by.



LePuy, France
Photo by Sr. Jayne Helmlinger, CSJ

For Pondering

- As you look out upon the world, what is the “food” needed that you have the ability to supply? Who might assist you in this faithful response?
 - How do you respond to the question – how steadfast is your love?
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For Prayer

*O God of the journey,
may we accept the challenges that come
with loving more deeply and fully in the circumstances of our lives.
May we be generous and unpretentious in our faith and actions this day.
Amen.*

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