

August 27, 2024

Daily Reflections



Center for Spiritual Development

EMERGENCES

By Julie Mussché

A Quote

"Violence is like a weed -- it does not die even in the greatest drought."

SIMON WIESENTHAL

Reflection

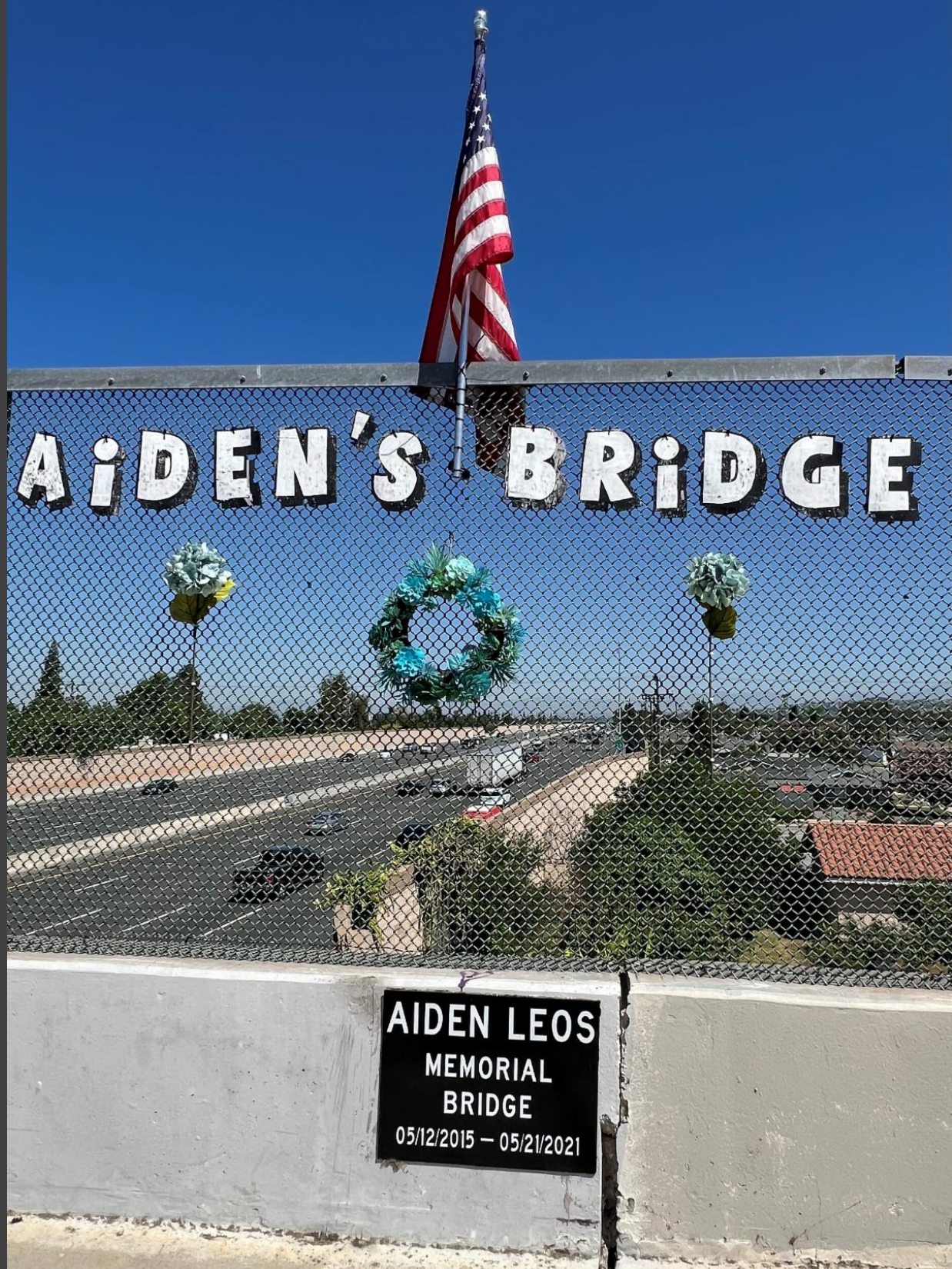
Probably ten times a week I drive a freeway overpass named Aiden's Bridge. The commemorative structure testifies to the 2021 road rage murder of a young boy, Aiden Leos. There is no remedy for such a senseless tragedy, no going back, and while technically justice has been served, an innocent six-year-old suffered and died.

There is no sweetness in vengeance, and at the same time, how can justice be actualized in a broader sense? Driving over Aiden's Bridge invites me to considerable spiritual and moral wrestling as well as mournful remembering of a loss of life and potential. I often wonder, for example, why would someone be

compelled to drive around with a gun, and is the need to be someplace so important that recklessness is necessary? Yet, how easy it is for all of us to go from zero to sixty in any given circumstance. Certainly, in my conversations with God I might ask, “Why must the innocent suffer as a result of our barbarism and moral lapses?”

In the weighing of all of this, there was consolation in these words from Pope Francis: “The important thing is not to fuel anger, which is unhealthy for our own soul and the soul of our people, or to become obsessed with taking revenge and destroying the other. No one achieves inner peace or returns to a normal life in that way.... Nothing is gained this way and, in the end, everything is lost.” (*Fratelli Tutti*, 242) Ultimately, how do we hold the value and dignity of each person we encounter in spite of differences and points of anger? Where can we find God on the fringes of contradiction and be agents of peace and love in building bridges of unity? Loving God, show us the way.

Rest in peace, Aiden.



Aiden's Bridge
By Julie Mussché

For Pondering

- How do you encounter the Divine when challenged to live up to your “best self?”

- How do you move toward forgiveness and peacemaking when angered or hurt?
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For Prayer

A Prayer to the Creator

*Lord, Father of our human family,
you created all human beings equal in dignity:
pour forth into our hearts a fraternal spirit
and inspire in us a dream of renewed encounter,
dialogue, justice and peace.*

*Move us to create healthier societies
and a more dignified world,
a world without hunger, poverty, violence and war.*

*May our hearts be open
to all the peoples and nations of the earth.
May we recognize the goodness and beauty
that you have sown in each of us,
and thus forge bonds of unity, common projects,
and shared dreams.*

Amen.

FRATELLI TUTTI

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