



## Grain

“We are not to simply bandage the wounds of victims beneath the wheels of injustice, we are to drive a spoke into the wheel itself.” Dietrich Bonhoeffer

Submitted by Vernita Kennen, Roseville, MN

## Field

<sup>31</sup>When he had gone out, Jesus said, "Now the Son of Man has been glorified, and God has been glorified in him. <sup>32</sup>If God has been glorified in him, God will also glorify him in himself and will glorify him at once. <sup>33</sup>Little children, I am with you only a little longer. You will look for me; and as I said to the authorities so now I say to you, "Where I am going, you cannot come." <sup>34</sup>I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. <sup>35</sup>By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another." Jn. 13:31-35

## Thoughts

The curator from the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum adjusted his glasses as he drew near one of the panels portraying the plight of homosexual men and “deviant women” under Nazi rule. He visited Madison when an organization I worked for brought the Nazi Persecution of Homosexuals 1933-1945 traveling exhibition to town. The curator studied the handwritten documents in German that I asked him about. They were letters from citizens to the Gestapo. “This one is from a woman reporting her brother for being gay.” Gasp. That meant her brother would be sent to a work camp where he might be castrated and/or worked to death. I asked if she likely felt forced to report him. “No. It’s hard to understand how people experienced patriotism under the Nazis.” Such betrayal.

Knowing how hate speech can get close and be normalized makes some news stories particularly agitating. Recently, I had lunch with a friend who was anxious about the continued increase in anti-Semitic hate crimes. Americans are attacking other Americans. But she didn’t like the organization where she found the statistics because of its stance on Palestinians. As a Jewish person, she was both on edge about anti-Semitism and appalled by the Israeli government’s treatment of people whose history stretches back generations in the same land. Denial of truth and anyone's humanity was denial.

Still in the Easter season, the Gospel is about love, though not the kind that comes easily. Jesus is about to share the Passover meal with his disciples. But a little earlier, he was “troubled in spirit” (verse 21), angry and indignant about Judas, one of his own, who would do the unconscionable. Later in verse 38, Jesus says that Peter would deny him. Couched between acknowledging betrayal and denial within his inner circle, Jesus talks about following a path of love. Love leads us toward driving a spoke into the wheels of injustice. In our convoluted world we pray for the grace to be forgiven when we get caught in cycles that lead us to deny or betray the humanity of another. We also join in with other religions that claim whether love comes easily or not, it is our way. Happy Monday!

## Prayer

Highly recommended.

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Many Blessings upon you,

Pastor Cindy