



Grain

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace:
where there is hatred, let me sow love... Prayer of St. Francis

Field

17After Jesus had spoken these words, he looked up to heaven and said, “Father, the hour has come; glorify your Son so that the Son may glorify you, ²since you have given him authority over all people, to give eternal life to all whom you have given him. ³And this is eternal life, that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent. ⁴I glorified you on earth by finishing the work that you gave me to do. ⁵So now, Father, glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had in your presence before the world existed. ⁶”I have made your name known to those whom you gave me from the world. They were yours, and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word. ⁷Now they know that everything you have given me is from you; ⁸for the words that you gave to me I have given to them, and they have received them and know in truth that I came from you; and they have believed that you sent me. ⁹I am asking on their behalf; I am not asking on behalf of the world, but on behalf of those whom you gave me, because they are yours. ¹⁰All mine are yours, and yours are mine; and I have been glorified in them. ¹¹And now I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them in your name that you have given me, so that they may be one, as we are one. John 17:1-11

Thoughts

Recently, I participated in part of the National Workshop on Christian Unity in Milwaukee. One of the keynote speakers was Pardeep Kaleka, the eldest son of Sikh Temple of Wisconsin founder Satwant Singh, who was killed in the 2012 attack by a white supremacist group. The other keynote was Arno Michaelis, who was a founder of the hate group from which the 2012 attacker hailed. Over years, Arno’s “love for his daughter and the forgiveness shown by people he once hated helped to change his world, bringing love for diversity and gratitude for all life.” Amazingly, Pardeep and Arno developed a friendship and together work to overcome white supremacy and seek authentic unity in society.

Arno said he has been asked how someone could hate so much that he would start shooting people he didn’t even know during a worship service. His answer was, “practice.” Over years, people involved in white supremacy groups practice hate. Hate can be addictive and eventually bury your humanity. Kindness, he said, is also a practice, speaking from his own Buddhist perspective. Pardeep focused a lot on “weapons of mass exclusion,” talking about how social media has provided a whole new level on which people can exclude one another and divide. How can we practice not joining in?

Jesus’ prayer in St. John’s Gospel exudes a sense of oneness. The disciples overheard Jesus praying for himself as he prepared to be isolated by the authorities and the public, for his community, and later starting in verse 20, for us and others who had not been born yet.

When we pray, we are surrendering to God and confessing we need help to love. In our tradition, when discerning new opportunities to love and seek unity, praying as Jesus did seems like a pretty good practice. Happy Monday!

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Many blessings upon you,

Pastor Cindy