

**11th Sunday in Ordinary Time  
June 12, 2016**

**Her many sins are forgiven because she has loved much**

*We are all in need of healing, we are all a cry for help, we all save each other because we belong to each other. And this is how God intends it.*

In case you were here and noticed that I wasn't, I was at St. Leo Parish in Tacoma helping my cousin celebrate her 50th anniversary as a Holy Names Sister. It was a wonderful celebration.

**Love at St. Leo Parish in Tacoma**

The love I experienced there is the kind of love Jesus is talking about. It is such an inclusive parish community - members of the L'Arche communities for the developmentally disabled, Nativity House providing housing for the homeless with recovery and reentry programs; a deaf community; a Catholic Worker Community; a strong peace advocacy community; a food distribution center, a soup kitchen, a community garden and more. Jesus is saying many sins are forgiven there because they love much.

**Love at St. Mary by the Sea Parish in Rockaway**

The love I experience here is the kind of love Jesus is talking about. This is such an inclusive community - the wonderful spirit of welcome you offer; your support of the Senior Luncheon program; your participation in our outreach to the homeless and vulnerable; your caring for the homebound; your becoming one with those who are hungry and homeless and naked; your reaching out to other church communities and more. Jesus is saying many sins are forgiven here because you love much.

**Her many sins are forgiven because she has loved much**

Bill Wilson, founder of Alcoholics Anonymous, says, "*Helping others is the foundation stone of recovery. A kindly act once in a while isn't enough. We have to act the Good Samaritan every day, if need be. It may mean the loss of many nights' sleep, great interference with your pleasures, interruptions to your business. It may mean sharing your money and your home, counseling frantic spouses and relatives, innumerable trips to court, hospitals, jails and asylums. Those in recovery are to be at the place where they may be of maximum helpfulness to others.*"

Ann Lamott says, "*To be saved means to see everyone on earth as family. We are all in need of healing, we are all a cry for help, we all save each other because we belong to each other.*" And this is how God intends it.

Ghandi wrote that it may be a long time before the law of love will be recognized, for he says there are a lot of machineries that stand between and hide the hearts of one people from those of another. We are programmed and wired for union, so when we feel separated from the rest, we are on the wrong track and living in what Albert Einstein called, an “*optical delusion*”, a prison.

Pope Francis says, “*The thing the church needs most today is the ability to heal wounds and to warm the hearts of the faithful. I see the church as a field hospital after battle. Heal the wounds, heal the wounds. ... And you have to start from the ground up.*”

Who can argue with this? We all know intuitively that what these people are saying is true. Still there is much that hides our hearts from each other: fear of getting involved; distance from the vulnerable; inconvenience to self; paralysis at seeing overwhelming need and so on. Besides, seeing the woundedness in others reminds us of the woundedness in ourselves. We don't like the wounded parts of ourselves. We do our best to hide it. We all are wounded people, physically and spiritually.

*The question for us is not how can we hide our wounds,  
but how can we put our woundedness to the service of others on a personal level?*

Fr. Greg Boyle in East L.A. tells a story that I have told here before, but it so to the point I wish to tell it again. It is the story a former gang member tells about himself. “*My mom beat me every single day of my elementary school years with things you could imagine and some things you couldn't. I used to wear three t-shirts everyday - the first t-shirt because the blood would seep through, and the second t-shirt because you could still see it. Finally the third t-shirt, you couldn't see the blood. Kids at school would make fun of me - Hey, it's a hundred degrees. Why you wearing three t-shirts? And then he kind of buckles and chokes up and gets emotional and says, I wore three t-shirts well into my adult years, because I didn't want to see my wounds. But then, I started to welcome my wounds. And now I run my fingers over my wounds; they are my friends. After all, I can't help heal the wounded, if I haven't welcomed my own wounds.*”

*The question for us is not how can we hide our wounds,  
but how can we put our woundedness to the service of others on a world level?*

This is an editorial letter from Sojourners Magazine that I received this week.

“*Dear Larry, The brokenness of our nation's immigration system has implications for many of the values that we hold dear – but now, more than ever, these policies are simply about life and death. Last week, more than 1,000 refugees drowned in the Mediterranean Sea. The current refugee crisis is widely considered to be the worst since World War II, as tens of millions of people flee violence and war. But the United States – the nation which has long proclaimed itself the shining city on the hill, whose Statue of Liberty yearns to give refuge to “your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free” – is doing far less than its fair share in accepting refugees.*

*“Meanwhile, the Obama administration is conducting more deportation raids against mothers and children fleeing the Northern Triangle in Central America – one of the most dangerous regions on the planet. There is mounting evidence some of those being targeted for deportation never received due process or legal representation. Some unaccompanied children such as toddlers do not receive any legal representation whatsoever, instead standing alone in front of an immigration judge to represent themselves. This mockery of American justice means that mothers and children with legitimate claims to asylum are being sent back to their deaths.*

*“As Christians, we have a special responsibility to stand up for the widow, the orphan, the sojourner, and the poor. Many Christians across the country are providing sanctuary to the undocumented and welcome to the refugees coming to their communities. If there was ever a time when gospel witness for the immigrant and the refugee was needed, it is now.”* The Sojourners Immigration Team

### **Love is insistent: we must do something, but what?**

We heard Ann Lamott say, *“To be saved means to see everyone on earth as family.”* We can love our sisters and brothers around the world much. Our many sins, as individuals and as a nation, are forgiven when we offer them a life of mercy, a life of hope, and a life of love. This is what we can do, each in our own way.

*We are all in need of healing, we are all a cry for help, we all save each other because we belong to each other. And this is how God intends it.*

### **Our many sins are forgiven when we love much**