

Cindy and I stood close by hand in hand, as he prayed these words and I can only begin to describe what I experienced as God's own healing touch and grace. The Bishop also offered to operate if necessary. He charges only \$29.99 and has a perfectly serviceable Black and Decker ready to go. Thank you all for your love and prayers.

Now let's get back to the issue at hand. This business of hatred is an infection of the human heart and is a terminal disease. Our tradition has much to teach us on this subject.

It begins with the notion of Love doesn't it? When it comes time for God to lay down the Law, this is what God says The Shema: "Hear O Israel, The-LORD our God is One. You shall love The-LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might." ~Deuteronomy 6:4-9

A lawyer once asked Jesus his reading of the Law. ~Luke 10:26 This is a common question in Rabbinical tradition. In other words how do you understand the Law as God gives it to us through Moses? Jesus knew all about that, didn't he? Scripture clearly states that Jesus is the Word made Flesh and that he was there in the Beginning with God. Therefore he was there too with Moses as he fashioned the Law, yes?

Jesus begins with the Shema; "Hear O Israel the Lord your God is one and you shall love the Lord your God". But then he does an interesting thing. His mind searches the Scriptures and makes its way through the first 19 Chapters of Leviticus in which you may find scores of reasons to stone people to death for one kind of abomination or another.

But when Jesus' heart, soul, mind and strength came to rest,, what was it about? If you say "Love", bravo!

Look what he does. He quotes one half of one verse in Leviticus and equates the Second Commandment to the first; "You shall love your neighbor as you do yourself." ~Leviticus 19:18b.

We know this as the Summary of the Law. Or as Jesus makes clear, "On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets."

Again this is an extraordinary statement. Here Jesus puts the Love of God and the love of human beings on a par and he requires that we do too. Not an easy thing, right? In some circles right now there are those who would just as soon do neither.

Moreover, in Judaism as in all tribal societies, "foreigners" are often looked upon with suspicion. My grandmother used to say it was the Irish who ruined Boston. That will tell you what she thought of my father especially after a nasty divorce.

She also made me promise on the family Bible no less, that I would never marry an Italian. I later broke that promise but she understands all this now.

The Prophet Isaiah deals with the issue of foreigners and goes one better than that. He spells out the place of eunuchs in God's salvation plan as well.

Listen to this.

"Maintain justice, and do what is right,
Do not let the foreigner joined to the Lord say,
 'The Lord will surely separate me from his people';
and do not let the eunuch say,
 'I am just a dry tree.'
For thus says the Lord:
To the eunuchs who keep my sabbaths,
 I will give, in my house and within my walls,
 a monument and a name
 better than sons and daughters;
I will give them an everlasting name
 that shall not be cut off.
And the foreigners who join themselves to the Lord,
 to minister to him, to love the name of the Lord,
these I will bring to my holy mountain,
 and make them joyful in my house of prayer;
for my house shall be called a house of prayer
 for all peoples.
Thus says the Lord God,
 who gathers the outcasts of Israel,
I will gather others to them
 besides those already gathered."
~Isaiah 56

Now, I will submit to you that when Jesus walked this earth, there were no outcasts. Instead, what was there? There was Love. There was forgiveness, there was compassion. And Jesus took that deadly disease of hatred that infects the human heart and he nailed it to the Cross. And so must we!

That's my reading of the Law.

It is clear from today's Parable of the Unjust servant that he owed what amounts to a couple of million dollars to the King. He was forgiven of his debt. Yet when it was his turn to forgive, he showed no mercy to the one who owed him a few dollars. We have been forgiven bountifully by God, likewise we too must forgive. You know the answer to the Gospel question. How many times shall I forgive my brother or sister?

This is the human condition. "Odi et Amo.", I hate and I love.

But on that last night, when gathered at supper with his friends, he washed their feet and said; "I give you a new commandment, just one now. Listen up, Love one another!"

Our bishop has written of this hateful incident in Bozeman; "As people who have been baptized into the death and resurrection of Christ, we need to die to racism, hatred, bigotry, and rise in newness of life to love of God and love of neighbor. We are called to pray for the perpetrators of violence and hatred, and work in our communities for an in breaking of the merciful reign of God, to repent for our own racism and lack of acceptance of others who differ from us, and to make ourselves into instruments of Jesus' peace."

Whoever you are now, you and I need the courage of Jesus to love one another. Without regard to tribal affiliation, race, ethnicity, gender, orientation, political party. And so on and so on. How often does Jesus have to say this for us to get it?

"Love one another."

Several weeks ago I shared with you the image of the American Bald Eagle. There are those of us on the Left wing of that magnificent symbol of our common life and others of us on the Right. If we hate one another that bird is in grave danger by virtue of the fact it won't even get off the ground. If I were to say to you the names of Donald Trump and Hilary Clinton, I bet you any amount of money the very mention of the names would inspire intense animus. That's a problem. We hate too much. We have forgotten how to hold conversation. We've reduced our national discourse to confrontation, ridicule, the racism. And so on.

We have forgotten the Law of God and so it is time to Reclaim it and Proclaim it. My namesake Paul lays down the Law in today's Epistle; "Why do you despise your brother or sister? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God. For it is written, "As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall give praise to God." So then, each of us will be accountable to God."

~Romans 14

You are to Love one Another and this Cathedral shall be a "House of Prayer for ALL People". Not because I say so, but because Jesus says so. Period!

In the Name of God the Most Holy, Undivided and Everlasting Trinity. Amen.

Fr Paul