

6th Sunday Easter B

Calloused by Life

Have you ever experienced tuning out or being tuned out?

If you have ever watched Charlie Brown when he hears the Teachers voice as Wha...Wha...Wha... instead of words... then you know what I am talking about.

Or the times your children or spouse seem to go deaf when you ask them to do something... or you hear the “hold music” on the phone that's meant to distract you from realizing the amount of time you are wasting waiting to conduct your business.

Sometimes we are easily distracted and lulled into ignoring reality, and accepting something lesser than ideal.

If your shoe rubs you the wrong way you eventually build up a callous that protects you from the pain.

Life can act that way too... Sometimes we become calloused to the larger world so as to avoid engaging, attaching and embracing the pain of others.

When we are fed a steady diet of man's cruelty and indifference towards humanity we can and do tune it out and fail to respond or even realize its presence. How often do we see and hear gruesome stories of violence and

tragedy and extreme suffering and simply ignore them because they happen elsewhere or don't directly involve us?

How often do we simply bury our head in the sand and ignore suffering and injustice?

If you do not think we have an enormous capacity to turn a blind eye and a deaf ear to enormous human suffering recall the words of the Lutheran Pastor Martin Niemoller shortly after World War II...

First they came for the Communists
And I did not speak out
Because I was not a Communist
Then they came for the Socialists
And I did not speak out
Because I was not a Socialist
Then they came for the trade unionists
And I did not speak out
Because I was not a trade unionist
Then they came for the Jews
And I did not speak out
Because I was not a Jew
Then they came for me
And there was no one left
To speak out for me

We could compose a vastly different list today of those who are persecuted, denied and marginalized but our capacity to allow human suffering and not intervene seems to remain a constant... but If we ignore others... then others will ignore us.

Recently Bishop Burns, along with other religious and civic leaders introduced the #BeGolden initiative to call attention to the Golden Rule and to wake us up to the needs of others... for if we do unto others as we would like done to us... we can no longer ignore the experiences of others. We can no longer be indifferent in the face of human suffering.

It was Mahatma Gandhi who said the true measure of a society is how it treats its most vulnerable... and it is Jesus Christ who says love one another as I have loved you... and St. Peter in the Acts of the Apostles who reminds us that God shows no partiality.

If we are called to love as Jesus Christ loves has loved us first... and God shows no partiality...no preferences... and excludes no one... then why do we place limitations, exclusions and conditions on our love for others?

The Gospel tells us... that it was Jesus who calls us and that as his friends that we are to bear much fruit... that will remain... and that fruit that will never end... is love.

Never withhold from others what God has in store for them... love.
Love one another...as you are loved... as Jesus loves you.

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