

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 4, 2020



Dearly Beloved,

I have been following the rampaging spread of COVID-19 through the Republican administration with a full range of emotions — from horror to resignation. To say “of course” to their becoming infected is merely a statement of fact; science dictates that we physically distance and wear masks — simple preventative practices that have been tragically politicized to their detriment and, perhaps, their demise. It is easy to see this as merciless justice. But let us strive not to harbor hatred in our hearts.

Here is one of the most challenging teachings of Jesus:

Ye have heard that it hath been said,
Thou shalt love thy neighbor, and hate thine enemy.
But I say unto you,
Love your enemies,
bless them that curse you,
do good to them that hate you,
and pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you.
~ Matthew 5:3-4

It is a spiritual practice, a spiritual discipline, not to hate. These days, it can feel Herculean. But hatred is a poison. Hatred very rarely affects the other person; it affects us. It is toxic to our character. It dims the spirit and hardens the heart. Here is the deepest truth:

Our hate becomes us.
Your hate becomes you.

Hatred is a very strong emotion. Let us use it for good — transmute that strength into compassion for the over one million thirty-five thousand people who have suffered and died with COVID-19. Let us fill our hearts with loving kindness for all those who have cared for them, and for their family and friends. And may we give our minds, our hearts, and our hands to the work of justice in service of a vision of the world at peace.

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Tomorrow, on the Feast Day of St. Francis of Assisi, we will celebrate our annual Blessing of the Animals! Be sure to download and print animal blessing certificates from our homepage (ASCBoston.org). Rev. Beth has created another fabulous slideshow, and we'll have hilarious and poignant animal-themed music from Director of Music Mark David Buckles, Julie Metcalf, Hana and Kazuhiro Omori, and Daniel Rosensweig. Mark David found a new piece which I've been singing all week. This is Richard Bruxvoort Colligan's *All of Us Belong*.

All of us belong
Each and every one
All of us belong
In this sacred circle

We have wings and paws
and tails
and toes

and instincts and souls

*

Also tomorrow, we'll be reigniting Share the Plate — an opportunity to support one of our many partners in our mission of love, service, justice, and peace. The new discipline will be to have a featured partner, make a special collection on one day of the month, and continue to welcome donations throughout the month through our website and social media. This month, our contributions will go to NEADS service dogs (neads.org), and the special collection will be tomorrow, when we'll be invited to text the word DOG to (617) 300-0509. *Thank you!*

Our service will close with this hymn text attributed to St. Francis:
All creatures of the earth and sky
Come, kindred, lift your voices high
Alleluia, Alleluia!
Bright burning sun with golden beam Soft shining moon with silver gleam
Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

All you of understanding heart
Forgiving others, take your part
Alleluia, Alleluia!
Let all things now the Holy bless
And worship G*d in humbleness
Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

*Faithfully Yours, with love always,
Kim*



Please enjoy this photo of manatees snacking on sweet potatoes while also looking like sweet potatoes. ~Kelly Hayes



Alice Roosevelt with her dog Leo. She smoked cigarettes in public, chewed gum, placed bets with bookies, rode in cars with men, stayed out late partying, and kept a pet snake named Emily Spinach, which she often wore wrapped around one arm and took to parties. Her father President Theodore Roosevelt once said of her "I can either run the country or I can attend to Alice, but I cannot possibly do both." 1902