



A weekly reflection by members
of the Precious Blood Community

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*Beloved, if God so loved us,
we also must love one another. (1 John 4:11)*

If God so loved us . . . How can we ever fathom the depths of the love of God? Even if we just celebrated the Christmas season with the most loving family on this planet, that love is a mere shadow of the love that God has for us. God's unconditional love is incomprehensible to us mere mortals, and though we are blessed with glimpses of understanding, we will not fully grasp it until we meet God face to face.

We also must love one another . . . Just as comprehending the love of God is beyond our feeble human capacity, so too is our ability to love as God loves. No matter how loving we try to be, we all fail at times. The eccentricities and annoyances among those with whom we rub elbows daily can trigger responses that are less than loving. These personal, private disagreements are part of our human condition; no one loves perfectly. But a sad reality of our time is that it now seems acceptable to go beyond words of impatience or frustration with an individual to hateful public rhetoric about entire classes of people.

We also must love one another . . . The dictionary defines **another** as "an additional person or thing of the same type as one already mentioned or known about." Sadly, it seems to have become normal to treat people as **other**, defined as "different or distinct from one already mentioned or known about." To see **another** is to see someone created in the image and likeness of God. To see the **other** is to see someone with whom we believe we have nothing in common, and perhaps we see them even as less than human.

We also must love one another . . . It is easy for me to blame those who express racist, misogynistic, or anti-immigrant sentiments as the ones who are "other-ing," who are creating a fabricated chasm between "them" and "us." And then I recall the words of the poet, Rumi: "Many of the faults you see in others, dear reader, are your own nature reflected in them. As the Prophet said, 'The faithful are mirrors to one another.'"

Beloved, if God so loved us, we also must love one another . . . I ask myself, "Am I a mirror of God's love to another, or am I, too, a mirror of "other-ing"?"

Sr. Janice Bader, CPPS, is a member of the Sisters of the Most Precious Blood of O'Fallon, Missouri congregation and has served the community in many capacities. To learn more about the community, [click here](#).

This weekly reflection is made available to everyone in our Precious Blood family. Feel free to share it with others. Would you be willing to write a reflection? If so, please contact Vicky Otto at votto@pbspiritualityinstitute.org