

What's going on in our country right now? In less than 2 months we will know who our president will be for the next 4 years! Are we Americans a peaceful people at this time? Are we a people who care about one another, who love one another? Truthfully no! An article in the Jesuit periodical "America" claims there is a "cold war within our borders." It goes on to say that our "nation is in danger of forsaking its identity." It speaks of the systemic racism and ever states that the Catholic Church must recon with our "failures with respect to race."

At this point we are a people in trouble. There is anger and violence throughout our land. There is rioting in Portland, Kenosha and Minneapolis. Even in our neighborhood violence has spilled out into the streets. There have been over 100 shootings and several murders.

Today's Gospel comes as especially Good News. Jesus speaks about reconciliation "If your brother sins against you go and tell him, between you and him." Be reconciled. Don't carry your guilt, your anger. Return to a state of peace. There can be no wholesale violence if we are not at peace with one another. It all starts with us.

The problem is that so many of us have unresolved conflicts within ourselves, between ourselves. We carry burdens of unforgiveness. For some of us it began years ago, for others yesterday. Perhaps there was an unforgiving parent, a hostile brother or sister. Perhaps there is a brutal relationship that has burdened you for years; maybe you have carried heavy unforgiven burdens for a life time and your days are plagued with dark, hostile, vengeful thoughts which color your life, which damage most of your relationships even today; which steal your happiness.

We can't solve the huge burdens that weigh down our country at present but we can unburden ourselves of past burdens which still disturb our peace of mind.

I believe that the Sacrament of Reconciliation/Confession is a beautiful place to start. There you can unburden yourself, there you experience the forgiveness and peace that Jesus won for us on the cross.

And I ask you please focus on your attitudes, your manner of life. In regard to race relations truly we need reconciliation. We are sisters and brothers. Try to be proactive, reach out.