

“Hate Can WAIT. Learn How to Love”

1 John 4:7-21

John Ordosch, one of our Divinity brothers who is soon to be a published children’s book author, has over the last 10 years has been inspired to write poems for his children’s books. He has given me permission to share a poem he has authored that teaches us much the same lesson about love and hatred that our text from 1 John teaches us on this Mother’s Day. At a later day, John will return with his completed work which will premier here at Divinity.

Whether it be the first century John writing about loving one another in the early Christian community or the 21st century John writing as part of our Divinity community that “Hate Can Wait”; we hear the gospel message on the Mother’s Day weekend that we are to love one another as God loves us and that “learning how to love should be our true endeavor.”

We begin with John Ordosch’s poem “Hate Can Wait” . . .

HATE CAN WAIT ©

Hate is a feeling inside of us all,
when we are little hate is very small.
But as we grow up, hate learns and grows faster,
the trick is to not let it become your master.
Hate will come from the darkest of spaces,
and is easily seen on people whose faces,
can't hide their dislike of other races,
or people who come from far-away places.
Hate feeds on the differences that make us unique,

from things we're afraid of, from things we can't speak.

But there are ways to control this emotion,
that don't call for magic or secret potions.

SO ...

The next time someone takes one of your toys,
and that hate in your heart starts to wake and make noise.

Just say, "It's OK, sharing is great!"

Put it back in its place and say "HATE CAN WAIT!"

When you take sides on who's wrong and who's right,
you'll feel that monster getting ready to fight.

The real enemy's inside, so talk things out or debate,
don't give in, send it running and state, "HATE CAN WAIT!"

Many people follow a different religion than you,
be they Christian, Buddhist, Muslim or Jew.

Hating others for this makes you second rate,
cage it up, tie it down and scream "HATE CAN WAIT!"

If someone has more or less of something than you

Hating them is a thing that you shouldn't do.

Being jealous or bragging is taking hate's bait,
don't bite, spit it out and yell "HATE CAN WAIT!"

Should your parents do something that makes you real mad,
Like having you do chores or cutting grass for your Dad
Accepting these duties is what makes life great
Your help is appreciated so remember ""HATE CAN WAIT!"

Disliking people because they are old,
Helps hate start to rise, and makes your heart cold
The worth of a person is not tied to birth date
shut it down, freeze it up and cry "HATE CAN WAIT!"

There'll be many things you can hate in your life,
but hating will only add to your strife.

To learn how to love should be our true endeavor,
'till one day the whole world can shout, "HATE CAN WAIT
FOREVER!

Twenty-first century John teaches us, “Hate Can Wait.” First century John teaches us in verse 7, “Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God every one who loves is born of God and knows God.”

Love is from God while “hate is a feeling inside of us all.” How can the love that comes from God defeat the hate inside of us all? How has God loved you? When has God loved you? How do you experience God’s love in your life when hate is coming “from the darkest of spaces and is easily seen on people’s faces”? What is good in your life?

When couples come into my office for marriage counseling, I obviously hear a lot of negative stuff. I listen to stories of hatred, abuse, and self-centeredness. As 21st century John writes, “When you take sides on who’s wrong and who’s right, you’ll feel that monster getting ready to fight. The real enemy’s inside, so talk things out or debate, don’t give in, send it running and state, ‘Hate Can Wait’”!

Eventually I’ll ask the question, “What is good in your life? Where do you see goodness close to you?”

The most common response is, “My children are what’s good in my life.” My children. Moms almost always say, “My children are what’s good in my life.”

Many of us have memories of our parents fighting and then our mother

hugging us and saying, “I love you. I don’t know what I’d do without my children.”

The birthing room. The pain. The breathing. The sweat. The pushing. Father is present but not equipped for the job. This little human being that has spent nine long months inside mother, being fed, being caressed, being talked to, being loved – now is being forced out of the water and the womb into the light and the arms of mother. Mother is love from the beginning. Mother is love.

First century John writes in verse 8: “Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love.” Mother is love because love comes natural. Father struggles with love. Yes, Father experienced his mother holding, hugging, kissing, and saying, “I love you.” Yes, mother loved her son with all the love her soul had to give. The son was gifted with mother’s love, but now as the father, he struggles with how to give it away again. Holding, hugging, kissing, saying, “I love you” were mother’s love, not father’s. But father wants to love. Man wants to know God. “Whoever does not love, does not know God, for God is love.” How does man love?

21st century John suggests we learn to love as children obeying our parents out of our love and respect for them. “Should your parents do something that makes you real mad, like having you do chores or cutting

grass for your Dad. Accepting these duties is what makes life great. Your help is appreciated so remember, ‘Hate Can Wait’”!

First century John writes in verse 9: “God’s love was revealed among us in this way: God sent his only Son into the world so that we might live through him.”

Why did God send a Son into the world to show us his love and to give us life? Why a man? Could it be that God was so wise as to see that man had not learned how to love from mother and so it would take a man to show man the way of love? We already knew mother’s love. We’d been in mother’s womb. We’d been held, hugged, kissed, and told we were loved by mother. We didn’t know man’s love. We didn’t know that mother’s love could also be the love of father. Father could hold, hug, kiss, and say, “I love you.” Father could love. First, we needed to learn the meaning of love.

Verse 10: “In this is love, not that we loved God but that he loved us and sent His Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins.”

The Father knew we didn’t love him. He knew we didn’t know how to love him. The Father knew if he sent a man into our world who acted like a mother – who held, hugged, kissed, and said, “I love you,” that we men would be so intimidated by the power of mother’s love in a man, that we would kill him. The Father knew his Son would become the “atoning sacrifice for our

sins.” And not only would we kill him, but we would make a public spectacle of his crucifixion so all could see and experience the power of man defeating the power of love, the power of mother – or so we thought.

Luke puts three words in His mouth on the cross: “Father forgive them.” Father, they don’t know what they are doing. Father forgive them.

When the 4 year old man takes out his sword, sneaks up behind the seven year old woman and bashes her over the head, she cries out and runs to mother for protection from that little man. The big man wants to bash the little man’s head in return for what he did to the little woman. Mother says to the big man, “Father, forgive him, he doesn’t know what he’s doing.”

We can continue to be man and bash him over the head in return, thus teaching him to be man. Or we can be Father, holding hugging, kissing him, and saying, “I love you.” Father forgiving him.

It’s so much easier to be man than to be Father. It’s so much easier to crucify than to be crucified. It’s so much easier not to forgive than to forgive. It’s so much easier to hate than to love. It is so much easier to build a wall around us than to leave ourselves exposed to being loved and forgiven.

The Father sent His son to love, to forgive, to be crucified. The Father sent His Son to affirm the love of mother and to show man how to become father.

21st century John writes: “The next time someone takes one of your toys, and that hate in your heart starts to wake and make noise; just say, “It’s o.k., sharing is great! Put it back in its place and say, Hate Can Wait!”

First century John writes in verses 11-12: “Beloved, since God loved us so much, we also ought to love one another. No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God lives in us, and his love is perfected in us.”

Mothers, be patient with fathers, we’re getting there. I see many signs of hope. I see many men in our congregation who have become fathers and grandfathers, who take parenting very seriously, who hold, hug, kiss, and say “I love you” to mother and children.

Some of you remember a movie entitled, "Mrs. Doubtfire," in which mother became father and father became mother. Theologically, it was all very confusing, but very true. Father and mother grow apart over the years with different interests, different expectations, and different ways of communicating or not communicating. Father and mother forget how to love one another. Father and mother forget how to be loved by one another. Father and mother forget that God loved us and sent his son to be the means by which our sins are forgiven. Father and mother no longer feel forgiven or loved. How can father and mother love one another?

In Hollywood, father becomes mother and mother becomes father. Mother

who is now father immediately falls in love with mother who was father. When the man becomes woman, all the old problems disappear and the family is filled with love. But then the mask falls off and the woman becomes man again - or does she? I think not. Once a mother, always a mother. Once we have risked to love with a mother's love, once we have held, hugged, kissed, and said "I love you" over and over again, there is no going back.

Who wants to be a "real man" anymore - distant, cold, holding feelings inside, not eating quiche? We'd rather be Mrs. Doubtfire. We'd rather be fathers who are like mother, holding, hugging, kissing, and saying "I love you," even as we stir the Hamburger Helper over the hot stove.

To all of you wonderful mothers, male and female, "Happy Mother's Day!"
Give yourselves a hand!

595 - Jesus Loves Me!