



I have this feeling that Jesus calls out to us today: “Behold, your sibling in Christ,” because this Good Friday can be rather...complicated to the human emotions. We as the church must be ever so careful as we navigate this almost theological tight rope: as if our sin is solely responsible for doing this to him, inflicting all this pain and agony; that, if we’re not careful, absolutely precious children of God, who struggle mightily with wondering about their worth in their own home and community and

the world on a near daily basis, may face even more unbearable anguish today. And as much as we as the church are called to proclaim a crucified Lord, part of that proclamation is a ministry of care and compassion, including to those who may not always be willing to ask for help. So, I have this feeling that Jesus calls out to us even more today: “Behold your sibling in Christ, and take care of each other.”

But in considering the plea from the cross to ensure family continues to be attended to and nurtured, I think of one of our most frequent modern equivalents as part of the church’s ministry as well: when some parents reach the age where they can no longer stay in the place that has been their home for what feels like their entire life, and older children must navigate a seemingly impossible life-impactful terrain, to honor dignity but to ensure safety and wellness; decisions that keep so many up at night with seemingly no perfect solutions. And regardless of what happens, as with many significant life decisions, to avoid pain and suffering, there still remains this inner turmoil that may not always be seen by others, and so the plea from Jesus Christ persists: “Take care of each other.”

And then there’s the other side of the living equation: parents trying to navigate a seemingly impossible life-impactful terrain for their children. Because the world insists that youth be perfect in their academics and participate in all the extra-curricular activities and excel in all of them, and they must be raised with discipline to ensure impeccable behavior in all circumstances, but without going overboard, of course, to ensure that love and patience and humility will be thrown in with the child-raising for good measures. And underneath it all for so many parents might still be this inner turmoil trying to pull it off every day for the ones they cherish with all their being; parents, who might just hold even the slightest empathy for a mother witnessing her child on a cross. And yet, somehow, somehow, that very child still manages to cry out to all of us then and now, “Take care of each other.”

There’s more than enough pleas for perfection and maximizing life everything in this world. “Take care of each other.” There’s more than enough people whose family relationships have been made complicated for a variety of reasons, some of which are never shared. “Take care of each other.” This is a day that brings up so many feelings and emotions that we do not always have the time and space as the church to fully delve into all of it because so much else is going on this weekend, before insisting on the all-around ministry to impact as many lives as we possibly can. And yet, in the midst of all of that, “Behold your siblings in Christ, and take care of each other.”

Because yes, today, in the midst of what can be a rather difficult day, to say the least, we still cling to the One who deeply and whole-heartedly insisted on caring for us from a cross, and still does in our very human midst now. As if the Gospel is all the more magnified today: nothing will happen in your life to separate you from the most compassionate care and unbreakable love of God in Christ Jesus, our Lord. Amen.