



Lent reflection for March 14, 2024

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1 Corinthians 12:12-26

For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. For in the one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and we were all made to drink of one Spirit.

Indeed, the body does not consist of one member but of many. If the foot would say, “Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body,” that would not make it any less a part of the body. And if the ear would say, “Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body,” that would not make it any less a part of the body. If the whole body were an eye, where would the hearing be? If the whole body were hearing, where would the sense of smell be? But as it is, God arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as he chose. If all were a single member, where would the body be? As it is, there are many members yet one body. The eye cannot say to the hand, “I have no need of you,” nor again the head to the feet, “I have no need of you.” On the contrary, the members of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, and those members of the body that we think less honorable we clothe with greater honor, and our less respectable members are treated with greater respect, whereas our more respectable members do not need this. But God has so arranged the body, giving the greater honor to the inferior member, that there may be no dissension within the body, but the members may have the same care for one another. If one member suffers, all suffer together with it; if one member is honored, all rejoice together with it.

Today's Reflection is by Carol Oliver

My first reaction to this passage the first time I read it was one of discontent. As I was getting ready for work and starting breakfast, I was in severe body pain. As someone who sometimes has issues with my spine, some arthritis or joint pain, some mornings and throughout the day, I am challenged by my body. It is on those days that I feel like God is not on my side; it is on those days that my faith sometimes wanes. Or I question God and say, “why I am going through all this body pain; what have I done to deserve this”. I am an active person, I teach yoga and I just love the outdoors, but there are days that I am angry at my

body. And so, with the mention of “the body” throughout this passage I really was not feeling it with God that morning. “Indeed, the body does not consist of one member but of many.” Yoga has taught me about the whole body and how every body part is necessary to make up the whole, how are bodies are our temples and with love and appreciation on those days that I am angry at my body perhaps setting out the yoga mat, meditating and at least doing some stretches will not only make me feel better, but perhaps I am closer to God. “Yogas Chitta Vritti Nirodha” (my Sanskrit mantra)– “Yoga is the stillness of the fluctuations of the mind.” It is when I am meditating and quiet that I can see within and feel closer to God. Developing a practice to be in stillness during lent, even if it is for 5 minutes a day, will help my body to heal and feel whole.

On my second read of this passage the word “body” had a different meaning. “Indeed, the body does not consist of one member but of many.” We live in a multicultural city, and we also live in a city where differences sometimes are seen as a sign of a threat, or danger or people are challenged in different ways. The current view of the migrants and how they are portrayed in the media sometimes burdens me. Through no fault of their own, they are thrown into a big city, with no knowledge of what is next, where will they get their next meal or how they will communicate without knowing how to speak English. We need to look at the body, the world we live in, as a whole and the parts that make it vibrant and unique. Not looking at biases and how some people are weaker and more indispensable than others. As a Latina woman, growing up and living some of the challenges my parents had growing up, I knew there was something different about us. I valued their stories of their lives coming from Puerto Rico as children and later meeting and getting married and living the American Dream. I was blessed through an education to understand the importance of these differences. I have worked my entire career with students from different nationalities and cultures and they have always taught me how the different parts of the body- makes us a more wholesome world. I come full circle by coming back to the passage that resonated with me, “But God has so arranged the body, giving the greater honor to the inferior member, that there may be no dissension within the body, but the members may have the same care for one another. If one member suffers, all suffer together with it; if one member is honored, all rejoice together with it.”



Carol Oliver lives in Kensington since she was 13 years old; she was born in Brooklyn and has never left. She started attending Holy Apostles in 2018 and is grateful of all the gifts she has received from the Holy Apostles community and her participation in Education for Ministry (EFM). She has been an educator her entire career and now works at Medgar Evers College. She loves spending time with her mom Olga and is looking forward to getting married at Holy Apostles in April with Pablo Rosario.