



July 10, 2022

## Fifteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

*Christ Jesus is the image of the invisible God,  
the firstborn of all creation. –Colossians 1:15*



Dear Friends,

What is your favorite kind of cake? When you think of baking a cake, you hold in your mind the finished product. The first thing you think of is the last thing to happen. You think of the cake but before you can have the cake you must gather the flour, eggs, and other ingredients. Then there is the mixing, the baking, the cooling and finally putting the layers together and frosting. What the author of the Letter to the Colossians is telling us is Jesus Christ is what God had in mind when God created all that exists.

God thought of Jesus incarnate (in-the-flesh) and eventually over the course of evolutionary creation and over time, Jesus was born. In Jesus all other created beings in the sky, on earth, in the sea, things visible and invisible, angelic or in the farthest reaches of the stars came to be through him. All is part of the one reality. Jesus is the head of the cosmic body of creation. What Jesus is doing is reconciling all things establishing and solidifying the unity of the entire cosmos. The resurrection is the final step in the creation process.

The universe, you and I exist because God loves us, completely, perfectly, and absolutely at every moment. You and I exist because we are held in being by God. We are loved into existence and the love of God which lies at the root of creation, including you and me, is called *grace*. The Church is called to be a living sign and sacrament of Christ's compassionate and forgiving love. We are called to mix with all the ingredients that God is baking into his cosmic Christ. We are all part of a greater whole. And the cake won't be complete until all the ingredients are brought together in love. Nothing or no one can be left out or the whole thing could be ruined.

Today's story of the Good Samaritan confronts us with the practical reality of God's universal love. We like the disingenuous lawyer want to set limits. We are familiar with the story of an anonymous man left beaten and half dead on the side of the road. A priest and a Levite (lower ranking priest) walk by the man. The third person to come upon the scene is the hated Samaritan. He is moved to the depth of his being with compassion. And taking great risks cares for anonymous stranger.

We want to know who we must help and who can we ignore. Jesus turns the question around and asks, "*to whom must we be a neighbor?*" The answer of course is to at like God and set no limits. The suffering Christ is present in all those who are in need.

Author, Gracie Olmstead writes, "*I believe one of our greatest sins is that we are too content. We will take a little of God's life, a little of his goodness, but are often afraid he will give too much of himself. We are afraid of what the fullness of joy might look like. We don't think we can take it. And it is true that we can't. There's not enough life in us to match his own, not enough joy in our hearts to comprehend his mirth and delight...We are willing only to go so far, to make so much room. We are afraid of his glorious life and the risks it might require of us...we must make space: to accept our feebleness and embrace the mystery, knowing that God is good even—and especially—in our weakness and poverty.*" May the Spirit awaken us to the power of universal, compassionate love!

Peace,

*Ft Ron*

*Esta carta está en español en el sitio web: [www.anne.church](http://www.anne.church)*