

Living Lent | Friday, February 26

Anne Bosarge – The Chapel Online

Fight, Flight or Love?

Today's Reading: Luke 6:27-38

“But I say to you who hear, Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you. To one who strikes you on the cheek, offer the other also, and from one who takes away your cloak do not withhold your tunic[a] either. Give to everyone who begs from you, and from one who takes away your goods do not demand them back. And as you wish that others would do to you, do so to them. “If you love those who love you, what benefit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them. And if you do good to those who do good to you, what benefit is that to you? For even sinners do the same. And if you lend to those from whom you expect to receive, what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners, to get back the same amount. But love your enemies, and do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return, and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High, for he is kind to the ungrateful and the evil. Be merciful, even as your Father is merciful.”

Luke 6:27-35 ESV

Encouragement for the Lenten Journey:

How do you respond when people hurt you? Is your gut reaction fight, flight, or freeze? Or is it love as Jesus instructs in these verses?

When my daughter was little, we created a strategy for her to use whenever her little brother was unkind to her. When she was hurt, her natural reaction was to hurt him back. When she was ignored, her response was

often to retreat in bitterness and resentment. When he was rude, she used her quick wit to put him into place. While these impulsive actions made her feel better at the moment, we talked about how returning evil for evil and pain for pain only deepens the hurt you feel inside. So, we created a solution to help her break the cycle of pain and follow what Jesus says in Luke 6:27, “Love your enemies, do good to them.”

In addition to talking to my son

about his behaviors, I worked with Rosalyn to employ a strategy we called, “Operation Opposite.” I told Rosalyn that at the moment when she wanted to lash out at her brother, she should think about what she wanted to do and then do the opposite. If she wanted to hit him, she should hug him. If she was tempted to throw a verbal insult at him, she should tell him something kind and loving. Faced with the temptation to return anger for anger, she should keep her voice calm and seek to understand where he is coming from.

Rosalyn was amazed at how effective Operation Opposite was every single time she used it. As she got older she began using it outside the home with friendships that turned toxic and even in dating relationships. Just the other day, she called me and said she had to use “Operation Opposite” with a co-worker at the school where she teaches. “Operation Opposite” isn’t just a strategy to help your kids get along and keep peace in the house – it’s a strategy for joyful living and fulfilling the command to love our enemies and do well to them.

Contributor and Contributing Body of Christ:

Anne Bosarge works with the South Georgia Conference of the United Methodist Church as the Director of Leadership Strategies and Local Church Resources where she provides leadership development for clergy and laity and works in new church development. In addition, she is the founder of Digital Discipleship (www.digitaldiscipleship.online), a digital discipleship organization reaching thousands around the globe through two faith communities, “The Chapel Online” and “Becoming More,” both that gather primarily on Facebook and WhatsApp. These two online communities provide daily discipleship to individuals from over 50 countries and seek to reignite a passion for discipleship around the globe. Anne lives in Brunswick, GA with her husband, Corey, and two black labs. She enjoys baking, reading, writing, and spending time with her son Jacob, daughter Rosalyn, and son-in-law, Drew. You can connect with Anne on Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok.