

July 14, 2016

- *Dealing with the fear of loss*
- *How to address political tensions*

God continues to speak to each of you as your own individual needs dictate. Your paths are so different, one from another, and yet they find ways of coming together, sharing the light, sharing warmth, sharing a single heart.

As we have said before, we know each of you as we know all human beings. We know your most intense, your most intimate needs—needs of spirit and heart and mind. We know your needs for understanding. We know your needs for patience. We know your needs for healing. We know your needs for forgiveness. We know your needs to rejoice. We know your needs for community. We know your needs when you feel alone. Our understanding of every human being is deeper and more profound and more significant than you can imagine.

In the present climate of political uncertainty, you seek understanding—understanding of what is essential, understanding of what is an appropriate response. These questions, even though you direct them in a political direction, apply in microcosm to your own relationships with other individuals. How do you become deeper in your understanding of another? How do you become more open to communicate on a significant and more meaningful level? How do you respond based on that new understanding?

Let us begin by saying there is an underlying truth that affects all relationships, whether between individuals or political entities, institutions of all description. That fundamental piece is the issue of fear. This fear may be experienced through various guises. It may be most especially felt as a fear of loss. What you fear most is loss. You fear the loss of relationships, you fear the loss of trust, you fear the loss of security. You fear the loss of influence. You fear the loss of health. You fear the loss of perceptions. You fear the loss of respect. Fear is the natural outcome of concern about loss.

When you look at political competition, campaigning, the running of governments, there is always a fear in the loss of access, success. If you consider relationships to be similar to sports events, you don't think of sports as having multiple winners. In a sports competition, trophies are not awarded to everyone. There are only winners and losers, however the victory or loss may be defined. When you view relationships between groups of people, there are winners and losers. There are those who wish to win at all costs. There are those who fear loss and the expression of that fear can appear unlimited.

You wonder what is missing in the discussions you hear regarding the tension between various segments of society. There is much talk about who is right and who is wrong. The truth is, of course, everyone is in some way right and wrong. Laying blame by one against another is not a solution. What needs to be a part of all dialogue is an

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acknowledgment that fear is experienced on all sides. There is fear of more recrimination. There is fear of more violence. There is fear of negativity being exercised on many fronts. There is fear of a loss of control, a fear of loss of dominance, but there is the fear associated with the loss of dignity, human dignity, human rights, the loss of mutual respect, a loss of the sense of being of value. The fear that is experienced by all sides comes down to the fear of loss.

What can be done when parties are at one another's throats because of fear? What can be done to lessen that fear? Most importantly, all must acknowledge that all experience fear of loss. By mutually discussing the concerns about loss, it is possible to lessen the sense of either winning or losing. It becomes evident that human rights, human dignity, is not a competition. It is a right that all are entitled to, and by acknowledging the dignity of another, by acknowledging the reality of another's fears, one is in truth defusing the negative energy that surrounds a fear of loss.

Emphasis must ultimately be given to the reality that all can win. The winning may be defined differently by different parties, but all parties can feel there is reason to hold their head high because their views are understood and valued. The resolution of fear is only achieved through its recognition. An individual's own personal life may be governed unconsciously by the presence of fear, but it is by recognizing, acknowledging it, that one is able to turn that fear into something positive.

So it is with political discourse. If you step back and listen dispassionately to what is being and will be expressed by the different parties in the upcoming election, you will see that behind much that is said is a fear. Giving someone else credit for an achievement is in all reality not assuming a sense of loss but rather a rejoicing for steps forward that are being taken. If one group is acknowledged for success, it does not mean another group is cursed by failure, but there is a fear that in recognizing the success of another, one's own ambitions are somehow trampled. The true path is a path that allows for all sides to be drawn to a life that is positive.

What can you do when you find yourself locked in a debate about someone being right and someone else being wrong? You are not going to easily convince one side to change. The best approach when faced with profound disagreements is to identify truthfully what it is that is most feared, and by acknowledging those fears, you can find ways through those minefields so that they bring affirmation to the value of all participants.

Rather than saying someone is wrong, be willing to say that in your view that person's perspective is expressing a fear of losing, very specifically losing what? That's where your perspective can be most helpful. What is it that is most feared to be lost? When many people are willing to ask those questions, those questions will be revealed in many different ways, but the acknowledgment of the presence of fear is a way of providing you with a clearer view of how best to respond. If you cannot identify from

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your own perspective what you feel to be the loss that is feared, you are less able to craft your own personal way of giving light to the conflicts.

When you are in disagreement with another person, find a way of backing off even briefly and asking yourself, "What do I fear? What is it that I wish not to lose?" By identifying that for yourself, you will be in a stronger position to understand the response, *your* response, that is most helpful.

As we indicated before, words are only a reflection of something deeper, and the fears, the sense of loss, are one of the taproots that influence your own ideas and emotional expression. What is anger, after all, if it is not fear? What is it that one fears the most? It is in losing something. Identify what you fear losing and you will often recognize that such fears of loss are grounded on clay and not rock.

Too often you go through human lives governed by fear. You resist doing something because something might happen. By identifying the "because," you often can look squarely at the loss you fear and recognize that it is not of great consequence.

Sometimes you recognize that what you fear losing is more about yourself, less about others. Part of the journey of human life is reducing the power of self and transferring your energies that are available to the powers of all, not just to another, but to all. It is not *I*; it is not *you*; it is always *we*.

Human life is about becoming centered on the *we* and not the *I*. If you base your life on the *you*, then you have little regard for self, but self is important. Self is the home of soul. You are sacred. It is not that others are sacred and you are not, therefore it's *we*. It's the sacredness, it's the dignity of all.

As you move forward in your lives and think of your relationships with others, whether those relationships are with other individuals or other groups, try to turn your attention to the fear of loss. Give light to those fears. Find ways of illuminating. Find ways of understanding that those losses are not so important but rather the victories of the *we*.

You are blessed in your searching and in your questioning. You are blessed in your need to acknowledge the collective *we*, giving dignity to yourself and dignity to all of God's creation.

Amen.