



## A weekly reflection by members of the Precious Blood Community

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*Do not go into pagan territory or enter a Samaritan town. Go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. As you go make this proclamation, "The Kingdom of God is at hand." (Matthew 10:5-7)*

When my mother taught us the lesson that pointing at someone in public was rude, she would often say, "Remember, when you are pointing the finger at one person, four fingers are pointed back at you." I think that Jesus may be teaching the disciples this same lesson in the gospel of Matthew.

We live in a time when we are bombarded with negative messages, including stories full of disinformation. It has become easier to label others rather than take the time and energy to build bridges of reconciliation and relationships with people who may have viewpoints much different from ours. Thanks to social media, we can quickly join in the polarizing discussions of our times with anonymity.

We are called to do something different. Jesus reminds us in the message from Matthew that before we can go out and speak of the kingdom of God, we have to clean up our own houses first. We are reminded that we are called by virtue of our baptism to bring forth a kingdom of inclusion, not polarization. Our spirituality propels us to reject the polarization that has infested our world and stand with those who are being left out or pushed out of the circle. It may feel scary to proclaim the message of God's kingdom and our spirituality through actions and words. We are called to begin each day with a commitment to living our spirituality in our every action and deed, starting with those closest to us. When we do this, we share the glory of God's kingdom, a kingdom where all are welcome, and no one is excluded, no matter what they do or what they believe.

Perhaps this week, we need to embrace the sentiment of Saint Francis of Assisi and "Preach the Gospel every day, and only if you have to, use words."

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This weekly reflection is made available to all who are part of our Precious Blood family. Feel free to share it with others. Would you be willing to write a reflection? If so, please contact Vicky Otto at [votto@pbspiritualityinstitute.org](mailto:votto@pbspiritualityinstitute.org)