

International Solidarity Reflection

School Sisters of Notre Dame



Women and Children

March 2019

Introduction

A common theme runs through our ministries: Being there, first and foremost, in encouraging, empowering, and supporting girls and women. The directional statement of the 24th General Chapter culminates in the call for us to be women of peace, hope, and love in the heart of the world. Therefore, it is about both being and being there for others, especially for women who need our solidarity.

Call to prayer

God, our father and our mother, we are your beloved daughters. Let us be grateful for this grace, and in gratitude proclaim the message of freedom and justice and realize it with deeds of solidarity. Amen.

Experience

... in a vocational school for women

Zeynep often comes late to school, sometimes not at all. However, when she is there, she is actively involved, inquisitive and eager, although she often looks tired. It is very difficult for her to complete an education with a specific terminology, since she speaks three other languages and she has studied German for only a few years. Her extremely high motivation to graduate became understandable for me as I gradually learned that her husband treats her badly, and violence is also involved. Sometimes she lacks necessities; her husband gives her too little money to buy food. Recently, the situation escalated. At this time, Zeynep lives in their apartment only for the sake of her child; she is afraid at night because her bedroom has no key. She wants a divorce, but at the trial, her husband reacted so violently that the trial was postponed.

Reflection

- Where do I encounter in my everyday life women who need support?
- What does it mean for me as a woman of peace, hope, and love to meet these women in my everyday situation?
- Let us look at our faith from the perspective of a woman:

I BELIEVE IN GOD
who created woman and man
in God's own image
who created the world
and gave both sexes
the care of the earth.

I BELIEVE IN JESUS
child of God
chosen of God
born of the woman Mary
who listened to women and liked them
who stayed in their homes

who discussed justice with them who was followed and financed by woman disciples.

I BELIEVE IN JESUS
who discussed theology with a woman
at a well
and first confided in her
his messiahship
who motivated her to go and tell
her great news to the city.

I BELIEVE IN JESUS who received anointing from a woman

who rebuked the men guests who scorned her.

I BELIEVE IN JESUS who said this woman will be remembered for what she did minister of Jesus.

I BELIEVE IN JESUS who healed a woman on the Sabbath and made her whole because she was a human being.

I BELIEVE IN JESUS who spoke of God as a woman seeking the lost coin as a woman who swept seeking the lost.

I BELIEVE IN JESUS
who thought of pregnancy and birth
with reverence
not as punishment
but as wrenching event
a metaphor for transformation
born again
anguish-into-joy.

I BELIEVE IN JESUS who spoke of himself

as a mother hen who would gather her chicks under her wing.

I BELIEVE IN JESUS who appeared first to Mary Magdalene who sent her with the bursting message GO AND TELL.

I BELIEVE IN THE WHOLENESS
OF THE SAVIOR
in whom there is neither
Jew nor Greek
slave nor free
male nor female
for we are all one
in salvation.

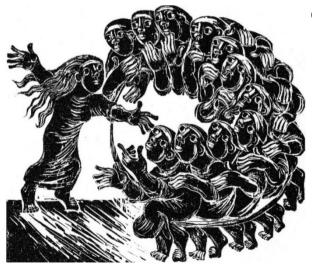
I BELIEVE IN THE HOLY SPIRIT as she moves over the waters of creation and over the earth.

I BELIEVE IN THE HOLY SPIRIT the woman spirit of God who like a hen created us and gave us birth and covers us with her wings.

"Woman's Creed", by Rachel Conrad Wahlberg, from No Longer Strangers, found online at ecumenicalwomen.org.

Action

- Join the Women's World Day of Prayer which is celebrated every year on the first Friday in March: https://weltgebetstag.de/en/
- Let us with our sisters and the women around us look at the woodcarving of Sr. M. Sigmunda May based on John 20: 17ff. Let us read the Scripture and share our thoughts on the image and on the creed of a woman.



Holzschnitt der Ordensfrau Sr. Sigmunda May (1937 – 2017)

Closing prayer

Triune God, You sent Mary Magdalene to tell the others: Life is stronger than death, hope stronger than doubt, the justice of God is stronger than any discrimination, and love conquers hatred. Let us understand this message ever deeper and testify through our life in the heart of the world. Amen.

Prepared by S. M. Gisela Hörmann SSND, BY, for the International Shalom Office, Rome, Italy Graphic on front is from the Directional Statement, 24th General Chapter. Design: Congregational Communications Office.