

02-23-25 FOR THE JOURNEY THIS WEEK

“Praying for our enemies and persecutors is meant to be difficult work. It doesn’t always feel good or seem right. It requires an enlightened way of thinking about those we dislike (or even hate). To pray for them as Jesus would is to pray with love, with compassion, with holy goodness.”

Nijay K. Gupta



Matthew 5:38-48

Questions for Reflection —

- When have you gone the “second mile” in demonstrating care and compassion towards someone? When has someone gone an extra mile for you? What are the challenges or barriers that keep you from acting with abundant love and offering radical grace to everyone you encounter (not just those towards whom you have natural affinity)? What would going the extra mile for the sake of another person look like presently in the context of your daily life? What is one specific situation or relationship in your life in which you can offer unexpected kindness and generosity this week?

- What are some of the social issues that matter the most to you right now? What does it mean for you to love those who are theologically or politically on the opposite side of those issues from you? How can you build bridges of understanding across the differences? What will help you to see and acknowledge the humanity of people whose ideas and actions you might abhor? What prayer of compassion might you offer for those with whom you disagree?

- In what ways are you moving on to perfection in your Christian discipleship? What keeps you accountable in acknowledging your human frailties? Knowing there will inevitably be shortcomings, what does it mean to strive for Christian perfection without succumbing to harmful perfectionism? What practices keep your heart open for God’s sanctifying grace to work in you as you mature in your faith? How can we as a congregation equip and support one another in living towards the perfection to which God calls us?

Daily Household Prayer

O God, we adore you, whose name is love. In signs and wonders your Son revealed the greatness of your saving love. You have taught us that all our deeds without love are worth nothing. Send your Holy Spirit and pour into our hearts that most excellent gift of love, the very bond of peace and of all goodness; through Jesus Christ. Amen.