

Commentary on the Gospel for Wed, Mar 18th 2015

Today's response to the psalm –The Lord is gracious and merciful– may sound to some like an abstract theological statement that says something ethereal about God, but does not quite land on our human experience. Fortunately we have all witnessed a mother's love for her child and today's first reading uses this experience to help the response to the psalm land on something very concrete: Can a mother forget her infant, be without tenderness for the child in her womb? Even should she forget, I will never forget you.

Our culture has managed to discolor this image and indeed to question its validity today. Our laws have declared it legal for a mother not only to forget her infant, be without tenderness for the child in her womb, but actually to destroy it, which is a tragically paradoxical way of not forgetting the child in her womb. Not that every mother who destroys the child in her womb is conscious of such injustice, because our culture has made a great effort to make sure that such awareness does not interfere with her decision. So it is not for us to judge the individual person and indeed today's gospel reading reminds us that the Father has given all judgment to the Son.

But are the rest of us aware of God's unconditional mother-like love for us? Are we even capable of such awareness, when we go through difficult and painful moments in our lives? In an ideal world that awareness should even be easy. But we live in a real world and we are human beings, not human should-beings. It is perfectly natural and understandable to feel abandoned by a seemingly distant God in such moments. However feelings, which do affect us, do not really define who we are and I submit that in calmer moments, when the pain is not present, we can be restored by God to the awareness of God's love for us, an awareness that will always remain a gift. A gift we need to pray for.

Luis Rodriguez, S.J. -Creighton University Jesuit Community