

Advent Calendar: Day 11

The reflections for this week are centered around the readings for this Sunday's texts
Jeremiah 33:12-16, Romans 13:8-12, Matthew 1:18-25

Romans 13: 10

Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore, love is the fulfilling of the law.

Earlier in this week's reflections we talked a bit about the "righteousness" of Joseph and some of what that means: fundamentally, that Joseph did what is right according to God's perspective. The second lesson that will be read this Sunday reminds us that loving one another does what is right by fulfilling the law. Joseph's desire to be merciful to Mary prior the angelic dream and his willingness to accept Mary and the Babe she bore following his dream, while full of both obedience and mercy was undoubtedly empowered in love of God and neighbor. What is implied by the love Joseph showed to Mary is not revelatory of some romantic love (though Joseph may have had such feelings for his betrothed) but rather demonstrates the kind of orientation of heart that seeks to bless and serve others. This is a love that "does no wrong" and thus does all it can to do what is right to God and for others. This is the love Joseph shows to Mary and Jesus, Jesus shows us, and we are to show the world.

How do you normally define love? How in that definition informed by love's scriptural connection to fulfilling the law? How in that definition informed by this text's description of love's need to do no harm?