

# **We Know the Love of God: A Reflection On the Trans Day of Remembrance**

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As trans people, we know the love of God. We feel it in our bones, in the very skin that lines our bodies, in the very nature of who we are.

God is that voice within us that shows us the way to authenticity, to self-love, and to community. The Holy Spirit is at work within and through us.

The Holy Spirit is that which can transform our deepest anger, sadness, and loneliness into something new. We can recognize this when the impossible happens, when inside us, despite our despair, there is the tiniest of lights, the smallest sign of hope, the little bit of energy that seems to be coming from within us. The Holy Spirit is that which resurrects us from the death we experience deep inside us from trauma. It is the darkness that shelters us and keeps us safe. The Holy Spirit resurrects us and allows us to see our own sacred divinity.

Cast out from our families, churches, and society, our fight for our existence and for our freedom is our ministry to the world. Our understanding of gender can heal the wounds of this oppressive system, from which every person of every gender is punished for doing gender wrongly. We are God's chosen—who like Moses were not meant to be born, not meant to exist, but do.

We are here to create a new humanity which values every life: the life of every person in an immigrant caravan, the life of every child taken from their parent at the border, the life of every trans woman, especially trans women of color, fighting to survive, the life of every trans person, period.

The Deputy Director of Transgender Law Center, Isa Noyola, once said that, “Transgender people are medicine, spirit, and leadership.” Indeed! God chose every single one of us. God chose to speak to us, to show us a way towards authenticity — to show others the way toward the value of life, the destructiveness of rigid gender rules.

This new humanity is led by us, those who have for long been categorized as non-existent persons. We are different. This does not mean that we are not valuable. Our difference is what makes us valuable, beautiful, and divine. Divine because it is God's gift to us.

In this difficult time, trans siblings, hang on. Hang on to hope, to love, to yourself. Even if you have to go underground, if you have to stop your transition, if you cannot come out, if you have to go stealth — it is okay. You are loved, cherished, and one of God's children. We are praying for you. You are one of us. We are a community. Find safe spaces. Find trans organizations, trans friends, trans instagram accounts to follow. Every bit of love that is out there, God has guided you to find it. So that you may fill yourself with it. Fill yourself with affirmation and love for yourself.

It is not that trans people have never existed, it is that we have been erased and taken out of history. We must do our best to rediscover our transgender histories, cosmologies, myths, and stories. We must write the stories of our trans elders and trans visions of a trans past. Our ways of knowing God within us are through body, through movement, through being in community with one another. In the midst of an oppressive power that seeks to fragment us, to make us insufficient and insignificant enough to document, to make us non-data, we must not forget our sources of knowing. There is sacredness and divinity in understanding the deep meaningfulness of coming into our being. Our transitions are spiritual quests, pilgrimages—of searching and discovering different parts of ourselves through surgery or gender affirming accessories/clothing/items, different gender expressions, new bodily sensations through hormonetherapy, and alternative ideological understandings of ourselves in relationship to others. We must share our pain, love, history, memories, dreams, hopes, myths, and visions with each other.

When we follow the guidance of the Holy Spirit within ourselves, we can embrace a divine community of creativity and love that can propel us into a fight for justice, free from hatred and unnecessary violence towards others, each other, and ourselves. Write, paint, photograph, sing, dance, pray, celebrate, love, gather, protest, and speak your truth.

Know that you are loved by God. Be blessed. And be safe!

You are Beloved.

*The Trans Seminarian Leadership Cohort is a 5 year old collaborative program of the National LGBTQ Task Force, the Freedom Center for Social Justice in Charlotte, NC and the Center for LGBTQ and Gender Studies in Religion at the Pacific School of Religion*