**Mariela’s Bautizo (Christening) Teaching**

7.3.22

July 3, 2022

Texts:
 Isaiah 66:10-14
 John 10:1-20

The Zoom link for Crisely’s teaching is [here](https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/-RG3ciarLk6rEGL77XCXnHBjp8zIRc0FWjLiosBdhSQkqUQk-r_eBW5-_oj9TT-R.5VRW7LFVKyPuGI9t?startTime=1656856868000).

Good morning, friends. What a joy to gather with you today to celebrate Mariela’s life in this loving community, as we get to make explicit what is already implicit: Mariela’s belovedness as a child of God.

I’ve been sitting with what to share with you this morning, and you might not be surprised to hear that it kept getting pushed to the backburner due to someone else requiring my full attention.

Until I realized, perhaps this little one is exactly to whom I should turn for our teaching this morning. In these almost two weeks since her coming into this world, Mariela keeps reflecting a deep wisdom back to me. Mariela is teaching me how to receive.

We hear in Isaiah, “as a mother comforts her child, so will I comfort you.”

[Also, side note: if you want a peak into what our household has looked like these days, this passage from Isaiah basically sums it up — lets just say lots of overflowing milk or as Santiago says, “leche, leche por dondequiera!”]

“As a mother comforts her child, so will I comfort you.” Mariela is completely, and I mean totally, dependent on us as caregivers to attend to her needs. She needs our touch, my milk, hearing the voices that are so familiar to her from the womb, to clean her, to behold her, to learn what her “poop face” looks like, to notice the slightest birthmark or rash … and all the while, her existence in this world is a radiant gift that each of us here has received from.

And so, this totally astounds me! God is saying that God is loving each of us in that same way? There is something about this wisdom that Mariela knows so absolutely that seems to me to be the grand work of this life, to re-learn to receive in that way.

Of course, this requires a caveat that not all of us have been loved in this way by our caregivers, and that trauma can mean learning to receive that love anew.

While Mariela has received these 12 days out of the womb with total surrender, peaceful smiles, with only the occasional yelp if I delay in feeding her, I can’t say it’s been quite as easy for me.

This Thursday at Ignatian Contemplation we entered into the gospel passage from Luke. I was quickly surprised by how I felt an intense invitation from God through the line, “The laborer deserves their rest.” God was joyfully and clearly inviting me to notice that I had labored to welcome Mariela into this side of the world and now it was time to rest and receive, receive, receive.

I, like Mariela, have been totally dependent on others postpartum. Many of you here have been a part of that by dropping off meals. Thank you. Under the strict eye of my midwife, who has reminded me that the most common reason for maternal mortality is postpartum hemorrhage from overactivity too soon after birth, I’ve been under strict orders to stay upstairs and essentially stay between the bed and the bathroom. You can’t imagine how much I miss being able to do a load of laundry myself or hoist Santiago onto my back and run down the stairs or even to cook a yummy meal for this incredible family that is supporting me.

So when I heard those words from the gospel, “the laborer deserves their rest” while looking at little Mariela, I knew there was a clear invitation and stern challenge from me to receive, receive, receive.

And again, here is the wild part! Even though it’s incredibly tempting to see myself as a burden who is not contributing, a bump on a log, if you will, that is yet again asking for help, people seem to be receiving from their giving and supporting as well.

And why wouldn’t it be true? If Mariela delights us through and with all her supposed “neediness,” why wouldn’t each of us be capable of being delighted in and loved on by God and through each other? And herein also lies another learning and wisdom gleaned from Mariela. Community. The village. Part of what makes it possible to feel so delightful is that each of us shares in the responsibility of caring for one another. There is such a wide web of support I can’t even imagine or see the end to. Each of us has our gifts to share and to receive in each moment. Right now, I can’t do much physically, but I can feed Mariela, I can give her my voice, I can lay in bed and tell Santiago *cuentos* about *dragones*, and I can receive nutrition, prayers, comfort from each of you. Mariela can’t hold her own head up, but she can gaze into our eyes with an intent look, or regulate our nervous system with her sweet smell and rise and fall of her chest as we hold her, or even make us laugh with her ridiculous snoring noises.

In each of us recognizing both our needs and our gifts honestly, we get to hold each other as a beloved community reflecting that love that God is so constantly outpouring.

And so, family, let us rest together. Let us receive from one another as we see how deeply interwoven we are. Let us each remember through Mariela’s invitation today to recognize how beloved we are.

Amen.