

The Divine Comedy:

Notes from Pastor Darryl

{Before reading my DIVINE COMEDY, I encourage you to please read this blog post from Rev. Brian McLaren about his observations from his time in Charlottesville, VA: <http://brianmclaren.net/what-i-saw-in-charlottesville/>}

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Once as I was leading a counter rally to a Neo-Nazi gathering in Kalispell, MT, I found myself standing next to a young girl of no more than five or six years old. She had made a sign to bring to the rally and was holding it up. Much of the signs created by adults had been things like “Reject Racism,” or “No H8 Here,” or “One Human Family.” But this little girl’s sign stood out to me. It was different and very well thought out. Her sign read, **“The Only Thing I Hate is Broccoli!”**.

This little girl’s sign spoke more truth that day than anything I or Rabbi Alan or the Mayor of Kalispell had said with a microphone in hand. No prayer that was offered and no public condemnation of the Neo-Nazis (or White Nationalists as they preferred to be called) was as powerful.

I thought to myself, “and a child shall lead them ...” I had to smile as I stood next to this adorable little girl with such a profoundly clever and poignant sign. She gave me hope. With a little courage, a little humor, and a whole lot of keeping our eyes on the prize, our community was going to get through this – love was going to drive out hate!

What made her sign so powerful for me was just how Christ-like it was. It invited people in; it had multiple layers of meaning; it was funny and bit of social commentary kung-fu; and at its heart was a message of love. She loves everyone ... including the Neo-Nazi, White Nationalists. Her sign was a charge to me to make sure my motivations were grounded in the ethic of love for all including the ones we were there to demonstrate against.

And as we move forward to bridge the moral and social divides in our country, we need to ask ourselves, are we speaking out against something or speaking up for something better! Because they are not the same thing. One is human, and the other is divine.

On Sunday, August 20, I got another visual that made my heart swell. This one was a picture from Jay, Jackie, Katie, and Marie Trischman who just happened to be vacationing in Barcelona. They went to the vigil at the Placa Catalunya square at Las Ramblas that was created for the victims of the terror attack in Barcelona. They wrote *“Barcelona, KCC esta contigo” – Barcelona, KCC stands with you.*



As we do our part to speak with love and show love to all, even those whose hearts have been twisted by a hateful ideology, we also are reminded by the Trischmans that we are called by Christ to stand in solidarity with those who have been hurt, injured, or killed by acts of terror, both internationally and domestic. We are to stand with and stand up for our Jewish, Black, Immigrant, Refugee, LGBTQ friends and others who have become targets for terrorists and Neo-Nazis.

Jesus calls us to love our neighbor and to pray for our enemies and those who persecute us. We are called to forgive others for their harmful and dangerous ideology, even as we work to change their minds and hearts. I believe it's the Christian way of things. And I firmly believe it will be by God's grace that we knock down the walls of hostility between us, and bear fruits to God's Peaceable Realm here on earth. May it be so ... and soon!



Peace. Love. Understanding.

Pastor Darryl

{The Trischmans also sent me this picture of the ad hoc memorial and vigil}