

September 15, 2019
Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost
Growing in God's Love
1 Timothy 1:12-17

1 Timothy 1:15-17 (New International Version) Here is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners—of whom I am the worst. But for that very reason I was shown mercy so that in me, the worst of sinners, Christ Jesus might display his immense patience as an example for those who would believe in him and receive eternal life. Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Holy One,

We confess.

We confess that we miss the mark as often as we hit it. We confess that we gaze longingly down the road that branches the other way, not Your way. We confess that our thoughts and our actions separate us from You, from Your beautiful creation and from our own true selves.

We confess that we separate from You whenever we are captivated by consumerism, by violence, by political polarization, by all our addictions and resentments. Remind us always that we cannot serve You and those other gods.

We confess that we do all that we can to separate ourselves from the rest of your creation. We ignore the crisis of the changing climate on this beautiful planet which you have placed in our care. We foment division among peoples, making war with neighbors across the street and across the globe.

We confess that we are separate even from our own true selves, the beings of love and light that you created.

We confess that we hate to confess.

Unlike your follower Paul, who proudly proclaimed that he was “the worst” of sinners, we shudder at the word sin. Maybe it’s because we believe that if we confess that we sin, we will somehow be confessing that all we are is sinful. Maybe we even believe that’s true.

We confess, then, that we have forgotten that we were born of your love, in order to live in your love. We confess that we need reminding that You created us in Your image, holy and pure. Free us to see that confession is the path to freedom from shame, not the piling on of it.

Give us the courage to look at our broken places and name them, bringing them into the light. Unchain us by this act of confession from both our sin and the shame we feel about our sin, so that we can move forward into your transformation. In your Holy Name we pray, Amen.