

# **A Short Reflection for the Transgender Day of Remembrance on the 20<sup>th</sup> November 2020**

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Each year, on the 20<sup>th</sup> November, we mark the International Transgender Day of Remembrance. In it we remember all transgender people who have died at the hands of others simply because they have tried to live lives which are true to themselves and to their own identities. We also remember those who have taken their own lives because of the persecution and trauma that is faced.

This has not been an easy time for transgender people, with transphobic crimes on the increase, the additional stresses caused by lockdown and the impact of the Covid crisis, where there are trans people who are confined to houses, singly or with non-supporting or unknowing families around them. People do disrupt gender and sexuality for many reasons. Motives may be misjudged, and many describe the current plight of trans people as being equivalent to that of the gay rights movement in the 1980s and 1990s. With greater understanding, today we know these to be about love and identity, not dissolution and sex.

As we know from the deaths, and the experiences of rejection and persecution, great harm can be done when the wrong identifications are made. In the passage from John 14: *"In my Father's house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you"*, we read. Yet Jesus also said, *"Knock and the Door Will be opened"*. Sadly, and too often, instead of seeking to listen, we use what we hear about each other to condemn those we disagree with, so we slam the door shut. Listening becomes more difficult if the condemnations become too great, and it may be made impossible if criminalisation... which still exists in many countries, occurs.

To listen and enter with an open mind is all that is asked. Jesus was despised and rejected because he broke the mould. Many people have now listened, and do welcome transgender people, but others do not. Today, on this day of remembrance we remember the many deaths that have been caused by these failures to listen and the discrimination that takes place. For their memories and for our futures, and in the company of each other, let us together resolve to go forward, and make this house of Jesus a home where love can dwell, a house where all are welcomed, and a house which shines with the Love of Christ

You are welcome to join us for a service of remembrance on the 20<sup>th</sup> November, or use this material to plan your own: <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/liturgies/tdor/index.htm>

May God bless you all

Susan Gilchrist

This document is available at <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/liturgies/tdor/tdor2020files/TDOR2020-ShortReflectionText.pdf>