

Richard Rohr: If there's one theme in the Bible that has been ignored far too much, even though it's from beginning to end, it's that those who get the message first, easiest, and clearest are any group of marginalized people. Those who are excluded understand what the rest of us really worship.

And Barbara Holmes, is a black theologian, head of a largely black seminary, has been humble enough to align herself with this quasi-Catholic organization. Her wisdom is heartfelt. She's from the Gullah of black people of the east coast and understands feminine marginalization, ethnic marginalization, and how the gospel that we call an alternative orthodoxy has hardly ever been understood by the mainline church.

Barbara has a way of saying this in such a kind and gracious way. Not righteous, not judgmental, but clear. And I thank God that she said yes to our invitation to join our faculty.

Dr. Barbara Hol...: I'm reminded of the power of the prophetic, to create solidarity where it least seems possible and to enhance compassion for the suffering of others in the suffering of the world.

But what are we to do about the troubles of the world? Well, Jesus calls us his brash and troublesome disciples who question doubt, continually fail him to take up the mantle of prophecy, to discern the sign of the times, and to be an ever present bomb in a troubled world.

The waters of our times are troubled, but Jesus calls us to walk on top of them, not through them or under them. Why? To witness to the world that his people are not a ragtag bunch crawling out of slavery. We are a people who were not a people.

Physicist Neil deGrasse Tyson reminds us that our solidarity is not a choice, it's a reality. He says, "We're all connected to each other biologically, to the earth chemically, and to the rest of the universe atomically." Our solidarity is the result of scientific fact as well as the salvific act of a loving savior and a wise and guiding Holy Spirit. Even our call to solidarity is exemplified by the divine.

William Dembski says, "In God becoming human in Jesus Christ, God has established solidarity with the human condition." Because Jesus has come and truly overturned and overcome the systems of the world, he beckons us to do likewise.

The systems say that change can't come, that gravity wins, that religion is of no use except to placate the people that you'd better put your trust in your growth mutual funds. But Jesus says there is another way, the prophetic way. And even now, he beckons for us to step out on the word, to come together as one and to exercise our gifts. Only then can we make peace with our neighbors, end the gun violence, and stop our addiction to division.

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Solidarity and compassion is love in action. May the God who calls you to your highest good walk with you as you journey toward this end. Ashe.