



In The Midst of Madness

by Azul Uribe | Jun 13, 2016 | Church, decisions, Family, Featured, Homosexuality, Immigration, LGBTQ, Racism, Radical Compassion | 3 comments



I have avoided social media for most of my day.

Originally I had written an entire post about the Church's push for legislation here in Mexico- Enrique Peña Nieto decided to make gay marriage legal in the entire country. The way it currently works here (in Mexico) is that you can only get married to a person of the same sex in a few states, but it is recognized across the country. Some form of marriage between people of the same sex has been recognized here since the year 2000. That's 16 years.

In recent weeks, the Church decided to go against this measure of being able to go and get legally married to someone of the same sex anywhere in the entire country (even though it is recognized) asking Church members to sign a petition opposing it. Said petition would then go to the senate.

Elder De Hoyos- the area authority for Mexico- held a meeting asking members to sign the petition. My bishop sent a message to our ward group, exhorting us to "show the government what Latter Day Saints truly believe".

I don't believe in being bigoted. I wrote an entire list, in Spanish, of why I would never sign my name to the aforementioned petition. It is long, and thorough and comes from a place of great vulnerability. Three days ago, Mexico passed a law stating that same sex parents could adopt children. I felt like maybe I was seeing the visible manifestation of bigotry being outrun- sunlight rushing into a room.

I don't know what to say.

I have sat with myself for the last two nights trying to hold a place for whatever it was that I was feeling, but I can't even find my center. There were fifty LGBTQIA Latinos that night who never got to walk out of the Pulse club. There was an overwhelming unease while waiting to hear the name of a shooter, of having to brace myself to see whether I was going to be on the defensive for another person of color, or whether I was going to be forced to a forgiveness that I could not make sense of if it happened to be a white man.

The shooter was Muslim.

Let me tell you what it is like to be religious and to be anything that must hyphenate, anything that has been othered, anything outside of the cishet white male blanket that suffocates the rest of us: It is a constant bracing, it is walking through life with your hands in front of you as you ward off the scratches that come from the world. Sometimes, those under the blanket are pit against each other. Sometimes, because we are covered, because we are suffocated, because we are lumped together, because we are not afforded the grace that comes from recognition of a full humanity, we are lumped together. This too is a form of silencing.

I look at my own community, my Latino siblings, and I think of my very own blood relatives and how, in some instances, it could have been them. I can't shake the terror that comes from that feeling of knowing that I am helpless to this chaos, just a breeze away from falling from the tightrope myself. I try to empathize and I cannot let myself finish the thought- my mind stutters at the sequence that would follow if I were told that one of my siblings had been murdered.

Generally I am comforted when my worlds somehow overlap or connect, but this week, these last few days have been too much. I could not even finish the Church's statement sending out prayers, or thoughts, or whatever words without works they were uttering, because I have seen first hand now how my religion has twice tried to deny a basic recognition of humanity to the LGBTQIA community, in two countries and two languages, under the guise of religious freedom.

I wish religious freedom meant protecting our Muslim brothers and sisters when they have to brace themselves for the violence committed by one of their own, much like the membership must brace themselves whenever the Church commits violence in our names. I am terrified for my Muslim siblings, for my Muslim Latino siblings, for my Muslim Latino LGBTQIA siblings.

I wish the Church didn't talk out of both sides of its damn mouth. I wish it would focus on things that are really affecting the people here in Mexico- femicide, unjust immigration laws, the disappearance of reporters, the murder of activists, the devaluation of our national coin, poverty, violence, corruption. Instead, the Church has come in, like a gossip aunt to a wedding, complaining about the bride's sweet 16, too late and irrelevant.

Dear Church, you are late to this, but right on time to ignore our needs it would seem.

I don't have answers.

I am scared.

I have been pacing.

My prayers are long stretches of tears.

My worlds have connected in a grotesque and depressing way, with the Church once again reiterating that the only interests are U.S. interests and somehow missing the entire point of why the massacre that occurred in Florida that they spoke against so profusely are caused by the very actions they take; after all, you can't continuously deny someone the protection that comes from government recognition and not expect this. Trickle down violence has a way of getting out of the hands of those who impose it.

So many have thrown matches at the altar of bigotry, of racism, or transantagonism, and are surprised that some are consumed by the fire. Do not let those who would make this about anti-Muslim sentiment change this conversation. This isn't about beliefs of the Muslim community – this is about a community who has been denied at every turn, because of the color of their skin, because of their sexual orientation, because of their gender expression and any change in that conversation is violence.

Because you are erasing those who have died.

Because you are using the actions of a single person to deny Muslims.

Because you are using the bodies and experiences of all of these people to distance yourself from your hand in this, and by doing so are actively participating

in the massacre of others, and are no different. If you are doing this you have blood on your hands.

The current narrative is as follows: Ignore how this is spreading globally. Smother all under the blanket of your whiteness, of your Mormon beliefs, of your stateside comforts. Create distance. Move on.

I don't know what will happen when LGBTQIA marriage is available in every state of Mexico- it is already legal. I don't know what that victory will taste like after such bitter days. But I do know this: I see what the Church is, and I now understand what talking out of both sides is. I have heard it, and these are the results.

For everyone out there reeling, we must hold on to each other. In the end, we are all we've got.



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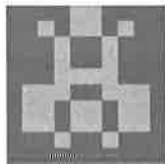


Azul Uribe

Azul is a binational (culturally) girl who currently resides in Merida, Mexico with her cat Chloe. Her work has been published in numerous other blogs, including Young Mormon Feminists, and she writes about re-assimilating, immigration and life in general over at www.happycosmopolite.wordpress.com. Her favorite Beatle is George Harrison and she hopes to someday be able to own a puppy.

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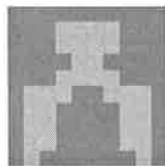
3 Comments



Daniel on June 13, 2016 at 7:40 am

I braced myself to read this. I was afraid it would hurt, and it did. Exquisitely. Thank you.

Reply



Mary Ann Crody on June 13, 2016 at 10:28 am

I want to hug you and say do not be so afraid but i wonder if it would help. I am glad you are still praying. The church is a big thing but sometimes as well intentioned as they are the leadership may have some catching up to do. Not everyone is homophobic in fact at our last stake conference At Elliot bay ward in Seattle WASHINGTON a comment was made by one of the speakerswe will not be whole till the LGBTQ brothers and sister are wholly with us...the church cannot help but speak out its beliefs. I had to work multiple jobs the years that the prop 8 thing was going on and i dont have tv or radio so i entirely missed it. I had a really bad