Columns
Spirituality



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I was in an upstairs window facing the street and reading the Scriptures for the day, the last one of January 2024.

In the first reading, King David is beating his breast and lamenting his offenses before a vengeful God, one who remembers every last infidelity and sends cohorts of "angels" in a payback move — pestilence over the land. Some 70,000 bodies lie strewn from Dan to Bersheeba.

What a difference in the second reading for the same day. Don Bosco and Mary Mazzarello are out early on the broken-down streets of Italy. One by one they pick up every wandering boy, every lost girl they can find. In warm embrace, they carry each child to a safe place. All this before the sun even rises.

These are the readings for the same day, different centuries. The presence of God seen with profoundly different eyes — vengeful or loving.

And now?

Next door to us are three downstairs apartments. A young couple lives in the far right one. While I read this morning, they walk across the street to the woman's parked car. She is bundled warm; he is in his shirt sleeves. Their goodbye kiss is long and sweet.

After he sees her settled in the car, he crosses the street and heads back to their apartment and work. She watches him close the door. I smile and reconsider the Scriptures I have been reading. Turning a few pages, I find the Song of Songs.

> She: He kisses me, and his love is more delightful than wine.
>
> He: How beautiful you are, my darling. Oh, how beautiful.

This is the word of God in my hands and heart and across the street.

Perhaps you experience something similar to the above, maybe every day. How might you respond?

Damn every "enemy" by word and deed? Be they in your city or in remote parts of the earth? You can see how this goes in every day's news. Slaughter your enemies, even pay with your life, if needed. The Old Testament writer envisions a vengeful

Almighty in this camp. Which tells us more about the writer of Genesis than the Almighty.

Turn a few pages, and there is the Song of Songs, sung in your heart, your home and on the streets where you live.

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History does, indeed, repeat itself. Every Don Bosco and Mary Mazzarello still pick the poor up off the streets, bring them to a safe place where they feed and shelter them.

As do you, the reader, one way or another. This is the story of your life, day after day, year after year. For this, much grace and gratitude.

And finally, each early morning you might send those you love, big and small, off with a kiss and warm embrace.

I, the writer, am a mirror. My words on the page are a mirror — when you read them, I hope you see, not the author, but yourself. You are not reading a page; you are looking into a mirror.

The work on the page is also a window. The author leads you out a window into a world outside yourself.

Think of this as you ponder Global Sisters Report. You are looking into a mirror. And you are looking out a window at a country beyond your experience.