World AIDS Day Ritual  
December 1, 2012

Remembering Love's Story  
By Diann L. Neu


Light a candle.

Think of those you know who are living with HIV/AIDS, those who have died of AIDS-related causes, those who have been affected by HIV/AIDS.

These beloved ones are with us now. Remembering them reminds us that we are all people living with HIV/AIDS—those we remember, those who have lost loved ones, those who care for them, and every one of us struggling to eradicate this virus. HIV/AIDS has changed our lives.
Remembering the Face of HIV/AIDS

We are friends, partners, lovers, family, and neighbors.
We know the face of HIV/AIDS. We are here, right here in your midst.

We are care-sharers, justice workers, health care professionals, social workers, and ministers.
We know the face of HIV/AIDS. We are here, right here in your midst.

We are students, teachers, parents, sisters, and brothers.
We know the face of HIV/AIDS. We are here, right here in your midst.

Some of us are wise elders; some are caring adults; some are searching youth; some are wonder-filled children.
We know the face of HIV/AIDS. We are here, right here in your midst.

Some of us are lesbian; some of us are gay; some of us are straight; some of us are bi; some of us are trans; some of us are queer.
We know the face of HIV/AIDS. We are here, right here in your midst.

Some of us have or might get HIV/AIDS.
We know the face of HIV/AIDS. We are here, right here in your midst.

Some of us feel angry and sad, fearful and fragile, vulnerable and alone.
We know the face of HIV/AIDS. We are here, right here in your midst.

We are multi-colored and many cultured people.
We know the face of HIV/AIDS. We are here, right here in your midst.

All of us are people of faith who long for the day when HIV/AIDS is a distant memory.
We know the face of HIV/AIDS. We are here, right here in your midst.


For my soulmate, Bob Canavello

I have learned how to learn,
How to read,
How to practice.

But today, I am getting ready for my life's performance
By forgetting everything I know
And letting everything go.

Look! How I am now dancing between the notes
Of the music that my soul plays!

Reflection

HIV/AIDS affects all of us and takes us to places where we would rather not go. How does HIV/AIDS affect you? What love story do you tell?

Prayers of the Faithful

Compassionate Holy One, open our hearts and minds and hands so that we may connect ourselves to the global community responding to HIV/AIDS as we pray:

We remember all women, men, and children in this country and around the world who are living with HIV/AIDS.
Justice demands that we remember and respond.

We remember all who care for people living and dying with HIV/AIDS in their homes, in hospices, and in support centers.
Justice demands that we remember and respond.

We remember all who are involved in research and hospital care that they may respect the dignity of each person.
Justice demands that we remember and respond.

We remember all partners who are left mourning their beloved ones.
Justice demands that we remember and respond.

We remember all parents who learn the truth of their children's lives through their process of facing death.
Justice demands that we remember and respond.

Prayer of Hope

We bring together many candles, many lights.
As those who keep the night watch await the dawn,
We remain vigilant,
Until a cure for HIV/AIDS is found,
Until those dying with HIV/AIDS are comforted,
Until truth sets us free,
Until love drives out injustice,
Until we get to zero.
We shall not give up the fight.

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