To Heal, We Must Remember

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Sometime during January 19, 2021, the 400,000th soul was reported lost to Covid-19 in the United States. In less than one year, the U.S. has lost more people to Covid than the total American fatalities in the conflicts of WWI, Korea, and Vietnam combined. It is estimated that by the middle of February, the U.S. will have suffered more deaths than it did in WWII.

One would think that in a time like this we'd be united to fight a devasting disease causing so much pain and destruction to our families and communities. Every life lost is a parent, child, sibling, relative, significant other, a friend. Every life with a name. Over 400,000 names precious to a loved one.

Yet we find ourselves a nation divided, fueled by false narratives of a rigged election by those who refuse to accept the truthful outcome of a fair election. We watched in sadness and horror as an insurrection, encouraged by a sitting President, attacked the Capitol in attempt to overturn the will of the American people by force. The mob failed, and an additional six lives with names precious to loved ones were needlessly loss on January 6, 2021.

During the second impeachment of President Donald Trump, one of the arguments presented by those who opposed impeachment was that the country needed healing and unity, not further division. It was remarkable how quickly the same voices in Congress that questioned the validity of a national election and fanned the embers of "Trumplican" loyalists to violence, wanted to just forget the whole thing and move towards reconciliation.

When asked on a news program if an impeachment trial would impede national reconciliation, Senator Chris Coons from Delaware answered, "There can only be reconciliation with repentance." Sen. Coons' response struck a chord in me as a person of faith. For me to be one with God and one another, I must be willing to be held accountable for any injustice I commit, especially when it causes harm to

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another. I must be willing to acknowledge my actions when seeking healing and reconciliation, and to ask for forgiveness. Repentance!

How can we heal if we choose to ignore or forget? How can we heal if there is a refusal to acknowledge actions of misinformation that has led many to their deaths? How can we heal if there is no repentance?

The healing process is a painful one. It means taking medicine to rid our bodies of toxic disease that brings us harm. It means exercising our muscles to strengthen ourselves to recovery, and it hurts. Healing means remembering not to repeat the habits that caused damage in the first place. Healing means being willing to hold ourselves accountable for our actions and to commit to do better going forward.

In watching the touching ceremony of remembrance of the lives loss to Covid-19, the night before Joe Biden's inauguration as the 46th President, I was touched by his charge to a hurting and broken nation that for us to heal, we must remember. We must remember our beloved 400,000+ and do better even when the journey to wholeness becomes painful.

May God bless our nation as we journey towards healing. Amen.

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