



*I know the plans I have in mind for you, declares the Lord; they are plans for peace, not disaster, to give you a future filled with hope.*

*Jeremiah 29:11*

Transgender Day of Remembrance (TDOR) is observed worldwide on November 20 every year. The day is set aside to remember transgender, and gender-variant individuals who have been murdered because of hate. During this memorial service, candles are lit and the names of those who have been killed are read out loud.

My late friend Monica Roberts said that people in the community would ask her why TDOR is so somber' and depressing. Monica would respond, "If you want a party, then do so on the International Day of Trans Visibility. There are 364 other days on the calendar for partying. This isn't one of them." Every year Monica would remind the community that TDOR had to be kept in the forefront of people's minds.

As a people of faith, we honor this day and recognize that it is connected to other justice issues. Every year the TDOR list is filled with black and brown names. For many transgender or gender-variant people in Latino and African American communities, this day reminds us of the dangers of this world still filled with ignorance and hate.

Our text today, Jeremiah 29:11, counters those fears by reminding us that our God has plans for peace, hope and a bright future for each one us.

How can we show that we truly believe this?

In the Latinx community, we say "ver para creer," that translates as "seeing is believing." People must see transgender people in leadership with their own eyes: in government bodies, in schools, in pulpits, in leadership roles both in secular and church communities. When we work toward these outcomes, we bear witness the Holy One's plans for our future of hope.

Friends, it is life giving to believe that the Holy One of All Genders, loves us unconditionally. This Saturday, November 20, let us remember all forty three transgender and gender non-conforming people who have died by violence. Let us remember to reach out to our transgender siblings with comfort and care each day of the year. Let the children, teens, and the people around us see in our church, communities, and the places we inhabit that the Holy One's plans are unfolding before our eyes to bring healing and hope.

Holy Spirit, please help us remember those who lives have been lost. We grieve with you for each of your children. Show us how to respond with love, justice, and mercy. Amen.

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