

For he is our peace; in his flesh he has made both groups into one and has broken down the dividing wall, that is, the hostility between us.

—Ephesians 2:14

MONDAY, MARCH 13

For nearly ten years, I have led groups on pilgrimage through the Holy Land. One of the most profound parts of these trips is visiting the security wall that separates the West Bank from Israel. This physical barrier, with its massive 20-foot-high concrete sections, reminds me of the physical barriers as well as the social, economic, cultural, ethnic and prejudicial barriers that keep people apart.

On a recent trip, as we were praying at the wall, one of the young people in my group tearfully asked, “Why does it have to be this way?” Indeed that is the question. The answer is: “It doesn’t!”

What would our world look like if the first thing we saw in one another was not the color of our skin, our position in life, our wealth or our orientation, but the face of Jesus Christ? How might this attitude guide us in living together in community?

We live in a hurting and broken world. But together, by loving our neighbor, striving for peace and justice and respecting the dignity of every human being, we can break down the walls that separate us from each other and from God’s love.

—Edward J. Konieczny