

Fall in Love, Have Your Heart Broken, and be Ruined Forever by Lucia Pineda '26

Fall in love.

This past summer, I participated in a border studies immersion with campus ministry at the U.S.-Mexico border. Although I was raised Catholic, going to church every Sunday and praying before meals, I have always felt detached from my faith. I was resentful of the lack of progressiveness I associated with the Catholic church and therefore the lack of relevance faith played in my life. It was here in Arizona I fell in love with my faith. Seeing organizations grounded in Catholicism, using it as a foundation to fuel their social justice work with migrants made something click in my head. Faith does not have to be some intangible thing that I hold inside myself, solely between me and God, but rather faith can be an action, a force that moves through us to make change in the world. An inseparable part of my newfound love for the Catholic Church was the love I developed for social justice, particularly in the realm of immigration. My love for social justice, too, is inseparable from the love I feel for the people I have met that have migrated to this country and been affected by changing immigration policies. Playing ring around the rosey and hide and seek with a five year old girl seeking asylum, tutoring elementary kids at a refugee support center on sentence structure and multiplication facts, and my own family history, reminds me of the richness that immigration brings to this country and the humanity of those demonized by the media. In the realm of faith based activism, and really any activism, love is just as foundational as religion. So as stated in 1 Corinthians 16:14, "Let all that you do be done in love."

Have your heart broken.

Heartbreak is a reminder that we are cursedly human and empathetic by nature. In an age in which we are constantly being bombarded with tragedies on the news, it is easy to become

desensitized and lean into apathy to protect our flammable hearts from pain. However, when hearing stories on the news of families being torn apart, children being caged in immigration detention centers, and statistics on migrant deaths who are crossing unforgiving terrain in search of a better life, it is entirely unproductive to try to stop the natural inclination towards heartbreak. Although these stories may just be a passing 30 second news segment or a five minute article for us, it is the painful, living and active reality for so many. The heart should break when we are confronted with the suffering of any of God's creations. It is then in these cracks and openings where growth happens and we can be moved into action in constructive ways.

Be ruined forever.

As stated by Isabel Wilkerson, "Ignorance is not a shield from the consequences of inaction." We live in an age in which there is an infinite amount of information available at our fingertips, accessible anywhere and anytime. There is no excuse for ignorance. It is sinful to turn your eyes away from the face of injustice. Jesus not only made cognizant choices to confront injustice, he leads us all by example to not passively conform to the systems that allow this injustice to perpetuate. He was a contrarian guided by love to sit with the sinful, the outcast, to wash the feet of those that wronged him. He shows us that we can resist systems that cast people out on the margins by practicing empathy and recognizing their humanity. Jesus was ruined by love – he loved us all so deeply he lost his life. Allow yourself to love so deeply that you have the privilege to be ruined. Open your heart to the pains of the world, sit with discomfort, and let it transform you.