

## Habit of the Heart #3

### A Capacity to Hold Tension Creatively

Life presents us with issues that are not clear-cut. If we hold the issues in “tension” rather than quickly choosing a “side,” we have time to fully weigh options and for greater wisdom to emerge in our decision.

Parker J. Palmer  
*Healing the Heart of Democracy*

Video: [www.couragerenewal.org/democracyguide/v15](http://www.couragerenewal.org/democracyguide/v15)

“If ‘We the People’ are to hold democracy’s tensions in ways that reweave the civic community, we must develop habits that allow our hearts to break open and embrace diversity rather than break down and further divide us.”

Parker J. Palmer  
*Healing the Heart of Democracy* (p. 36)

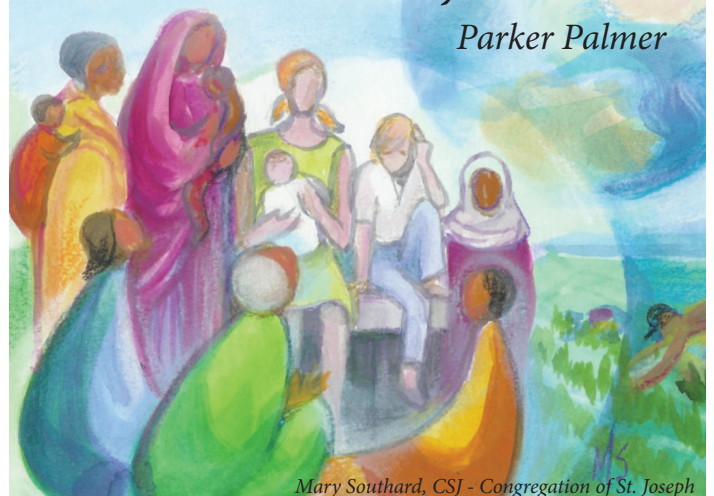
## Reflecting and Sharing

**Parker Palmer describes our social structure as consisting of three “layers: the private, the public, and the political.**

**Focusing for the moment only on the public realm, how much time do you spend in “the company of strangers”? What do you value most about public life? What worries you most about it?**

“*The diversity that grows in a democracy, delights the ear as well as the eye.*”

*Parker Palmer*



Mary Southard, CSJ - Congregation of St. Joseph

