



Wednesday Prayer

Ash Wednesday and 1st Sunday in Lent – The Bow in the Clouds

“When the bow is in the clouds, I will see it and remember the everlasting covenant.”

~Genesis 9:16

It seems a bit strange to begin the season of Lent with a rainbow. But there you have it in this Sunday’s lesson from Genesis. God has made a promise (covenant) with Noah never again to flood the earth completely. And the rainbow in the clouds will be our reminder. Who doesn’t notice a rainbow and point to it, wanting to show others? Usually, they appear after a storm has blown through, and the remnants of torrential downpours now hang in the mist, as a prism for the sun to work its magic.

Nearly four hundred years ago Thomas Fuller penned the phrase: “It’s always darkest before the dawn.” And yet, when you’re in the midst of that storm or dark place, the dawn seems oh so far off.

That’s why I’m always amazed to hear about people who have overcome unspeakable experiences and have grown stronger on the other side of such pain and trauma. If you’ve been following this weekly devotion, you have heard about the important work of ACE’s training, noting the resilience of people who have experienced multiple [Adverse Childhood Experiences](#) and lived to tell about it.

My hope is that we can reach these kids before the storm hits, with prevention and protection as we work together as Cherish All Children. The stats for my home state are sobering. According to the Minnesota Attorney General’s office, sex trafficking affects people from all parts of Minnesota. One national study found that being homeless for longer than 30 days was the single biggest factor for teens to become sexually exploited. These children often get involved in sex trafficking as a form of survival. Many leave home in the first place because of drug abuse, physical or sexual abuse, or other dysfunction in their families. (Source: <https://www.ag.state.mn.us/Consumer/Publications/SexTrafficking.asp>)

These youth are going through storms that are confusing, hurtful, and steeped in shame. And what they need isn’t a lecture or more stats. They need to know they are loved, valued, and not alone. The Psalm for this Sunday highlights God’s steadfast love for all: “Do not remember the sins of my youth or my transgressions; according to your steadfast love remember me, for your goodness’ sake, O Lord!” (Psalm 25:7)

O God, may we reach out to the young people in our lives, *for goodness sake*, and be the bow in the clouds, a lifeline who will have their back no matter what, before the storm comes rolling through. In your precious and holy name we pray. Amen.

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