



Wednesday Prayer

2nd Sunday in Lent – Brave Truth-telling

Then he began to teach them that the Son of Man must undergo great suffering, and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again. He said all this quite openly. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. But turning and looking at his disciples, he rebuked Peter and said, “Get behind me, Satan! For you are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things.”

Mark 8:31-33

Jesus tells the disciples the shocking truth about what is to happen to him and Peter “rebukes” Jesus. To rebuke is to strongly criticize, disapprove or correct the person. Peter wanted to shut down this news, maybe pretending Jesus hadn’t said this or that it wasn’t true.

How often do we want to shut out truths that are too hard for us to comprehend in the moment? Survivors of child sexual abuse and survivors of trafficking too often have their stories shut down by the adults who are responsible for protecting them or systems that fail them. Survivor and former Olympic diving contender John-Michael Lander shares,

“As a 14-year-old Olympic-bound athlete, the adults entrusted to my training groomed and trafficked me into silence.”

Survivor and Advocate for Abuse Prevention Amber Higgins shares,

“I disclosed my abuse, and like many people, I had a really rough round with the system and I wasn’t believed, and it was just kind of swept under the rug. And it was something that I just thought I would have to pretend never happened.”

These brave survivors share their stories on Zero Abuse Project’s [Survivor Space](#) as a way to reveal the truth, bring people together in their healing journeys and support one another. Many more stories are shared, and resources are provided on this site informed by survivors, for survivors. Please use and share this healing space with others as is fitting for you.

Jesus goes on in this Gospel of Mark telling the disciples and the crowd that they must take up their cross and follow him. Bravely living into their stories in community with others.

Gracious God, we pray for children who suffer in the silence and secrecy of sexual abuse. Help them find a safe adult who will listen and act on their behalf to end the abuse and support their healing. May all people watch for signs of sexual abuse and work to set up protective barriers in their church and community. Keep all children safe from sexual predators. In Jesus’ name we pray, Amen.

This closing prayer is the first of Cherish All Children’s six [Lenten Prayers to Prevent Child Sexual Exploitation](#). We invite you to share them with others to widen our net of those praying for children.

Written by Joy McElroy, Cherish All Children Executive Director.