



Wednesday Prayer

26th Sunday after Pentecost – The Beginning of the Birth Pangs

As he came out of the temple, one of his disciples said to him, “Look, Teacher, what large stones and what large buildings!” Then Jesus asked him, “Do you see these great buildings?

Not one stone will be left here upon another; all will be thrown down.”

When he was sitting on the Mount of Olives opposite the temple, Peter, James, John, and Andrew asked him privately, “Tell us, when will this be, and what will be the sign that all these things are about to be accomplished?” Then Jesus began to say to them, “Beware that no one leads you astray. Many will come in my name and say, ‘I am he!’ and they will lead many astray.

When you hear of wars and rumors of wars, do not be alarmed; this must take place, but the end is still to come. For nation will rise against nation and kingdom against kingdom; there will be earthquakes in various places; there will be famines. This is but the beginning of the birth pangs. Mark 13:1-8

This week has been fraught with many emotions and many discussions about the divisions within our country, the wars in our world, and fears of continuing and worsening oppression against many who have been marginalized throughout history. Friends, family members and colleagues who are holding real fear for their futures and their families’ futures. In this Gospel lesson, the disciples seem to be asking Jesus “privately”, maybe out of fear, when the destruction will happen and what will be the signs? Jesus answers by telling them to be aware, there will be great pain, and yet this will be the beginning of the birth pangs.

In my work with Cherish All Children, I share how those who are marginalized are at much higher risk of exploitation and trafficking – our LGBTQIA+ and BIPOC siblings, folks who are unhoused, or have physical or mental disabilities. I urge congregations and community groups to engage in work within their communities to fight against oppression and support those who have been and continue to be marginalized. It will not be easy, and often unpopular, but Jesus’ promise is that this can be the beginning of new birth.

This week I thank the many pastors who shared the wisdom and hope we are given through our faith in a God of justice and peace, always lifting up the brokenhearted and making things new again.

“Together, we are called to something bigger, a journey toward justice, peace and truth. This journey invites us all to reflect, to challenge, and to lift up the voices often unheard.”

~Rev. Dr. Kelly Sherman-Conroy

God of hope, we thank you for leaders working toward justice and peace and pray that our work is grounded in your steadfast love for all. Amen.

Written by Joy McElroy, Cherish All Children Executive Director.