



Cherish All Children

Pray + Educate + Connect + Act

Wednesday Prayer – 3rd Sunday in Lent

Then he told this parable: "A man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard; and he came looking for fruit on it and found none. So he said to the gardener, "See here! For three years I have come looking for fruit on this fig tree, and still I find none. Cut it down! Why should it be wasting the soil?" He replied, "Sir, leave it alone for one more year, and I'll dig around it and fertilize it. If it bears fruit next year, fine! If not, then cut it down.' "

Luke 13: 6-9

This man in the parable was getting frustrated with his fig tree. He wanted to give up, cut it down and not be reminded of its lack of fruit. We live in a fast-paced world. Like this impatient man we like things to happen immediately. When we were young, didn't we want to be adults, be on our own and be independent? This man in the parable was getting frustrated with his fig tree. He wanted to give up, having no patience for its lack of fruit.

We need to think more long term as we work in the ministry of Cherish All Children. We pray diligently for children suffering under the unfertilized hands of child sexual exploitation. We offer informational forums by experts for our congregations and communities. We work with advocacy centers and safe houses, and support with money and in-kind offerings. We do it out of our love, out of God's love for all children. I have been disappointed with turn-outs for speakers and have heard people say, "What good is this doing, it is such a huge issue?" I felt this too years ago. But we in this ministry have maintained our course and continue to pray and educate and advocate. We have boldly spoken of childhood sexual exploitation year after year since 2006. People have listened and our tree has grown many branches throughout the United States and bears much fruit.

Cherish All Children will continue its good work slow and steady. Fruit in the form of prevention, laws, arrests, the work of Polaris and initiatives such as My Neighbor is Not for Sale. God will provide the fruit of our good works.

Loving and merciful God, continue to hear our prayers and discussions on behalf of your children who suffer so that they may lead healthy, fruitful lives. Keep our hearts from despair and fill us with hope. Surround all children who are scared and suffering with your loving protective arms. Teach us patience and diligence as we watch this ministry's tree bear much fruit. We pray in Jesus name. Amen.

Written by Dianne Klafehn, Upstate New York Synod Cherish All Children Leader. Please pray for all leaders and congregations throughout the country working to keep children safe and loved.