



Wednesday Prayer

12th Sunday after Pentecost – Faith offering hope, resilience and confidence

So we can say with confidence, “The Lord is my helper; I will not be afraid. What can anyone do to me?” Hebrews 13:6

Elizabeth Smart is an advocate, musician, wife, mother, and college graduate. Seeing her today, it can be difficult to believe that she is also a survivor of one of the most high-profile cases of youth exploitation in our country. During her nine-month ordeal at age 14, she was held by two people who twisted scripture to justify their actions. One would think that she would never turn to God for hope in enduring those nine long months, or in the months and years after her rescue as she healed and moved on with her life. To the contrary, Elizabeth identifies her faith, as nurtured by her family in the Mormon tradition, as one of the many components that gave her hope in her months of captivity and in her healing process after.

In her book, *Where There’s Hope: Healing, Moving Forward, and Never Giving Up* (2018, St. Martin’s Press), Elizabeth talks with other survivors of difficult life situations and lifts up faith as a common denominator of hope for people from a variety of religious traditions. She writes, “Faith isn’t just what you believe in; it’s how you live, how you love, and how you move forward.” Her faith was nurtured by her family and faith community. It gave her not only hope, but resilience, confidence, and the strength to move forward.

When our beliefs are seen by others in the way we live, the way we love and our way of being in the world, we build that sense of hope, resilience and confidence in children that will give them the foundation they need when they encounter challenges or sufferings. “The Lord is my helper; I will not be afraid. What can anyone do to me?” is the message others receive when they witness members of their family and faith community surviving and healing from trials we face in life. By praying, educating and advocating, we model the confidence that comes from knowing that nothing can separate us from our Lord and helper. We can become part of the foundation that will hold others up during difficult times, and help them move forward when healing is necessary.

Lord and helper, calm our fears as we face life’s challenges that are all around us. As we live, love and move forward trusting that nothing can separate us from you, allow us to show others, especially those who are at risk of or recovering from exploitation, that it is your never-ending love and strength that is the source of our hope, tenacity and healing. Amen.

Written by Kay Kinkel, MA, MSW, a Licensed Independent Clinical Social Worker and Crisis Clinician with Scott County Mobile Crisis Response.