



Wednesday Prayer

7th Sunday of Easter – Seek justice

**Learn to do right; seek justice. Defend the oppressed.
Take up the cause of the fatherless; plead the case of the widow. Isaiah 1:17**

This reflection is an excerpt from two survivors of sexual assault exchanging emails after Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos finalized new Title IX federal regulations on May 6, 2020.

My first reaction to the Facebook post headlines was to ignore it. Great, go figure, maybe if I ignore it, it will just go away, more bad news for victims of sexual violence, and I can't cope with this...these were a few things to go through my mind. But then my dear friend private messaged me an [article about the Title IX changes](#) and I responded telling her how helpless I felt. From all outward appearances I appear in control and competent, but in reality, I have been completely underserved as a victim of sexual violence. And now these new guidelines give more protection and power to the students accused of sexual assault. Further, they place limits on incidences that higher education must investigate, one of which is excluding misconduct that happens to students studying abroad. I experienced egregious sexual violence while studying abroad. I felt with my whole being that waiting to report was the right choice, but this delay resulted in the police and campus making me feel delinquent and that my pursuit of justice didn't matter.

In response to the Title IX changes, I challenged my friend to a prayer writing competition to lift up victims of sexual violence. I refused to give up and I know that God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit are right here with me to sustain me.

God, I know you have plans for all victims of sexual violence to prosper. Thank you for your steadfast love! Wipe away any damage due to sexual violence or use it to allow us to flourish. Take the evil used as a weapon and transform it into lasting change in your name. Give control back to the rightful owners. Give the oppressors their eternal allowance so they may realize now and forever that hurting people is not fruitful. Continue to give hope in times of despair. Give the oppressed a voice and spirit to reckon with. Restore the dignity that has been lost by victims of sexual violence both by the perpetrator and by those who take the perpetrator's side.

God, I know there is a lot to this world that I don't understand, but I ask you to give me grace and help me be the best person I can be so I can set a good example for those around me. Amen.

Written by Callie Nordahl, BA from NDSU, founder of Students Abroad Sexual Assault Resource Initiative www.SASARI.org, and survivor of sexual violence. **SASARI's mission is to educate students, staff, faculty, family and community leaders engaged in student travel on issues of sexual violence, equipping them with the understanding and resources required to prevent, respond to, and recover from a sexual assault. We know that educating those involved strengthens individuals, supports families and creates safer communities.**