



Wednesday Prayer

8th Sunday after Pentecost – The image of God

And [you] have clothed yourselves with the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge according to the image of its creator.

Colossians 3:10

Since the early days following the Russian invasion of Ukraine, I've been following the posts of a woman named Maia Mikhaluk on social media. Maia and her husband, Nick, are part of a ministry in Kyiv and made the difficult decision to stay there to continue to minister with those who could not leave. Her posts reveal day-to-day life in the midst of air raids and bombings, the weekly worship services they continue to lead faithfully, and the many humanitarian aid trips she takes to area towns, often risking her life to bring food, clothing, medicine and primarily hope to others. She is honest about her fears and anxiety and anger, but also posts her prayers and Bible readings and gratitude lists that are lifting her up and carrying her forward. She speaks often of how her faith helps her to refocus from anxiety to trust in God. Maia is most certainly a disciple "renewed in knowledge according to the image of its creator".

Bernard of Clairvaux is quoted as saying "God's image will become visible as it is reborn in you." How has God's image been reborn in each of us in the midst of our own day-to-day challenges? They may not be as immediately threatening as those Maia faces, but are still overwhelming at times. The world is very much in need of seeing the image of God with increasing threats of gun violence, the political division, and, of course, the ever-growing threat of sexual exploitation and trafficking that can weigh us down with fear and anxiety for many young and vulnerable people.

Prayer for ourselves and others, especially those held in or vulnerable to the exploitation of sex-traffickers, bears God's image and moves us to reach out and lift up others. Faith-filled worship draws us and others into a safe sanctuary and the knowledge and hope of God's redeeming word. And wading into the tumultuous waters of today's political arena to advocate for justice and policies to bring an end to sex trafficking shines God's image as a beacon of hope in a dark world.

**God of justice, your word is truth and light. Shine your face on us that we might walk in your way, bearing your image to all who need the knowledge of your steadfast love.
Amen.**

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