



Wednesday Prayer

5th Sunday of Easter – Seeking Refuge

**In you, O LORD, I seek refuge; do not let me ever be put to shame;
in your righteousness deliver me.**

**Incline your ear to me; rescue me speedily. Be a rock of refuge for me,
a strong fortress to save me.**

**You are indeed my rock and my fortress; for your name's sake lead me and guide me,
take me out of the net that is hidden for me, for you are my refuge.**

Into your hand I commit my spirit; you have redeemed me, O LORD, faithful God.

My times are in your hand; deliver me from the hand of my enemies and persecutors.

Let your face shine upon your servant; save me in your steadfast love.

Psalm 31: 1-5, 15-16

“LOVE, who can I trust? Who will be on MY side?”

These lines are from the book “I Can’t Talk About It” a child’s book about sexual abuse published in 1986. My mother found this book while packing to move from the 100-year-old farmhouse my father grew up in. It is a beautifully illustrated and gentle telling of the story of Annie, sharing her experience of sexual abuse to a dove she calls LOVE.

“and the Spirit of GOD came down from heaven like a DOVE.” (John 1:32)

Annie feels so alone in her pain, in the fear of telling, and in the shame that she feels for what has been done to her. The dove listens, believes, and comforts. Annie finds refuge in sharing with the Dove, and is gently guided to tell her mother...when she is ready.

We wondered if the story would hold some very outdated language, but the author, Doris Sanford, shares Annie’s story with tender care. While this isn’t a book review, there is one part that we as Christians can be aware of as we interact with survivors in our midst (whether they have chosen to share their story or not). The dove shares that Annie will need to forgive in order to let go of the hate she feels due to the abuse. As Christians, we sometimes rush to push forgiveness when that is not within the victim/survivors capacity, whether now or at any time. That is for them to determine...when they are ready.

“When you are ready, Little One. When you are ready, I will listen.”

**Spirit of God, our refuge, be with all who suffer and need refuge in your love and grace.
Be with each of us as we strive to protect your children, and as we move through this
world of survivors with gentleness and tender care. Amen.**

Written by Joy McElroy, Cherish All Children Executive Director.

Read what Victor Vieth, Zero Abuse Project, informs regarding forgiveness (8. on page 6) [Suffer-the-Children.pdf](https://www.zeroabuseproject.org/Suffer-the-Children.pdf)
([zeroabuseproject.org](https://www.zeroabuseproject.org))