



Wednesday Prayer

12th Sunday after Pentecost – Love and Praise together

May God be gracious to us and bless us and make his face to shine upon us, Selah that your way may be known upon earth, your saving power among all nations.

Let the peoples praise you, O God; let all the peoples praise you.

Let the nations be glad and sing for joy, for you judge the peoples with equity and guide the nations upon earth. Selah

Let the peoples praise you, O God; let all the peoples praise you.

The earth has yielded its increase; God, our God, has blessed us.

May God continue to bless us; let all the ends of the earth revere him.

Psalm 67:1-7

As a pastor, I understand part of my vocation is to create an environment in which people are free to praise God. “Let all the peoples praise you, O God, let all the peoples praise you.” Henry Nouwen’s book, Love in a Fearful Land, speaks of the kind of love, and shares living the kind of love which enables praise, praise in the midst of things harmful and troubling. The subject of the book is Father Stan Rother, who served the church in Guatemala during our proxy war there. Father Stan was a strong and gentle pastor, completely committed to the Lord and to the people of Santiago Atitlán. Love and praise go together. Love gives us capacity for praise. And praise increases our capacity for love.

For us who engage in the challenging work of advocacy, care, and intervention for the sake of children, this love-praise symbiosis needs to be nurtured and not forgotten. Our energies are limited, and we may become unaware of our proximity to things loveless and empty. So we treasure love and praise and guard it even as we share it, so that we may create together an environment where praise is possible and love is shared.

Father Stan’s love and loyalty to the people ultimately resulted in his assassination by supporters of the Guatemalan military. He had written to his friend in Oklahoma, “At the first signs of danger, the shepherd cannot run and leave the sheep to fend for themselves...” Brother Nouwen wrote of Father Stan, saying, “He knew that praying is letting one’s own heart become the place where the tears of God and the tears of God’s children merge and become tears of hope.” May our tears lead to love and praise.

In a world torn by wars and harms committed against children, you God, continue to bless us. Let our prayers and our tears lead us to share your love and praise. Amen.

Written by Pastor Nathan Tuff, Lead Pastor at Olivet Lutheran Church, Sylvania Ohio & Cherish All Children Advisory Board Member.