



Wednesday Prayer

Holy Week – Betrayal, and new life

**So if I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet,
you also ought to wash one another's feet. John 13:14**

Then Jesus, knowing all that was to happen to him, came forward and asked them, "Whom are you looking for?" They answered, "Jesus of Nazareth." Jesus replied, "I am he." Judas, who betrayed him, was standing with them. John 18:4-5

Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the tomb. John 20:1

Today I was honored to accompany two women to the [Survivors Memorial](#) in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Before moving into the area of the beautiful mosaic stones, I was gifted with a Tibetan Kata, a scarf that represents the interdependence of each other and gratitude for one another. The wind was blowing fiercely which provided a story of its own as we joined together. The Spirit was surely in our midst. The Mississippi River in the background felt symbolic of washing one another's feet.

And then we entered the memorial. Moments of quiet, of tears, and stories of great harm, betrayal, and rejection were shared. At one point I had to ask if my words had ever been harmful as I recalled something I had said in the past. Being in relationship with one another allowed for an open and trusting dialogue. *We need to break the silence.* While that statement has been made often in recent years, it was never more critical to me than at this moment. Survivors have been (and are) suffering in silence as history plays out over and over again. Carrying the weight of disbelief, shame, retaliation, further harm – survivors may stay silent for their own survival. So when it gets hard, can we – survivor advocates – stand with them?

"We are surrounded by survivors of sexual violence. This memorial will honor the courage and strength of survivors, and it will bring awareness to the prevalence of sexual violence. It will let survivors know that our community believes them, supports them, and stands with them in solidarity. The memorial depicts two prominent metaphors: mosaic and ripple effect. The mosaic represents that even broken pieces can be put together to create something whole and beautiful. The ripple effect represents the multiplying power of breaking the silence; by telling our stories, we unconsciously give other survivors permission to tell theirs." ¹

It was Mary Magdalene that went and announced that she had seen the Lord. They had a long history – she had been seen and believed, and now she proclaimed new life. Abiding and steadfast God, help us to believe, to stand with others, and to proclaim your love, Amen.

Written by Joy McElroy, Cherish All Children Executive Director, and community advocate for racial justice. ¹ From the website of the Survivors Memorial survivorsmemorial.org