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Daily Reflections



A CRY FOR PEACE

By Alicia Rodriguez

Dear God,

The world right now is drowning in pain and agony. Hearts are being torn apart, trust is being broken, peace seems to be nothing more than a forgotten whisper in the wind. What do I do? How can I help others to remember Your love for us? How can I help the world to heal, to remember Your promises to us?

On the news we see countless stories of children being separated from their parents. We see people being unjustly and unlawfully condemned for just existing in the world and not being in favor of political leaders. We see countries trying to rip each other apart instead of building bridges to work together towards providing a more humane way of living for all.

When did the world become so greedy and engrossed in its power? When did power become more important than love and respect for one another? Why do people treat each other differently based on the way we look if we are all made

in Your image?

Driving through the streets of Los Angeles recently broke my heart. Police officers in riot gear stood silently behind barricades to keep the police station safe from all the protesters and rioters across the street from them; they held their hands in front of their bodies for all to see and very few held any firearms. I saw a collection of people wearing gas masks and goggles yelling and chanting their feelings of oppression. The constant hum of a circling helicopter patrolling the streets joined the mixture of chanting and honking that had become the soundtrack of the city.

The whimsical shops in the once lively streets were heavily boarded up with signs reading “This is an immigrant-owned establishment, please keep that in mind before you loot.” On the other walls there were tons of images of people who have gone missing. I noticed that the images varied from children up to the elderly. The buildings were all full of graffiti condemning the immigration raids that have been occurring. Roads and freeway entrances were blocked off, preventing anyone from walking onto the freeway to protest. An 8:00 PM curfew was in effect with special permissions granted to select groups, one of them being the group that I fell under (if stopped by a police officer, I would have to show special documentation).

As I left the city of Los Angeles around 10:30 pm, the streets felt eerier than they had when we had arrived. There was a deafening silence in the air. Instead of the usual traffic lights, all you could see were the lights of police cars patrolling the city and blocking off more roads. Not a soul was walking on the streets. The skyscrapers seemed to loom in the distance, watching over the now darkened city. The cathedral was glowing in between the road closures, a silent ray of hope amidst the darkness and turmoil that had been surrounding it.

Where do we go from here, God? What can we do? How do we remember that forgotten word “peace?” In times like these I can’t help but wonder how You feel, watching us hurt one another. How do You feel when people blame You for allowing such injustices to happen in the world? I know that you are not at fault, God. I know that this is what happens when humanity leans into evil when given free will, but if there is anything that I have learned from You, it is that you can take the worst and most violent things in the universe and turn them into something beautiful and life-giving. You create new life from the shattered remnants of the old, and You bring us people to guide us back to you.

I pray that humanity remembers to listen for Your words. I pray that they return to trusting in You and one another. I pray that peace may one day be restored throughout the world so that we may all live in honor and respect for one another.

Amen.



Silhouette at Dawn
Photo by Alexandro David

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