

In all of this, we stand together as people of faith who believe we are called to live lives of love, showing kindness, respect, and generosity of spirit toward all. We are called not to a hierarchical system of ranking or importance. No. We are called to love all and stand with those in deepest need. As I said yesterday, our baptisms remind us that we are all children of God, beloved and beautiful in God's sight. We are also all deeply in need of God's grace and mercy and called to seek it with humility, honesty, and hope for the future.

We have a future together. God assures us of this. The prophet Isaiah reminds us:

*Have you not known? Have you not heard?  
Has it not been told you from the beginning?  
Have you not understood from the foundations of the earth?  
It is he who sits above the circle of the earth,  
and its inhabitants are like grasshoppers;  
who stretches out the heavens like a curtain,  
and spreads them like a tent to live in;  
who brings princes to naught,  
and makes the rulers of the earth as nothing.  
Scarcely are they planted, scarcely sown,  
scarcely has their stem taken root in the earth,  
when he blows upon them, and they wither,  
and the tempest carries them off like stubble.  
To whom then will you compare me,  
or who is my equal? says the Holy One.  
Lift up your eyes on high and see:  
Who created these?  
He who brings out their host and numbers them,  
calling them all by name;  
because he is great in strength,  
mighty in power,  
not one is missing.  
Why do you say, O Jacob,  
and speak, O Israel,  
"My way is hidden from the Lord,  
and my right is disregarded by my God"?*  
*Have you not known? Have you not heard?  
The Lord is the everlasting God,  
the Creator of the ends of the earth.  
He does not faint or grow weary;  
his understanding is unsearchable.  
He gives power to the faint,  
and strengthens the powerless.  
Even youths will faint and be weary,  
and the young will fall exhausted;  
but those who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength,  
they shall mount up with wings like eagles,  
they shall run and not be weary,  
they shall walk and not faint (Isaiah 40:21-31).*

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