

The Pain of Ukraine  
February 25, 2022  
The Rt. Rev. Dr. Bonnie A. Perry

War. War makes everything different. Have you noticed? I had things I was worried about last week, but this week, after Tuesday night they all seem rather small and insignificant. War in Europe changes everything.

This war feels different. Ukraine's proximity to the rest of Europe, our shared history of catastrophic world wars in Europe, and the reality that Russia dictated by Vladimir Putin, began this conflict, completely unprovoked. This does not feel like a response to an act of aggression, instead this feels like a naked grab for dominance; a bold geopolitical act meant to assert control and authority over significant assets and resources based upon a fanciful retelling of history and imagined future threats. An act that is likely to embolden other authoritarian world powers to undertake similar schemes.

This then is where we are.

People of faith, watching and feeling the political tectonic plates of our world shift and collide. How do we stand? Where is our sure footing? What are we called to do?

Pray my friends. Pray in a way you never have before. Pray with the passion and responsibility of the people who are being called to heal. Read the news, do not look away. Talk about the suffering we are seeing. Talk about it endlessly, bear witness to it. Name the pain. Name the suffering caused by unbridled aggression and unfettered greed for control. Name the evil that is taking place. Talk about the people whose homes and lives are crumbling around them. Imagine it is you, your life, your children. Embrace the sanctions and the ramifications those sanctions will have for us. Embrace them proudly and boldly.

Evil wins when we look away and pretend the pain does not exist, and that the wound does not weep. Love wins when we follow Jesus and immerse ourselves in the needs of the world and use all, all, all we have to say, 'NO.'

God will use us and Love will win, when we honor and embrace the pain as if it were our own.