



Encouragement and prayer in a time of crisis and fear

SUNDAY

2 Corinthians 1 :3-4

Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves receive from God.

[We can offer empathy to others because of the troubles we face].

Prayer focus - for churches who are having to make big adjustments to the way they arrange their worship times. And for ourselves that we may feel close to God even though we don't get close to others with whom we would normally share times of worship.

Prayer for the week

"Lord we give you ourselves, our anxieties, our weaknesses – all that we are. And we pray that you can transform us into your true children, trusting you for all and being your hands in the world in caring for others - and caring for ourselves. Amen"

SOME OTHER E-PLACES TO LOOK FOR ENCOURAGEMENT

Daily reflections

<https://www.sanctuaryfirst.org.uk/>

<https://www.loyolapress.com/3-minute-retreats-daily-online-prayer>

<https://www.northumbriacommunity.org/offices/how-to-use-daily-office/>

MONDAY

Deuteronomy 31 v6

"Be strong! Be courageous! Do not be afraid! For the Lord your God will be with you. He will neither fail you nor forsake you."

Prayer focus – *God says to each of us again and again "do not be afraid". That doesn't mean that he will sort the coronavirus problem miraculously, but he asks us to trust him – for we each mean the world to him.*

TUESDAY

Psalm 23

The LORD is my shepherd, I lack nothing. He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters, he refreshes my soul. He guides me along the right paths for his name's sake. Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me. You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies. You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. Surely your goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever.

Prayer focus – *Circle us Lord, keep fear without, keep trust within.
Circle us Lord, keep anxiety without, keep faith within.*

WEDNESDAY

Psalm 121

I lift up my eyes to the mountains; where does my help come from? My help comes from the LORD, the Maker of heaven and earth. He will not let your foot slip – he who watches over you will not slumber; indeed, he who watches over Israel will neither slumber nor sleep. The LORD watches over you – the LORD is your shade at your right hand; the sun will not harm you by day, nor the moon by night. The LORD will keep you from all harm – he will watch over your life; the LORD will watch over your coming and going both now and for evermore.

Prayer focus – *for those who struggle far more than we do – the elderly, the very young, those in hospital.*

THURSDAY

Luke 8: 22-25

One day he got into a boat with his disciples, and he said to them, "Let us go across to the other side of the lake." So they set out, and as they sailed he fell asleep. And a windstorm came down on the lake, and they were filling with water and were in danger. And they went and woke him, saying, "Master, Master, we are perishing!" And he awoke and rebuked the wind and the raging waves, and they ceased, and there was a calm. He said to them, "Where is your faith?" And they were afraid, and they marvelled, saying to one another, "Who then is this, that he commands even winds and water, and they obey him?"

Prayer focus – *for the homeless and those dependent on food banks.*

FRIDAY

Philippians 4:5-7

"The Lord is near. Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."

Prayer focus – *for people who are so afraid they can hardly express it, that God will give them peace.*

SATURDAY

From Psalm 46

God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear, though the earth give way and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea, though its waters roar and foam and the mountains quake with their surging.^[a]

There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God, the holy place where the Most High dwells. The LORD Almighty is with us; the God of Jacob is our fortress. Come and see what the LORD has done, He says, "Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth." The LORD Almighty is with us; the God of Jacob is our fortress.

Prayer focus – *for organisations who have to make huge and far-reaching decisions about events – hospitals and the NHS, for schools and those who have to make decisions about major examinations – and for the students who have been preparing so hard for these key exams.*

"All my hope on God is founded; he does still my strength renew".