

Speaking to the soul



Refuge and strength

God is our refuge and strength, always ready to help in times of trouble. So we will not fear when earthquakes come and the mountains crumble into the sea.
Saturday Psalm 46:1-2

When disaster strikes it's often without warning. A death, a car accident, a serious illness or a fall. Although such events come without announcement they can, in an instant, completely change the shape of our lives. In those moments of shaking, it's so important to know that we can look to God as our refuge and strength.

As a minister I've often visited the homes of people at times of traumatic change. I remember once visiting an old lady who knew that she had terminal cancer and only had a short while to live. She lived in a dark cottage in a village; when I visited her it was late in the afternoon and there was very little light in the room where we met. But I will never forget her glowing smile in the fading light. She knew the Lord well and had every confidence that her life was in his hands. He was her refuge and strength.

The next day I visited another person who was dying of cancer and the situation couldn't have been more different. She had no Christian faith and the news of her cancer was a complete disaster. She was terrified at the thought of death. It was an agonising situation and felt as unlike the previous day as could be imagined. I spoke to her about God's love for her and told her that he wanted to walk with her and to fill her with his peace. I prayed with her and she was grateful for my visit. But what made me so sad was that she had lived a life that had offered her no preparation for this moment.

Let's make sure that we place our lives firmly in God's hands right now, so that whatever challenge we face we will be confident in the knowledge that God is our refuge and strength.

QUESTION

Can you say with David that God is your refuge and strength?

PRAYER

Thank you, Lord, that I can look to the future with serenity and peace because you will never fail to be my refuge and strength. Amen

Photograph - St Columba's Parish Church, Knock, Belfast

