

# Speaking to the soul



**When life is difficult**

**O my Strength, to you I sing praises, for you, O God, are my refuge, the God who shows me unfailing love. Psalm 59: 17**

Is your life a struggle at the moment? I'm really sorry if so, but I want you to know you're not alone. In this psalm, like many others, David pours out the detail of his struggles. He feels physically threatened and compares his opponents to vicious dogs, snarling as they prowl the streets. He also reflects on the curses and lies they keep hurling at him. There seems to be no limit to the challenges that he faces. Whether you are struggling or not, we should all listen to how David faces up to his situation with brutal honesty.

When life is difficult, and we all experience that from time to time, it's so important for us to be honest about it, especially with God. He already knows the whole story. He knows the kind of people we are and our history, so he is perfectly able to understand whatever we are up against. Like David, we need to make sure our prayers express exactly how we are. It's also important that our prayers in church reflect the fact that we all experience difficulties. There can be a temptation in some churches for the prayers to be so full of victory and celebration that there is no space to offer to God our struggles and disappointments. Our worship needs to reflect the whole of life, not just our edited highlights.

On two occasions in this psalm, David burst out in praise, affirming that God was his strength and his refuge. Amid the troubles of his life, he didn't forget that God was always with him, giving him the encouragement and protection that he needed. When we face times of difficulty, however bad it

gets, we can always praise God that he is standing with us, keeping us strong and secure.

## **QUESTION**

How do you cope with the struggles that you face in life?

## **PRAYER**

Loving God, thank you that you are always able to strengthen and help me, however hard times might be.  
Amen

*Photograph - St Mark's Parish Church, Lisburn*

