



Create a peaceful space to pause, and allow yourself to feel God's presence alongside you, as near to you as your own breath. In following the reflection below, as a church we will draw closer to God and to one another as we grow in faith and deepen our sense of belonging to God.



Psalm 27:1, 13-14 'A Triumphant Song of Confidence'

The Lord is my light and my salvation;
whom shall I fear?

The Lord is the stronghold of my life;
of whom shall I be afraid?

I believe that I shall see the goodness of the Lord
in the land of the living.

Wait for the Lord;
be strong, and let your heart take courage;
wait for the Lord!

Words of trust, written so long ago, yet they seem so fitting for Holy Week celebrating God's triumph over all darkness. They also seem so relevant for us in the situation in which we find ourselves today. Throughout history there have been times of trouble and disaster. Men and women on every generation have grappled with doubt-where is God in all this? Does He care? Why does God allow it to happen? In the midst of struggle and suffering can we make sense of our faith? How can we be sure God is, and that he knows and understands?

Jesus came here, born in humble circumstances and grew up in an ordinary home, cared for by Mary and Joseph. From them he learned so much, for when he began his ministry of teaching he used examples of ordinary, everyday things to illustrate God's heavenly kingdom of justice, freedom and love. He spoke words of wisdom the simplest could understand, stories about the everyday things they knew. He loved, laughed, wept with ordinary folk, teaching them how God intended life to be. He encountered good and bad, and had time for all. Rebuking, cheering, sympathising according to the needs of those he met. Above all, assuring them that each individual is precious in God's sight.

Not everyone welcomed him, or his teaching. He made many enemies. His closest friends denied, deserted him when he needed them most. Pursued to death, he finally gave up his life for them and for us. So yes, God knows the pain and suffering we may endure, for he, in the Person of his Son has experienced life on Earth. We can rest assured God understands whatever life brings our way. Beside us, within us, to help, guide and strengthen us every day of our lives. In the words of Timothy Rees (1874-1939):

*God is love: and he, enfolding all the world in one embrace,
with unfailing grasp is holding every child of every race.
And when human hearts are breaking under sorrow's iron rod,
then they find that self-same aching deep within the heart of God. (STF 103)*

Prayer:

Compassionate God, may we all know your loving care surrounding us in all the chances and changes of life. Bless and keep us, we pray, especially those who need You most of all. In Jesus' name. Amen