



‘Worship at home’ Sunday August 25th 2024



When we live in God’s presence and
immerse ourselves in prayer,
we stand strong and firm in our faith.

Opening based on Psalm 84

We gather to worship, knowing that even when
not physically together, we worship with others:

How good it is to be in God’s presence!

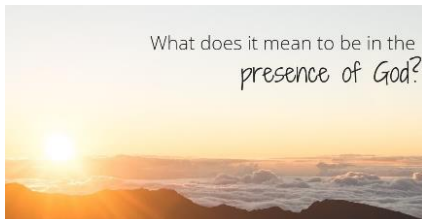
God is our sun, our rock, our shield:

Our strength comes from God.

God is our peace, our joy, our hope:

We rest in the presence of God. Amen!

**Reflect on times when you experience
the presence of God with you.**



What does it mean to be in the
presence of God?

For some, this may be in worship;
for others, a walk along the
beach, curled up in a favourite
chair, or a discussion with friends
may be the context where you
feel close to God.

**Consider your own
prayer times.**

**Do you set aside a
regular period of time
each day for prayer or
meditation?**

**Do you “shoot arrow
prayers” to God
throughout the day?**

**Do you immerse all your
daily activities in prayer?**

“The time of business
does not differ with me
from the time of prayer;
and in the noise and clatter
of my kitchen,
while several persons
are at the same time
calling for different things,
I possess God in as great tranquility
as if I were on my knees.”

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Ephesians 6: 10-18

A final word: Be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. Put on all of God's armour so that you will be able to stand firm against all strategies of the devil. For we are not fighting against flesh-and-blood enemies, but against evil rulers and authorities of the unseen world, against mighty powers in this dark world, and against evil spirits in the heavenly places. Therefore, put on every piece of God's armour so you will be able to resist the enemy in the time of evil. Then after the battle you will still be standing firm. Stand

your ground, putting on the belt of truth and the body armour of God's righteousness. For shoes, put on the peace that comes from the Good News so that you will be fully prepared. In addition to all of these, hold up the shield of faith to stop the fiery arrows of the devil. Put on salvation as your helmet, and take the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. Pray in the Spirit at all times and on every occasion. Stay alert and be persistent in your prayers for all believers everywhere.

New Living Translation

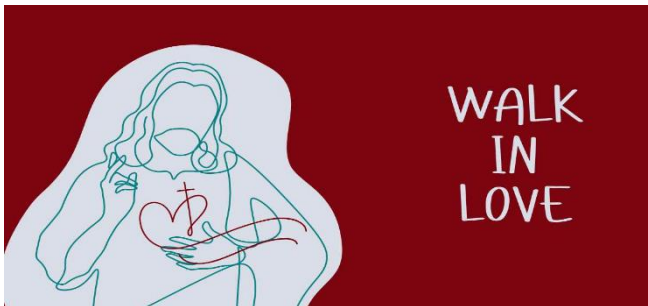
**PRAY
IN THE
SPIRIT
AT ALL
TIMES**
EPHESIANS 6:18

At the time this letter was written, soldiers wearing armour were a familiar sight. For those hearing this passage, shields and swords were part of everyday life. We sometimes read this as a military call to war, to defend ourselves against the wily ways of the devil in a battle of good versus evil. However, it can also be heard as a call to live in God's presence and love, to abide in prayer and live wisely as we walk in God's ways, each and every day. We find strength as we trust God to guide and empower us to live in faith. The armour can be seen as a metaphor: in putting on God's truth, righteousness, peace, faith, and salvation, in the strength of God's Spirit, and immersing our whole lives in prayer, we are ready to face whatever might come our way. We stand firm in prayer and love, in God's strength.

‘St Patrick’s Breastplate’ commits us to putting on God’s love and living in God’s ways each day. It is not known if Saint Patrick is the author or if it was written later and attributed to Saint Patrick. It probably originates from around the early 8th century.

*I arise today
Through God's strength to pilot me:
God's might to uphold me,
God's wisdom to guide me,
God's eye to look before me,
God's ear to hear me,
God's word to speak for me,
God's hand to guard me,
God's way to lie before me,
God's shield to protect me,
God's host to save me from snares of devils,
From temptations of vices,
From everyone who shall wish me ill,
Afar and anear, alone and in multitude.*

*Christ shield me today against wounding
Christ with me, Christ before me, Christ behind me,
Christ in me, Christ beneath me, Christ above me,
Christ on my right, Christ on my left,
Christ when I lie down, Christ when I sit down,
Christ when I arise,
Christ in the heart of everyone who thinks of me,
Christ in the mouth of everyone who speaks of me,
Christ in every eye that sees me,
Christ in every ear that hears me.*





Prayer

Gracious God, we bring you thanks and praise because you are mighty, you are far beyond, far greater than we can ever comprehend. You cannot be contained or confined to our church buildings, our incomplete prayers, our inadequate words. We give you thanks that we can trust in your faithfulness, and your presence with us always.

We pray for those who struggle to know your presence with them. We pray for those who feel apart from you, and from others. We pray for those who are unwell, facing illness, awaiting results, recovering from surgery.

We pray for those who are mourning the loss of loved ones, the loss of hopes and dreams, the loss of identity and purpose.

We pray for those in conflict, those who live under oppression, those who suffer injustice at the hands of others.

We pray for your Spirit at work in our world, in our church, and in our lives. Keep us in you, immersed in prayer, and embraced in your love, we pray. Amen

**PRAYER IS NOTHING
ELSE THAN A SENSE OF
GOD'S PRESENCE**

BROTHER LAWRENCE

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The most holy and important practice in the spiritual life is the presence of God - that is, every moment to take great pleasure that God is with you

Brother Lawrence

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Closing

This day, and every day, may God give you strength to sustain you, might to uphold you, wisdom as guide. May God's way be your way, may God keep you safe, and may God give you rest. Amen