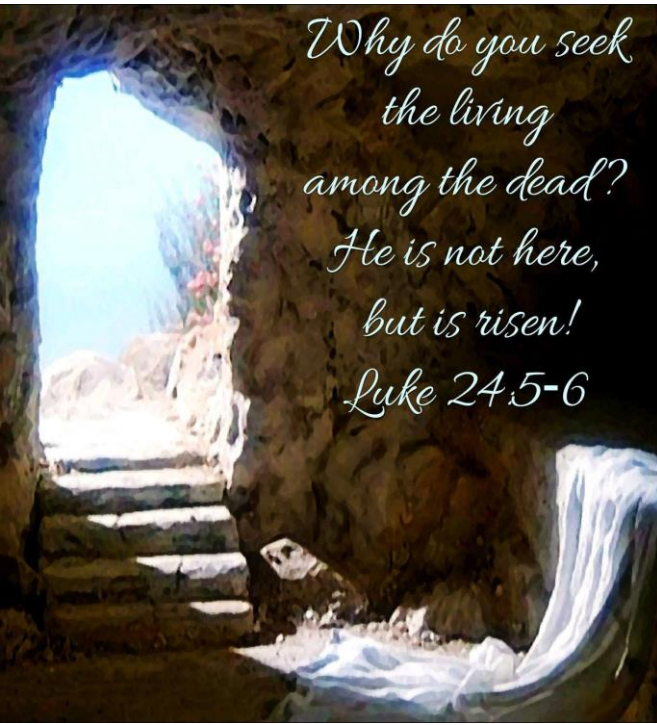


*Cathedral News*  
*April 2020*



*Why do you seek  
the living  
among the dead?  
He is not here,  
but is risen!  
Luke 24:5-6*

*He  
is  
Risen*

**THE CATHEDRAL  
OF CHRIST THE  
LIVING SAVIOUR**

Bauddhaloka Mawatha,  
Colombo 7

*Message*

*from the*

*Vicar of the*

*Cathedral*

My dear Friends in Christ,

Greetings to you in the name of Jesus Christ our Saviour!

**Church:** With the Diocese making a decision to suspend public worship until further notice, I sense that some of us were glad, while some of us were disappointed. It has been heartening to discover the many alternative methods being used by worshipping communities for worship. I am sure that some of you connected in public worship using some of the social media platforms.

In the midst of many challenges, I have been making every effort to stay in touch with you. I am extremely thankful to the support and help given by the Cathedral Finance and Administration Committee (CFAC) in an effort to reach out to those in need.

I would like to assure those of you in self-quarantine or in quarantine centers that our love and prayers are with you as you spend these days on your own. Please be mindful that even in our solitude, God is with us, and therefore I appeal to you to stay plugged in with Him at all times. God is our only refuge as our known and familiar bastions from stock markets, to oil prices and every other form of material security falls around us. Make use of this time to reconnect with God and listen to His voice. Also reconnect with one another, build community and reconnect with God's creation.

**Nation:** As I share these thoughts with you, the entire human family finds itself in chaos and turmoil as a result of the Pandemic Covid 19 that sweeps across the world.

While thinking reflectively about this crisis, I came across the following slogan which I felt aptly describes the present situation that grips the human family "**Planted Earth Closed for Repairs**".

The enforced lockdowns have given both the environment and human beings the opportunity to retreat into the respective space and some short term results are being seen with pollution levels reducing, resulting in better air quality, water ways becoming clean, plants, birds, animals and human being enjoying a break from their race for survival.

As the Church, we will continue to assist the state authorities in the uphill task they find themselves in as efforts are being made to manage this rapidly developing situation.

It was heartening to note that the political leaders were able to make a decision regarding the postponement of the General Elections that were scheduled for the 25<sup>th</sup> April 2020.

**Life in the Cathedral:**

**Electoral List 2020/2021:** This list has been revised and the first posting will be made shortly.

**Temporary Suspension - The Alpha Course:** The prevailing Health Crisis has forced us to suspend the Alpha course until further notice.

**Obituary:** As I write these lines I regret to inform you of the passing away of Ven. Godwin Weerasuriya, former Archdeacon of Colombo and Vicar of the Cathedral. Fr. Godwin, as many of us fondly refer to him, passed away peacefully in the presence of his family.


Due to the prevailing health crisis and the regulations being enforced by the authorities in the country, the family will be compelled to make the necessary arrangements for his funeral at short notice.

Your prayers will be appreciated for Mrs. Manora Weerasuriya, his wife, and children, Shanika, Shanini, Chaminda and siblings, in their time of bereavement.

Let us, in our prayers, thank God for the life of this exemplary human being who touched many of us through his life and example.  
May his Soul Rest in Peace and Rise in Glory!

Thanking You,

With Prayers and Blessings  
Yours Sincerely,



Ven. Perry Brohier  
Vicar



# Confidence in God in the Midst of the Pandemic/ COVID 19



## *A Reflection from Psalm 46*

Following the tragic chaos over the rapid spread of the Corona virus (Covid-19), life has become uncertain. Today, as we face lockdown conditions, curfews, social distancing and isolation, it is fear, insecurity and worry that grips our hearts. In this world of uncertainty, there is a longing for stability, peace, comfort - both material and physical, and the need for protection for human existence. This yearning is often followed by the agonizing realization that there is not much that we can do, and we find ourselves helpless, grappling to find solutions.

We can take protective and precautionary measures such as wearing masks, staying indoors, and follow all health advisories, but eventually we realize that we are at the mercy of many factors that are beyond our control. It is therefore impossible to have complete confidence in our own efforts to feel safe.

Then, from where does our help come? Who can truly protect us? In whom can we have unwavering confidence? To find the answers to such questions we must turn to the words of the Psalmist as written in Psalm 46:

*"God is our refuge and strength, A very present help in trouble.  
Therefore, we will not fear, even though the earth be removed, and  
though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea." (Ps. 46: 1-2)*

The Psalmist talks about the confidence that people have in God's presence and power; even in the most calamitous of situations. The certainty expressed defines God's power to be our refuge, His divine presence with His people, His nearness, and His controlling power over all circumstances.

A similar sentiment is captured beautifully in Martin Luther's famous hymn, **A Mighty Fortress is Our God**, which Psalm 46 is often associated with. Both the Psalm and hymn serve as a reminder to the



church that people can look to God for protection, help and strength in times of trial, plague, pestilence and trouble.

The Old Testament shows us how the people of Israel would praise and thank God for His salvation, deliverance, and the great works that He had done for them. He had been faithful in the past and so, the people were able to completely rely on His faithfulness in the present and the future regardless of the difficult circumstances they were facing.

Now let us see how the theme of confidence in God is revealed through each section of verses in Psalm 46.

## **Refuge and Help**

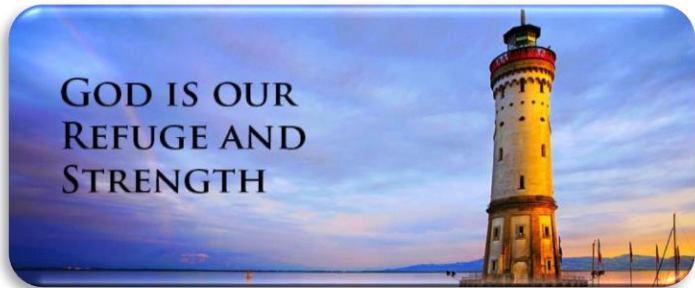
In the first three verses (vv. 1-3), the Psalmist declares God to be the peoples' refuge and help (v. 1). The word "refuge" is followed by, "to us," or "ours," which

presents the main message of the Psalm, "God is our refuge." The term, 'refuge' is used figuratively to convey the idea of a place of shelter, a resting place, a dwelling for confidence and trust. One seeking refuge is therefore fully dependent on God alone. This section is a strong contrast to human nature and behaviour in times of trial, where we resort to or seek to depend on our own strength, capacity and thinking. The idea of refuge can also be linked to blessedness; especially for those who seek refuge in God. The Psalmist declares, "Blessed are all who take refuge in him" (Ps 2:12b). Having assured his readers about God's help, the Psalmist goes on further to define the outcome of that assurance (v. 2).

God is a refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble (v. 1), therefore, "we will not fear." He affirms that they will therefore not fear natural calamities such as earthquakes and floods.

Today we are more than familiar with the destruction caused by extreme tragedies such as the Corona virus (Covid-19) that has spread all over the world.

The Psalmist uses strong language to emphasize that whatever may happen, fear is not going to shake them because God is their refuge and help. The comforting truth is that the Scripture does not deny the challenges and tragedies faced by human beings on this earth, but reminds us that when we face such calamities, we are not alone. This again, goes



against our basic human instincts and reactions which makes us believe that not being fearful in such disastrous situations is almost impossible or impractical.

## **God's Presence**

One may then pose the question, **“How can we seek God's presence in the face of sickness, chaos, destruction?”**

How is it possible to not be afraid when calamity strikes? The confidence of the Psalmist is not based on anything extraordinary in himself, the rulers of his nation or the superpowers of his time; but purely in the near presence and help of God. The same theme of confidence in God's presence, help, and protection since God is their refuge, is evident through the entire Psalm. It also focuses on God's presence and relationship with His people and the Psalmist establishes the secret of His unshakable certainty and confidence in the presence of God.

The second section (vv. 4-8) of the Psalm begins by giving a sense of comfort in being in God's presence (v. 4). The river that runs thorough Jerusalem, makes the city of God glad. The river used in its metaphorical sense refers to blessing, restoration, peace, and prosperity - the river representing a source of life.

In times like this, during natural catastrophes and destruction, we feel weary, troubled and hopeless, and we need to find fresh waters which restore, bless and sustain our souls. This river that brings life and gladness, from which flows streams of calm waters, signifies the idea of Peace. In verses 3 and 4 the raging (roaring) waters are contrasted with gladdening streams (river). These highlights and makes comparison with situations such as chaos and calmness, destruction and peace, and fear and gladness (calm assurance in the Lord).

The assurance of God's presence is powerfully presented in verse five. Because He is in Jerusalem, the city will not be shaken or overthrown. Moreover, the Psalmist declares his certainty in God's help at “the break of the dawn.” This picture also conveys a change in situations and the immediacy of help and deliverance. It reminds us that still God is in control, even though there can be challenging circumstances which may seem uncontrollable, powerful and beyond human control. It is said, that it is darkest just before dawn. Though darkness may prevail in the world at this moment in time, God can still bring the dawn, life and Hope by making His light shine throughout the world.

## **God's Nearness**

After describing the disturbance and chaos developed in nature, the Psalmist goes on to describe the raging of nations and the moving of kingdoms (v. 6). Though nations clash so that kingdoms fall, they are helpless before God, in whom the Psalmist taken refuge (vv. 6-7). Even though, nations rage to bring about mass destruction, God's voice melts the earth. This portrays God's mighty power; His words have power to create and make things new, as in the creation story (He spoke, and things were created (Gen 1:3)).

The Psalmist again brings our focus to the nearness and the seeking of help in God as given in verse 7. He is with us; He is our refuge. God is mentioned twice in this verse. This emphasizes that Jerusalem is secure, not by any other means, but purely by God's help and protection. The Psalmist comforts his people by adding that the Lord is with them in times of need.

## **Come and See**

In the third section, the Psalmist proclaims God's awesome work in stopping wars and destroying weapons (vv. 8-9). He then reminds Israel of God's command to be still, calm and not panic. God is sovereign over the nations and over the whole earth (vv. 10-11). This section (vv. 9-12) begins with an invitation. After emphasizing confidence in God as his help, the Psalmist extends an invitation to "come and see" (v.8). To see also means to "Witness". In a sense, he is saying, "Come so that you will see the works of the Lord." An implication of this invitation for people to come and see, is to give them the assurance that He is in control of all things (v. 9). This invitation is also linked with the invitation to "be still" in verse 10. Verse 11 offers another invitation, for the people to cease striving and recognize that "He is God". The Psalm closes with the same refrain as verse 8. "The Lord of Hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our stronghold."

## **Be Still and Know – I AM God**

The concluding section of the Psalm emphasizes the need to know the One and Only True God. The verse begins with two imperatives "to be still," or "let alone and do nothing." The challenge presented is to "know", "recognize", "admit" and "confess". These are the concluding commands

found in the Psalm - not an option or suggestion but a command for the people of God to be still and recognize who God is.

This Psalm also depicts God as unique and that He is sovereign over all nations. He establishes his confidence in God as a refuge who helps and protects His people. It is a hope-filled message which encourages people to trust in God. The message also motivates people to turn to Him in all situations. God being a refuge and defence is associated with His relationship with His people. God's people can find protection and unshakable confidence in and through the presence and in the power of God even in the most turbulent situations such as the ones we are experiencing in the entire world today.

**May Confidence mean**, that Christ of Nazareth, Fulfils our Inner Desire. His love is Eternal, and His Grace is Never Ceasing, Emmanuel, God with us.

### **Confidence**

**C**hrist  
**O**f  
**N**azareth  
**F**ulfils our  
**I**nn  
**D**esire. His love is  
**E**ternal and His Grace is  
**N**ever  
**C**easing  
**E**mmanuel, God with us.

As we reflect and think about the current situation in the world, read about the chaos and sad headlines, our hearts may be filled with pain, but we can have confidence in the help of our Redeemer.

The invitation at the conclusion of the Psalm is for reflection and acknowledgement. We should therefore be increasingly convinced of God's ever-present help, even in times of disturbance, chaos and instability for individuals, families and nations. People of God must have unshakable confidence even in unstable circumstances.

May the Lord grant each of us the grace to grow in faith, to trust more in His power, and to acknowledge Him as Lord in every area of life's circumstances. Amen.







### **Holy Days / Festivals & Important Dates -April 2020**

5th	Palm or Passion Sunday
9th	Maundy Thursday
10th	Good Friday
11th	Holy Saturday
12th	Easter Day
24th	Feast of St. Mark the Evangelist

### **Clergy at the Cathedral**

Rt. Revd. Dhiloraj Canagasabey  
The Bishop of Colombo

Ven. Perry Brohier  
The Vicar of the Cathedral & Archdeacon of Colombo (0777541234)

Revd. Earnest Nadeem  
Assistant Curate (0777138831)

## Sunday Worship Service Times

7:00 am - Sinhala

8:15 am - English

11:00 am - Tamil

Daily Eucharist - Monday to Saturday - 7:30 am

Every Second Sunday-Sinhala & Tamil Combined service- 7:00 am

Every Fifth Sunday- Tri-Lingual Service-8:15 am

## **Cathedral Office**

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<https://www.facebook.com/pg/cathedral-of-christ-the-living-saviour-sri-lanka-768180569905300/about>

