

**7/25/18**

**Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,**

There are many real things in our lives that make us afraid and cause us stress. We may sometimes hide them, downplay them, even try to forget about them, but the fear is still there and it is real. Health, finances, guilt, relationships, and security are all things that can keep any person awake at night. These are not the paranoid fears of the few but real concerns that most of us have.

In a world of real fears and real concerns, how then can God say, “Do not fear” and “Do not be dismayed”? God tells us not to fear because he has real answers to our real problems. *“Do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.”*  
*Isaiah 41:10*

He reminds us, first of all, that he is with us and he is our God. This section of Scripture was originally written to God’s Old Testament people, the Israelites. God had chosen Israel as a special people for himself from all the people in the world and he was really present with them in several special ways. God has also chosen you and promises to be with you in several special ways. He is with you when you read and hear his Word. He has made you his own in Baptism. He says that he is really present in Holy Communion. In these things, you find God’s presence with you still.

Secondly, he reminds us that he can help. God strengthened and helped his Old Testament people through mighty acts. He brought them through the Red Sea on dry land, provided food for them, and rescued them from their enemies. God continues to

strengthen and help you. He daily provides all that you need. He continues to guide all the events of this world for your eternal good. Most importantly, he sent Jesus to take away all your sin and guilt so that you have life and salvation. In all of this, God still holds you with his righteous right hand.

You may have real fears but find your confidence in a real God. He is with you and he will help you.

***Prayer:*** *God of mercy, you command us not to fear and in your love you equip us to obey that command. Remind us that you are the source of our help and are strong to save. Amen.*

*(WELS E-Devotion, adapted)*

**The Lord works out everything to its proper end— even the wicked for a day of disaster. Proverbs 16:4**

**Remember in your prayers:**

...See you in worship.

Keep looking up because the Lord is always looking down – Psalm 121

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