Whom Shall I Fear? A Paulin Devotional
Psalm 27:1

A short verse from today's lectionary readings calls to me; we have a choice of three readings today but it seems like the right day for a short visit with Psalm 27:1

"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?"

Today, I am readying myself to move into a life transition, and so I'm sharing in the hope that someone else is feeling a little trembly about change. We can sit together in this short verse that reminds us we don't need to be afraid.

We can simply move those two sentences into one, can't we – though we strip away the poetry – and focus on the vital words. The Lord is our light, our salvation, our stronghold.

Our light. When the path ahead is unclear and we're moving into the unknown (so, every day, after all - none of us know what is coming). When we can't see - God is our light. But we know how God works - and it never seems to be like the blinding light of broad daylight, letting us see for miles (and years) ahead. No - he's a lamp unto our feet, a light unto our path. We can see a step or two ahead at a time. The Lord loves us to keep stepping in faith, relying on him every single step of the way.

Our salvation. The root word, Yasha, in Hebrew - that conveys a sense of roominess, of space. It lends itself to the very opposite sensation of tightness and anxiety, if you'd like to think of it that way. Salvation in God is the room to take a deep breath, to unwind, to be safe, because He's got you.

And our stronghold. A mighty fortress is our God! A castle, solid rock that our faith can rest upon, can rest within. A stronghold is built to contain weakness. We can BE weak because our God is strong.

Whom shall I fear? Of whom shall I be afraid? The psalmist doesn't say there's nothing to fear. This isn't dismissal. Things can be scary, but we can face them, that's the message here.

We aren't facing them without fear because of anything in ourselves. We are standing in the sanctuary of our light, our salvation and our stronghold.

When you feel overwhelmed, when you're uncertain about the path ahead, when you feel a bit lost - remind yourself that you aren't alone and you aren't defenceless. He is sheltering you, lighting your way, and giving you room to breathe.

Take courage! The very end of the Psalm leads us to this: "Wait for the Lord; be strong, and let your heart take courage; wait for the Lord!"

