



Let your hearts be strong!

Dearest sisters and brothers in Christ,

The world can be a frightening place. It is plagued with war that ravages families, leaves children with scattered memories of an unsafe and violent existence, renders families vacant with losses of sons and daughters and even for those of us afar from the battle grounds, touched in ways that can break our hearts.

“Thus says the Lord: ‘*Say to those whose hearts are frightened:*

Be strong, fear not!’” (Isaiah 35:4)

We can always find solace in the Lord. We can pray for others who suffer, we can pray for our own faith to be strengthened, we can empower ourselves by paying tribute to God in our acts of compassion, generosity, and service, with joy and humility. We can actively use our lives, our blessings and what we can in the service of God. As a prayer, we can offer whatever we have, from wherever we are, to whom ever is in need. A simple act of faith may come across as a smile to brighten someone else’s otherwise unfortunate day. A meal for a neighbor may come as a surprise of nourishment and care. A call to your parents at an unexpected time may offer gratitude in a moment of struggle. We may never know the ripples of hope that our actions create. We may never sit under the shade of a tree where we have planted seeds. Yet, these acts change the world. Let us do this in the name of God, our Lord, and our Mother Mary. **Amen.**