

Hymn: **Be Not Afraid** *Robert Dufford*

You shall cross the barren desert
But you shall not die of thirst;
You shall wander far in safety
Though you do not know the way;
You shall speak your words in foreign
lands
And all will understand;
You shall see the face of God and live.



Refrain:

Be not afraid, I go before you always;
Come, follow me, and I will give you rest.

If you pass through raging waters in the sea,
You shall not drown;
If you walk amid the burning flames,
You shall not be harmed;
If you stand before the pow'r of hell
And death is at your side,
Know that I am with you through it all.



Refrain:

© 1975 OCP Aust Agent: Word of Life International
All rights reserved. Used with permission. Licence No. 774

A Prayer for Today

Every day we need Thee, Lord, but this day especially.

We need some extra strength to face what is to be.

This day more than any day we need to feel Thee near to fortify our
courage and overcome our fears.

By ourselves we cannot meet the challenge of the hour.

There are times when human beings need a Higher Power to help them
bear what must be borne.

And so, dear Lord, we pray, hold onto our trembling hand and be with us
today.

CREATURE FEATURE...

YOU, ME and the CRAB



Oh, how I wish we would
only remember that we
are but travellers here.
With this thought ever in
our minds how easy
would the daily trials
of life become to us...

Mary MacKillop
1866



CRABS

At the seashore, every pool and puddle left by the retreating tide seems to have a crab in it. Little ones scuttle sideways, squeezing under rocks, peeking from a patch of seaweed, occasionally venturing out to nibble on unwary human toes. Now and then, you may see bigger crabs, in deeper, safer pools; with ponderous majesty, they wave huge claws as a warning to stay away.

On the beach, shells of crabs lie washed up by waves. Some are from crabs that died. Others are simply discarded, a swelling too small for its growing occupant. That's how crabs grow bigger—when their shells get too tight, they split the shell open and grow a new one. I've never talked with a crab. But I imagine the process of splitting open a shell must be painful. I'm sure that until they grow a new shell, they feel terribly defenceless and vulnerable. Because that's how we humans feel when we crack open our shells.

Our shells aren't visible like crabs' shells, but they are there, just the same—shells formed by years of habit, shells that protect us from other people, shells that are the roles we play as parents, or children, or bosses, or employees. Every now and then, we crack our shells open and emerge into a new world, quivering and defenceless.

Teenagers do it as they become adults. No wonder they get crabby sometimes. Adults do it as they learn to quit running their kids lives, or when they get laid off work, or when a wife or husband dies and they have to start all over again—alone. When an investment fails. When a dream disappears. In all these traumas of life, a shell is being broken. A new vulnerable life is started. Like the crab, the longer that shell has been growing around us, the harder it is to break open, to start again; the more painful the breaking becomes.

Some of our shells we have worn for generations. Our Christian faith can be a shell handed down by our ancestors. Some faith shells are worth keeping; others may have become prisons, shells so encrusted with the barnacles of the past, so burdened with trailing weeds, so constricting, that we can no longer move when God calls.

No one looks for painful experiences in life or faith. To avoid pain we may prefer to stay locked into shells that no longer fit well, rather than risk the vulnerability of cracking them open. But when a crab's shell becomes too thick, too protective, too tough to crack open and start again, then the crab can't grow anymore. That's when it dies...So do we.

Let's be crabby!!!

Faith Prayer

Real love is full of living and dying. It takes the best that a person is because it takes all that a person is.

Response: Lord, help us to be crabby...

Every experience in life provides us with a special gift. Ask to receive it and the gift will be yours. **Response**

We ask permission to break the shell of yesterday's pains. After all the strife we seek a new lease on life. **Response**

We seek permission at last to be free and to be the people we were meant to be. **Response**

Liturgy of the Word

When we have seen and heard something in a new way, in a way which brings life and joy to us, there is no turning back, only going forward with hope into the mystery of a future unknown but full of promise...led by the voice of our Beloved...embracing us, whispering to us...

“This is the way, walk in it.” (Isaiah 30:21)

Some Positive Crab Thoughts

One for each day of the week...

1. I am okay.
2. I am loved.
3. I like me.
4. I am special.
5. I am interesting.
6. I can appreciate change.
7. Everything teaches me—I enjoy learning.

