

Prayer for the community

By Elise L. Moore, C.S.

I was glad when my Mom gave back the gun. She'd kept it hidden in her bedroom. But my brother and I knew it was there.

It looked like a toy gun. Or rather, toy guns look very realistic. It had a white handle, a long barrel. But it was heavier than the toy plastic version.

My uncle gave the gun to Mom because of the neighborhood we lived in. Because she was alone with two small children. He gave her the gun for protection. To make her feel safe.

I never felt safe with that gun in the apartment. Apparently, neither did Mom. She gave it back.

I was nine when she had the gun. But even then, I knew my safety, our safety, rested in the power of God not the bullet of a gun.

"I will both lay me down in peace, and sleep: for thou, Lord only makest me dwell in safety." (Psalms 4:8) King David wrote this during the time of his son Absalom's revolt. David fled the city to avoid being killed by Absalom. So he was well aware of danger. But David's conviction in the power of God was absolute. His life had been one proof after another of the saving power of God, good, over evil. We can pray to realize this same conviction and safety.

Part of the salvation of God is wisdom. David knew when to run. He knew when to avoid a certain place. He knew when to humbly listen to God for direction and be kept safe from sudden attack.

When people are being attacked in their home, we need to unite in prayer to form the armor of God around each member of the community. Ephesians 6:10-18 speaks of putting on the whole armor of God.

It's not people we are battling. We are battling blind and selfish thinking that could cause someone to justify doing evil. The voice of Christ must

ring in every human consciousness. Our prayers will help silence evil impulses so that the voice of Christ is heard and obeyed.

When my mother gave back the gun, we began to pray more diligently, with more consecration for our safety. There were challenges. I remember one night being attacked by the newspaper boy. He was strangling me.

It helps to be prayed up, overcome fear ahead of time, because there isn't much time in these situations. In those seconds, I turned to God and knew God was there. God was with me and would protect me. God was with this boy, speaking to him. God's man was good and only wanted to do good. God governed this boy. Just then he let go. I'd briefly lost consciousness, but revived. After threatening me, he left.

As the weeks passed, I kept praying. He never threatened me again.

Perhaps it's time for us to join together mentally and pray for just 5 minutes each day for the safety of everyone in the community. Psalms 40 and Ephesians 6 are good places to start.

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