

Meditation on the Lord's prayer

Our Father who art in Heaven,

you want us your children to build a new earth of sisterhood and brotherhood, not a hell of violence and death.

Holy be your name,

that in your name Lord, let there be no abuse, no oppression and no manipulation of the conscience and liberty of your children.

Your Kingdom come,

not the kingdom of fear, force or money, of seeking peace through war.

Your will be done on Earth as it is in Heaven,

in this land of ours and in sister lands which echo with gunfire and cries of fear.

Give us this day our daily bread,

the bread of peace, Lord, so that we can sow our maize and beans, watch them grow and share them together as a family.

Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.

Do not let our relationships be based on self-interest. Let us change laments for songs of life, clenched fists for outstretched hands and the weeping of widows and orphans for smiles.

Lead us not into temptation,

the temptation to conform, to do nothing: the temptation not to collaborate with you in the search for justice and peace.

But deliver us from evil,

from behaving like Cain to our brothers and sisters, from believing ourselves rulers over life and death.

For yours is the Kingdom,

the Power and the Glory. You are our hope of salvation, in you we place our trust.

El Salvador, group of refugees,

Love your neighbour

Jesus, friend and brother,

You know what it is like
To be hungry and thirsty.

You know the plight of the
Stranger who is made unwelcome.

You know the suffering of all
Who have lost everything.

We pray that by welcoming
The asylum seeker we may show
Love for our neighbour and
Draw closer to you.

Amen.

Tony Singleton/CAFOD

Prayer of protection

Terror is at our heels.
Anxiety, uncertainty, vulnerability
Lie ahead.
We have fled to freedom.
And yet...
Our hearts are aching.

Response: Cover us with your wings O Lord

Far from home.
Longing for the familiar.
A touch, a smile, a hug, a kind word.
Yearning to return.
And yet...
We must go forwards.

Response: Cover us with your wings O Lord

Memories and dreams
Grief and hope
Death and new life
What might have been
What could be.
And yet...
Throughout
Remains
Your constant love.

Response: Cover us with your wings O Lord

Margaret McNulty/CAFOD

Welcoming the stranger

For the people and land from which refugees have fled,
may there be peace and reconciliation between people and nations.

That strangers, refugees, and those who seek asylum
may find a welcome among us.

We pray for all who make our laws
and administer justice: May the God of justice be their guide.

We pray for those who minister to the vulnerable and broken people
especially the homeless and displaced: that they may show God's welcoming love.

We often feel powerless in the face of crushing poverty, injustice
and violence in our world; we ask for the courage to reach out
to victims of injustice and poverty.

Lord, you bestow on us the gift of your spirit in our lives to sustain our wavering
hope.

Accept the prayers we make from the fullness of our hearts, and grant the requests
we make with confidence in you.

Through Christ our Lord.

Brentwood Diocese Refugee Week

Leaving security behind

God, our fellow traveller,
give us courage to leave security behind
that we may take the path of risk
and become your pilgrims.

Give us courage to tread the road of dispossession
that we may reach out to those we meet
and share their load.

And give us grace to listen to those whose voice is lost
That we may hear their cry and shout out for justice.

Amen.

Annabel Shilson-Thomas/CAFOD

On Homelessness

Vulnerable God,

As we contemplate the wonder of your birth,

Stir in us the desire to cradle those who have no where to lay their head,

That together we may rock the boat of injustice.

Give us grace to offer our hands to those who reach out

That with faltering steps we may find a way home

And kindle our hearts to embrace the rejected and dispossessed

And so meet you face to face.

We ask this in your name. Amen.

Annabel Shilson-Thomas/CAFOD