

POVERTY



APRIL 2010-JULY 2010

PRAYER DIARY

Please pray for the work of Christian Aid and its partner organisations throughout the world.

In the Prayer Diary you will find:

- daily requests to pray or to thank God
- a weekly prayer that could be used in church intercessions
- a reference to a Bible passage for reflection

Thursday 1- Saturday 3 April

As Holy Week reaches its climax, we see the gathering of the powers that take Jesus by force, humiliate and kill him. In Jesus we see a different sort of power speaking of the Kingdom of God. We pray for eyes to see the signs of God's kingdom in the world today, and with it the promise that suffering will not triumph.

John 19:30

Lord Jesus, you died to bring life and love to all people. Let us see your face in the faces of all those who suffer.

During the week
please pray for:

- all people forced to carry a cross they have not chosen
- a willingness to enter into the suffering of others
- a willingness to make sacrifices in the name of justice
- all who are imprisoned for daring to challenge the powers of the world
- all who are vilified for threatening assumptions and prejudices
- all who are ridiculed for speaking peace in the midst of violence.

Sunday 4- Saturday 10 April

Easter is the triumph of life over death, of hope over despair. But Easter joy is costly. The resurrection narratives speak of shock, fear, and lack of recognition rather than immediate delight. This week we pray for freedom and life for the people of Haiti who continue to suffer as they struggle to cope following the devastating earthquake in January.

John 20:1-18

Alleluia, Christ is risen! Help us to die to greed and rise to justice, so that rich and poor may be restored to resurrection life together.

During the week
please pray for:

- food, water and medical assistance to continue to reach the most vulnerable people in Haiti
- separated children to be reunited with their families
- a commitment to help Haiti that continues after the media has left the country
- Christian Aid partners distributing tents and shelter as the hurricane season approaches
- the political will to cancel Haiti's estimated \$890m international debt.

At Easter we rejoice. Death has relaxed its grip. Life has burst out of the tomb. The stone has been rolled away.

But as we rejoice, we pause. God is crucified again and again, laid in a grave as the basics of life are denied people, a stone sealing the tomb.

Wilson Manuba lives in the Philippines. He lost his leg to cancer due to metal poisoning, which he believes is a direct result of years of mining operations. Life is a daily struggle for him. He describes how it takes him half an hour to 'crawl' down the steep bumpy road to the sea several kilometres away, where he works as a fisherman.

In a country of contrasts where the wealthy drive their Porsches and Ferraris into the car parks of glitzy air-con shopping malls, Wilson belongs to the 40 per cent of the 90 million-strong population that live in poverty.

The company that employed him is alleged to owe the Philippine government \$20 million in mining taxes. Such tax losses are compounded by widespread corruption. If the taxes were paid, they could be spent on healthcare to help Wilson fight the diseases he now has. Instead, Wilson has fallen victim to a situation beyond his control.

God in Jesus places himself in the place of the victim, and in so doing, stands with all victims of unequal power structures. Through the life, death and resurrection of Jesus, we are shown a new way of living without the need to create victims. We see the presence of the risen Christ today wherever the victim is given support. One manifestation of this is Christian Aid partner MACEC which is helping Wilson to take on the mining company and the law to bring justice to thousands of people affected by mining in the Philippines.

Christian Aid partners are working around the world to expose the systems and structures that prevent people from living in the fullness and dignity of the life for which they were created. As we celebrate the risen Christ, work with us so that together we can challenge the existing order, stand in solidarity with those who are oppressed and victimised and roll away the stone that stands in the way of abundant life.

This reflection draws on the theology of the atonement presented by René Girard and James Alison.

As a result of the chronic arsenic poisoning caused by the nearby copper mining operations, Wilson Manuba has lost one of his legs. With the help of Christian Aid partner MACEC he is campaigning for justice.



APRIL

Sunday 11- Saturday 17 April

This month Loretta Minghella will take over as the director of Christian Aid. Please give thanks for the tremendous achievements of Daleep Mukarji over the last 12 years and pray for Loretta as she steers the organisation into the future.

John 20:19-20

Risen Christ, give us your peace that reconciles us with each other but will not stand quiet in the face of injustice. Give us your peace, the peace of God that passes all understanding.

During the week,
please pray for:

- the management of the organisation as it negotiates challenging financial times
- the continued prayers and support of the churches of the UK and Ireland
- Christian Aid's board of trustees, helping to set and oversee the strategic direction of the organisation
- all our partners working at grassroots level with poor and vulnerable communities
- supporters, volunteers and staff, giving thanks for their time, creativity and commitment.

Sunday 18- Saturday 24 April

Wednesday marks the start of the Global Campaign for Education's week of action. Please pray this week for our partners in southern Sudan working to improve educational facilities in a country where, after years of conflict, less than 6 per cent of children will complete primary education.

John 21:18-19

Lord, give us the courage to follow you where we do not necessarily want to go, to speak out in the power of love that you have given us.

During the week,
please pray for:

- girls in Sudan – a 15-year-old girl is more likely to die in childbirth than to complete her education there
- Christian Aid partners working to support education and training initiatives in Sudan
- all displaced people returning home after the conflict to find that schools have been damaged either through violence or neglect
- the Episcopal Church of Sudan, which has built classrooms and implemented a school feeding programme
- the Mundri Relief and Development Association, working to raise awareness of the importance of education, particularly among girls
- A peaceful future for Sudan, as the Comprehensive Peace Agreement reaches its final year.

APRIL/MAY

Sunday 25 April- Saturday 1 May

Today is World Malaria Day. Malaria is one of the world's biggest killers, claiming more than a million lives every year, mostly African children under five years old. Please pray for communities affected by this disease and for Christian Aid partners working to combat it.

Revelation 7:16-17

Loving God, quench our thirst with the water of life, so that we are strengthened to wipe away another's tears.

During the week
please pray for:

- Christian Aid's 'Nets for Life' programme, distributing 250,000 mosquito nets over three years in Nigeria
- Christian Aid partner ACJ in Angola, working to raise awareness of the illness in slum communities
- ACJ's lobbying of state health services to distribute more mosquito nets
- people living with HIV who are less able to fight off illnesses and so are more susceptible to malaria
- CASM in Honduras, lobbying local councils to provide proper drainage to avoid stagnant pools where mosquitoes breed.

Sunday 2- Saturday 8 May

At the time of writing, it is anticipated that a general election will take place this week. Please pray this week for political action by Christians working to hold governments to account for their promises and actions.

Revelation 21:1-6

Loving God, we pray for a right use of power, and for all governments to act in the cause of justice, freedom and development.

During the week
please pray for:

- a commitment within the new UK Parliament to give a voice to those living in poverty
- the political will to deliver the millennium development goals
- political commitment to work for an end to poverty
- a commitment of financial resources to creating green jobs and renewable energy
- a proactive approach to lobbying MPs and helping to shape the politics of development.

Sunday 9- Saturday 15 May

This week is Christian Aid Week. Please give thanks for the commitment and dedication of all who work to make this week a success and pray for the people of Kenya featured in the church resources.

Revelation 21:10, 22-25

Loving God, move us to action, move us to generosity, move us to bring in your kingdom.

During the week
please pray for:

- the courage never to give up on the belief that change is possible
- communities to come together to work for change
- the people of the Matopeni slum in Kenya, who have come together as a community to organise rubbish collections and educate people about health and other issues
- Christian Aid partner MNU helping the people in the Kiambiu slum to build toilet and shower blocks and to live in safety and dignity.

Sunday 16- Saturday 22 May

Please pray this week for the people of Zimbabwe for whom the past two years have been a rollercoaster ride. The politically motivated violence, the collapse in the economy and desperate food shortages meant that at least 5.5 million Zimbabweans are estimated to have depended on food aid to survive during 2009. Christian Aid partners have pioneered simple and cost-effective farming techniques to help poor, small-scale farmers there to survive.

Psalms 97:2

Jesus our Redeemer, may the effects of your resurrection spread to all places of oppression and injustice.

During the week
please pray for:

- ZimPro, promoting agricultural techniques that help poor farmers in Zimbabwe to grow more food in a changing climate
- the Dabane Trust, building dams and pumps that bring water to market gardens, ensuring crops all year round
- the Habakkuk Trust, encouraging community 'action teams' to restore water pumps ensuring clean and safe water for their communities
- the estimated 4 million Zimbabweans who fled the country during the violence
- the 3 million Zimbabweans believed to be in South Africa, living in appalling conditions in informal settlements.

Sunday 23- Saturday 29 May

Today is Pentecost – the day when the Holy Spirit is poured upon a small group of Galileans who are then understood by people across the Roman Empire as speaking in their own languages. This week we think about the ways that we are held together by globalisation, and particularly about the ways that economic relationships can both enrich and impoverish.

Acts 2:1-4

Holy Spirit, give us tongues of fire, and inspire us to speak of justice without fear.

During the week
please pray for:

- the World Bank and IMF to remove all economic policy conditions attached to their loans and debt-cancellation agreements
- reforms in international trade so that poor countries have the freedom to support their farmers and industries
- the World Trade Organisation to support development rather than promote free trade for the sake of it
- strong campaigning against economic partnership agreements (EPAs), in which the EU insists that its former colonies open up their markets
- the millions of farmers who will potentially lose their livelihoods if EPAs are pushed through.

Sunday 30 May- Saturday 5 June

Tuesday marks the start of Volunteers' Week. This week we give thanks for all who regularly give their time as Christian Aid volunteers.

Psalms 8:1-9

Gracious and Holy Father, give us wisdom to perceive you, diligence to seek you, patience to wait for you, eyes to behold you, a heart to meditate on you, and a life to proclaim you; through the power of the Spirit of your Son, Jesus Christ. (*St Benedict*)

During the week
please pray for:

- all volunteers, giving thanks for those who run events, speak in churches, lead assemblies and help in our offices
- the unique perspectives of volunteers that serve to inspire hearts and minds
- all gap-year students who inspire other people to get involved in anti-poverty issues
- a new generation of activists campaigning against social injustice
- all young people participating in Platform2, our unique scheme offering 18-25 years olds the opportunity to volunteer in a developing country.

Sunday 6- Saturday 12 June

The FIFA World Cup starts on Saturday in Durban. Please pray this week for Christian Aid's partners in South Africa and especially the Church Land Programme working with poor communities in and around Durban, helping them to stand up for rights to their land.

Luke 7:11-15

Loving God, who lived among the poor to show us the meaning of love, remind us of our responsibility to usher your new order into the world.

During the week
please pray for:

- the Church Land Programme supporting poor families in legal battles to reclaim their land
- poor families who have been evicted from their shacks, often at gunpoint, in a move to make the country appear 'poor-free' ahead of the FIFA games
- all children orphaned or affected by HIV – South Africa has the highest infection rates in the world
- the inhabitants of South Africa's sprawling townships, many of which have no sanitation, water or electricity provision
- South African rural communities, where most land still remains in the hands of a wealthy minority after years of colonial and apartheid rule.

Sunday 13- Saturday 19 June

Please pray this week for the people of Mali, where the changing climate is making life increasingly difficult for poor communities. The once predictable rainy seasons have been getting shorter, leaving river beds dry sooner than they should be, and farmers without enough rain water to grow their crops. 80 per cent of Mali's population relies on farming, so the impact is devastating.

Luke 7:49-50

God of peace, help us to build a world where justice reigns and your kingdom of peace is established.

During the week
please pray for:

- Malian farmers who cannot grow enough food to last them through the dry season
- families for whom a lack of available food means they cannot carry out traditional methods of trading in which food is a kind of currency
- the 110 million people who depend on the River Niger – which is fast running dry
- families who are having to leave their homes as water sources dry out and food becomes increasingly scarce
- the Mali Folkecenter, finding clean energy solutions to help communities develop.

Sunday 20- Saturday 26 June

Today is World Refugee Day. Please pray for all people who have been forced to leave their homes because of conflict, natural disaster or environmental causes.

1 Kings 19:11-12

Come Holy Spirit, enter our silences, our longings, our desires; embrace and empower us with your love.

During the week
please pray for:

- the Thailand Burma Border Consortium which provides food and shelter to 140,000 Burmese refugees who are unable to return home because of conflict
- all people who do not live in safety at home
- all refugees who face the prejudice of others
- the people of Bangladesh, where the changing climate is forcing people to leave their homes
- the people of the Gaza Strip, home to around 70,000 displaced people – almost half the population
- The people of Colombia, home to a 40-year armed conflict that has created widespread displacement and loss of life.

Sunday 27 June- Saturday 3 July

Please pray for the people of India this week. India has one of the fastest developing economies in the world, but only a small section of India's 1.1 billion population are reaping the benefits. The remaining 80 per cent have seen little positive change in their lives. Most of this 80 per cent exist on less than \$2 a day but a shocking 370 million among them subsist on less than \$1 a day.

Galatians 5:22-23

Holy God, give us the confidence that comes from confessing Christ as Lord, and the strength to live by the fruits of your spirit.

During the week
please pray for:

- groups such as dalits, adivasis (indigenous peoples), religious minorities and women who continue to face persistent poverty, exclusion, exploitation and human rights violations
- Christian Aid partners such as Safai Karmachari Andolan working to restore dignity and rights to dalit women working as manual scavengers (the practice of clearing toilet waste from homes and businesses)
- the people of India experiencing the harmful impacts of climate change
- the development wing of the Church of North India working with marginalised communities to secure their livelihoods.

Sunday 4- Saturday 10 July

This week we hold in our prayers the people of Israel and the occupied Palestinian territories. Poverty in the occupied Palestinian territories has increased more than threefold over the last 15 years. The separation barrier, which runs through the West Bank and surrounds the ancient city of Bethlehem on three sides, together with more than 550 checkpoints, roadblocks and other obstacles in the West Bank, makes getting to work, school or healthcare a daily struggle for Palestinian families. The blockade of Gaza, meanwhile, continues to perpetuate a humanitarian crisis.

Isaiah 66:10-14

Loving God, we pray for a building of peace in your holy land, and your blessing on all those who work for reconciliation.

During the week
please pray for:

- all children, Israeli and Palestinian, who have been injured in the conflict
- children who have been traumatised by the events they have witnessed
- the people of Bethlehem who rely on a tourist industry which is adversely affected by the conflict
- Christian Aid partner YMCA, providing stress and trauma counselling
- the Women's Affairs Centre, offering women in Gaza training and support to help them take an active role in society
- the Parents' Circle Families Forum, where bereaved Israeli and Palestinian families come together to campaign for peace.

Sunday 11- Saturday 17 July

Please pray this week for the people of Brazil. At 35 times the size of the UK, Brazil is the largest country that Christian Aid works in. It is one of the most unequal countries in the world, making the global top ten for both wealth and inequality.

Luke 10:25-37

God in Jesus, help us to be good neighbours, and give us the strength not to walk on by.

During the week
please pray for:

- Christian Aid partners working for a fairer distribution of Brazil's land
- projects that are helping poor people understand and claim their rights
- work to change the unfair tax system in Brazil
- increased political voice and representation for the poorest people
- partners that are building interfaith networks to lobby for social change
- the rights of indigenous people and vulnerable women.

Sunday 18- Saturday 24 July

Please pray this week for the people of Afghanistan, the poorest country in the world outside of Africa. 40 per cent of the population there do not meet their daily food needs, and a quarter of all children will die before their fifth birthday. Poverty and desperation only strengthen the hand of anti-governmental forces.

Amos 8:1-12

God of justice, help us to live out our faith in a way pleasing to you and in a way that will bring your love to the world.

During the week
please pray for:

- the Afghan Women's Network, working to reform Afghan law to protect human rights
- Christian Aid partner STARS, helping Afghan people to diversify their food sources by growing vegetable gardens
- STARS' work helping to train women on pregnancy, birth and post-natal care
- Christian Aid partner ANAB, working with blind people to challenge discrimination
- Christian Aid partner AJC, working to improve knowledge and understanding of HIV through local radio
- the Afghan government to find a concrete resolution to the conflict that goes beyond the military option.

Sunday 25- Saturday 31 July

This week we celebrate significant successes in our tax campaign such as the backing by the British government for our call for companies to declare the profit they make and the tax they pay in every country in which they operate. Christian Aid estimates that poor countries are losing \$160bn a year in potential tax revenue. Please pray for the campaign as it gathers momentum.

Psalms 138

God of glory, help us to live with your steadfast love that can never be defeated.

During the week
please pray for:

- an end to the financial secrecy that costs poor countries billions of dollars in unpaid taxes
- a change to accounting rules that allow unscrupulous businesses to dodge taxes
- world leaders to reform global financial systems at this time of market instability
- laws to be introduced forcing tax havens to reveal the identities of businesses and individuals holding funds offshore
- energetic campaigning and effective communication as to the scale of this problem.

An online version of this prayer diary can be found at
www.christianaid.org.uk/prayer

You can find further resources – including policy papers, reports and worship materials – at www.christianaid.org.uk/resources

Christian Aid is a Christian organisation that insists the world can and must be swiftly changed to one where everyone can live a full life, free from poverty.

We work globally for profound change that eradicates the causes of poverty, striving to achieve equality, dignity and freedom for all, regardless of faith or nationality. We are part of a wider movement for social justice.

We provide urgent, practical and effective assistance where need is great, tackling the effects of poverty as well as its roots.

Front cover picture: Joseph Kithuku, 71, and his granddaughter Blessing, 6, sit outside their family home in Matopeni in Nairobi, Kenya

Front cover photo: Christian Aid/Elaine Duigenan

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