

TRAVELLING TO PARIS: PRAYERS FOR CLIMATE PILGRIMS

As we journey together to Paris over these two weeks, we are inspired by our faith to walk and pray in solidarity with communities affected by climate change. With each step and with each prayer, we are walking by faith, collectively calling on our world leaders to agree a fair, ambitious and binding climate change deal in Paris. Whether you are physically walking or praying from home, we are joining in with a global movement of people with the same heart and vision for a world free from poverty and climate change, as God intended. We hope and pray that this collection of prayers and reflections will be an inspiration for each one of you as we walk and pray together; each step taking us all closer to Paris.

FRIDAY 13 NOVEMBER
AND DID THOSE FEET?



Christian Aid supporter hiking the Munros.

Matthew 4:18-19

'As he walked by the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the lake – for they were fishermen. And he said to them, "Follow me!"

Reflection

Jesus kept walking. Walking by the Sea of Galilee. Walking to Jerusalem. Walking on the water. Through crowds, through fields ready to be harvested, through the throng of the Temple, and through foreign towns.

The Pilgrimage2Paris, whether we are joining in physically with others along the route, making our own pilgrimage in solidarity, or tracing it in our mind from the comfort of our own chair, is a walk with Jesus.

Jesus invited others to join his walk. 'Come, follow me', he keeps saying in the early pages of the Gospels.

In his book, *A Philosophy of Walking*, French philosopher Frédéric Gros talks of walking as a form of 'life scoured bare', as a way of 'experiencing the real'.

Through the hubbub of daily life, Jesus keeps calling us. That call, as it was for the first disciples, is into a life of greater reality as we leave things behind.

The disciples spent time at Jesus' pace. In this they discovered what it is to walk the earth, feeling underfoot the hard ground, the ground where the birds pecked and the thistles grew, and the soft loam where the wheat produced the harvest. By walking at Jesus' pace they began to hear the cry of the poor and sick, see the marginalised and ostracised, and respond to those in need of love and healing.

Reflecting on this, the theologian Dan Hardy wrote about Jesus 'walking step by step through the land, and after every set of steps he met someone, stood by someone, one to one, and in some way he touched

and healed each one.' (*Wording a Radiance, Parting Conversations on God and the Church*, Daniel W. Hardy with Deborah Hardy Ford, Peter Ochs and David F. Ford. SCM Press, London 2010. p80.)

Jesus calls us to look at the reality around us, to see the joy and wonder of creation and also how we are destroying it and storing up trouble for generations to come. He wants us to see the effects of this on today's poor and sick, marginalised and ostracised. He calls us to set out on a journey that involves leaving behind old ways and become his agents for mending the world.

'There are two different roads', wrote St Basil the Great, in his commentary on Psalm 1, 'one broad and easy, the other hard and narrow.' He talked of these being a path of pleasure to be enjoyed now, and the path of salvation that promises a beautiful future. 'The soul is confused and dithers in its calculations. It prefers pleasure when it is looking at the present; it chooses virtue when its eye is on eternity.'

Many are saying the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP21) in Paris is our last opportunity to set off on a new journey that has the future at its heart. The old ways will mean that the world's poorest, and our children's children, will be pilgrims through a barren land. The new walk leads towards the crystal fountain where the healing waters flow.

To do

Take a deliberate step towards Paris today and in taking that step ask yourself how you can walk more in a Jesus-centred and Jesus-simplified way.

Prayer:

Lord, let me walk with you,
putting my steps in Jesus' steps,
and entering his rhythm of life,
so that I might see creation more as you see it,
hearing its song of joy but also its cries of pain.
As I learn to tread more gently on the earth
towards Paris and beyond,
by the reconciling power of your Spirit,
bring together all your people to work to mend
the world.

Graham Usher, Bishop of Dudley

SATURDAY 14 NOVEMBER

A PILGRIM'S JOURNEY

Hebrews 11:8

'By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to set out for a place that he was to receive as an inheritance; and he set out not knowing where he was going.'

Reflection

A pilgrimage is an opportunity to step away from our everyday lives and spend time in quiet reflection as we redirect our hearts towards God. The story of Abraham's pilgrimage in Genesis is a story of listening to God's call and leaving his normal life in obedience. He started out on a journey, not knowing what the outcome would be. Putting his trust in God, he walked by faith into the unknown. Abraham moved from place to place in obedience to God, building altars and making sacrifices. Each time he sacrificed, he came to know God better and God blessed him more. God showed his faithfulness to Abraham, in providing him with the thing that he wanted most – a son and an heir – when all the odds were stacked against him. God kept the promise that he had made to Abraham, who was strengthened in his faith and gave glory to God, fully believing that God had the power to do what he had promised. Abraham's trust and obedience were not misplaced.



Orphaned at six, and later thrown out by her husband for not bearing a child, Agnes Anyabo's tiny plot of land was washed away by floods. She started over again with the help of a women's farming cooperative, Omulala women's group, in Soroti, Uganda.

The Bible tells us that, as Christians, we are permanently sojourners or pilgrims in this world. For those who have accepted Jesus as their Lord and Saviour, we are temporary residents in a sinful world. Our ultimate home is the city of God. Therefore, like Abraham, our whole lives are a pilgrimage of faith. We trust God to provide for our needs and to help us make a life in a world which often seems foreign to us. God calls all of us to walk with him throughout our lives. We often don't know where he is calling us to in terms of

where we will live, what we will do or the people we will spend our time with. Sometimes we are called, like Abraham, to believe the impossible and to sacrifice the unthinkable.

As the writer of Hebrews says, faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see. Like Abraham, although our path and its outcome are not always immediately obvious, we are ultimately spurred on by a future hope. For those who put their faith in Jesus, there is hope and certain future glory. This world is not all there is. Ultimately there is peace and justice in the city of God. Seeing God's faithfulness to us so far, as we journey with Him through life, we trust in His promises laid out in scripture and cling to the hope of the life to come.

To do

Think through your own journey in life and journey of faith, and discuss with fellow travellers what challenges you have met, and what you hope for in the future.

Prayer:

Lord, as we follow the path of our pilgrimage, may we keep you in our hearts.

As we put aside material comforts, and the things that usually support our life, help us to concentrate on the here and now, and the journey of our faith.

May we support one another through the difficult and the good times, so that we may fulfil your will for us.

**The Rt Hon Caroline Spelman MP,
Second Church Estates Commissioner**

SUNDAY 15 NOVEMBER

RUNNING, WALKING AND CAMPAIGNING WITH PERSEVERANCE!



David Golding CBE, voluntary spokesperson for Tearfund, shows Elinata the article, in which she featured, that inspired him to campaign with Tearfund, Nguluka village, EFZ, Zambia.

Hebrews 12:1-2

'...let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus...'

Reflection

'What drew me to Wilberforce was his reputation as a man who simply would not give up when the cause is just,' says John Piper. In his first speech to Parliament

on the slave trade, on 12 May 1789, Wilberforce said, 'I am determined I will never rest until I have effected its abolition'. 18 long years later, on 25 March 1807, having had his bill rejected on no less than 12 occasions in the intervening years, the motion was carried overwhelmingly. The great majority of the MPs rose to their feet and cheered him, while William sat with his face in his hands, tears streaming down his face.

As with the abolition campaign, perseverance involves effort in the face of adversity. On Christmas Day, 1776, at the lowest point for the Americans in their War of Independence, George Washington addressed his weary and frostbitten troops with words penned by Thomas Paine: 'Let it be told to the future world, that in the depth of winter, when nothing but hope and virtue could survive, that the city and country, alarmed at one common danger, came forth to meet it.' That night they crossed the Delaware River and the next day won the decisive victory and secured their nation's freedom.

Perseverance also involves patience in the face of indifference. Truly, our rulers have sorely tried our patience! The biting denunciation by an outraged young environmental campaigner, Anjali Appadurai, of the assembled high and mighty at COP 17 in Durban, in December 2011, put it perfectly: 'You have been negotiating all my life!', she thundered, to roars of approval from the rest of the youth delegation. We stand on the cusp of history and must brace ourselves to be in it for the long haul.

Perseverance also involves courage in the face of despair. Early in 1940, the allied forces had been routed by the German army and the whole of the continent

lay under the Nazi jackboot. Joseph Kennedy, the American Ambassador in London, reported that Britain 'would be beaten by the end of the month'. Within the war cabinet, both the former Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain and Foreign Secretary Lord Halifax thought we should give up the fight and sue for terms. But Churchill was contemptuous – Hitler would reduce Britain to a slave state with a puppet government. Shortly afterwards, on 28 May, he addressed his full cabinet with these words, 'If this long island story of ours is to end at last, let it end only when each of us lies choking in his own blood on the ground!' It's said there was a pause, then a great roar, with many of those present in tears. 'The rest', as they say, 'is history'.

Climate change? Let us have no readily avoidable part in it, and let it not happen with our meek acquiescence! Beyond that, we commit ourselves and the fruit of our endeavours into the hands of Almighty God.

To do:

Can you recall occasions when you persevered with patient good humour and eventually won through? Are there other situations to which you need to apply this approach?

Prayer:

O Lord God,
when you give to your servants to endeavour any great matter,
grant us also to know that it is not the beginning,
but the continuing of the same,
until it be thoroughly finished,
which yields the true glory.
Amen.

Sir Francis Drake

David Golding CBE,
Voluntary spokesperson for Tearfund

MONDAY 16 NOVEMBER

RENEW OUR STRENGTH, LORD

Isaiah 40:31

'... those who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary.'

Reflection

Sometimes we feel like a ton of bricks have been dumped on us. So much work. So much to do. There's no time to rest.

Today's reading is a comfort. The Lord understands all our burdens, and he gives us strength.

We are asked to hope in God, where we will find true rest for our hearts.

Gustavo Gutierrez is a theologian from Peru. He once said, 'Hope is a grace, it is a gift, but we need first to actively respond to this gift. To receive this gift is to create in the world around us a reason to hope.' (CAFOD Pope Paul VI memorial lecture, 2005.)

It's amazing what strength hope gives you. Even in the most difficult of circumstances, by holding onto hope you can be a light shining through the darkness.

Rosa Idalia lives with her family in a small farming village of Puenticitos in El Salvador. Erratic rains and drought have meant most of her crops were ruined. This was devastating for Rosa, because she was hoping to sell these crops to pay for her daughter to go to school.



Rosa Idalia Rivera de Arevalo from El Salvador feeding her chickens. She said, 'I am putting my faith in the chickens... For me personally, breeding chickens is my greatest hope.'

Determined not to give up, Rosa turned her life around. Thanks to the support of CAFOD's partner Jesuit Development Service in El Salvador, she now keeps chickens and sells the eggs at the local market. This has made a huge difference to Rosa's family. She says, 'Breeding chickens is my greatest hope. If you don't have hope, you don't get anywhere.'

We hope for a positive outcome at the UN climate talks, for the sake of Rosa and all of our sisters and brothers who are affected by the changing climate. Rosa has created a reason to hope, and we are called to do the same.

It's a long road ahead. But when we place our hope in God, we find the strength to carry on.

To think about

What are your burdens?

What do you hope for?

Take a few quiet moments today to speak to the Lord.

Prayer:

Lord, in you we find our strength.

Bless and comfort those who feel weary,
and give them rest for their souls.

TUESDAY 17 NOVEMBER

'A SMALL FIRE BURNT BIG LOGS'

– an African chiManyika proverb (the language spoken in the central western district of Mozambique)



Earnest Maswera, Tearfund's country representative for Mozambique, asks Amber Rudd, Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, how the UK will make Paris deliver for people living in poverty, at the Speak Up reception on 17 June 2015.

Genesis 41:14

'The Pharaoh sent for Joseph, and he was hurriedly brought out of the dungeon.'

Reflection

Pharaoh has a dream that troubles him. He calls all the magicians and wise men to come and interpret the dream. None of them can. But the chief butler remembers a dream teller he met in prison two years back, and the dream teller is urgently called to the palace to interpret the dream.

Many poor people in Egypt did not foresee the famine. It was certainly difficult for Joseph who was in prison. The poor and the vulnerable like Joseph could not foresee the likely devastating food shortage and the deaths of thousands. It was through Pharaoh's dream that disaster was averted. He discovered that answers to complicated issues are found in simple people in simple objects and even in prisoners. Joseph, a pitiful boy picked from the pit, raised in slavery, condemned to a prison, was brought to the palace to interpret Pharaoh's dream. He laid out an outstanding 14-year strategic plan. With plans that seemed hard in the

short-term, he served the nation by making Egypt food secure and also sustained the hungry of other nations.

As we journey on the Pilgrimage2Paris, may the rulers of this world realise that the answers to the world's climate change problems could be in and with simple people, little recognised, apparently weak and not consulted. The answers to the uninterpreted dreams on climate change may be hidden in dirty, yet precious parcels that no one ever worries to open. Giving a voice to the poor, seeking genuinely to find a Joseph strategy for today from those who do not seem to count may bring the answers to climate change problems. Africa will be there, Latin America will be present and Asia too. Europe will be present and America will be there. Whose voice will count? Will it be the strong and powerful, will it be the averagely strong? Will it be the weak and poor?

Let the leaders of this world make climate justice a priority and make the lives of all people a concern of their hearts.

To think about

Who are the ones whose stories you need to listen to? And whose stories will you tell?

Prayer:

Lord Jesus, thank you for the story of Pharaoh who needed answers to the troubling dreams of his day.

We pray that those who make decisions in Paris will listen to those who are poor.

We pray that you will raise up Josephs who will speak justice,

persuade decision makers to commit to a better future,

and so make celebration possible among the poorest citizens of the world.

In the precious name of Jesus, our Lord.

Earnest Maswera, Tearfund

WEDNESDAY 18 NOVEMBER

REAPING WHAT WE SOW

John 4:37-38

'For here the saying holds true, "one sows and another reaps". I sent you to reap for that for which you did not labour. Others have laboured, and you have entered into their labour.'

Reflection

Let me tell you about a village.

In the village there are 360 houses built of brick, in rows and tenements. The size of single apartments is 15 by 12 feet and 9 feet in height. For about 300 houses there are only 12 privies of a most objectionable character. Ashpits are provided, but they are built about 15 yards from the houses. Water is procured from some 17 stand-pipes, and the sewage flows down by open channels. The sanitary conditions generally existing are bad in the extreme.

This village could be in India or Zambia. Actually, it's a description of a Scottish village in 1915. One hundred years ago, my grandfather was a coal miner living in this village. He died of pneumoconiosis (black lung disease) at the age of 48, leaving my grandmother, still in her 30s, with eight children under-12 to bring up alone. Her life was one of unremitting struggle; of poverty, appalling housing, illness and exhaustion. She died aged 56.

Coming from a coal mining family, I am all too familiar with the endemic poverty, the health destroyed, the communities ruined, the land polluted, which have all too often been the reality of life for those who work in the extractives industry. Nor is this reality a thing of the past. Still today, as Christian Aid partners across the world testify, fossil fuel mining casts a long shadow over the lives of communities from Colombia to Nigeria to the Arctic.

I am someone who has hugely profited from the benefits of fossil fuels. The energy that lights up homes, schools and hospitals, the power that has driven production lines and prosperity, the fuel that moves our transport. Health, wealth and mobility – all of these the powerful and comfortable of the world (among whom I must include myself) have enjoyed. In the words of Jesus, I have reaped that for which I did not labour.

But now I know also that fossil fuel extraction has not only externalised its costs onto the poorest and most vulnerable people and places. It has also damaged the future of life on earth itself. We know that we can't continue to burn fossil fuels; we must leave the vast majority of fossil fuels in the ground in order to keep global warming at a safe level. Yet we are still



Christian Aid/Tom Stoddart

Alain Lubondo, 17, and Nsinka Zihindula, 25, work in cassiterite mine, Szbira, South Kivu. They work 24 hours on, 24 hours off, and say they do the work because 'there is nothing else to do'. Nsinka lost sight in one eye after a mining accident.

dependent on them to an alarming degree for our energy, transport and economy.

I believe that the best way I can honour the huge cost my grandparents paid is to join the campaign to stop investment in the dirty energy produced by fossil fuels and instead to invest in clean, renewable energy. I want all the world's grandchildren to reap a secure and sustainable future, and that depends on the seeds we sow today. I believe this is the labour that Jesus is now calling me to enter into.

To do

'If we stand with the poorest, there is hope we can address the issues of climate change when we speak up for the love of this world God made and loves.' – Nicholas Holtam, Bishop of Salisbury
Please consider joining in with the Big Shift, Christian Aid's campaign to leave fossil fuels behind.
christianaid.org.uk/bigshift

A prayer:

God our strength and hope,
we pray for countries rich in fossil fuel resources,
especially those who see in mining the hope for future prosperity:
that the urgent desire to benefit impoverished national economies
is not taken advantage of by those with wealth and power,
that sustainability is not sacrificed to short-term gains, people are not sacrificed to profit,
that the future of life on earth is not sacrificed to the interests of a few,
and that countries, especially the poorest, are not forced into impossible choices.

Kathy Galloway, Head of Christian Aid Scotland

THURSDAY 19 NOVEMBER

PEDDLING A PILGRIMAGE TO PARIS



Children cycling home from school in Cambodia.

Jeremiah 6:16

'Thus says the Lord; "Stand at the crossroads and look; and ask for the ancient paths, where the good way lies; and walk in it, and find rest for your souls."

Reflection

I have always had something of a fascination with pilgrimages. This started long before I became a Christian and it was probably in part due to having to read the Canterbury Tales at school (I still sometimes baffle my children by quoting the Wife of Bath). I have over the years made one or two spiritual journeys of my own, although mostly these days I make do with my annual pilgrimage to Lords for the cricket. This year I am joining the people's pilgrimage to Paris to encourage the world's leaders to take decisive action on climate change.

Yeb Saño, who is also a climate change commissioner, grabbed the limelight at last year's UN climate talks with emotional pleas for action. On 20 May he stepped out to lead a 'pilgrimage' to parts of the world hit by climate impacts before embarking with others towards Paris in the late autumn.

Another one speaking out is Winston from Fiji. As the Archbishop of Polynesia he has seen and experienced at first hand the devastating effects on fragile coastal communities that climate change is bringing. In a sermon delivered at the G8 meeting in Brisbane in 2014, he said, 'I sincerely feel that the battle on climate change cannot be won merely within the confines of the institutions we have built and the boundaries of our own countries,' Winston says. 'I will be encouraging as many as possible to join the pilgrimage to highlight the issue of climate change, with the fervent hope that it rallies people and communities towards building a more just, sustainable and peaceful world.'

Archbishop Winston is not coming to Paris but his voice is, because the Anglican Alliance is gathering hundreds of voices and words from around the globe and then symbolically taking them to Paris. Listen out for these voices on your local radio station and on Premier Radio in the days leading up to the Paris summit.

Many commentators are suggesting that civil society mobilisation on climate change around the world towards the Paris meetings will be unprecedented, more courageous, more uncompromising, more creative than anything we have seen before. I pray that this is so.

As we stand at this important crossroads in the climate justice debate I ponder on the path we will choose. Join me in asking God to move the hearts and minds of those making decisions. I will be doing that as I peddle from Wells Cathedral to Salisbury Cathedral and on via Newhaven to Paris.

You don't need to be religious to be a pilgrim but I can assure you that if you share in anything like this, it will always be spiritual.

To think about

Stop and think about the beauty of nature. Breathe in the air around you and use that pause to remember those being significantly impacted by our changing climate. Remember the island nations in the Pacific. Ask God to bless Archbishop Winston and others like him who are speaking out about climate justice.

Prayer:

Dear Lord,

You called your disciples to follow in your way:

you are the Way, the Truth and the Life,

and so we come, seeking to follow in your footsteps.

Creator of the earth, as we journey, help us to walk lightly,

treasuring the world you have given us and cherishing each other.

And grant, we pray, that our walk may be part of your plan,

to care for creation seeking climate justice

and the coming of your Kingdom

on earth as it is in heaven.

Prayer from www.prayandfastfortheclimate.org.uk

Andrew Bowerman, Anglican Alliance

FRIDAY 20 NOVEMBER

LISTENING TO GOD'S CALL

1 Samuel 3:9

'Speak, Lord, for your servant is listening.'

Reflection

Samuel is called by God. He hears the call, but he doesn't recognise who it is at first. Then at last he knows it is the Lord, and he listens deeply.

Like Samuel, we are called to listen to God. This call is often mysterious. Sometimes it is hard to hear. Sometimes we don't recognise the Lord. But we are asked to be present to the Lord, and to listen deeply.

Davi Kopenawa Yanomami is President of the Hutukara Yanomami community, a CAFOD partner, which protects the rights of threatened indigenous people in the Brazilian Amazon.

Davi and the Yanomami people have a deep connection with the natural world. 'Our country Brazil is very beautiful,' he says, 'full of harmony, trees, it has lots of clean water.'

But their way of life is threatened by small-scale illegal gold miners who repeatedly invade indigenous territory.

On top of this, his people are vulnerable to the changes in climate. Davi says, 'The earth is cracking. The destruction of the forest is making us ill.'

Davi is angry when people are indifferent to the environment. He says, 'The people in the cities, we want them to listen and believe us. They don't see it. They let it happen.'

At times, we can be very detached from the world around us. We might hear about environmental deterioration, such as droughts and floods, but it is happening far away from us.



Davi Kopenawa Yanomami, President of the Hutukara Yanomami Association in Brazil. A CAFOD partner.

But Davi hears how mother earth is crying out. Davi is also crying out for justice, for he knows his community suffers with the earth.

To do

Take a few moments today to listen to what's around you. Try to listen to everything you hear; the wind through the trees, people talking, distant traffic. Ask God to help you to listen to his call.

Prayer:

**Loving God,
whose wisdom speaks
through the cracking of the earth
and the righteous anger of the suffering,
break down the walls of our indifference.
Help us to hear the cry of our neighbour
and the cry of our sister earth.**

Rachel McCarthy, CAFOD

SATURDAY 21 NOVEMBER

RAIN IN ITS SEASON

Deuteronomy 11:14

∴ then he will give the rain for your land in its season, the early rain and the later rain, and you will gather in your grain, your wine, and your oil;

Reflection

The writer of Deuteronomy was very familiar with the rainfall pattern of Israel. It usually rained from October to early May, and for the rest of the year there was no rain, but the winter rains sustained the land. If there was little winter rain then there was a drought in the summer. In good years the barley harvest began by Passover in the spring and the wheat harvest by Pentecost seven weeks later. The grapes and the olives were harvested in the summer and autumn. There were also bad years where there was little rain and the harvest was poor. Throughout the Old Testament the people were told that if they were

faithful to God then they would be blessed, but if they were not they would be punished, often by poor harvests.

Water is still a vitally important resource today. Our planet is dominated by water, but most water is saline, and cannot be used for drinking or to water our crops without expensive desalination. Of our freshwater supply, most is locked up in icecaps and glaciers, with only about 0.01% in our streams, rivers and lakes. Water is continually recycled as it evaporates from the sea, freshwater bodies, and from the leaves of plants. This water forms our clouds, which eventually supply us with rainfall. Humans have been very successful at controlling freshwater systems with dams and other engineering projects. In some places we have extracted so much water from rivers that it is causing environmental problems. An example is the Aral Sea in Central Asia, which was once the fourth largest lake in the world, but after diverting the rivers that fed it to irrigate cotton fields it is now about 10% of its former volume. We have also over-extracted ground water held in aquifers in many parts of the world and polluted numerous lakes and rivers.

With climate change there is more energy in the atmospheric system, which means an increase in heavy rain, as well as droughts. Rainfall seems less predictable than it was, with severe droughts often followed by major floods. Recent research has suggested that climate change has exacerbated the effects of the prolonged drought in California.

The rich countries of the world have contributed most of the greenhouse gases causing the climate to warm. The poor of the world have suffered most of the consequences. We cannot entirely stop further warming this century, but a strong agreement on carbon emissions cuts in Paris is essential if we are to limit its effects. Like the people of Israel we have a choice. If we make the right choice we will have 'rain in its season'. If we make the wrong choice we will have no rain, and the ground will yield no produce. It is up to us.

To do

Consider supporting one of the charities that are working to supply fresh water in poor countries. Examples include Christian Aid, Tearfund, WaterAid and Christian Engineers in Development.



El Hundimiento waterfall in Ruidera, Spain.

Prayer:

We pray for all those people suffering from the effects of drought and flooding.

May their tears be wiped away.

We pray for the organisations working to provide safe, clean water.

May you lead them to springs of living water.

We pray for Christians on the way to Paris for the climate change meeting.

May they love the Lord, their God, and serve him with all their hearts and with all their souls.

Martin J. Hodson, The John Ray Initiative

SUNDAY 22 NOVEMBER

WALKING FOR THE STRANGER

Leviticus 19:34

'The alien who resides with you shall be to you as the citizen among you; you shall love the alien as yourself, for you were aliens in the land of Egypt: I am the Lord, your God.'

Reflection

There are two groups of people walking at the moment. They are very different from each other, and yet intricately connected.

The first group is you; taking part in the Pilgrimage2Paris, giving up your time, your money, your energy and your comfort to pray and speak up for issues you care deeply about. The second group is the multitude of people trying to make their way



Syrian refugees, Anal, 18, and her son Ahmed, 10 months, in the Beqaa Valley, Lebanon. Anal went into labour during her journey from Syria.

across Europe, fleeing from Syria and other places where life has become impossible to sustain owing to conflict. Over the last few months we have watched the deepening crisis in Syria, and the refugee crisis in Europe, horrified at the scenes of death, panic, desperation and heartache that have been relayed to us through our various screens.

What we have seen is one of the biggest refugee crises since the Second World War. There are more than four million Syrian refugees outside the country, as well as 7.6 million people displaced inside Syria, where some 12.2 million people are in need of humanitarian assistance. It is a crisis of immense proportions, but how is it connected to you who are walking the path to Paris?

The immediate reason why millions of people have had to leave their homes is the worsening violence in Syria due to the ongoing civil war. The subsequent deterioration of the refugee camps has then catalysed people to leave Syria in search of something better.

If we look further back, though, there has also been a lengthy and severe drought in Syria, which a number

of studies have linked to our changing and increasingly erratic climate. The factors behind the current refugee crisis are complex, but climate change is one of them.

In an opinion piece for *The Guardian* (6 September, 2015), Jonathan Sacks, a former chief rabbi, philosopher and bestselling author, said, 'I used to think that the most important line in the Bible was "Love your neighbour as yourself". Then I realised that it is easy to love your neighbour because he or she is usually quite like yourself. What is hard to love is to love the stranger, one whose colour, culture or creed is different from yours. That is why the command, "Love the stranger because you were once strangers", resonates so often throughout the Bible. It is summoning us now.'

To think about

As you walk today or remember those who are walking, remember to pray for the stranger: people not only from Syria, but millions of people around the world who are on a very different journey from yours; travelling on foot, on boats, on trains.

Prayer:

It is thought that 12 million people were displaced by natural disasters in 2014, many of which were weather-related disasters linked to climate change.

Take 12 steps forwards and then stop.

Before going any further, pray once again that our world leaders will come to an agreement in Paris that will help reduce climate-related weather disasters and hence reduce the numbers of people displaced by them.

Ruth Valerio, A Rocha UK

MONDAY 23 NOVEMBER

TRAVELLING LIGHT

Luke 9:3

'He said to them, 'Take nothing for your journey, no staff, nor bag, nor bread, nor money – not even an extra tunic.'

Reflection

When packing for a holiday, trip or pilgrimage, there are always some essential items that you really mustn't forget: tickets, passport, money and toothbrush. With these few items to hand, in theory at least, the world

is our oyster. But for most of us, the checklist of must-have travel accessories is growing longer and it's no surprise our suitcases and backpacks are getting bigger and heavier. It seems we find it increasingly difficult to travel lightly, literally or metaphorically. The way we travel, probably reflects the way we live. Our lives are crowded out with stuff, and more stuff. We are defined by our possessions.

When Christ called the disciples they didn't have time to pack or collect their things. They just dropped everything, got up and walked. They had to travel light. In that moment, they had to weigh up what was really important, and what they really needed for their life's journey.



St Augustine called the church 'God's pilgrim people here on earth'. In the religious life, the pilgrimage has long been a metaphor for the journey of faith and the journey of life. When we embark on a pilgrimage, we are set free from the things that normally tie us down, and we are liberated from the stuff that we normally carry around with us. By necessity we must travel light, and we come to recognise what is really important, what we really need.

The first Christians were called 'followers of the way' and today we are still followers of the way of Christ. Our home is not fixed here, neither is our destination. We are travellers, we are pilgrims, on the move. That might help us all regard the trappings of modern life with

a little more discernment. We find our true calling as Christians in the vocation to pilgrimage. We are spiritual travellers, walking towards eternity and fulfilment, in the world but not of the world. God's pilgrim people here on earth.

To think about:

Have you packed the right things for your life journey? What do we really need to experience life in all its fullness, and what should we leave behind? Are you defined by your 'stuff'? How can we learn to break free from some of the trappings of modern life?

Prayer:

Merciful God,

grant us grace and courage to keep on walking the pilgrim way of Jesus Christ,

and the wisdom to know what we really need to take with us on the journey of life.

Help us to let go of the things that hold us back, so that we may travel lightly.

Keep us on the right path, and direct us in the way of peace.

Victoria Johnson, Residiary Canon, Ely Cathedral

TUESDAY 24 NOVEMBER

TEN COMMANDMENTS FOR PILGRIMS

Exodus 16:2

'The whole congregation of the Israelites complained against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness.'

Reflection

Boots rubbing heels, rucksack straps rubbing shoulders and poles rubbing hands. Am I carrying too much or too little? Do I have enough food and water? Did I pack my earplugs for sleeping in the church hall tonight? The romantic ideals of being a pilgrim are sometimes abruptly interrupted by the harsh physical reality of the endeavour.

The dreams of freedom soon turned to dross for those early pilgrims in Exodus as they encountered the harsh reality of the wilderness. Less than two months into the journey the complaints to Moses and Aaron began. The people found it hard to leave their old ways behind them, so God gave them rules to live by in Ten Commandments. Not rules for deep moralism



In the dry landscape of Yabello, Ethiopia, food insecurity is exacerbated by rising temperatures and increasingly unpredictable weather.

to clobber people with but rules to help them journey together towards the common good.

We know that there need to be rules to live by to ensure the flourishing of all of humanity and the earth. We know that there is another way to live away from

the old land of dependence on fossil fuels. We know that the talks in Paris are a key opportunity to take an important step towards the new land of a fairer, low carbon future. We need rules put in place that are agreed on to bring climate justice, while enabling the world's poorest to develop in a sustainable way.

It was in the wilderness that the children of Israel got a sense of their true selves and their place in the world. It was in 'The Great Wilderness,' a three-day expedition as part of Christian Aid's 70 Munro Challenge, walking 70 Munros to mark the 70th anniversary of Christian Aid, where we found conditions harsh yet the experience holy. In the great wilderness of Fisherfield we retreated from pressing digital demands. The long days of walking and wild camping stretched us out and expanded our souls. We returned reminded that our true selves are part of nature and hopeful that we can be more resistant to rampant consumerism. 'The wilderness experience of transcendence fuels the struggle for true justice in the world'. (Quote by Ched Myers. Used with permission.)

The endurance of pilgrimage, the day-to-day rhythms of preparation, walking, eating, cleaning and sleeping become rituals that toughen both the soles of our feet and our inner resolve. Whether walking or following the pilgrimage to Paris may we all become more resolute people of faith journeying towards the justice of another possible world.

To do

Ten Commandments for hillwalkers/pilgrims:

1. Thou shalt prepare thoroughly before starting.
2. Thou shalt start early.
3. Thou shalt set out properly equipped.
4. Thou shalt choose thy company with care.
5. Thou shalt not destroy anything which is thy neighbour's.
6. Thou shalt often keep silent to hear the mountain/the land speak.
7. Thou shalt leave no sign of thy passing.
8. Thou shalt remember others in their strength or weakness.
9. Thou shalt bend to the weather and be strong.
10. Thou shalt be humble and praise God.

(Anonymous. Used as part of the Christian Aid's 70 Munro Challenge 2015)

Prayer:

God of the journey,
when the way seems long
sustain us with your vision.

When we grow weary
refresh us with your love.

When we reach the destination
embolden us with your passion.

Wendy Young, Christian Aid

WEDNESDAY 25 NOVEMBER

WISDOM HAS BEEN POURING OUT

Proverbs 1:20

'Wisdom cries out in the street; in the squares she raises her voice.'

Reflection

For years, Wisdom has been pouring out:

From scientists and environmentalists across the board and across the world, a consensus of insight and experience more than 97% strong.

For years, Wisdom has been pouring out:

From our poorest brothers and sisters in parts of the planet who have least to do with the causes of climate change, but who suffer most from the chaos it creates. Wise warnings from Bolivia where flooding takes homes in El Alto and hectares in the Amazon; from Bangladesh, where waters wipe out crops and cultivate disease; from Sudan, where rising temperatures lay waste to farmland and drive neighbours into heated



Christian Aid/Andrew Testa

Louda dam in Burkina Faso. Families in this area, who are still feeling the impact of the 2012 food crisis, are struggling to cope with the adverse effects of climate change.

dispute; from Siberia, where one of the world's last wildernesses is losing its winter and her people, their way of life; and from Tuvalu, the peaceful pacific islands who may soon drown in the waters that have generously sustained them for thousands of years.

For years, Wisdom has been pouring out:

From our globe that groans under the pressure of our ever-increasing carbon footprint. Sea levels and global temperatures rise, our oceans warm and their ice sheets shrink, our glaciers diminish and the earth spins out of kilter. The world endures ever more extreme weather events, an inconvenience to the well-insulated, but a catastrophe to the vulnerable. And all the while, Wisdom stands shouting, shivering or sweating in the midst of it all, but we in the wealthy west walk on by and smirk.

Lady Wisdom in Proverbs is no shrinking violet. She has something vital to say and her strident voice is a clarion call to those who will heed her. She is a very old lady, according to our sacred story with the world since before the world, and her eternal understanding resonates with our present-day. There are two takes on the truth vying for our attention: on one side, the voices of science, experience and evidence have all joined to say that we must make real changes to the way we live, travel and consume – they insist that we cannot continue to live as if the planet has infinite resources or as if we are the only generation to consider. They challenge the deeply embedded model of 'economic growth' at all costs, claiming that it is too costly. On the other side, there are heavily invested corporations calling us to consume more and more, ideologies telling us it is sensible to base success on things, subtle but consistent encouragement all around us to live for today with no more than a cursory glance at tomorrow.

Wisdom cries out...

To do

Add your voice to the growing chorus of those wanting real change and serious moves towards climate justice. Sign the ACT NOW petition at <http://actclimate.org> and ask global leaders to step up in Paris!

Prayer:

Wonderful God, let lady Wisdom have her way!
May her voice carry us to new places,
where we meet our brothers and sisters
and share the generous gifts of this world.
May she lead us to see from new places,
and give us new perspectives.
May your love song sing us together.

Sally Foster-Fulton, ACT NOW Climate Change
Ambassador for Scotland

THURSDAY 26 NOVEMBER

JESUS, THE GARDENER

John 20:15

'Jesus said to her 'Woman, why are you weeping? For whom are you looking?' Supposing him to be the gardener, she said to him, 'Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have laid him, and I will take him away.'

Reflection

Most readings of this text assume that Mary was wrong about Jesus being the gardener, and that is the obvious inference to make. But as this is the Fourth Gospel, the wise reader needs to be alert for irony. Could it be that there is another sense, an extraordinary and symbolic sense, in which Jesus actually is the gardener? Could it be that Mary was, in a way, right in supposing him to be the gardener? This Gospel is so good at hints and symbols and hidden meanings that perhaps there is something hidden here if only we could 'see' it.



Beatrice Mwende Ngumbi stands in the field in which she and her father, farmer Reuben Ngumbi work. They are members of the Sustainable Agricultural Livelihood Innovation (SALI) Project in Kenya, which works with farmers groups, training members in farming techniques and assisting in the marketing of produce.

The writer of this Gospel uses plenty of imagery from the natural world to reflect on the meaning of Jesus' death and resurrection (being like a seed that falls into the ground and dies) and perhaps the writer is alluding

here to the stories in the Hebrew scriptures about Adam, the earth creature, who was made from the soil, whose vocation was to till the soil and to keep it, and who would return to it at death.

There were those among the early Christians who talked about Jesus as the new Adam or the second Adam, and they understood that Jesus was the saviour not only of people, but of all creation too. They saw in him a new beginning for the whole world, a recovery of the vocation and meaning of humankind in relation to creation, and the 'first fruits' of a new kind of human community with creation. Is this a Gospel theme that we have forgotten and need to find again?

Looking back over history from the place we are now, we can see the story of humankind as one of tilling the soil, of digging deep to grow crops and of digging deep for minerals and fuels. We have been the kind of gardeners who have tilled hard. But we have not 'kept' the earth and indeed now we see that the earth is groaning, dirty, and exploited, and that some of earth's children are hungry. We need to find again our vocation as 'Adam', the earth creature of God, in touch with the earth, tilling it fruitfully, but also keeping it faithfully. And Jesus is the new Adam, the new earth creature, who calls us to that renewed vocation.

If Jesus is our saviour, then there has to be a sense in which Mary was right. He is the gardener. He is the one

who creates, in God's good time, a new creation, in us and in the earth too. We might weep with Mary over the ruins of the old garden, but also, like her, announce that we have seen the beginnings of a new one. 'I have seen the Lord!'

To do

Plant some seeds, whether wild flowers by the path or vegetables in your allotment, as a sign of trust in the renewing of the garden of creation.

Prayer:

Risen Jesus,
garden in my soul
that I may harvest goodness and hope
for the sake of the earth
and for the feeding of the hungry.
And in the garden of creation,
may we find the green shoots of your new life.

Susan Durber, Christian Aid

FRIDAY 27 NOVEMBER

STAND UP AND WALK

Matthew 9:5

'For which is easier, to say, "Your sins are forgiven", or to say, "Stand up and walk"?'



To mark the year commemoration of Typhoon Haiyan in the Philippines, Filipino UN Climate Negotiator, Yeb Sano, organised the Climate Walk, a 1,000km trek in November 2014 from Manila to Tacloban.

Reflection

In intercessory prayer we hold the needs of others before God. Often we ask for healing, like those who carried the paralysed man to Jesus. What do we want for those whom we carry and hold before the Lord? It is the basic question of intercessory prayer.

Those on the Pilgrimage2Paris have the care of the earth in their hearts and minds. Holding the earth before God, what do you want? Pray today for those who are preparing the political and diplomatic processes for the Climate Change summit. Hold them lovingly before God and ask that they be supported and strengthened to do their work for the good of all.

The use of energy stored in fossil fuels has given us marvellous developments. We have made rapid progress. Now we live in a new era, when climate change is caused by human activity, particularly the use of fossil fuels. That which has been good for us is now a mixed blessing. It is creating new dangers. The health of the world depends on our making an even more rapid transition to a low carbon economy. For this we will need our best brains and greatest hearts to act together. Pray for all of us in this, for the creativity and inner energy to make the depth of commitment and collective will needed to make difficult change. What exactly are we asking of God as we hold one another and the care of the earth in our prayers?

Is the problem sin? What is it about the way we live that damages ourselves, our relationships with one another and with the wider world? What separates us from God? It is an absorbing thought but forgiveness and healing moves the person on from being absorbed with self: stand up, go on, if not home, get on with life. What is it you are called to do? Now you are on the move, who are you called to be?

Pilgrimages are hard work, especially in November. The journey gets us thinking about our goals and the means by which we will reach them. What have you found on the journey so far that you now see as a goal that you want to tell those meeting in Paris for the Climate Change summit?

By now you will have discovered the truth of the African proverb: 'if you want to travel fast, travel alone. If you want to travel far, travel together.' Pilgrimages build community like little else. What have you started to discover on this journey that you want to take home?

Is it easier to say, 'Your sins are forgiven', or to say, 'Stand up and walk'? Either way, what we are being told is to get on and live as God would have us be.

Prayer:

**We pray, Lord,
that everything we do
may be prompted by your inspiration
so that every prayer and work of ours
may begin from you
and be brought by you to completion.
Through Jesus Christ, our Lord.**

(Based on the Prologue to the Rule of St Benedict.)

Nicholas Holtam, Bishop of Salisbury

Thank for you sharing in this pilgrimage of reflection and prayer for climate justice, on the way to Paris. Whether you have travelled physically or whether you have travelled in prayer and thought, your pilgrimage is part of the journey that all humankind is making and must make towards a new future with God, for the sake of the earth, and for the sake of the poor.

Please continue to join in prayer, so that earth may be renewed, in the power of the Holy Spirit, according to God's will and to the glory of Jesus Christ.

The reflections included in this booklet are written by people representing a variety of churches, faith agencies and perspectives.

