

# Daily Advent prayers – Week Three

## Day 15 (16 Dec)

**"The people walking in darkness have seen a great light."**

Ephesians 5:9

### **Reflect**

It is hard to stand out, to feel like an outsider. To be different takes courage. Yet as the children of light we are to live in truth. We are to be people of integrity. We live what we say. Sometimes living for and speaking the truth can be painful, but it is part of our discipleship. We are a people living with a different agenda.

### **Prayer**

Lord, help me to stand for truth today. Make me a person of honesty and integrity. Lord, when my courage fails, as it does, grant me your close presence to remind me that healing, forgiveness and love flow from you to me. Thank you, Amen.

## Day 16 (17 Dec)

**"Because Joseph her husband was faithful to the law and yet did not want to expose her to public disgrace, he had in mind to divorce her quietly."**

Matthew 1:19

### **Reflect**

At the start of the story, there is the possibility of hurt, confusion, disappointment and disgrace. Joseph and Mary are living in that place between faith and fear, hope and misunderstanding. I wonder how isolated they felt. Yet in the midst of it, God was at work. Sometimes in the midst of struggles we just have to hold on and believe that God will work it out.

### **Prayer**

Lord God, we pray for all those who are isolated. Some that live in isolated communities across the world, and others who feel alone even in the midst of many people. We pray that they may know your presence. We also pray for those who go to isolated communities across the world bringing supplies, medicines and support. Lord, have mercy. Amen.

## Day 17 (18 Dec)

**"An angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said: 'Joseph, Son of David, do not be afraid.'"**

Matthew 1:20

### **Reflect**

Fear is something we are all familiar with. Sometimes our fears are genuine, sometimes misplaced, but fear is part of the human condition. Yet the Bible tells us that perfect love drives fear away. Do we need to invite the love of God more directly into areas of life that bring us fear?

### **Prayer**

Lord, we pray for all those who are captives to fear. Those who face each situation with dread. Those with fears in the present and those fearing the future. Lord, draw near and bring your love. God, we ask for those who live in countries where their situation can change for the worse at any moment. Those with no control over what happens to them. Make your presence known, we pray. In Jesus' name, Amen.

## Day 18 (19 Dec)

**"So Joseph went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David."**

Luke 2:4

### **Reflect**

Even so close to the birth, Mary and Joseph had to leave their home, town and support to move at the whim of an occupying force. They had no say in where they were going or when. Many people today are being forced to move from their homes because of situations out of their control. The United Nations suggests that there are more than 19 million refugees in the world, many living in camps, not able to get back home.

### **Prayer**

Gracious Lord, we pray for all those who are refugees. Those running in fear. Those in camps. Those taking tremendous risks just to survive. We pray that you might be with them and we ask for your presence to be with all those who work with refugees. Give them favour and encouragement in their work. Amen.

#### Day 19 (20 Dec)

**"She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no guest room for them."**

Isaiah 9:2a

#### **Reflect**

There is such a contrast at this time of year. For some, parties, lights, buying presents, meeting families and friends. For others, there is debt and homelessness. There will be many in the towns and cities across the UK that will be sleeping rough, enduring the cold with nowhere to go. What does it mean for us to be light to them? Can we, as the Church, do something magnificent that makes a real difference this year?

#### **Prayer**

Lord, for all those who are homeless, we ask that you may provide help and care for them. Give your Church compassion and help us not to just pass by. Lord, show us what we can do practically this year that would lift up those who are struggling. Lord, we pray for those agencies that work with the homeless, may they receive the resources and wisdom they need. In Jesus' name, Amen.

#### Day 20 (21 Dec)

**"And they will call him Immanuel (which means 'God with us')."**

Matthew 1:23b

#### **Reflect**

There are so many disasters in the world. We care and we do what we can, but often after a few months we are called to help in another situation. It is good to know that God never forgets or moves on from those in trouble. In April, an earthquake hit Nepal, one of the poorest countries in the world. More than 8,000 people died and half a million homes were

destroyed. Many of those made homeless still have nowhere to call home.

#### **Prayer**

Lord, we thank you that you never leave us. Thank you that you don't move on to the next thing and abandon us, You are Immanuel. You are with us. Lord be with all those who are still suffering through past disasters. Those who feel abandoned and uncared for. We pray for the people of Nepal and for all the agencies that are still working there. We thank you for groups like MAF and others who are seeking to get aid to those in the most desolate and difficult areas. May they know encouragement as they bring hope and peace in your name. Amen.

#### Day 21 (22 Dec)

**"When Herod realised that he had been outwitted by the Magi, he was furious."**

Matthew 2:16

#### **Reflect**

It always astounds me how amazing love or good news can provoke such violent responses. There are those in the world who will do everything they can to stop the plan of God. However, God will always prevail. His kingdom will advance. Our next few days of prayer are for the persecuted Church.

#### **Prayer**

Lord, your word tells us that when one part suffers we all suffer. We pray now for our brothers and sisters across the world who are being persecuted for their faith and we pray for all persecuted people, that your love would be with them. Amen.

