

Praying with refugees, Rooted in accompaniment

This prayer resource pack is rooted in the mission of accompaniment: walking alongside refugee friends with compassion, dignity, and hope. It offers a range of prayer practices, reflections, and creative activities that invite individuals and communities to deepen their spiritual solidarity with people seeking sanctuary.

Whether used in personal devotion, parish liturgy, or school assemblies, these resources help us hold refugee friends in prayer while reflecting on the realities of displacement and the Gospel call to welcome the stranger. Each section is designed to be inclusive, adaptable, and grounded in the lived experiences of those JRS UK accompanies.



About JRS UK

The Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS) is an international Catholic organisation with a shared global mission to accompany, serve and advocate alongside and for the rights of refugees and other forcibly displaced people. Our work is based on hospitality, carried out in a spirit of compassion and solidarity, encouraging participation and community, aiming to kindle hope, secure justice and affirm the dignity of refugees and forced migrants.

JRS in the UK supports people made destitute by the asylum process through practical support including accommodation, food and clothing; expert casework and legal advice; and a range of classes and activities. JRS UK also runs a detention outreach service at Harmondsworth and Colnbrook, including befriending, social visiting, and casework support. This frontline work informs our research and advocacy for a more just and humane asylum system.

Daily & personal prayer

Short intentions for people seeking sanctuary to include in your personal prayer

Monday: Prayer for welcome

“God of hospitality, open our hearts to welcome refugee friends with warmth and dignity. May our communities be places of refuge and peace.”

Tuesday: Prayer for strength

“Lord, strengthen those who have fled danger and uncertainty. May refugee friends find courage in each step and comfort in companionship.”

Wednesday: Prayer for justice

“God of justice, guide us to challenge systems that exclude and harm. May we speak truth and act with compassion for our refugee friends.”

Thursday: Prayer for healing

“Loving God, bring healing to those who carry trauma and loss. May refugee friends find rest, renewal, and hope in their journey.”

Friday: Prayer for solidarity

“Jesus, you were a refugee. Help us walk in solidarity with those displaced today. May our prayers become acts of love and justice.”

Saturday: Prayer for families

“God of family, bless refugee parents and children separated by borders and conflict. May they be reunited and surrounded by love.”

Sunday: Prayer for hope

“Risen Lord, fill refugee friends with hope that transcends fear. May they know they are seen, valued, and never alone.”

Daily & personal prayer

Praying with Scripture

Scripture is full of stories of displacement, exile, and welcome.

From the flight of the Holy Family to the journeys of the Israelites, the Bible speaks powerfully to the experience of people seeking sanctuary.

Throughout history, the Catholic Church has upheld the call to welcome the stranger. Rooted in the Gospel and Catholic Social Teaching, this tradition affirms the dignity of every person and calls us to respond with compassion, justice, and hospitality.

This section offers **scripture passages and reflection questions to help individuals and communities pray with open hearts.** As you read and reflect, consider how these ancient words speak to today's realities: and how you are being called to respond.

Matthew 25:35-40

"I was a stranger and you welcomed me"

- Who are the "strangers" in my life or community today?
- How am I being invited to welcome others: not just physically, but emotionally and spiritually?
- What does it mean to encounter Christ in those who are displaced or excluded?

Exodus 22:21

"Do not mistreat or oppress a foreigner"

- What systems or attitudes in society today mistreat people seeking sanctuary?
- How can I challenge injustice in my own context?
- What does this passage teach me about compassion and responsibility?



Isaiah 58:6-7

“Provide the poor wanderer with shelter”

- What does true generosity look like in my life?
- How can I make space - physically or spiritually - for those who are excluded?
- What barriers prevent me from responding to others with hospitality?

Luke 10:25-37

The Parable of the Good Samaritan

- Who is my neighbour?
- What risks or discomforts might I face in choosing to accompany someone in need?
- How does this story challenge me to act with mercy, not just intention?

Romans 12:5

“So we, though many, are one body in Christ”

- How do I recognise the dignity and gifts of refugee friends as part of our shared community?
- What does it mean to belong - and to help others feel they belong?
- How can I live out unity in a world that often divides?



Daily & personal prayer

Examen for Accompaniment

The **Examen** is a simple yet profound prayer practice from the Ignatian tradition. It invites us to pause, reflect, and become aware of God's presence in our daily lives.

Pray As You Go, in collaboration with JRS UK, has created **a special Examen to help us reflect on the experience of accompaniment.**

What to expect

- A guided audio reflection lasting around 10 minutes
- Gentle music and prompts to help you notice moments of grace, challenge, and growth
- Space to consider how you've encountered refugee friends, and how God may be inviting you to respond

How to use it

- Find a quiet space where you won't be interrupted
- Listen with openness - there's no "right" way to pray the Examen
- You can use it daily, weekly, or whenever you feel the need to reconnect with your purpose

Listen: prayasyougo.org/prayer/refugee-examen

*God of all people, We pray that we may accompany those on the road,
Walking in solidarity with those forced from their homes.
May we serve them humbly, recognizing not the cost,
But freely giving from what we have.*

*Remove all fear and allow us to become a voice crying out in the desert,
Proclaiming the good news and advocating on behalf of all those who
are forcibly displaced.*

*May we follow your example in being a friend to the excluded and a
ready defender in their time of need.*

*Please keep us united as a family, brought together by faith, hope, and
love. Amen.*

Group prayer & services

Include refugee intentions in Sunday Mass

Intercessory prayers during Mass can help your parish community to pray in solidarity with refugees and forcibly displaced people. You can include these prayers throughout the year, but you could also tie them to specific Church dates or awareness dates, such as:

- Flight of the Holy Family – Jesus was a refugee
- Epiphany – bringing gifts from other places
- St Josephine Bhakita's feast day – in solidarity with victims of human trafficking
- World Refugee Day – 20th June
- World Day of Migrants and Refugees – marked by the Catholic Church each year on the last Sunday of September

You can write your own intercessory prayers, or find a list of intercessory prayers in our **parish activities pack**.



“The Lord is a refuge for the oppressed, a stronghold in times of trouble” (Ps 9:9)

For all people forced to flee their homes due to war and persecution, that they may find safety, and find hope through the compassion of others.

Lord, in your mercy

find the resource

**[www.jrsuk.net/
praying-with-refugees](http://www.jrsuk.net/praying-with-refugees)**

Group prayer & services

Prayer service: Welcoming the Stranger

On our **Praying with Refugees webpage**, you'll find a **prayer service for refugees pack**. This prayer service is an invitation to gather in community and hold people seeking sanctuary in prayer. Rooted in the Catholic tradition of welcoming the stranger, it draws on scripture, reflection, and intercession to help us respond to the realities of forced displacement with compassion and hope.

Group prayer & services

Stations of the Cross: Journey with Refugees

On our Praying with Refugees webpage, you'll find **JRS UK's Stations of the Cross** resource. Praying the Stations of the Cross is a traditional way of praying during Lent. We pray this familiar prayer to be with Jesus Christ who walked this journey, carrying the cross, the instrument of his death, out of love and commitment to us.

We have developed these Stations of the Cross meditations to aid your prayer during Lent and Holy Week. You can use this resource as a Parish Group, school, as a family, or individually.

You can also find the prayer on Pray As You Go, if you wish to listen to the Stations.



Prayer into action

Prayer is powerful and transformative. In our **parish activity pack**, you'll find a number of ways you can turn prayer into action, as well as the tips and resources you'll need to make them happen.

Activities include:

- **Write to your MP** – one powerful way to live out our faith is by advocating for justice. Writing to your MP is a concrete way to amplify the voices of those often unheard and remind our leaders of their duty to protect the vulnerable.
- **Organise a donation drive** - many refugee friends supported by JRS UK face destitution and isolation. You can offer dignity through essentials like toiletries, food, and clothing.
- **Host a coffee morning fundraiser** - sharing tea and cake can become an act of hope! It brings people together in fellowship, raises vital funds for organisations supporting refugees, and offers a space to reflect on how we can respond to displacement with love and generosity.
- **Run an awareness session** - understanding the realities faced by refugees is essential to meaningful prayer and action. Hosting an awareness session to understand the realities faced by refugees helps your community explore Catholic Social Teaching, hear stories of resilience, and reflect on how faith calls us to respond.
- **Celebrate refugee contributions** – people seeking sanctuary bring rich cultures, stories, and gifts to our communities. Celebrating these contributions through a cultural evening or multicultural Mass affirms their dignity and fosters belonging. It's a joyful way to live out the Gospel call to welcome the stranger and build a parish rooted in diversity and love.

More ways to get involved

Host a refugee

JRS UK's At Home Hosting Scheme matches refugee friends who are experiencing homelessness with individuals, families, and parishes who can offer a safe, temporary place to stay. Hosting is a powerful act of hospitality and solidarity, and JRS UK provides full support throughout the process.

👉 Learn more: www.jrsuk.net/at-home-hosting-scheme

Invite JRS UK to speak in your parish/community/school

Bring the message of welcome to your parish, school, or community group by inviting a member of the JRS UK team to speak.

👉 To arrange a speaker, email: uk.outreach@jrs.net

Volunteer

Volunteers are at the heart of JRS UK's work. From helping in the social drop-in to supporting creative activities, volunteers walk alongside refugee friends in meaningful ways. Your time and presence make a real difference.

👉 Explore opportunities: www.jrsuk.net/volunteer

Subscribe & stay in touch

Stay informed and inspired by subscribing to JRS UK's postal and email newsletters. You'll receive updates on our work, stories from refugee friends, prayer resources, and invitations to events.

You can also sign up to receive bulk copies of our newsletters and posters for your parish/community. This is a great way of sharing insight into the asylum system even further.

👉 Subscribe: www.jrsuk.net/subscribe or email uk.outreach@jrs.net for more information

Take on a sponsored challenge event

Turn your next adventure into an act of solidarity. Whether it's a sponsored walk, run, cycle, or creative challenge, fundraising for JRS UK helps support refugee friends with food, legal advice, accommodation, and community. We'll support you every step of the way.

👉 Get started: www.jrsuk.net/challenge-events

Leave a legacy

By leaving a gift to JRS UK in your will, you help ensure that future generations of refugee friends are met with dignity, compassion, and hope. Legacy giving is a powerful way to continue your commitment to justice and accompaniment beyond your lifetime.

👉 Find out more: www.jrsuk.net/leave-a-legacy

JRS UK Prayer

Lord Jesus,

Give us courage to accompany others for in walking at their side we find you there present with us.

Give us joy that we might serve others for in tending wounds of those who suffer, we sense your healing grace at work in us.

Give us wisdom, as we advocate for others, for in defending the downtrodden we hear your voice speak up for us.

Grant that in all we do, we may give you glory Lord; we return all we have in love to you, for you have given everything to us.
Amen.



Find out more about the work of JRS UK at
www.jrsuk.net

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JRS UK is the refugee agency of the Jesuits in Britain (Jesuits in Britain CIO), a registered charity in England and Wales (1207742) and Scotland (SC053495)



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