

*When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leapt in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit and exclaimed with a loud cry, 'Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb'.*

Luke 1:41-42

God creates each human being to be the centre of a new world that is his or her story, a whole world in miniature, a microcosm. In this sense every human being is irreplaceable. The dignity of each human being is founded on his or her creation in the image and likeness of God.

Cherishing Life 39.

*God has brought gladness and light to the world through the Virgin Mary's delivery of her son.*

*Grant the prayer of all mothers-to-be as they ask for the birth of a healthy child.*

*May they safely deliver a son or daughter to be numbered among your family, to serve you in all things, and to gain eternal life.*

cf. Book of Blessings

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The leaflet is one a series of resources produced to support the Cycle of Prayer. They can be downloaded from [www.liturgyoffice.org.uk/Calendar/Cycle](http://www.liturgyoffice.org.uk/Calendar/Cycle).

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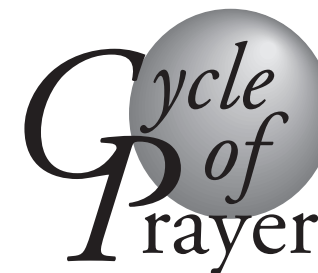
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# Advent & Christmas

**B**ecause the joy and hope, the struggle and anguish of the people of this age and especially of the poor and those suffering in any way are the joy and hope, the struggle and anguish of Christ's disciples, the Church prays not just for its own needs but for the salvation of the world.



The Bishops of England and Wales invite you to join in the **Cycle of Prayer**.

Please pray for the current intentions, both with your parish community and in your own personal prayers. On some days these intentions will be included in the Prayer of the Faithful at Mass. Also it is hoped that vigils and other prayer services will be held.

This leaflet is one of a series which offer a selection of prayers and texts which may be used in private or public worship.

Throughout Advent and Christmas we are asked to pray for these intentions:

ADVENT & CHRISTMAS

Openness to the Word of God

*especially on Bible Sunday  
(2nd Sunday in Advent)*

Migrants and Refugees

*especially on Migrants' Day  
(3 December)*

Expectant Mothers

*especially on 4th Sunday in Advent*

OPENNESS TO THE WORD OF GOD

*especially on 2nd Sunday in Advent*

*Your word is a lamp for my steps  
and a light for my path.*

*Lord, by your word give me life.*

Ps 118:105,107

In the readings, God speaks to his people, opening up to them the mystery of redemption and salvation, and offering them spiritual nourishment; and Christ himself is present in the midst of the faithful through his word.

cf. General Instruction on the Roman Missal  
55

*All-wise God,  
as you have granted us  
to drink with delight  
from the Word  
that leads us to know you,  
in your goodness grant us also  
to come at length to you,  
source of all wisdom,  
and stand for ever before your face.*

based on a prayer of the Venerable Bede

May the word of God  
always be heard in this place,  
as it unfolds the mystery of Christ  
before you  
and achieves your salvation  
within the Church.

Rite of Dedication of a Church

MIGRANTS AND REFUGEES

*especially on Migrants' Day*

*Love the stranger,  
for you were strangers  
in the land of Egypt.*

Deuteronomy 10:19

O Lord,  
who willed that your Son  
should lay down his life  
to gather into one  
your scattered children  
grant that in sincerity of heart  
we may show true compassion  
towards strangers  
and the abandoned  
and that all of us may deserve  
to be gathered together  
at last in the land of the living

cf. Roman Missal (RM) 1364

O Lord,  
to whom no one is a stranger  
and from whose help  
no one is ever distant,  
look with compassion  
on refugees and exiles,  
on segregated persons  
and lost children;  
restore them, we pray, to a homeland,  
and give us a kind heart  
for the needy and for strangers.

RM 1364