

Dear all,

Sunday marks the end of Refugee Week. Refugees are big news, and remain controversial in this country. They have been used as a political weapon in recent years, including in the Brexit debate, and there has been much blurring of distinctions between the terminology – ‘refugee’, ‘migrant’, ‘immigrant’, ‘asylum seeker’, ‘illegal...’ – all of which have different meanings and nuances, all of which have specific and different legal status. Distinctions have been blurred both by ignorance, and by mendacity.

In the Book of Deuteronomy 26:5 the people of Israel were reminded that part of their national/racial DNA was that of refugee - *you shall make this response before the LORD your God: "A wandering Aramean was my ancestor; he went down into Egypt and lived there as an alien, few in number, and there he became a great nation, mighty and populous.* They were to be continually reminded of this, and because of this, they were to have particular care for the ‘widow, orphan and alien’ – the marginalised, the outsider... those in need. This essential worldview is carried forward throughout the teachings of the New Testament.

Refugee Week reminds us why people become refugees, and there but for the grace of God...! This short video put things into context. [International Refugee Week 2021 - Feeling Home - YouTube](#)

Here is a very short list of famous refugees, or children/grandchildren of refugees, only including names I personally have heard of. They just go to show how much refugees can give to communities they find themselves in.

Maurice & Charles Saatchi (advertisers); Richard Rogers (architect); Marc Chagall, Jacob Epstein, Lucien Freud, Sir John Tenniel (artists); Montague Burton, Michael Marks (retail company founders); Alec Issigonis (Designer of the Mini car); Bob Marley, Gloria Estefan, Freddie Mercury, Olivia Newton-John, Rita Ora, Arnold Schoenberg, Sir Georg Solti, Richard Tauber (musicians); Madeleine Albright, Lord Alf Dubs, Margaret Hodge, David & Ed Miliband (politicians); Sigmund & Anna Freud (Psychoanalysts), Claude Lévi-Strauss (philosopher and anthropologist); Rabbi Immanuel Jakobovits, Jesus, the Dalai Lama Tenzin Gyatso, Rabbi Hugo Gryn, the prophet Muhammad PBUH (religious founders & leaders); John Dollond – founder of Dollond and Aitchison, Albert Einstein (scientists); Marlene Dietrich, Omid Djalili, Ben Elton, Baron Lew Grade, Billy Wilder (TV & film); Hannah Arendt, Joseph Conrad, Lord Paul Hamlyn CBE, Victor Hugo, Shaparak “Shappi” Khorsandi, Judith Kerr, Thomas Mann (writers & publishers).

A CofE prayer for Refugees:

Almighty and merciful God,
 whose Son became a refugee and had no place to call his own;
 look with mercy on those who today are fleeing from danger,
 homeless and hungry.
 Bless those who work to bring them relief;
 inspire generosity and compassion in all our hearts;
 and guide the nations of the world towards that day when all will rejoice in your Kingdom of justice and
 of peace;
 through Jesus Christ our Lord.
 Amen.

The hymns for Sunday are [Inspired by love and anger - YouTube](#) and [When I Needed a Neighbour \[with lyrics\] - YouTube](#) (this is credited as being a performance by the writer, Sidney Carter, himself – the words are a bit different from what we are used to).

The readings are: Job 38:1-11 ; 2 Corinthians 6:1-13; Mark 4:35-41.

One of the hymns suggested for Trinity 3, based on the Gospel reading, is [Will Your Anchor Hold - YouTube](#). It is a great favourite of many, and is the hymn of the Boys Brigade. It contains wonderful images about holding fast to the rock that is Jesus during the storms of life – how much have we needed that over the last year! While I was at training college, there were a few ex-navy students who pointed out (a bit tongue in cheek) that, if you did what it says in the hymn, your boat would sink!

The late Larry Norman had a fantastic song saying the same in a rather different way, called The Rock that doesn't roll: [Larry Norman, "The Rock That Doesn't Roll", \[Live 1997\] - YouTube](#)

The Psalm for the day is some verses from Psalm 107

Firstly, Anglican chant:

[Psalm 107, chants by Walmisley and Wesley - YouTube](#)

And Anglican Chant from St Andrew's Anglican Cathedral, Warri, Nigeria.

[Psalm 107 Chant \(with lyrics\) - YouTube](#)

In Gaelic: [Psalm 107:21-30 \(Gaelic\) sung by Kristine Kennedy to the tune Loch Broom - YouTube](#)

Anthems suggested include:

[Händel - Dettingen Te Deum; O Lord, in Thee have I trusted - YouTube](#)

[John Blow, God is our hope and strength, Vox Luminis LIVE - YouTube](#)

[Sumsion's "They that go down to the sea in ships": Hereford Cathedral 1988 \(Roy Massey\) - YouTube](#)

[Great Sacred Music: Walk softly \(28.05\) - YouTube](#) The anthem is by Bob Chilcott, with reflection by Sam Wells, vicar of St Martin-in-the-Fields.

The Bible study group will be meeting on Thursday. We will be looking at Mark's Gospel, chapter 12. New members are welcome. It is not a particularly academic study, though occasional insights are shared. More important is the discussion of how the text impacts and applies to our everyday Christian life. The link is <https://us04web.zoom.us/j/8109399155?pwd=STVVTU44RzJxTFFHbTY1Mnl0bjJZz09>

Meeting ID: 810 939 9155

Passcode: 1w2C9a

Nick Fawcett is currently writing a book, provisionally titled *Still, Still with Thee*, featuring morning and evening prayers for every day of the year, here's a request for God's help to faithfully walk the way of Christ, renewed in strength. [Renewed in strength - Nick Fawcett \(devotional and reflective writer\)](#)

Whoever trusts in the Lord will be renewed in strength; they will soar as if they have wings like eagles; they will run and never grow tired; they will walk without ever becoming exhausted.

Isaiah 40:31

Though I grow weary, Lord,
life proving demanding,
asking more of me than I feel able to give,
renew my strength.
Should the flame grow cold,
rekindle it.
Should my spirit fail,
revive it.
Should my vision fade,
restore it.
Should my courage wane
refresh it.
Should my faith decline,
rebuild it.
Should my joy dissipate,
revitalise it.
Should my trust waver,
reawaken it.
Should my commitment founder,
replenish it.
Should my zeal flag,
rejuvenate it.
Grant me those wings of faith you promise,
that I may soar again to the heights.
So move within me that I may take up again my journey,
and, however hard the going might prove,
continue it,
to the very end.
Amen.

And, finally, something to remember for Father's Day.

For many of us, Father's Day can be difficult.

If you know someone who...



...has lost their dad



...has never known their dad



...has a difficult relationship with their dad



...has lost a child



...is longing to be a dad



...whose dad is unwell

think about reaching out to them today and letting them know it's ok to say.

Stay safe.

Blessings and love

Mark

Revd Mark Williams

