

# ‘At Home’ Prayer Pack

A seven-part reflection and discussion guide inviting you to engage with refugee homelessness in the UK

Launched on the World Day of Migrants and Refugees 2015, for use throughout the year



# Contents

1. Introduction
2. How to use this pack, on your own or in a group
3. Information on refugee homelessness
4. 'At Home' Refugee Hosting Scheme
5. Christian Life Community
6. Resources for Action
7. Order more copies

***An audio version of this pack is available on-line via Pray As You Go, please see the back pages for details.***

“Our doors are open to all. A commitment to ‘welcoming the stranger’ has to extend a special invitation to those who feel most estranged and who we feel most estranged from. Hospitality displays extravagant generosity, actively seeking out ‘strangers’ and making them feel truly at home in our community. It is very different from passive toleration – merely accepting the presence of another as a regrettable inconvenience.”  
*(from Recreating Right Relationships: Deepening the Mission of Reconciliation in the Work of JRS, JRS International, 2014)*

“Hospitality is that deeply human and Christian value that recognises the claim that someone has, not because he or she is a member of my family or my community or my race or my faith, but simply because he or she is a human being who deserves welcome and respect.” *(Fr. Adolfo Nicolás SJ, Superior General, Society of Jesus)*

“Hospitality starts at the heart; willing to help one another. Hospitality is the opening of hands; is being present to the other. Hospitality means opening your heart to others and sharing what you have; sharing a part of yourself. Hospitality becomes sharing life  
*(from JRS supporters at the launch of the ‘At Home’ Refugee Hosting Scheme, 2012)*

# Hospitality

Christ has no body but yours,  
No hands, no feet on earth but yours,  
Yours are the eyes with which he looks  
Compassion on this world,  
Yours are the feet with which he walks to do good,  
Yours are the hands, with which he blesses all the world.  
Yours are the hands, yours are the feet,  
Yours are the eyes, you are his body.  
Christ has no body now but yours,  
No hands, no feet on earth but yours,  
Yours are the eyes with which he looks  
compassion on this world.  
Christ has no body now on earth but yours.  
(Teresa of Avila 1515–1582)



“Hospitality is that deeply human and Christian value that recognises the claim that someone has, not because he or she is a member of my family or my community or my race or my faith, but simply because he or she is a human being who deserves welcome and respect.” (Fr. Adolfo Nicolás SJ, Superior General, Society of Jesus)

# Introduction

Opening your door to a stranger is daring and a very radical way of being human. At the same time, helping someone in such great need is rewarding and enriching. Many have done it, and have had their reward. Abraham was promised a son because of his hospitality (Genesis 18:1-8), the widow of Zarepheth welcomed and cared for Elijah, despite her own grinding poverty (1 Kings 17:7-16), and Jesus himself accepted the hospitality of many in his ministry. Can you see this as a wonderful opportunity to give and receive, to be the hands of God, to be empowered to do something for justice?

The principal aim of the Jesuit Refugee Service UK 'At Home' Hosting Project's is to provide accommodation to destitute asylum seekers, those whose asylum application has been refused and who have no more rights for appeal. In winter particularly, the weather here in the UK is harsh on everyone. Some asylum seekers we know have few friends able to help and nowhere to go, or have often turned to street corners for sleeping rough.

JRS seeks respite for them in families and religious communities; somewhere they could have some dignity and have good and decent nights' sleep for at least two months. These places are very limited, but they can be a place where they feel safe and comfortable and have regular healthy meals, whenever they have the opportunity of being hosted. It can be heart-breaking asking them to leave the accommodation at the end of two months, without finding alternative

accommodation for them, but often this hospitality provides a building block towards further self-advocacy or support.

Rowan Williams, former Archbishop of Canterbury, in his book 'Silence and Honey Cakes' says: "Winning the brother or sister isn't a matter of getting them signed up for something, getting them on your side, but opening doors for them to God's healing. If you open such doors, you 'win' God, because you become a place where God 'happens' for someone else, where God comes into life for someone in a new and life-giving way - not because you are good and wonderful but because you have allowed the wonder and goodness of God to appear (and you may have no idea how)... When we shift our preoccupations, anxiety, and selfishness out of the way and some space appears for God, we ourselves are brought more in touch with God's healing. And so, in winning the brother or sister, we win God."



# How to use this pack

We invite you to cross the threshold and enter a little into the experience of a homeless asylum seeker in the UK. We hope that you find it challenging, thought-provoking and engaging.

Each of the seven themes focuses on a different step in an asylum seeker's journey of homelessness and the hopefully transformative experience of being offered hospitality. The themes invite you to engage in the feelings of the guest, as well as the host's experience of being open to whoever comes.

The pack has been designed for you to use either on your own or with a small group. You could choose to use it once a day over a week, or one evening at a time over a course of seven meetings. The audio version can be used in a similar way, but however you choose to use it, try and commit to the time you give.

We have tried to prioritise refugee voices, as the Jesuit Refugee Service places great importance on enabling each person we accompany to speak for themselves where possible. Their experience, need and wisdom inform how we shape our response. This resource uses the 'Ignatian' approach of rooting spiritual reflection in scripture and our lived experience. Every section includes some quotes or passages to pray with, questions for you to consider and some suggestions for response. In this way, whether you have spent time with refugees or not, you can, on your own or in a group, reflect at a level that enables you to learn and share.

We recognise that 'Home' is an emotive topic for all of us, wherever we come from or however we live. If you are using this reflection as part of a group, check with the rest of the group that they are happy to explore this with a level of honesty and respect how to share. Home can be a physical, emotional and spiritual place, evoking rich stories and memories.

We suggest that, as with any reflection and discussion, you might like to start your time with a short stilling or breathing exercise to settle and prepare your heart to be open to reflection and hearing the voices of others in your group. Any response to the questions is to be taken as sharing, rather than a debate or discussion.

One person might like to read the quote and passage out loud, another facilitate response to the questions and someone else lead a time of prayer. Don't forget to start and begin your time in whatever way you normally do, with a meal, lighting a candle or notices!

After the discussion and prayer time, you might also like to do a short 'examen' or review on what you learnt or share 'what stays with me' that you will take away. During this time, you can help prepare yourself and one another for the next session.

At the end of this resource, there are suggestions for further reading and how to deal with some of the bigger issues about refugee destitution and homelessness that may come up, including for advocacy and action. Please do be in touch with JRS-UK about any issues or ideas that emerge from this. We will be glad to respond and to listen. Thank you and enjoy!

# Refugee Homelessness

It is not known how many asylum seekers are living destitute in our cities. Being 'destitute' means that you are not permitted to work or claim statutory benefits and so you become reliant on friends or charities to survive. This can happen while an asylum claim is being processed or has been refused.

We know that many rely on a hostel place, often short-term, or 'sofa-surfing' with friends or wider family members. Some sleep on the night buses, unable to lie down to sleep, or in doorways, fearful of violence or abuse. Daytimes can be a circuit of visits to day centres for hand-outs, meetings with lawyers and often waiting in libraries or other 'anonymous' public spaces.

At JRS's Day Centre in London, we aim to provide a safe and welcoming space, where a personal welcome and appreciation of each person is a priority. This hospitality and style of accompaniment rather than service delivery means every individual knows that each week someone will always be pleased to see them and receive them as an equal.

We give out toiletries and sometimes food parcels, but realise that some of the people who come to us have no bathroom or kitchen to use them in. In winter we provide warm coats, and, from time to time, try to secure a safe night's sleep for someone in an emergency situation.

We have been inspired by JRS France's 'Welcome' Scheme that matches destitute asylum seekers with welcoming families. We also recognise the efforts of London Hosting Scheme and projects in the UK such as Spare Room or the ongoing commitment of the Catholic Worker communities to host people.

Our 'At Home' Refugee Hosting Project can place selected individuals in a context where they can benefit from privacy and safety, find time to relax a little, regain confidence in humanity and re-build some trust. Whilst not being a solution, each placement is a respite from daily challenges, time to be a normal human being again, that is to say experience what the rest of us take for granted: a door to close before going to bed and a space to call their own for a while.

The Jesuit Refugee Service accompanies, serves and advocates for asylum seekers who are left destitute or in detention. We run a weekly Day Centre and currently support up to 200 individuals each month with basic needs, friendship and consistent support. Our team of trained volunteer visitors visit refugees detained near Heathrow airport, providing a much-needed listening ear and signposting to specialist services.

The Christian Life Community is for people who want to understand more deeply how God is at work in their everyday lives. We meet regularly in small groups to pray and share, supporting one another through the ups and downs of ordinary life. In listening to one another we grow to understand ourselves, deepen our relationship with God and discover more clearly how each one of us is uniquely called to respond to God's love.

# 1. Home and Hospitality

*It is said that whoever practises hospitality, entertains God. A Danish proverb tells us that where there is room in the heart, there is room in the house. Home, and sharing home, means different things to all of us, but it is clear that many quotes and cultures encourage to make others welcome: 'Hospitality is a little fire, a little food, and an immense quiet.'*  
(Ralph Waldo Emerson)

1 Kings 17:8-16 Then the LORD said to Elijah, "Go and live in the village of Zarephath, near the city of Sidon. I have instructed a widow there to feed you." So he went to Zarephath. As he arrived at the gates of the village, he saw a widow gathering sticks, and he asked her, "Would you please bring me a little water in a cup?" As she was going to get it, he called to her, "Bring me a bite of bread, too." But she said, "I swear by the LORD your God that I don't have a single piece of bread in the house. And I have only a handful of flour left in the jar and a little cooking oil in the bottom of the jug. I was just gathering a few sticks to cook this last meal, and then my son and I will die." But Elijah said to her, "Don't be afraid! Go ahead and do just what you've said, but make a little bread for me first. Then use what's left to prepare a meal for yourself and your son. For this is what the LORD, the God of Israel, says: There will always be flour and olive oil left in your containers until the time when the LORD sends rain and the crops grow again!" So she did as Elijah said, and she and Elijah and her family continued to eat for many days. There was always enough flour and olive oil left in the containers, just as the LORD had promised through Elijah.

## Comment

Elijah said to her "don't be afraid, go home and do as you have said." It was a big ask for the widow to listen to the prophet, to share what little she had. Sometimes offering hospitality to someone in need may be costly and does require faith that all will be well. At other times hospitality might not be about trying to solve problems we cannot resolve in our own strength. It might simply be about listening and being attentive to the person before us and trusting that our response will be enough to sustain one another as we each go forward.

## Questions

- What are your initial reactions to this reading?
- How do you react when someone comes to me for help? Do you want to know or just hand it over to someone else to deal with?
- How do you feel 'at home'? Safe and glad to have a place where I can be myself? Can you open up to others for a place of rest and respite? Are you free enough to do so?
- What feelings arise in you? Are you uncomfortable or happy? If uncomfortable, what are you going to do with that feeling – put it aside and hope that it goes away, or pray about it and see what arises in your mind and heart?

## Prayer

Lord, may we reflect your love in the world. May we bring peace to others and offer hospitality to strangers so that the world may be transformed to reflect the kingdom of God. Amen.

**Reflection offered by Sister Frances Crowe MA, member of CLC and volunteer detention visitor with JRS-UK**

## 2. Welcome

*If someone shows me hospitality, I feel love and kindness. Hospitality is very important in our lives: visiting a friend, seeing people in the hospital, giving food to people who are needy. (participant, JRS-UK Women 4 Women's refugee peer support group)*

*“One of the marvellous things about community is that it enables us to welcome and help people in a way we couldn't as individuals. When we pool our strength and share the work and responsibility, we can welcome many people, even those in deep distress, and perhaps help them find self-confidence and inner healing.” (Jean Vanier, Community and Growth)*

Luke 19:5-6 When Jesus reached the spot, he looked up and said to him: “Zacchaeus, come down immediately. I must stay at your house today.” So he came down at once and welcomed him gladly.

Acts 16:15 When she and the members of her household were baptized, she invited us to her home. “if you consider me to be a believer in the Lord,” she said, “come and stay at my home.”

Acts 28:2 The islanders showed us unusual kindness. They built a fire and welcomed us all because it was raining and cold.

### Comment

Members of the JRS women's group, who come from a mix of countries including Eritrea and the Democratic Republic of Congo looked at pictures of African hospitality. They talked to their neighbour about what they saw in the images: about memories they evoked about times when they were able to offer hospitality, about their feelings of what being welcoming is like... each person chose a passage and wrote a personal reflection or message to God.

### Questions

Each of these verses describes the experience of someone who offered hospitality and a welcome to others. Which of these passages speaks most strongly to you? This is God's word to you. Spend some time thinking about this particular word – what caught your attention? Enter into a conversation with God about your feelings having heard this Scripture. Share with God what is in your heart as one friend speaks to another.

### Prayers

Lord, help me to love more deeply those near me and to offer them hospitality... Amen!

Lord, teach me to be hospitable towards everyone. Teach me to receive people who have problems. God, give me a big heart and the strength to support them any time when they have need of help.

**Reflections offered by participants in JRS-UK's Women's Prayer Circle who meet weekly**



# 3. Encounter

*"The beggar stretches out his hand not to ask, but to give you the Kingdom of heaven and yet you do not see..."*  
(Elder Arsenie, a Russian Staretz)

*"...O wad some Powers the giftie gie us / To see oursels as ithirs see us!"*  
(Robert Burns in "To a Louse" 1786)

## Luke 10:25-37

Just then a lawyer stood up to test Jesus. 'Teacher,' he said, 'what must I do to inherit eternal life?' He said to him, 'What is written in the law? What do you read there?' He answered, 'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbour as yourself.' And he said to him, 'You have given the right answer; do this, and you will live.' But wanting to justify himself, he asked Jesus, 'And who is my neighbour?' Jesus replied, 'A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell into the hands of robbers, who stripped him, beat him, and went away, leaving him half dead. Now by chance a priest was going down that road; and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. So likewise a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. But a Samaritan while travelling came near him; and when he saw him, he was moved with pity. He went to him and bandaged his wounds, having poured oil and wine on them. Then he put him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him. The next day he took out two denarii, gave them to the innkeeper, and said, "Take care of him; and when I come back, I will repay you whatever more you spend."

Which of these three, do you think, was a neighbour to the man who fell into the hands of the robbers?' He said, 'The one who showed him mercy.' Jesus said to him, 'Go and do likewise.'

## Comment

The Bible is full of stories in which people encounter God in strange or unexpected places. Think, for example, about Moses and the Burning Bush or the disciples on the road to Emmaus. Might it be possible that we continue to encounter God in unexpected places? The "Parable of the Good Samaritan" is probably one of the best known Parables in the New Testament. In it, Jesus points us towards the truth that kindness and generosity often come from the most unexpected places and people. God inspires the most 'unlikely' people to show His love to the world; people whom the world has turned its back on or looks at with some sort of fear and hatred. All human beings have the capacity to show God's love, to give a foretaste of God's hospitable welcome into heaven. But, if we resort to fear of the other, if we drive 'the other' out, then we risk losing that potential encounter with God's love and goodness at the hand of 'the other.' At the end of the Parable Jesus utters the words 'Go and do likewise.' In so doing he inspires his listeners to concrete action; to emulate the compassion of the Samaritan. Perhaps we should be inspired by this to consciously welcome 'the other' for in them we might well be consciously welcoming God Himself.

**Encounter is continued on the next page...**

# Encounter continued...

## Questions

- The Good Samaritan was a member of a hated (and feared) ethnic group within Israel and yet was the one who ministered most compassionately to the man who was attacked (himself a Jew and therefore probably educated to fear the Samaritan). Think of a time when you have been ministered to by the 'unlikely other.'

- Robert Burns in his poem 'To a Louse' asks that we might be given the grace to 'see ourselves as others see us.' How do you think reactions against immigration might appear to someone seeking Sanctuary in this country? In addition, what message does it give out to those who have been resident here for some time? What impression do people get of us, get of you, from the way that we, and you, treat other people?

-Thinking about your answer, is this compatible with the sort of loving compassion shown by the Samaritan? Does it speak of a generous 'kingdom' welcome?

## Prayer

Loving Lord, you reveal yourself through the weak and downtrodden and minister to us with hands which were torn by hate and prejudice. Help us to see You in 'the other' that, welcoming you in them, we might encounter your Love and compassion and be enriched by their giftedness. We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

**Reflection offered by Brother Joseph Emmanuel SSF, previously a volunteer at the JRS-UK Day Centre**



## 4. Around the table

*Being around the table is certainly more than sharing food. The table is the symbol of the reign of God where all are brothers and sisters. When we invite a stranger to share the table with us, we help Christ to expand and realize the Kingdom of God.*

*"If we have no peace, it is because we have forgotten that we belong to each other." (Mother Teresa)*

*"Love only grows by sharing. You can only have more for yourself by giving it away to others." (Brian Tracy)*

Luke 14:12-14 He said also to the one who had invited him, 'When you give a luncheon or a dinner, do not invite your friends or your brothers or your relatives or rich neighbours, in case they may invite you in return, and you would be repaid. But when you give a banquet, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, and the blind. And you will be blessed, because they cannot repay you, for you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous.

### Reflection

Being together at the same table is definitely more than sharing food. Jesus shares himself at the table of the Last Supper. We share our meals with relatives and neighbours as a way of sharing love and care, which is, to some extent, sharing ourselves. Those who are in need of food, deep down in their heart, may also need the food of love and care for their starving souls. We both need to be at the same table together. When eating with sinners and tax collectors Jesus brought a defining moment to their lives: they are transformed, such as the case of

Zacchaeus. It was not easy for Jesus to be at the same table with sinners and tax collectors. Many people failed to recognize him as the Son of God partly because of his associating with these people. This misunderstanding finally led to his death. Every choice has a cost.

We will not pay a lesser cost when we respond to the invitation of Jesus to invite destitute asylum seekers for hospitality. We may have to sacrifice our comfort zone, our holy and private atmosphere of our family or community to welcome our 'special stranger', with whom our culture and society offer us no experience of how to entertain him or her. We are in front of a person whose language and culture may in many ways differ from ours. At such a moment, we may feel awkward and only our heart can tell us what to do. Such moments can be compared to the moment of a grain of wheat dying for its comfort after being sown to the soil. However, resurrection - new life and joy will follow any true sacrifice. There is a kind of joy and meaning which is beyond any description, a joy from God, emerging gently from our hearts, as both guests and hosts.

### Questions

- What reactions do you have to this story?
- Do you think that those who are in need can bring back to us things which we cannot have in any other way? Can they teach us lessons that we can't learn without them?
- What are the main obstacles hindering you from inviting destitute asylum seekers for meals? Our culture? Our social structure? Our comfort? Or our fear of not knowing what to do or what will happen?

**Reflection offered by Thi Vu, Jesuit Scholastic and member of 'At Home' host community in London.**

# 5. Sharing

*There where your treasure is, there may your heart be also. (Matthew 6:21)*

*“But still – that is our vocation: to convert the hostis into a hospes, the enemy into a guest and to create the free and fearless space where brotherhood and sisterhood can be formed and fully experienced.” (Henri J. M. Nouwen)*

John 3: 16&17 This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers and sisters. If anyone has material possessions and sees a brother or sister in need but has no pity on them, how can the love of God be in that person?

Isaiah 58:6-10 “Is not this the kind of fasting I have chosen: to loose the chains of injustice and untie the cords of the yoke, to set the oppressed free and break every yoke? Is it not to share your food with the hungry and to provide the poor wanderer with shelter— when you see the naked, to clothe them, and not to turn away from your own flesh and blood? Then your light will break forth like the dawn, and your healing will quickly appear; then your righteousness will go before you, and the glory of the LORD will be your rear guard. Then you will call, and the LORD will answer; you will cry for help, and he will say: Here am I. If you do away with the yoke of oppression, with the pointing finger and malicious talk, and if you spend yourselves in behalf of the hungry and satisfy the needs of the oppressed, then your light will rise in the darkness, and your night will become like the noonday.”

## Comment

Rich people who see a brother or a sister in need, yet close their heart against them, cannot claim that they love God. Love should not be only words or talk, but it must be true love, which shows itself in actions. Therefore by showing love to a stranger, you have obeyed the commandments of God and it is only God that truly rewards you.

## Questions

- Think back to a time in the last couple of weeks when you laid down your life for another person, even if in a small way, by giving up a preferred choice, putting their needs first or making a real sacrifice. Share, if you wish, how that was for you.
- What might the links between ‘fasting’ and ‘justice’ be in the context of your own community? What might you have to give up for others to have more? This could be more space, time, material goods, opportunities to participate...
- Are there any situations where you hope to see “light break forth” in your neighbourhood, group or church so that people experiencing oppression might have their needs met?

## Prayer

Today, if we hear your voice, God, harden not our hearts and help us to respond with love. Amen

**Reflection by Justina, refugee volunteer, and prayers by Kate, staff member, who both work in the JRS-UK office**

# 6. Journey

*We are all “strangers and pilgrims” in this life... (1 Peter 2:11)*

*“Your people have always been on the move. Moses led your people out of slavery in Egypt. The holy family fled to Egypt with Jesus to escape the murderous King Herod. People continue to move today - war, poverty, oppression and injustice drive people from home and country.” (adapted from reflection of Latina Women Circle, 2012)*

Luke 24:34-36 Then the two from Emmaus told their story of how Jesus had appeared to them as they were walking along the road, and how they had recognized him as he was breaking the bread. And just as they were telling about it, Jesus himself was suddenly standing there among them. “Peace be with you,” he said.

## Comment

The road to Emmaus is one of the famous lost roads of history. Even if we could securely identify the village, the road is missing. And it is the road we dream of, the road where we can share the burden of our disappointments, the defeat of hopes that once defined us, and be touched again by the wisdom of the compassionate stranger. “The story of Emmaus appears a particularly modern one, of people journeying inside their story of separation and loss and struggling to find a language for their pain and bewilderment.” (‘Jesus and the Gospel’ by Denis McBride, Redemptorist publication, 2006)

## Reflection & Questions

- Imagine being lost in a completely unknown place. How might that feel?
- Have you ever had an experience of gently leading another who is lost and vulnerable?
- Take some time to imagine the mental and physical exhaustion of refugees fleeing danger. Be with them as they ask themselves: What awaits me at my journey’s end? Will I find friends or work? And when will it be safe for me to go back home?

## Prayer

Teach us to recognize your Son: in the refugee seeking protection from persecution, war, and famine; in the women and children who are victims of human trafficking; in the asylum seeker imprisoned for fleeing without documents. Grant us the grace to welcome them with Christian hospitality, so that these brothers and sisters of ours may find acceptance and understanding on their journey. May all those who are far from their place of birth find in the church a home where no one is a stranger. We ask this in the name of your blessed Son, Jesus our Lord. Amen.

**Reflection offered by Sr Mary-Agnes Idiong IBVM, Project Co-ordinator, ‘At Home’ Hosting Scheme during 2013**



# 7. Courage

*“Courage is the most important thing.”  
(member of JRS-UK peer support group  
Men 4 Men)*

*“I learned that courage was not the absence  
of fear, but the triumph over it. The brave  
man is not he who does not feel afraid, but  
he who conquers that fear.” (Nelson  
Mandela)*

## 1 Kings 19:1-8

Ahab told Jezebel all that Elijah had done, and how he had killed all the prophets with the sword. Then Jezebel sent a messenger to Elijah, saying, ‘So may the gods do to me, and more also, if I do not make your life like the life of one of them by this time tomorrow.’ Then he was afraid; he got up and fled for his life, and came to Beer-sheba, which belongs to Judah; he left his servant there. But he himself went a day’s journey into the wilderness, and came and sat down under a solitary broom tree. He asked that he might die: ‘It is enough; now, O LORD, take away my life, for I am no better than my ancestors.’ Then he lay down under the broom tree and fell asleep. Suddenly an angel touched him and said to him, ‘Get up and eat.’ He looked, and there at his head was a cake baked on hot stones, and a jar of water. He ate and drank, and lay down again. The angel of the LORD came a second time, touched him, and said, ‘Get up and eat, otherwise the journey will be too much for you.’ He got up, and ate and drank; then he went in the strength of that food for forty days and forty nights to Horeb the mount of God.

## Comment & Questions

*Meditation from what asylum seekers of the  
group Men 4 Men told about this text:*

Then Jezebel sent a message... (v.2)

*“Jezebel’s message had a destructive  
power. After Elijah got her message, he felt  
panicked and forgot about the power given  
to him. When we receive letters from UK  
Border Authority (UKBA) or other  
authorities, we feel psychological fear. It  
made me to think about how important it is  
to keep focused on my life and not be  
distracted by those destructive powers.  
Even if there are many difficulties as asylum  
seekers, we should not forget what God can  
do in our lives.”*

- What are your own “Jezebel’s message”s, your own “letters from UKBA” which can turn your life upside down?
- What are you tempted to run away from in your life?

... He himself went a day’s journey into the wilderness... (v.4); suddenly an angel touched him... (v.5)

*“I see Elijah who is asking for God to take  
his life away. There can be desperate  
situations in our life, such as cancer. We  
need spiritual strength to overcome this.  
Elijah lay down and slept.”*

- Have you ever experienced this desire? Do you remember the face of those in this situation?

*“After that, he regained energy and carried  
on with his life in front of life’s challenges.  
God does not desert us in despair. We can  
reach the end of the tunnel.”*

- Who are the angels who come in the thickest darkness?

**Courage is continued on the next page...**

# Courage continued

*“As Elijah goes on a journey after he ate and drank from the angel, so life is a journey full of ups and downs. Then where and how can we gain faith, encouragement, and strength? God gives food. Word of God is the spiritual food.”*

-What food have the angels brought to you, that give you life and strength? What kind of food, of words do the persons in distress really need?

...then he went in the strength of that food...

*“I lived in the U.K. for 20 years as an asylum seeker. I survived. It is my triumph. I will survive 20 years more. It is not I but God, the bigger being that lives in me.”*

- What is your daily triumph, where you can recognize a strength that is stronger than yourself and give you hope to continue?

## Prayer

O Lord, creator of heaven and earth, give us the courage to overthrow the fears that overwhelm us sometimes, give the courage to trust the angels that You bring on my path and to welcome what they give me. Give me also the courage to recognize the distress on the faces of my brothers and sisters and to bring them what they need to continue on the path of the life. We ask this by the power of Your Holy Name. Amen

**Reflection offered by JRS Men 4 Men peer support group and arranged by Jesuit Brothers Gonzague Lalanne SJ and Kundong Kim SJ**



# Review



We would recommend that at the end of the last session or as part of the next time that your group meets, that you allow a little time to look back over the experience of doing this prayer journey together. You might have your usual way to review or evaluate which you could use. There are two areas that it would be good to look at the emotional and spiritual experience of doing the retreat together on this topic and practical or group learning about how to do similar initiatives in future

## Here is one suggestion of how you might like to do this together:

- Create the space to reflect together with silence or quiet music or lighting a candle  
Ask the Holy Spirit to be with you as you listen and learn
- Consider which elements of the retreat were positive for you, where you felt God speak to you, or that provided an insight or blessing in some new way
- Consider which elements of the retreat were more challenging for you, why God might have highlighted these, what was it that was difficult or upsetting
- Allow space for each person to respond in silent prayer as individuals
- Take time to share anything within the group as participants are able and comfortable

- Explore as individuals and as a group if there are any remaining questions or actions you would like to take as a result of doing this retreat
- Thank one another and God for this time and what you have experienced

*Talking about and reflecting on home and hospitality is often an emotional and personal topic. You can always take this into your time with your spiritual director, chaplain or parish priest, or a trusted friend or family member.*

*Learning about the difficulties and hardship faced by destitute asylum seekers can also be shocking or upsetting. If you would like to talk over your observations with us at Jesuit Refugee Service we would be glad to listen and reflect with you.*



# Next Steps

We hope that this prayer pack has helped you live a little into the experience of individual asylum seekers who come to us looking for welcome and safety.

Jesuit Refugee Service aims to be here for the long-term for destitute asylum seekers who are caught in limbo, often for months or years.

If you are interested in more information about how you can help or to explore hosting someone, contact:

Jesuit Refugee Service UK  
[www.jrsuk.net](http://www.jrsuk.net)

Housing Justice  
[www.housingjustice.org.uk](http://www.housingjustice.org.uk)

London Catholic Worker  
[www.londoncatholicworker.org](http://www.londoncatholicworker.org)

London Hosting:  
[londonhosting.wordpress.com](http://londonhosting.wordpress.com)

Praxis  
[www.praxis.org.uk/](http://www.praxis.org.uk/)

Shelter from the Storm  
(contact details via JRS UK)

If you would like to make a donation towards the 'At Home' Refugee Hosting Scheme, please send a cheque made payable to 'Jesuit Refugee Service' and post it to us at JRS-UK, 2 Chandler Street, London E1W 2QT or you can donate online via [www.justgiving.com/jesuitrefugeeservice](http://www.justgiving.com/jesuitrefugeeservice) (please add 'At Home' to your message). **Thank you.**

More copies of this prayer pack can be ordered from [uk@jrs.net](mailto:uk@jrs.net).

An audio version of this pack is available as an on-line retreat at Pray As You Go: [www.pray-as-you-go.org](http://www.pray-as-you-go.org)

For more information about the Christian Life Community network and how to join a local group in your area: [www.clcew.org.uk](http://www.clcew.org.uk)

You can request a speaker from JRS UK for a church or community event, or to help you to organise a toiletry collection.

You can sign up for our quarterly e-newsletter at [www.jrsuk.net](http://www.jrsuk.net) or ask to receive it by post via [uk@jrs.net](mailto:uk@jrs.net)



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