

**Church of Ireland
Youth Department
(CIYD)**



**Day of Prayer for Young People and
Youth Ministry**

Sunday 11th February 2018

Introduction

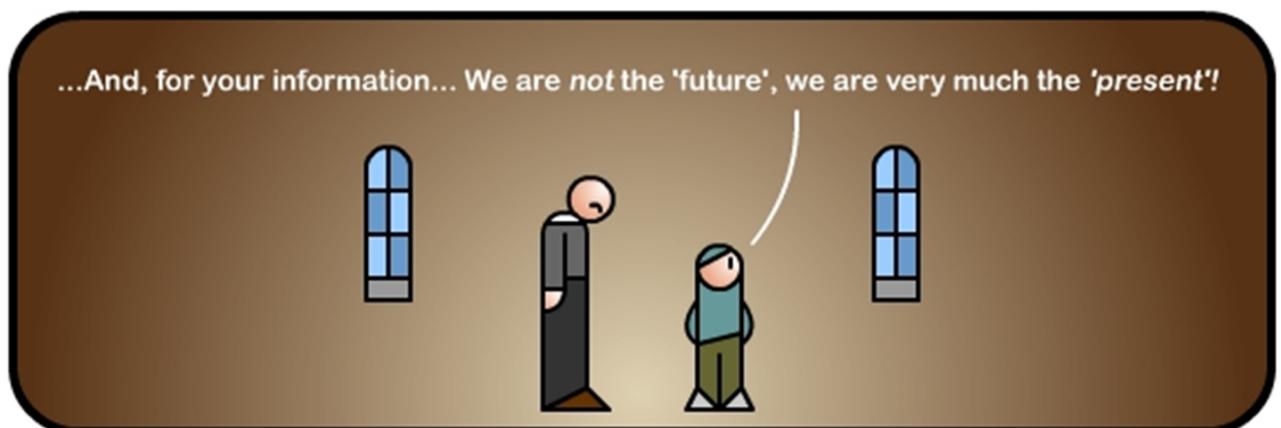
This year marks the fourth CIYD Day of Prayer for Young People and Youth Ministry. In previous years, a number of dioceses across the island have organised events and services to pray for the needs of young people and for the youth leaders and ministries that serve them. This resource has been produced to help dioceses and parishes in the organising of their events.

The House of Bishops have approved the date 11 February for this day, once again it is the Sunday before Lent. Participation is completely optional and at the discretion of those leading services on the Sunday in question. Please feel free to use these resources at other times and events as appropriate.

This pack contains a selection of prayer ideas that can be used during a service. The readings for Principal Service on this Sunday include 2 Corinthians 4: 3-6 which links to the Transfiguration and speaks of the God's Light shining in our hearts. A number of the prayers will link to God's light and how we might shine for Him.

"The Scriptures say, "God commanded light to shine in the dark." Now God is shining in our hearts to let you know that his glory is seen in Jesus Christ." (CEV)

If you have any questions or queries, please do not hesitate to contact Steve Grasham (Youth Ministry Development Officer, Southern Region) at steve@ciyd.org. If you are planning to participate in the day, please let Steve know so that CIYD has an idea what is happening across the island.



Do not let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith and in purity.

1 Timothy 4:12

“We Pray for Young People” Prayer

We pray for young people.

We pray for young people who put chocolate fingers everywhere, who like to be tickled, who stomp in puddles and ruin their new trousers, who ask for €10 before they leave with their friends, who erase holes in maths workbooks, who never put away their shoes.

And we pray for those who stare at photographers from behind barbed wire, who can't bound down the street in new trainers, who never “counted potatoes,” who aren't anybody's Facebook friend, who are born in places we wouldn't be caught dead in, who never go to the circus or to a concert, who live in an X-rated world.

We pray for young people who bring us sticky kisses and fistfuls of dandelions, who sleep with the cat and bury goldfish, who hug us in a hurry and forget their lunch money, who leave make-up all over the sink, who slurp their soup.

And we pray for those who never get pudding, who never had a security blanket to drag behind them, who can't find any bread to steal, who don't have any rooms or lockers to clean up, whose pictures aren't on anybody's iPhone, whose monsters are real.

We pray for young people who spend all their minimum wage before Tuesday, who throw tantrums in the supermarket and pick at their food, who like ghost stories, who stay out past curfew while their parents wait for them, who shove their dirty clothes under the bed and never rinse the bath, who think they're far too old to be hugged good-bye, who squirm in church and scream on the phone, whose tears we sometimes laugh at and whose smiles can make us cry.

And we pray for those whose nightmares come in the daytime, who will eat anything, who have never seen a dentist, who are never spoiled by anyone, who go to bed hungry and cry themselves to sleep, who live and move, but have no being.

We pray for young people who want to be carried and for those who have to be carried, for those we never give up on and for those who never get a second chance, for those we smother, and for those who will grab the hand of anybody kind enough to offer it.

We pray for young people for they are all so precious.

General Prayers

We pray for the young people of this parish and diocese and of the wider community. We thank you that you created each one of them lovingly and carefully and that you know each of them intimately. Help us to always see them through your eyes. We pray that they would come to know Christ as the Rock that supports their faith and their actions, so that they fear neither wind nor flood.

We thank you for youth leaders who faithfully give of their time, energy, talents and other resources to invest in the young people in their care. Help them to live lives that point young people towards Christ as Lord and Saviour. At times when they feel inadequate, help them to trust you and to rely on you to give them the strength and wisdom they need. Draw near to them when they grow weary and refresh them for all that they have to do. Help us all to support and encourage them in their valuable ministry.

We thank you for the youth ministry in our parish/diocese (as applicable) and pray that it would bring glory to you. May it be a safe place for young people as they grow and develop; may they feel comfortable and confident there and may good and lasting friendships begin and grow. Most of all, we ask that it would be a place where young people would hear and understand the gospel and grow as disciples of Christ.

We thank you for the many contributions that young people make towards the life of the Church. Help us to appreciate their optimism, enthusiasm, passion and energy, which greatly enrich our worship and fellowship. Thank you for the encouragement that they can be to other Christians of all ages. Help us always to value them as equal members of the Body of Christ and to provide them with opportunities to use the skills, gifts and talents with which you have blessed them.

There are many challenges and pressures facing young people today; in school, with their friends and peers, online and even in the home. The teenage years are a time of many different types of change. Help us to be aware of these struggles and to be supportive of young people as they negotiate them daily. We pray that they would look to you as their ultimate source of guidance, comfort and help.

We pray that you would help all of us here present to support young people as they grow in their faith. Many of us, at services of Baptism and Confirmation have promised to support and encourage children and young people in their Christian growth and development. Help us always to be mindful of this and to actively seek opportunities to live out such promises.

We pray especially for parents and guardians who seek, amid hectic family life, to raise their children in the Christian faith. That they would have the courage and wisdom to talk about faith at home and when out and about. To be a consistent and faithful witness with the strength and sensitivity to speak with loving respect, and the courage to live as a strong Christian example for children and grandchildren.

We pray for all young people who are considering or preparing for Confirmation. Make ready their hearts and minds and bring them to a true and lasting faith in you. By the power of your Holy Spirit, help them to live out their Confirmation declarations and promises for their rest of their lives, keeping their eyes firmly fixed upon you.

We pray for young people who for various reasons have many doubts and questions about the Christian faith. We pray for those who have been hurt in some way by Christians or the Church and who now struggle to believe in you. We ask you to work your purposes out in these situations and to help us to support such young people in appropriate and loving ways.

We pray for young people who are seeking to live out their faith in their daily lives; in their families, friendships, schools and workplaces. We thank you for their commitment to you and for their passion to share the message of your grace and love with those whom they meet each day. Give them courage at times when they may be mocked, ridiculed or sidelined by others for their actions and words. May they be ever aware of your presence with them and know that even in the most difficult of circumstances, you will never leave them or forsake them.

A Prayer for Difficult Times

You might choose to print this prayer out or project it on a screen so that all can participate.

At times of anxiety and worry

Reassure our young people

At times of hurt and upset

Comfort our young people

At times of tension and stress

Help our young people to cast their cares upon you

At times of rejection and failure

Remind our young people of their worth in your eyes

At times of change and turmoil

Be the constant in our young peoples' lives

At times of wrongdoing and guilt

Remind our young people that you forgive and renew

At times when there are difficult decisions to be made

Remind our young people that you are the way

At times when different voices and ideas compete and cause confusion

Remind our young people that you are the truth

At times when it seems difficult to carry on

Remind our young people that you are the life

Interactive prayers

Some of these prayers involve using items to inspire prayer - others involve moving around, writing and drawing.

- **Verses of Light:** Take some time to reflect on verses in the Bible which talk about light. Do feel free to choose your own verses, or use our suggestions below.
 - ♣ John 1.4-5: 'In [Jesus] was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.'
 - ♣ John 8.12: 'Again Jesus spoke to them, saying, 'I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness but will have the light of life.'"
 - ♣ Matthew 5.14: 'You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hid.'
 - ♣ 2 Corinthians 4.6: 'For it is the God who said, 'Let light shine out of darkness,' who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.'
 - ♣ 1 Peter 2.9: 'But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people, in order that you may proclaim the mighty acts of him who called you out of darkness into his marvellous light.'
- **River of Light:** You will need:
 - ♣ An image that conveys the idea of Christ as light of the world (minimum A4 size, ideally at least A3) Stuck onto the piece of strong card
 - ♣ One piece of strong card (larger than the image of Christ)
 - ♣ A few gold or silver foil emergency blankets (Often available for minimal cost from outdoor shops)
 - ♣ Electric tea lights
 - ♣ A packet of black napkins, cut up into smaller squares
 - ♣ Printed instruction card for the black napkin squares (below)

Pray that light will shine in places of darkness.

 1. Take a square of black napkins to represent a place or feeling or fear where darkness is present.
 2. Crush the darkness (tissue) and bury it in the folds of the river of light.
 3. Pray that darkness would not overcome.
 4. Then choose a quote from the river of light that speaks to you to take away.
 - ♣ Printed template of quotes about darkness and light cut up into individual cards (see table below)

What to do:

 - ♣ Lean the image against a wall in your dark corner and create a river of light flowing from it using a couple of gold or silver emergency blankets shaken out and arranged along the ground in a flowing shape.
 - ♣ Place electric tea lamps along your river of light: their light will be reflected by the foil and everything should shimmer.
 - ♣ Cut up the quotes about light in the darkness.
 - ♣ Distribute the cards in little piles around the river of light you have created.
- **Light of life:** You can cut up the cards (below) containing quotes and put them in piles around your prayer space, or use them as inspiration to create your own.

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| <p>Jesus spoke to them, saying, 'I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.'</p> <p><i>John 8</i></p> | <p>... the people who sat in darkness have seen a great light...</p> <p><i>Matthew 4</i></p> | <p>The light shines in the darkness and the darkness did not overcome it.</p> <p><i>John 1</i></p> |
| <p>Hope is being able to see that there is light despite all of the darkness.</p> <p><i>Desmond Tutu</i></p> | <p>Every human being is a mixture of light and darkness, trust and fear, love and hate.</p> <p><i>Jean Vanier</i></p> | <p>Life isn't just about darkness or light, rather it's about finding light within the darkness.</p> <p><i>Landon Parham</i></p> |
| <p>The issue is now clear. It is between light and darkness and everyone must choose their side.</p> <p><i>G.K. Chesterton</i></p> | <p>Look at how a single candle can both defy and define the darkness.</p> <p><i>Anne Frank</i></p> | <p>Give light, and the darkness will disappear of itself.</p> <p><i>Erasmus</i></p> |
| <p>At times our own light goes out and is rekindled by a spark from another person. Each of us has cause to think with deep gratitude of those who have lighted the flame within us.</p> <p><i>Albert Schweitzer</i></p> | <p>Faith is the bird that feels the light when the dawn is still dark.</p> <p><i>Rabindranath Tagore</i></p> | <p>Send out your light and your truth; let them lead me;</p> <p><i>Psalms 43.3</i></p> |
| <p>Happiness can be found in the darkest of times, if one only remembers to turn on the light.</p> <p><i>Albus Dumbledore in J. K. Rowling's Harry Potter</i></p> | <p>In the midst of darkness, light persists.</p> <p><i>Mahatma Gandhi</i></p> | <p>Darkness cannot drive out darkness: only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate: only love can do that.</p> <p><i>Martin Luther King Jr</i></p> |
| <p>The path of the righteous is like the light of dawn, which shines brighter and brighter until full day.</p> <p><i>Proverbs 4</i></p> | <p>Where can I go from your spirit? Or where can I flee from your presence? If I say, 'Surely the darkness shall cover me, and the light around me become night', even the darkness is not dark to you; the night is as bright as the day, for darkness is as light to you.</p> <p><i>Psalms 139</i></p> | <p>This is the message we have heard from him and proclaim to you, that God is light and in him there is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with him while we are walking in darkness, we lie and do not do what is true; but if we walk in the light as he himself is in the light.</p> <p><i>1 John 1</i></p> |

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| It is you who light my lamp; the Lord, my God, lights up my darkness. <i>Psalm 18</i> | You are the light of the world... let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works. <i>Matthew 5</i> | For with you is the fountain of life; in your light we see light. <i>Psalm 36</i> |
| Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path. <i>Psalm 119</i> | For you have delivered my soul from death, and my feet from falling, so that I may walk before God in the light of life. <i>Psalm 56</i> | Send out your light and your truth; let them lead me; <i>Psalm 43</i> |

- **Bookmarks:** In advance of the service, create simple bookmarks which could include printed prayers or prayers written by young people. Talk to young people, “How might you bring Light to situations at home, school, work?” During the service, distribute the bookmarks to the members of the congregation. You might choose to lead some prayers or invite the congregation to pray silently.
- **Mapping:** Get hold of a street map of your community and mark on it places where young people gather or attend (e.g. schools, church, sports clubs etc.). Get people to mark on it where they live and then to ‘adopt’ one of the areas nearest to them. Ask them to visualise some of the young people who go to those places and pray God’s blessing and protection on them.
- **Sand and stones:** You’ll need a large, deep tray or container of sand, a similar container filled with a selection of large stones or rocks, and a small watering can or jug of water. Have copies of the parable of the wise and foolish builders from a variety of translations, Bible verses: Matthew 7:24-29. This activity helps people to reflect on their own lives and what they are built on, as they meditate on the parable. Encourage people to touch the sand and the rocks and then explore what happens when the rain is poured over the sand and the rocks. As they read the parable they can reflect on what happens when storms or difficult times come and our lives aren’t built on Jesus’ words and teachings. Invite people to pray that they would not just hear but follow and live out Jesus’ teachings.
- **Quiet Light:** ‘Father God, who created light in our world, bring peace and light to our schools now. Amen’ ‘Out of the darkness light shall shine’ 2 Corinthians 4:6a
Many young people feel pressure or suffer bullying, maybe at school. God brings peace to places of unrest and light to darkness. Think of young people you know, and silently ask God to shine his light into their lives Light a candle and say a prayer. Watch as your candle flickers and adds to the light

Pray for Young People on the Edge

Loving God, who promises to be faithful and righteous,
Help us to make real your vision for all young people,
so that they are valued for who they are,
not who they will be,
so that they are encouraged and supported,
not abused or neglected,
listened to and challenged,
not ignored or stifled,
free to play safely
not forced to grow up before their time.

Amen.

Pray for young people in our communities; for those struggling with mental health issues, for those caught in the debt trap and for those who are rejected for who they are.

Pray for churches and organisations working with young people; for those helping to bring Your Kingdom closer each day by serving those who are seen as the least in our society.



FAITH IN YOUNG PEOPLE