

Journeying Towards Welcome

A Reflective Walk through the Liberties and Dublin City Centre

Sponsored walk in aid of
Dublin 8 Refugee Community Sponsorship



Starting Point: St James' Church

Opening Prayer

God of our days and years
we set this time apart for you.
We bring before you our fears and our hopes
Our sins and our pain.
We place all these into your hands
and ask that you heal, restore and redeem
so that our lives may glorify you. **Amen.**

First Stop: Peace Garden, corner of Christ Church Place (David)

Theme: The need for peace in our world and peace in our relationships

Jesus says to his disciples: '... the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything, and remind you of all that I have said to you. Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not let them be afraid.' *John 14:26-27*

Most gracious God and Father,
in whose will is our peace:
turn our hearts and the hearts of all to yourself,
that by the power of your Spirit
the peace which is founded on righteousness
may be established throughout the whole world;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

We keep a moment of silence for those who suffer as a result of the lack of peace in our world: for those whose homes and lives have been destroyed by conflict, those who suffer from abuse and ill-treatment, and those who bear the impact of trauma even generations after a physical conflict has ended.

Second Stop: Outside Dublin City Council Civic Offices, Wood Quay

Theme: Our local community as a place support and generosity

'Do not judge, and you will not be judged; do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven; give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap; for the measure you give will be the measure you get back.' --Luke 6:27-31

Lord of creation, you have blessed us in the beauty of the natural world and you have blessed us in the richness of the relationships we experience and the lives to which our own are bound.

We pray for our world, that we may honour and share its resources, and live in reverence for the creation and in harmony with one another.

We pray for our community, that we may live lives of welcome, extending care to those who are suffering and giving encouragement wherever there is despair.

We offer our prayers to you, the God of hope, able to do far more abundantly than all we could ask or imagine.

Amen.

We keep a moment of silence for our elected officials, local councillors, those who work in our public services, social workers and all who give of their time to make our communities healthier and stronger.

Third Stop: Famine Memorial, Custom House Quay

Theme: Wealth and poverty in our world

A Brief for the Defense

by Jack Gilbert

Sorrow everywhere. Slaughter everywhere. If babies
are not starving someplace, they are starving
somewhere else. With flies in their nostrils.
But we enjoy our lives because that's what God wants.
Otherwise the mornings before summer dawn would not
be made so fine. The Bengal tiger would not
be fashioned so miraculously well. The poor women
at the fountain are laughing together between
the suffering they have known and the awfulness
in their future, smiling and laughing while somebody
in the village is very sick. There is laughter
every day in the terrible streets of Calcutta,
and the women laugh in the cages of Bombay.
If we deny our happiness, resist our satisfaction,
we lessen the importance of their deprivation.
We must risk delight. We can do without pleasure,
but not delight. Not enjoyment. We must have
the stubbornness to accept our gladness in the ruthless
furnace of this world. To make injustice the only
measure of our attention is to praise the Devil.
If the locomotive of the Lord runs us down,
we should give thanks that the end had magnitude.
We must admit there will be music despite everything.
We stand at the prow again of a small ship
anchored late at night in the tiny port
looking over to the sleeping island: the waterfront
is three shuttered cafés and one naked light burning.
To hear the faint sound of oars in the silence as a rowboat
comes slowly out and then goes back is truly worth
all the years of sorrow that are to come.

*We keep a moment of silence for those who suffer even now, and that we ourselves may
have strength and resolve to be their advocates and their friends.*

Fourth Stop: Hanover Quay, Docklands

Theme: Dangerous journeys at sea

Psalm 71:1-6

In you, O Lord, do I seek refuge;
let me never be put to shame.

In your righteousness, deliver me and set me free;
incline your ear to me and save me.

In you, O Lord, do I seek refuge; let me never be put to shame.

Be for me a stronghold to which I may ever resort;
send out to save me, for you are my rock and my fortress.

Deliver me, my God, from the hand of the wicked,
from the grasp of the evildoer and the oppressor.

In you, O Lord, do I seek refuge; let me never be put to shame.

For you are my hope, O Lord God,
my confidence, even from my youth.

Upon you have I leaned from my birth,
when you drew me from my mother's womb;
my praise shall be always of you.

In you, O Lord, do I seek refuge; let me never be put to shame.

We keep a moment of silence in memory of all who have been lost as they have made desperate journeys to seek safety and sanctuary.

Fifth Stop: Trinity College Dublin

Theme: Education and empowerment

Everyone has the right to education. Education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages. Elementary education shall be compulsory. Technical and professional education shall be made generally available and higher education shall be equally accessible to all on the basis of merit.

--Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Section 26, Paragraph 1

God of all the nations, so many of your children are crying out to you worn down by injustice and suffering.

Help us to fulfil our goal of helping to make real the vision that Christ spoke of as 'the kingdom of God' where justice reigns.

Help us to foster compassion one for another, tolerating damage to no one and oppression by no system.

We pray for all to have access to education enabling them to flourish as human beings and empowering them to contribute to their communities, and to the betterment of the world we share.

Amen.

We keep a moment of silence for all young people who have been deprived of opportunities for education due to conflicts around the world. We mourn the wasting of human potential and the lack of opportunities for young people to flourish and offer their unique gifts and abilities to the world.

Sixth Stop: Dublin Castle

Theme: Civic engagement in an environment of political divisiveness

The Prophets are Weeping

by President Michael D. Higgins

To those on the road it is reported that
The Prophets are weeping,
At the abuse
Of their words,
Scattered to sow an evil seed.
Rumour has it that,
The Prophets are weeping,
At their texts distorted,
The death and destruction,
Imposed in their name.
The sun burns down,
On the children who are crying,
On the long journeys repeated,
Their questions not answered.
Mothers and Fathers hide their faces,
Unable to explain,
Why they must endlessly,
No end in sight,
Move for shelter,
for food, for safety, for hope.
The Prophets are weeping,
For the words that have been stolen,
From texts that once offered,
To reveal in ancient times,
A shared space,
Of love and care,
Above all for the stranger.

We keep a moment of silence, acknowledging the potential that resides in every human heart to make positive or negative choices, to relate to others with openness and generosity or to choose exclusion.

Concluding Prayer at Christ Church Cathedral

God of our journeys, no refugee is a stranger to you and no one is excluded from your loving care. Watch over children and families as they travel to camps or seek safety far from home. Heal the hearts of refugees who have endured unimaginable tragedy.

Lord in your mercy; *hear our prayer.*

God of mercy, we pray for all asylum seekers who are living in a direct provision and waiting for their decision. Calm their worry and fears, and help them to have peace.

Lord in your mercy; *hear our prayer.*

God of justice, we pray for all those who flee from the persecution and seek asylum here in Ireland. We pray for justice here and justice in all places. We pray for all who are desperate for find safety and a home.

Lord in your mercy; *hear our prayer.*

God of compassion, we give you thanks for the willingness shown by this local community to welcome those seeking refuge and to help them make a new home in a strange land. Strengthen us as in our lives we bear witness to the loving welcome you so graciously extend to all your children, and may we never be overcome by despair at the evils in our world but may we overcome evil with good.

Lord in your mercy; *hear our prayer.*