

ADVENT REFLECTION 2010

Week 1: Watching and waiting

Stay awake, because you do not know the day when your master is coming.

Matthew 24:42

He will wield authority over nations and adjudicate between many peoples; these will hammer their swords into ploughshares, their spears into sickles. Nation will not lift sword against nation, there will be no more training for war.

Isaiah 2:4



Muggings; street crime; racial attacks; ethnic cleansing; physical, mental and verbal abuse; violence; war: conflict all around – presented to us daily through the media. The whole world is brought into our living rooms.

- *Is there tension in my family?*
- *What can I do to resolve it?*
- *Is there hostility in my local community, especially towards newcomers?*
- *How might I be a better neighbour?*
- *Can I change my lifestyle to shift the focus from my own needs to the needs of others.*
- *How might I help those who suffer because of violence and war?*

Thank you loving God

For the gift of life

For this wonderful world which we all share

For the joy of love and friendship

For the challenge of helping to build your kingdom.

Strengthen

My determination to work for a world of peace and justice

My conviction that, whatever our nationality or race, we are all global citizens, one in Christ

My courage to challenge the powerful with the values of the Gospel

My efforts to forgive injuries and to love those I find it hard to love.

Teach me

To share the gifts you have given me

To speak out for the victims of injustice who have no voice

To reject the violence which runs through much of our world today.

Holy Spirit of God

Renew my hope for a world free from the cruelty of war so that we may all come to share in God's peace and justice. Amen.

Pax Christi Prayer

Action Ideas

- Join a local community action group or the LETS scheme (Local Exchange Trading Schemes – www.letslinkuk.net) which swops skills and resources
- Become a member of the Catholic Peace organization Pax Christi (www.paxchristi.org.uk)
- Send a greetings card to a prisoner of conscience (www.amnesty.org.uk)

Activity

- Everyone is invited to take 2 paper leaves: one a green holly leaf on which to write a word or phrase that expresses personal regret or concern for an issue in the wider world, the second a red poinsettia leaf for their hopes and dreams
- Florist's wire is attached to the leaves and they are displayed in a vase for everyone to see