

Get Involved: Pray



EMBRACE Prayer Group July/August 2013

As Christians, the Bible underpins our engagement with migrants. Scripture captures the heart of God for those far from home.

Genesis is a book of migrations. It describes those who have been uprooted by natural disaster, conflict, economic deprivation and the call of God. It introduces us to many of the threats and opportunities of migration. Abraham left the security of his home, for a land he didn't know. Jacob was forced to flee like a refugee.

Joseph – trafficked by his brothers with the help of the Midianites - rose to prominence in a foreign land. His wider family, forced by natural disaster and the benefits of family reunification, settled in Egypt. Later, their descendents were exploited by their hosts.

Genesis teaches us something of the complex nature of migration. It is rarely a simple decision to leave one's homeland.

Speaking of the great patriarchs of the Hebrew Scriptures, the writer of the Book of Hebrews tells us that: "all these people were still living by faith when they died. They did not receive the things promised; they only saw them and welcomed them from a distance, admitting that they were foreigners and strangers on earth. People who say such things show that they are looking for a country of their own. If they had been thinking of the country they had left, they would have had opportunity to return. Instead, they were longing for a better country – a heavenly one." Hebrews 11:11-16a

As I read the stories of faith from Hebrews, I'm reminded of the Filipino nurse who sees her new life in Northern Ireland as a response to God's call. Seeing herself in that light changes her perspective. Her work is not simply a job; but a vocation. As she puts herself in God's hands we catch a glimpse of heaven touching earth.

Embrace seeks to reflect something of God's heart for those far from home and exposed to particular challenges. Our very existence reflects the call of God to protect the vulnerable, offer hospitality and display generosity of spirit.

Our vision is for a better future; a future where God's heart is reflected and shared by His people. Where His Kingdom comes to earth; where a heavenly vision becomes an earthly reality.

Contributed by Richard Kerr, EMBRACE Chairperson

This month we give thanks for:

- The wealth of scripture which challenges us to make a difference
- The rich gifts immigrants bring to our communities

We pray for:

God's will to be done on earth as it is in heaven...

...so that our faith communities are places where

....His people reflect His compassion for the vulnerable

....others catch His vision of a world where people live in harmony