

Get Involved: Pray



EMBRACE Prayer Group June 2016

Freedom ... to love.

Headlines and images linked to limiting immigration ... and drownings in the Mediterranean bombard me as I reflect on a prayer for this month.

Images of my mum escaping from Lithuania come to mind. One morning in the 1940's, at her farm, she heard that the priests in the church of her rural village had been brutally killed and the message circulated that the Russian Army were coming in the afternoon. The community, in fear for their lives, found bicycles, horses and carts as they moved rapidly to find refuge. After various adventures and passing through Poland and Germany my mum found herself working in a sanatorium for tuberculosis patients in England. My father had escaped by a different route and my parents got to know one another in Scotland, through a Lithuanian newspaper, *The Immigrants Friend (Isieviu Draugus)*, which my father, a steel worker, eventually helped to edit in his spare time.

My parents imbued in us a deep sense of gratitude for democracy, education and sense of responsible citizenship. To be free to express what we believe without fear was a value my father instilled in us and my mother was an example of living hospitality!

As a Christian I am grateful for my life, for my family, and for the freedom I have to express and live my faith and trust in the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, without persecution. Freedom is a gift that enables me not simply to do what I want but which I can use in order to love and serve others.

'My God, ... Let me be your arms that press to themselves and consume in love all the loneliness of the world'

Chiara Lubich

Contributed by Irene Jovaras

Prayer topics

- Pray for all, who because of war, persecution, poverty and famine, live in fear and desperation.
- Pray for those in positions of leadership in religious and political fields. May they have wisdom to make choices that contribute to lasting peace and challenge injustice.
- Pray for those who have sought refuge here.
- Pray for the churches and communities in parts of Northern Ireland where people seeking refuge are living. May we be people of welcome; the immigrants' friends.