

November 18th 2017



### Stepping out as a Refugee

They became **R**efugees and were concerned about what they were to **E**at and became **F**earful. Knowing they were **U**nwanted they trusted in **G**od and after such an **E**xperience they were full of **E**xpectation.

*(Written by Deacon Vivian Ward during the 2017 MWiB Lancashire District Conference)*

These words, shared during the Conference, really spoke to me and this was my reflection in response for refugees are very much a part of our world today, never have so many people been homeless or rootless and yet history shows us that this crisis is not unique.

Stepping out into the unknown, they made their way towards a place of safety, not knowing what the reception would be. Taking little more than they could carry, the family made their way from the terror they had witnessed, passing by towns and cities to reach another country. Surely someone would help them, someone would take them in, someone would show pity until it was safe to return home?

That was some 2,000 years ago, when Mary and Joseph fled with their young son to keep him safe, they were refugees escaping from the Promised Land and finding safety in the very place the first Israelites had fled from. What irony, refugees fleeing from Egypt and now God's Son, a refugee, going back again!

And 2,000 years later what has changed? Refugees today are leaving terror behind, looking for a place of safety, passing by towns and cities, even risking life and limb in flimsy boats to reach another country - to what? A welcome or no room?

As we see through the media the huge camps or the lines of weary people walking, do we see them as individuals, made in the image of God or another problem to be solved?

We cannot ignore them, for surely God, who loves all his creation, has his hand upon them. And as we are his hands, feet, eyes and voice in the world today - we have to respond and step out for them.

**Oh Lord, for those of us who feel safe and secure, may our hearts so be stirred with compassion that we see Mary and Joseph and Jesus in the faces of all who flee for their lives. May we step out of our comfort zones and our complacency and reach out a hand of friendship to those who step our way. May we take that first step and open doors to give hope to the hopeless, friendship to the friendless, peace to the disturbed and life for the children. We speak of a refugee crisis, but you see the tears and heartache and the ones that don't make it. So to all who are having to step out today from the place they called home, may you, Lord God be their pillar of cloud by day and pillar of fire by night as those we call refugees seek to find somewhere they can call home once more. Amen.**

*Prayers for November written by Denise Creed.*

*Picture: free image from internet.*