

Written prayers

Intercessory prayers in response to global poverty and injustice

Use these general, and specific issue prayers, individually or together, in your intercessions for poor communities, and all those who are committed to speaking up for the voiceless.

For all those living in poverty

Leader: Father of life,
To all who are hungry
All: Give daily bread
Leader: To all who are thirsty
All: Send fresh water
Leader: To all who are homeless
All: Provide shelter
Leader: And in all who are comfortable
All: Stir up a compassion that cannot be ignored
Until there is no more poverty and injustice left to feel uncomfortable about.
Amen.

For those living below the poverty line

Dear Lord, we lift up to you all who live below the line – we thank you that none of them is beneath your notice. You see each one, and know each one completely – for each one is your unique and precious child.

Dear Lord, we ask that you would lift them above the line – we know that you are our perfect Father and all good things come from you. Give daily bread to satisfy their hunger, and give daily hunger for change to us.

Dear Lord, we thank you that you have provided more than enough food in your world. Please soften our hearts so that we, who live so far above the line, would be prepared to share all we have until that line is erased completely. In our day, and in our time, please do it Lord. Amen.

For forgotten nations

Leader: God of the broken, and the forgotten,
Father of the overlooked, and the down-trodden
Your eyes see everyone – each one is made in your image.
All: We lift to you all who live in unseen poverty.

Leader: God of the distant shores, and the islands
Father of the obscure, and the powerless
You seek justice for all nations – each one is precious to you.
All: We lift to you all nations that are out of the public's interest or awareness.

Leader: Move our eyes beyond the media
And lift our faith above statistics.
Help us to see through this week's fashionable cause
And remember the places where the cameras are no more, or have never been.
Deliver us from our fear of what is different, and our indifference to where we do not know.

**All: Remind us Lord, of your passion for the nations.
Restore in us Lord, your heart for the nations.
Amen.**

For the voiceless poor (based on Proverbs 31:8-9)

Leader: Living Word we hear your call
To speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves

All: We will speak up for the rights of all who are destitute.

Leader: Wise Counsellor we hear your call
To speak up and judge fairly

All: We will defend the rights of the poor and needy.

Leader: We fall to our knees and cry out to you

All: Defend the poor;

Leader: We get to our feet and cry out to governments
Defend the poor;

Leader: We get past ourselves and cry out to our hearts

All: Defend the poor;

Leader: Living Word we hear your call

All: And we answer yes and amen.

Prayer of confession (inspired by Amos 5:21-28 and Isaiah 58)

Leader: Father forgive us
For the times we have profited from the exploitative systems of our society
And the history our ancestors made,
Whilst all the while saying we were worshippers of you.

**All: Father forgive us for we have sinned. We are truly sorry, and repent of our selfish ways.
We return to you – God of the orphan, the widow and the stranger.**

Leader: Father forgive us
For the times we have deafened our ears to the cries of the poor
And filled the air with prayers about ourselves
Whilst all the while saying we were worshippers of you.

**All: Father forgive us for we have sinned. We are truly sorry, and repent of our selfish ways.
We return to you – God of the orphan, the widow and the stranger.**

Leader: Father forgive us

Written prayers

Intercessions – responding to global poverty

For the times we have prioritised our luxuries above others' essentials
And coveted still more material gain
Whilst all the while saying we were worshippers of you.

**All: Father forgive us for we have sinned. We are truly sorry, and repent of our selfish ways.
We return to you – God of the orphan, the widow and the stranger.**

Prayer of absolution

God of the orphan, the widow, and the stranger
We thank you for your grace and compassion.
You are slow to anger, and abounding in love.
As we turn to you, we receive your forgiveness.
All our sin – towards you and towards others – for you make no distinction
Is as far removed from us as east to west –
Because of the outstretched arms of your precious Son, our Lord Jesus Christ.
Through his resurrection love and power, lift us to a new way of living, spending, and giving
So that our righteousness arises like the dawn, and shines for your glory
Showing that there is a different way to live – and that like you God, we love the orphan, the widow and the stranger.
Amen.

For aid agencies, campaigners and project workers

Father, we thank you for all who work for justice and life,
Bless them and keep them we pray.
Give them energy where they are weary,
Wisdom where they see no way forward,
And resources where they have come to the end of themselves.

Father, we thank you for all who speak out against oppression, and poverty.
Bless them and keep them we pray.
Give them audiences where they have previously received none,
Favour where there has previously been rejection
And breakthrough where it seems impossible.

Father, we thank you for all who work alongside the poor and the broken,
Bless them and keep them we pray.
Give them love where they are challenged
Compassion where they are under-appreciated
And strength where they have nothing left to give.

We ask these things in the name of your Son, who walks with them in all they do.
Amen.

For governments (inspired by psalm 113)

God of the nations, we praise you.
You are high above all – you are sovereign over all.
You are the King of kings and the Lord of lords.

Who is like you?
Who is there besides you?
Who compares to you?

From the beginning of the day to the end of time – your name is to be praised.
What are the nations beside you?
Who are the powerful compared to you?

You are the champion of the poor, and the one who sets things right –
Turning everything back to your upside-down right-way-round kingdom's order.
You lift poor communities out of ashes and sit them high up with princes.
You are not impressed with those who swagger and use their power to get still more.
You are not frightened by those who threaten or bribe.

God of the nations, we praise you.
Build your kingdom in the earth we pray.
Challenge world leaders with your priorities,
Remind powerful nations what is right
And lead companies, financial institutions and governments to reform unjust systems.
Deliver oppressed nations from debt, unjust trade systems, and all forms of exploitation
And convict the powerful of their greed.
Fill rich nations with your justice and mercy
And lead them to create new, righteous practices which protect the poor.

God of the nations we ask these things in your name, and for your glory.

Amen.