When people we know are in dangerous situations – and particularly when they are travelling or living in volatile nations in order to share the gospel and/or work for justice – it can be hard to find the words in spontaneous prayer for them. Even more so when they are incredibly precious to us personally. There might be a weight of emotion involved which sometimes makes it hard to focus. And at other times, we might find ourselves feeling guilty for praying for one person, or a few, when so many – equally loved by God – are at risk too.

It’s at times like this – when we so need to pray – that written prayers can really help. Here are some that have helped us or that we’ve written for friends. If you’re in a dangerous situation yourself, you can use these prayers too. Simply flip the pronouns so ‘you’ becomes ‘I’ or ‘we’ and change associated words to my, mine, ours, us etc.

A prayer based on Psalm 20

This prayer is also set as a song – see www.thesanctuarycentre.org/whereworldandworshipmeet-songs to download the mp3, chord sheet and story behind the song.

May the Lord answer you when you are in distress
May the strong name of our God watch over you
May God speed you help from his sanctuary
And grant you support from heaven.

May the Lord remember all your sacrifice
And may He be pleased with the offering you live
May our gracious God give you the desires of your heart
And make all of your plans succeed

Some may put their hope in the world and all its power
But we will place all our trust in the Lord
For surely he will answer from his holy hill
And he will raise us up, we’ll stand in him.

Raise a banner in the name of our God
Surely he saves, surely he saves
Shout for joy in victorious praise
For our God reigns, yes our God reigns
Forever – Amen.

And we will shout for joy, when you see your victory
Yes I will shout for joy, when you see your victory
For injustice is defeated - it's crushed under his feet.
Yes injustice is defeated - it's crushed under Jesus’ feet.
The Aaronic blessing (Numbers 6:23-30)

You might find it helpful to pray this slowly, several times through. Also, try substituting ‘you’ for the person or people’s name/s.

The LORD bless you
and keep you;
the LORD make his face shine on you
and be gracious to you;
the LORD turn his face toward you
and give you peace.

A prayer of protection inspired by St Patrick’s Breastplate

Insert the person or people’s name wherever a space is indicated to do so, and change pronouns to the alternative gender or plural as required.

I bless _______ today
Through a mighty strength, the invocation of the Trinity,
Through belief in the threeness,
Through confession of the oneness
Of the creator of Creation.

I bless _______ today
Through the strength of Christ’s birth with his baptism,
Through the strength of his crucifixion with his burial,
Through the strength of his resurrection with his ascension.

I bless _______ today
The power of God to hold and lead,
His eye to watch, His might to stay,
His ear to hearken to his need.
The wisdom of God him to teach,
His hand to guide, His shield to ward,
The word of God to give him speech,
His heavenly host to be his guard.

Christ be with him, Christ within him,
Christ behind him, Christ before him,
Christ beside him, Christ to win him,
Christ to comfort and restore him.

Christ beneath him, Christ above him,
Christ in quiet, Christ in danger,
Christ in hearts of all that love him,
Christ in mouth of friend and stranger.
Written prayers

Interceding for protection for people in dangerous situations

Christ in his travel and Christ in his shelter,
Christ in his hiding and in the eyes of all when he is seen,
Christ in his choice of words and leading when he is silent,
Christ in his work and Christ in his rest.

Christ in his emails and covering his phone-calls
Christ in any records that are being held on him.
Christ in his thoughts, redeeming his fear
Christ be his security, covering him with love.

Christ in his seeing, and in new memories made
Christ in his remembering, and in old trauma surfacing.
Christ his protection, Christ his reward,
Christ his everything, his strong and ever present Lord.

A prayer to the God of the many and the God of the one

This prayer is dedicated to JB – an amazing, beautiful woman of God and a very precious friend.

Lord Jesus, long ago you won my heart
For you and for those on your heart.
And day by day and year by year
I have mourned with you,
Interceded with you,
Acted with you,
Rejoiced with you
As you transform others’ lives
And bring hope to nations.

Lord Jesus, every day you win my heart
For the people you love behind faceless statistics.
And day by day and year by year
I have mourned with you,
Interceded with you,
Acted with you,
Rejoiced with you
As you work in the lives of seven billion
And in the heart of this one.

Lord Jesus, everyday you know what is on my heart
And whose face most precious of all is pictured there today.
Today help me mourn with you,
Intercede with you,
Act with you,
Rejoice with you
As I trust him to you and remember
That your love for this one is as deep as it is for millions and more.

Lord Jesus, I know you understand my heart
That I love those closest most for you made us that way.
Today help me mourn with you,
Intercede with you,
Act with you,
Rejoice with you
As guiltless and heart-felt I pray more for this one
And trust you with him and millions more in his nation.

Lord Jesus, come close to the depths of my heart
And give me the words I long to pour out to you
To mourn with you,
Intercede with you,
Act with you,
Rejoice with you
Under the shadow of your wing, I praise here and pray here
Whilst you lovingly, powerfully, overshadow him too.