

reflect

Resources to help you reflect and pray for
communities around the world

February – June 2024



**An invitation
to pray for
Cord**

Cord

Welcome...



I'm delighted to welcome you to Reflect, Cord's prayer diary. Thank you for joining us in prayer as we lift up to God the places where violence and conflict prevent people from living life to the full. Your prayers play such a vital role in Cord's work for peace, and we are incredibly grateful for your commitment.

As you'll read, there are many things to celebrate:

- **Over 2,500 people rising out of poverty and trauma in Burundi**
- **A fantastic new project in Cambodia**
- **More women becoming Environmental Defenders in Southeast Asia**

It's so important to recognise this success and take time to thank God. All of these wonderful achievements are the result of your prayers, your generous gifts and faithful support. You have made such a difference and thousands more people live in peace today because of you.

And yet, there are still so many situations that desperately need our love and prayers:

- **Increased fighting in Myanmar has forced 600,000 people to flee their homes**
- **Fears that forthcoming elections in Burundi could lead to tension and violence**
- **Children in the poorest part of Laos not having enough food or attending school**

Let us join together and pray in faith for these issues over the coming weeks. May we be encouraged as we remember that we are praying alongside hundreds of other Cord supporters. However difficult some of these situations seem, let us remember that God's will is for peace. He is not reluctant or distant. His will is for all people to live in peace, to flourish and thrive.

Thank you for being so faithful, compassionate and kind. I hope that you will feel inspired and encouraged as you pray. I hope you will feel more connected to this work and recognize the vital role you play.

If you would like to ask any questions or share anything from your prayers, please do feel free to contact me – nthorley@cord.org.uk or by calling 024 7708 7777. It's always fantastic to hear from you.

With huge thanks,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Nick Thorley', written in a cursive style.

**Nick Thorley,
Fundraising Manager**



25 February – 2 March

Praise God for our new project in Cambodia. It's called SABRE and will support Indigenous People. Their human rights are regularly denied, their land can be grabbed and they often end up living in extreme poverty. We'll be working with communities, local authorities and multinational corporations to end this injustice. Please pray that the project has a great start and for the 150 Human Rights Defenders we'll be working with in the coming year.

3 – 9 March

We've been asking you to pray for our efforts to organise a forum for our freedom of religion and belief work in Myanmar for some time. This has been a huge challenge and we've had to postpone this event several times. Increased monitoring by the military government of human rights

organisations means we have to be very careful not to risk the safety of our staff or partners. The event is really important for partners to share learning, best practice and plan joint campaigns. We hope it will take place this month, outside of Myanmar. Please pray that it happens safely and is a great time of encouragement and learning for all those involved.

10 – 16 March

This week, join us in praying for the recruitment of new staff in the UK and around the world. Our work depends on the skills, dedication and commitment of our brilliant team. We have a number of key appointments to make. Ask God to bring forward the right people for the various roles and to give wisdom and discernment to those responsible for this process.

Heart-rending and heartwarming

A reflection from Cord supporter Carolyn Howarth

“My earliest memory of Cord (then Project Vietnam Orphans) is that iconic photo of tiny babies, rows and rows of them, all strapped into jumbo jet seats, on their way from Vietnam to the UK. It was heart-rending to think about those little mites, with no family, and travelling so far into the unknown. But it was also heartwarming to know that there were Christian families in the UK who were going to welcome these little strangers into their home, and to love and care for them.

Looking at my diary I noticed with some amusement that two notable dates this month both fall on February 14 - Valentine's Day, and Ash Wednesday! What an odd combination. Do I put on make-up and go out for a romantic dinner for two, or do I go to a penitential service in church and come home with ash on my forehead?! But thinking

about it, it's those two emotions once again – my sins and sorrows, and those of the world, are heart-rending, but the gift of human love in all its aspects is heartwarming.

I think God's heart must be rent too, as He sees the injustices, the greed, and the poverty in the world. His heart was literally rent when Jesus died to forgive the world's sins. But as He walked among us Jesus taught us how to love our neighbour, and our enemy as well. So God's heart must be warmed as He sees what Cord and similar organisations do – the loving labour of reconciliation and repair and restoration is His work too.”

If you would like to write a short reflection for our prayer diary, please email Nick – nthorley@cord.org.uk

17 – 23 March

Our latest fundraising appeal is launched this month. Let's pray that it's a great success so that more of the world's most vulnerable communities can know peace. Although institutions like the European Union and US State Department support some of our work, they only

do so because of the funds raised by supporters and churches around the UK. May all those who receive the letters and emails feel inspired and may those who can give, give with joy.



24 – 30 March

We would value your prayers for Dismas, Cord's Burundi Country Programme Manager. There have been lots of staffing changes in Burundi and an office move. Dismas is now heading up our Burundi team. Ask God to strengthen Dismas as he adjusts to his new role and takes on extra responsibility. Pray that he will be equipped with everything he needs to continue the amazing work for peace and reconciliation in this very special country.

31 March – 6 April

Lift up to God the grassroots organisations in Laos we're strengthening through training and investment. Their work supports the poorest, most marginalised and vulnerable people. We've recently provided 12 of them with grants for new projects and the Cord Laos team is mentoring and coaching them as they start this work. Bring them before God as they shape their projects and put them in to practice.

7 – 13 April

This year we're hoping to build new partnerships with businesses and companies. Shoe Zone have provided amazing support for many years including match-funding our Christmas appeal. Last year we also received financial support from The Entertainer toy store chain. This week let's pray that God would open more opportunities in this area so that more businesses can join us in working for peace.

14 – 20 April

In your prayers this week, please remember our support of Women Environmental Defenders in Southeast Asia. We're helping them to work safely and effectively. We're also helping their families and neighbours to understand their vital work. One way we're doing this is by sharing educational resources. These include picture books in Cambodia and calendars in Laos. Please pray that they lead to more communities supporting these courageous women.

21 – 27 April

Let's pray for Jude, Marika and Lucy who make up the Programme Development Group here in the UK. They oversee all Cord's projects, helping to design, manage and evaluate them. At the moment they are exploring new opportunities in Bangladesh and Uganda. They are aiming to build on recent, short-term projects. Let's pray for wisdom and creativity throughout the planning process and that they find great partners to work with.

28 April – 4 May

This week please bring Cord's trustees before God. They generously share their time, expertise and experience. We thank Him for their commitment to peace and to those who suffer due to conflict. Let us pray that God will give them understanding and integrity in all the decisions that they make. Let's pray that they will find new passion and vision in their relationship with God and in the work of Cord.

5 – 11 May

Ask God to equip the 150 Human Rights Defenders we're training as part of our new project in Cambodia – SABRE. They'll be protecting Indigenous People who live in poverty because their rights are denied and their land is taken. Things are especially difficult for young people who struggle to access education and employment, and women who suffer discrimination due to traditional attitudes. Because of this, half of the Human Rights Defenders are women and 40% are young people under 30 years old.

12 – 18 May

We thank God for Cord's work with women and young people in Burundi. We recently focused on 3 communities devastated by conflict where hundreds of people were left in terrible poverty. This work has been so successful that around 100 Self Help Groups have started – each with 25 people. Through savings and loans they are rising out of poverty. Psychological support means that they are finding healing from trauma. Please pray that these groups help their communities to become more prosperous and peaceful.

19 – 25 May

Let's cry out to God for Myanmar. It is now over 3 years since the military coup toppled the government. Major fighting erupted in October and is sweeping the country. Pro-democratic groups have united against the military authorities. The military response has included missiles and shelling on civilian populations. More than 600,000 people have fled their homes. Thank God that our staff and partners are ok at the moment. Please pray for their continued safety and for a peace and just end to this situation.

26 May – 1 June

Let us pray for the Laos Disabled People Association – one of the grassroots organisations in Laos that we are supporting through training and investment. With Cord's support they are working in some of the poorest rural villages. Many children don't attend school and don't have enough to eat. Please pray for their work to improve school attendance and to help schools provide nutritious food.

2 – 8 June

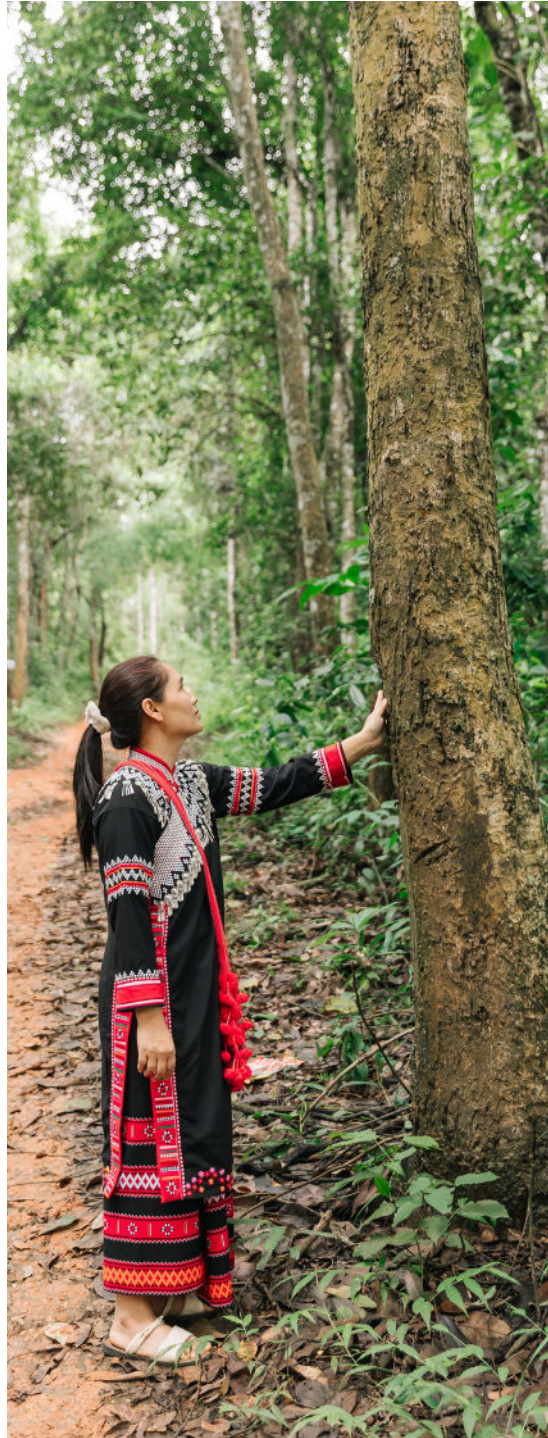
We praise God for all the churches who partner with Cord for peace. Some make a regular donation; others support us during a particular festival or season. Ask the Holy Spirit to inspire those churches who pray and give with such love and generosity. May all those churches feel an increasing connection with the people and communities that benefit from their kindness. Please pray that more churches would catch a vision for our peace-building work.

9 – 15 June

This week please ask God to bless the Women Environmental Defenders we support throughout Southeast Asia. They fight climate change, protect vital areas of natural beauty and the families who live there. Pray that more women will get involved in this essential work. Praise God for a recent social media campaign in Cambodia which was wonderfully successful and led to more women deciding to become Environmental Defenders.

16 – 22 June

We would welcome your prayers for our new project in Burundi which is concerned with the elections that are planned for later this year. Tensions increase and violence often breaks out during these periods. Young people can often get caught up in the fighting. We will be working with the most vulnerable young people and their communities to reduce the risk of conflict and ensure a peaceful election period.



Cord is a member of The Community of the Cross of Nails. This worldwide network of over 200 churches, charities, peacebuilding centres, and educational and training organisations, is inspired by the Coventry story of destruction, rebuilding and renewal and all members are active in reconciliation in their own ways.

As a result, each Monday, as part of our staff prayers, we share in The Coventry Litany of Reconciliation and we'd love you to join with us whenever you can:

All have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God.

The hatred which divides nation from nation, race from race, class from class,

FATHER FORGIVE

The covetous desires of people and nations to possess what is not their own,

FATHER FORGIVE

The greed which exploits the work of human hands and lays waste the earth,

FATHER FORGIVE

Our envy of the welfare and happiness of others,

FATHER FORGIVE

Our indifference to the plight of the imprisoned, the homeless, the refugee,

FATHER FORGIVE

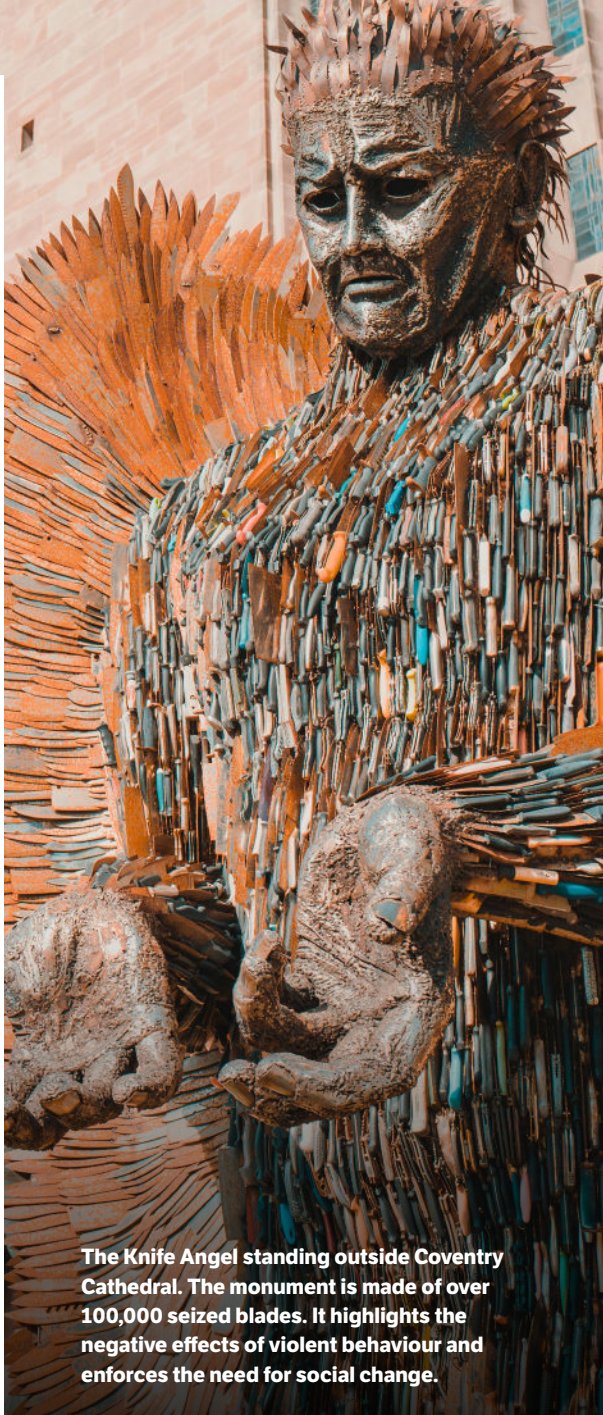
The lust which dishonours the bodies of men, women and children,

FATHER FORGIVE

The pride which leads us to trust in ourselves and not in God,

FATHER FORGIVE

Be kind to one another, tender hearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.



The Knife Angel standing outside Coventry Cathedral. The monument is made of over 100,000 seized blades. It highlights the negative effects of violent behaviour and enforces the need for social change.

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