

# reflect

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

*October 2025 – February 2026*



**An invitation  
to pray for  
Cord**

**Cord** 

# Welcome...



**It's a joy to welcome you to this edition of Reflect. As we join together in prayer, I thought it would be helpful to reflect on the theme of hope. We are constantly confronted with distressing reports in the media - stories of conflict, violence, and division. If you're anything like me, this unrelenting stream of bad news can make it difficult to hold on to hope.**

I recently heard an interview with Lyse Doucet, the BBC's Chief International Correspondent. She was asked how, after years of covering wars, humanitarian crises, and natural disasters, she manages to avoid collapsing into despair. This is what she said:

Sometimes my producers make fun of me because I'm always trying to look for hope in unexpected corners. Many cultures—Russia, Afghanistan—have the phrase “hope is the last to die.” I don't think a life is worth living unless you live with hope and optimism.

I used to go by that expression of the Italian Marxist Antonio Gramsci, who talked about the “pessimism of the intellect” and the “optimism of the will”. And then I thought I should find a more modern mantra. So, I took the one of a man who I really admired who always found hope, wherever he went, and that was Bishop Desmond Tootoo. If you ever met him, he had a great belly laugh – he found humour everywhere. He was also a moral beacon. He would say that he was a “prisoner of hope”. I think I love

that expression because we can't bring ourselves to say that all is gone and all is lost.

I'm a great believer in human agency and that if one by one, we all try to make something happen, with our collective energy, we can try to move something forward.

I also always loved it when David Miliband, the former Foreign Secretary who heads the International Rescue Committee, used this expression: when you read the statistics about a place it makes you feel depressed, but when you go to the ground and meet the people you feel more optimistic.

I hope you find encouragement in Lyse's words. As fellow prisoners of hope, let us exercise our agency and make a real difference in the world by joining together in prayer.

Yours,

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

Nick Thorley  
Fundraising Manager



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### **26 October – 1 November**

As tensions rise in Burundi, let us call out to God for peace. National elections were held in May, but in reality, the country is now a one-party state. Fuel shortages are pushing up prices and inflation; forcing more people into poverty. As daily life grows harder, many are looking for someone to blame. Please pray that violence does not break out and ask God to strengthen all our peacebuilding efforts.

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### **2 – 8 November**

This Autumn we're launching our new strategy, "Build Peace". It will guide and shape our work over the coming years. You can read the Build Peace strategy document on our website. It emphasises our commitment to developing peacebuilding practices within Cord and in the work of our partners. There is also an ambition to raise our voice and speak

out for peace, in our ever more divided world. Please pray that God will guide us as we put our strategy into practice and that even more people will come to experience peace, freedom and life in all its fullness.

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### **9 – 15 November**

Some of the communities on the border between Ethiopia and Somalia live in desperate poverty. The situation is made worse by outbreaks of violence. In a new pilot project, we are working with our friends at the Dutch Christian charity, Dorcas. They are providing humanitarian aid and setting up livelihood projects, and we are helping to build peace. Please pray that this project would be effective and ask God for guidance, as we consider similar opportunities with other charities.



“For to us a child is born,  
to us a son is given,  
and the government  
will be on his shoulders.  
And he will be called  
Wonderful Counsellor,  
Mighty God, Everlasting  
Father, Prince of Peace.  
Of the greatness of his  
government and peace,  
there will be no end. He  
will reign on David’s  
throne, and over his  
kingdom, establishing  
and upholding it  
with justice and  
righteousness, from that  
time on, and forever.”

**Isaiah 9:6-7**

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### **16 – 22 November**

Thank you so much for praying about the recruitment of new Trustees over the summer. We’re delighted to announce that a number of new Trustees have joined Cord’s board, providing even more experience and expertise. Thank God for the dedication of all Cord’s Trustees, whose guidance and commitment are vital to our mission.

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### **23 – 29 November**

Please pray for the SABRE project in Cambodia. Mining and farming are harming the environment and driving Indigenous People from their land. Through this project, we’re partnering with five private companies, encouraging them to safeguard natural habitats and respect community rights. The Cambodian government has also invited us to support them in strengthening how they communicate laws that promote socially responsible business practices. We thank God for the growing trust between all those involved.

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### **30 November – 6 December**

We’d be so grateful if you could pray for our Big Give Christmas Challenge which launches at 12 noon this Tuesday, 2 December. As usual, for 7 days, until midday on Tuesday 9 December, every donation to Cord made online, will be matched pound for pound. So, whatever you give, it will have twice the impact. Please pray that we have a successful appeal as this is always our most important fundraising moment of the year. And do give generously if you can!



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### **7 – 13 December**

Thank you for praying for our new project in Laos, supporting the poorest women in rural areas, to gain land rights and a voice in their communities. Your prayers have been answered through a successful recruitment process, and we're excited to welcome new members to our Laos staff team to take this work forward. Please pray that they settle in quickly and catch Cord's peacebuilding vision!

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### **14 – 20 December**

In July, Andy, our CEO, was able to attend an event organised by the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office, looking at the UK's approach to Freedom of Religion and Belief (FoRB). He was able to meet with David Smith MP – the Prime Minister's Special Envoy for FoRB. Andy and David are meeting again this month to talk more about Cord's work. Please pray that it would be a fruitful meeting and thank God that we have the ear of some influential and significant people.

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### **21 – 27 December**

Let's pray that this Christmas time is a deeply refreshing and revitalising time for us, our friends and families. Let's also lift the Cord team up to God, many of

whom will be taking time off this week. We pray that we will be renewed as we spend time resting, being with loved ones and taking things at a very different pace. We also pray that it would be a significant time as we reflect again on the birth of Jesus, the incarnation - the world-altering, universe-shaking event of God becoming a human being.

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### **28 December – 3 January**

Many governments are spending less on international development, especially Human Rights-based work - the kinds of projects that Cord delivers. A recent report estimates that funding for Human Rights-based work will be cut by £62 billion by 2026. This 28% reduction is in large part (84%) the result of cuts made by the US, UK and Germany:

*<https://www.ohchr.org/en/stories/2025/09/report-foreign-aid-cuts-threaten-global-human-rights-ecosystem>*

Please pray, at the start of this new year, that God will renew our vision and passion to build peace, in spite of these huge challenges. Please ask for God's blessing as we explore innovative ways of working, developing partnerships and securing vital funds.



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#### **4 – 10 January**

According to Open Doors (serving persecuted Christians worldwide), Laos is amongst the world's ten most dangerous countries for religious persecution. Our new project is promoting tolerance and understanding by working with minority religious groups and government officials. The fact that the Laos government is willing to work with Cord on this issue is an incredible answer to prayer; many people who work for religious freedom around the world, can't quite believe that we have this opportunity! Please pray that this relationship grows and that minority religious groups, including Christians, will gain more freedom.

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#### **11 – 17 January**

Praise God for all the churches and groups who partner with us for peace. We celebrate shoezone's long-term commitment to Cord and their remarkable commitment to match-fund our Big Give

Christmas Challenge. We thank God for congregations all over the country who regularly pray and give, so that more people can live in freedom. Various Rotary Groups fundraise for Cord and promote our work. We celebrate these relationships and pray that they would deepen. We also pray for even more churches and groups to catch a vision for peace and join us in our mission.

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#### **18 – 24 January**

In Burundi, schools do not teach the nation's recent history. Instead, young people learn about the civil wars and conflicts through their family; often inheriting prejudice and misinformation. This increases the risk of future violence. Please pray for Cord's Peace Project, educating 1,000 young people to learn from the past and training them as leaders who will promote truth, tolerance, and critical thinking in their communities.

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## **25 – 31 January**

Let's celebrate the impact of the SABRE project in Cambodia – protecting the environment and the communities who depend on it. Over halfway through the project, relationships between Indigenous Communities, local authorities, the Cambodian government and multi-national corporations are growing through trust and co-operation. Local issues are resolved, and conflict is avoided. Women Environmental Defenders have become formidable advocates and are now training the next generation to take on these roles. Pray that the impact of this project will last long into the future!

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## **1 – 7 February**

This week please spend some time praying for those who lead Cord's work around the world. Please lift up to God our Country Leaders: Dismas in Burundi, Theresa in Laos, Carlos in Cambodia and Nirjhar. Please ask God to pour out His Spirit afresh on these individuals, renewing their strength, persistence, wisdom and discernment. Ask that the Holy Spirit would equip them with everything they need to serve their teams and those we work with in these different contexts.

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## **8 – 14 February**

We'd love more people to find out about Cord and get involved in our peacebuilding work. This week, spend some time thinking about what inspires you most about Cord's projects. Then pray that God will provide you with an opportunity to talk about this with one of your friends, someone from your family or a member of your church community. You might want to point them to our website, share a recent copy of Connect or encourage them to sign up to our mailing list. And do please let us know how you get on by emailing us at [info@cord.org.uk](mailto:info@cord.org.uk).

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## **15 – 21 February**

Self Help Groups in Burundi are enabling people to start small businesses, improve their financial security, and find emotional support. Praise God that the groups are multiplying! Two years ago, 50 groups were formed. They are thriving and even helping in the creation of new groups! This is happening organically because people see how effective they are and want to join in. Thank God for this sustainable approach and the lasting change it is bringing.

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.”

**John 1:1-5**

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***

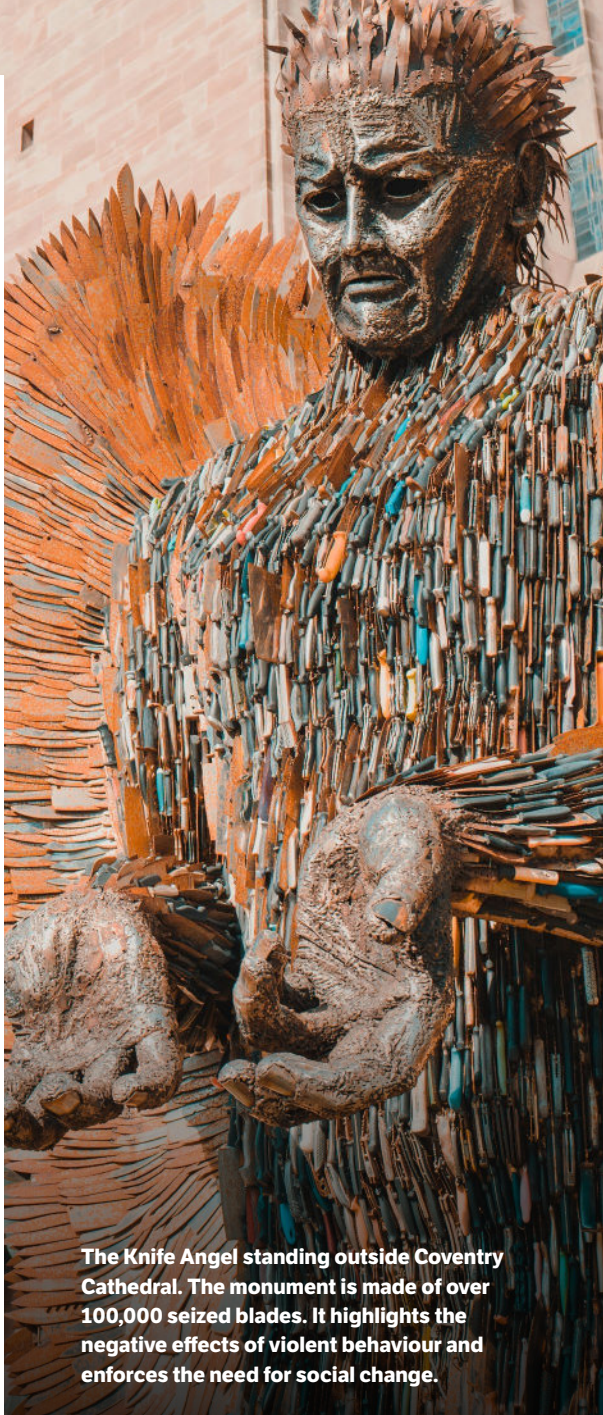
**The lust which dishonours the bodies of men, women and children,**

***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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