

Saturday 1 January 2011

Focus on the youth: New school year

The schools will be starting shortly. To several children their December holidays were a nightmare, Christmas an embarrassment, disappointing and painful. Many have to face this year without the security of a normal healthy parental home. Ask the Holy Spirit to work hope in their hearts, for healing where there is pain and insight to meet all the challenges of the coming year. Specifically pray that Christian teachers and lecturers will take responsibility for more than just the academic side. That they will openly witness to the meaning of life, and be able to perceive critical needs in time.

Focus on the nations: United Kingdom

The United Kingdom includes England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland. Ireland fought itself free of British rule in 1922, leaving volatile Northern Ireland as a province of the United Kingdom. England is the most populous part of the UK, with 49 million inhabitants. Almost one third of England's people live in the prosperous south-eastern part of the country centred on London. Scotland (one third of Britain's size) has a population of 5 million people and Wales 2.9 million people. The 2001 census counted more than 2.5 million Asians (mostly Indians and Pakistanis) and 1.1 million from Africa and the Caribbean. Pray for the church in the UK, that Christians will have a new passion to see prayer, mission and justice grow in every village, town and city. Ask for revival to once again touch this nation!

Website: <http://www.24-7prayer.eu/#/united-kingdom/4540765141>

Sunday 2 January 2011

Pray the Word (4) (Cont. from 26 Dec.)

When the Word of God is prayed by a believing, praying heart, *it will break the power of evil, set us free from sin, save us in crisis situations and change the world around us.* The Word of God has power to create and re-create. On occasion Hudson Taylor said, "We (Christians) are supernatural people: born again through a supernatural birth, driven by a supernatural power and nourished with supernatural food, taught by a supernatural Teacher from a supernatural Book."

The Word is God. **John 1:1-3** teaches us: *In the beginning the Word already existed. The Word was with God, and the Word was God. The Word was from the beginning. Through Him all things were made; without Him nothing was made that has been made.* Jesus is the Word of God and the Word is God. The Word was there from the beginning. Because God is a triune God, He and the Word can never be separated.

God makes Himself subservient to His Word and He is faithful to His Word. We read in **Psalm 138:2:** *For You have magnified Your Word above all Your name (NKJV).* This means that God puts His Word above His Name. Thus God is faithful to His Word. We can say that God 'submits' to His Word. What His Word says, He does. (Quoted from *Praying with Purpose*, Bennie Mostert). Take a portion of Scripture, maybe a Psalm or verses in Proverbs, and use it to pray for your family and friends. Submit yourself to God and His commands and believe and pray the promises God laid on your heart for them.

Monday 3 January 2011

Focus on the youth: Children who have never heard the gospel

Plead for the salvation of children/young people in unreached nations and in closed countries that have never heard the gospel; not even once. Pray that they will hear the message of the gospel in some or other way, whether through dreams or visions, radio broadcasts or secret Christians among them. Ask that Christians who are called to these places will not run away like Jonah, but will go and that they will be supported by their churches or Christian groups, financially, emotionally and spiritually. Jesus died for every child and young person (**John 3:15-16**). Pray secondly for the children living in the cities of the world - that learners will not give way to peer pressure and start smoking, drinking, taking drugs or give up their virginity. Also ask that parents will understand that their children will go to heaven stripped of all their achievements; which they cannot take with them. Finally, pray that children and young

people will complete their studies successfully and be able to find a job with their qualifications; a job that will make them earn enough money, enabling them to provide for themselves.

Focus on the nations: Portugal

Portugal lies on the western coast of the Iberian Peninsula in south-western Europe. Most people live along the coast, with a third of the population living in the urban areas of Lisbon and Porto. About 190 million people worldwide speak Portuguese – pray for a greater passion for world mission amongst believers in Portugal. Most of the few Christians live in the poorer southern provinces of Portugal. Pray that Christians will be equipped and supported to bring the truth and love of Jesus into these communities. Over 90% of the population consults spirit mediums and witches. Pray that this bondage will be broken and that the people of Portugal will come to know Christ and look towards our heavenly Father for all of their needs.

Website: <http://www.24-7prayer.eu/#/portugal/4540987806>

Tuesday 4 January 2011

Focus on the youth: Hungry children

Jesus promises in **Luke 12:22-33** that His children needn't worry about physical or spiritual provision. Let us pray that hungry children will not die without Him. Remind Him of this promise to the hungry children of the world. Pray that God will show you a specific local or overseas group of children whose physical need you can help relieve. A little girl, who in some or other way found herself at a place where they were handing out food to the hunger-stricken, was busy eating her bowl of food when she looked up and asked a lady, "Am I with God now?" Ask God where you can make a contribution towards alleviating a child's hunger. Pray for stable governments worldwide and stable economies. Pray that those who sell food use "scales that weigh accurately". (**Prov.11:1**)

Focus on Bible translation: Local translators in sensitive regions

In many countries with restricted access, people from various language communities are joining Bible translation teams. It's a challenge for them to work on the Christian Scriptures in a hostile environment. Pray that God will give them all they need to work effectively: Courage, faith in Christ, love for God's Word, commitment to translation, technical skills, protection from those who oppose them and for 'bread on their tables'. Pray especially for great joy as they get to know the God who inspired the Scriptures. *Wycliffe Prayer Focus Bulletin*.

Website: <http://www.wycliffe.org/pray.aspx> or e-mail: Personnel_Southafrica@wycliffe.org

Wednesday 5 January 2011

Focus on the youth: Molested and raped children

I cry aloud to the Lord; I lift up my voice to the Lord for mercy. I pour out my complaint before Him; before Him I tell my trouble (Ps.142:1-2). Pray unceasingly that child molestation and rape will be stopped worldwide. Children all over the world are molested and raped in their own homes by family members or friends, many others are sold by their own parents as sex slaves. In Orange Farms in Gauteng a pastor is teaching young children to pray for their own safety and he says that several of these children have already been rescued from rape situations. Pray that molested children will be brought to safety and recover physically, emotionally and spiritually. Also ask for God's grace for child brides who have no say in their own lives and have lost all hope in life. Praise God for every instance worldwide where these things are brought to light and children have been saved. Keep on praying that God will address the parents' conscience so that they will never sell their daughters or leave them at the mercy of adult men. Also pray for the many children and babies (especially in South Africa) who have been raped by burglars or strangers. Ask that God will lift them up and heal their broken lives again.

Focus on the nations: Albania

Albania (with a current population of 3,170,000) suffered more than 40 years of communist rule, which ended in 1991. War in neighbouring Kosovo brought 480,000 ethnic Albanian refugees into Albania in 1999, straining the country's resources. In communist times, Albania was proclaimed the first atheistic country in the world with no known Christian witness. After the fall of communism, a lot of missionaries came and found an openness to the gospel among the young generation. Churches were planted all over the country. Today, church numbers are dropping, with people more interested in education and prosperity. Pray for a fresh outpouring of the Holy Spirit in the hearts and minds of the people of Albania, and specifically that prayer initiatives will start and be maintained. Also pray for the salvation of President Bamir Topi (president since 2007), and all members of parliament.

Website: <http://www.24-7prayer.eu/#/albania/4539780319>

Thursday 6 January 2011

Focus on the youth: Spiritual and cultural development of children

In South Africa, the education department stopped subsidising music posts in schools in spite of the fact that there are so many musically gifted children among disadvantaged South Africans. Therefore they are not given the opportunity to develop these talents. Pray that music teaching will once again be subsidised in South Africa. Praise Him for each child that gets the opportunity to develop his/her musical ability – pray that they will use it to honor God and that they will not become proud. **Ps. 108:1-2:** *My heart is steadfast, O God; I will sing and make music with all my soul. Awake, harp and lyre! I will awaken the dawn.*

Breakthrough: Nicaragua again rejects foreign pressure to legalise abortion

Nicaragua, one of the few countries in the world to maintain a total ban on abortion, has again rejected pressure by foreign powers to liberalise its pro-life legislation. A report from proceedings at the *UN's Human Rights Council (HRC)* in Geneva reveals that 11 countries called for Nicaragua to legalise abortion.

Website: <http://www.christiantelegraph.com/issue10063.html>

Give thanks to the Lord for Nicaragua's stance on abortion. Continue to pray for a ban on abortion worldwide, especially in countries where it has already been legalised, that they will repent and turn to God.

Pray for children/young people (1)

Let the little children come to Me, and do not hinder them, for the Kingdom of God belongs to such as these. This is what Jesus said to His disciples in **Luke 18:16**. We also read in **Proverbs 3:18**, *Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves, for the rights of all who are destitute.* We should however always keep in mind that *only* God enables us to speak up for our children's rights, and no matter how impossible it might sound to us: *Our* love for our children cannot be compared to the perfect love of the One who made them Himself. Sometimes even we as Christians want to doubt or challenge God's righteousness – especially when our own children suffer, but then we need to remind ourselves once more that God's judgment is righteous and that He wins His case every time He is accused (**Rom.3:4b**). Which of us can prove God unrighteous? *"Can any of you prove me guilty of sin [lovelessness? heartlessness]?"* Jesus asks in **John 8:46**. God IS love. We must keep on trusting Him, always.

When we pray for children, we must however also remember that according to **Romans 3:10** there is *no one righteous, not even one;* not among children, not among adults. *Who can say, "I have kept my heart pure; I am clean and without sin?"* (**Prov.20:9**).

God wants to have mercy on us and our children. In **Micah 7:18-19** we read: *Who is a God like you, who pardons sin and forgives the transgression of the remnant of His inheritance? You do not stay*

angry forever but delight to show mercy. You will again have compassion on us; You will tread our sins underfoot and hurl all our iniquities into the depths of the sea.

Friday 7 January 2011

Focus on the youth: Children who experience the violence of divorce

Pray that Christians will understand that the word violence does not specify only assault, rape or murder. The Lord God of Israel says He hates divorce. Divorce is no different to violence, says the Lord Almighty (**Mal.2:16**). Plead with God to restore family life in our society and especially marriages. Worldwide, the Evil One is busy breaking down family structures by means of adulterous relationships, divorce, living together, lesbian and homosexual marriages. Specifically pray for children with fathers who neglect or abandon their own children and, in their place, take care of another woman's children as if they were his own. **Prov.27:8**: *Like a bird that strays from its nest is a man who strays from his home.*

Focus on the nations: Togo

Vinodi is a children's project in Togo. According to *Operation World*, churches in the country are generally ill-equipped to address the needs of children and young people, and many are being sold into foreign sex industries. *Vinodi* is training parents, churches and school teachers in child protection, and parents are also being supported to start their own small businesses, such as growing and selling their own produce, and dressmaking. Pray that children will be positively affected by *Vinodi's* work. Pray that parents, church leaders and teachers would truly understand God's heart for children, and as a result, change their attitude and behaviour towards those in their care. Pray for parents who are now starting to generate income for their families through their small businesses; that these businesses will flourish and that parents will make wise choices on how to make the best use of their money in order to provide for their children. *Children at Risk Prayer News*.

Websites: <http://www.viva.org> and <http://www.operationworld.org/country/togo/owtext.html> or
e-mail: pray@viva.org

Saturday 8 January 2011

Focus on the youth: Children who witnessed violence

Ps.140:1: *Rescue me, O Lord, from evil men; protect me from men of violence.* In South Africa and worldwide, just about everybody knows about toddlers, children and young people who have witnessed the savagery of violence committed by people. Pray for each of these precious children who had to look on while someone was tortured, raped or murdered. Pray that they will not lose faith in God. Pray that parents will receive grace to set the example and turn to God for comfort and for complete deliverance from the emotional consequences of the trauma, especially from fear and bitterness and the desire to take revenge.

Focus on the nations: Germany

Europe's strongest economic and industrial power, Germany, is also the most populous European country outside Russia. Germans are highly urbanised; about 86 percent live in cities and towns. With one of the world's lowest birth rates, Germany is a magnet for foreign workers; some 7.3 million immigrants live there. Pray especially for families to restore the family altar and become one again. Pray that more and more Christians will seek God and start praying and spreading the gospel like never before. Germany's politicians (and many Germans) seem to be weak in what they stand for - afraid to be marked 'intolerant' if they take up a well-defined stance. Pray for Christians to take a stand for what is right.

Website: <http://www.24-7prayer.eu/#/germany/4539977562>

Sunday 9 January 2011

Pray the Word (5) (Cont. from 2 Jan.)

God's Word creates (**John 1:3**). There is creative power in the Word. Jesus is the Word of God and through the Word God created the universe. God the Father thought creation, the Son spoke the Word (He is also the creative Word) and the Holy Spirit brought forth creation. In **Genesis 1** we read that God said, "Let there be light", "Let the waters beneath the sky flow together into one place", "Let the land sprout with vegetation ...", "Let the earth produce every sort of animal ...". The words God spoke created; out of nothing they brought something into being. *God's Word is alive, it re-creates and restores.* Jesus Christ, the Word, came to earth to restore, to re-create, to reconcile. *For the Word of God is alive and powerful (**Heb.4:12**).* The words spoken by God are alive and full of power; they release energy and are active. When we take the Word of God (the Word that comes from the mouth of God), and speak it, it has creative power. When we speak the Word of God it brings life, creates and re-creates, brings into being, reconciles, releases power, destroys the works of the devil and restores order. Take note of the following parts of Scripture about the life-giving power of the Word: *I assure you that the time is coming, indeed it's here now, when the dead will hear my voice – the voice of the Son of God. And those who listen will live (**John 5:25**).* *The Spirit alone gives eternal life. Human effort accomplishes nothing. And the very words I have spoken to you are Spirit and life (**John 6:63**).* What Jesus tells us comes from the Spirit and *brings life.* The Word of God cannot be chained (**2 Tim.2:9**). It quietens the storm, heals the sick, raises the dead, restores relationships, reconciles people with God. The Word of God destroys the work of the devil, drives out evil spirits and sets people free from the power of Satan. (Quoted from *Praying with Purpose*, Bennie Mostert). Remind God in prayer about the power of His Word: 'Lord, a word from Your mouth, and my own heart, my child, my church, my community, my city and Africa can be renewed, healed and transformed! I proclaim that You are Almighty, nothing is impossible for You.' Pray as God leads you.

Article: International focus: Honour killing

Honour killing (also called **customary killing**), is the murder of a (more often female) family or clan member by one or more fellow (mostly male) family members, where the murderers (and potentially the wider community) believe the victim to have brought dishonour upon the family, clan or community. A woman can for instance be targeted by (individuals within) her family for a variety of reasons, including: refusing to enter into an arranged marriage, being the victim of sexual assault, seeking a divorce — even from an abusive husband — or (allegedly) committing adultery. The mere perception that a woman has behaved in a way that 'dishonours' her family is sufficient to trigger an attack on her life. Women in the family tend to support the honour killing of one of their own, agreeing that the family is the property and asset of men and boys. There is some evidence that homosexuality can also be perceived as grounds for honour killing by relatives.

The term honour killing applies to killing of both males and females in cultures that practice it. About 5,000 honour killings take place per year. In Pakistan for instance, 245 women and 137 men died as victims of honour killings in 2002. There are definite reports of honour killings in Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Pakistan, Syria, Turkey, Yemen, other Mediterranean and Persian Gulf countries and also in western countries, within their migrant communities, e.g. France, Germany and the UK.

Honour killings can often be performed in extreme ways. Rape cases often lead to honour killings and many women will commit suicide to escape such honour killings or the shame of being raped. Over 80 Iraqi women in Diyala province committed suicide to escape the shame of having been raped. They chose to become suicide bombers to escape the shame; their rapes were planned in advance by a 51-year-old Iraqi woman, Samira Jassim, who confessed to Iraqi police that she organised their rapes so that she could later persuade each of them to become a suicide bomber to escape their shame.

Give thanks to the Lord for every individual that escaped an attempted honour killing. Please pray for communities and clans to be set free from the fear of losing their honour. Ask that families, clans and

communities in nations where honour killings are acceptable, will have a revelation of the horror of this cultural terror and begin discussions on how to stop it and find their true value in Christ. Pray for places of refuge for women (and men) who are potential victims of honour killings. Facts in this article were taken from:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Honour_killing Prayer pointers are suggestions of the writer of this article.

Monday 10 January 2011

Focus on the youth: Physically handicapped or disfigured children

There are physically handicapped and disfigured children and young people worldwide. Pray for children and young people in wheelchairs, children without an arm or a leg, blind children, deaf children. Pray that they will find a circle of friends where they can feel at home. Ask that these children will not yield to depression and despair. Pray that they will be able to qualify themselves academically and find a job so that they will be self-supporting. Pray for help with the payment of hospital and doctors' accounts. Pray for disfigured children; those who for example were born with a birthmark on the cheek, were savaged by dogs or scarred by burn marks. Pray for albino children. Pray that they will experience Jesus' love, and for acceptance in their communities. Pray for medical breakthroughs so that these children can be helped. Remember **Num.23:19** – is there anything impossible for Him?

Focus on the nations: Italy

Two 'Italies' exist today: the prosperous, industrialised north and the less developed agricultural south, known as the Mezzogiorno (land of the midday sun). The government confronts corruption, which is traceable to organised crime and an unemployment rate in the south more than twice that of the north. To address regional inequalities, a constitutional referendum was held in 2001—the results favoured giving greater autonomy to the country's 20 regions in tax, education, and environmental policies. Praise God for that. Turin, the capital of heavy industry, is home to Fiat—one of the world's largest car producers. A major attraction for pilgrims and tourists is the "Holy Shroud" in Turin's cathedral—tradition holds that this was Christ's burial cloth. Rome, Italy's capital, exhibits the architectural and artistic grandeur of ancient civilisations. Pray for more workers to preach Jesus Christ, the risen One, to the peoples of Italy. Ask for divisions to be removed, churches across denominations as well as the poor/rich line to begin to pray together on a regular basis. Earnestly cry out for hearts to be awakened and thousands to turn their hearts back to God.

Website: <http://www.24-7prayer.eu/#/italy/4539780320>

Tuesday 11 January 2011

Focus on the youth: Children who suffer at the hands of step-parents

There are so many wonderful step-parents, but there are also children/young people worldwide who suffer greatly at the hands of a stepmother or stepfather. Several stepchildren are deliberately humiliated, neglected, treated unfairly and even molested by a step-parent or stepbrother. Cry out to the perfect Father of all children to take note of the suffering of these children and to come to their aid. Pray that the child will confide in someone who can pray about this situation together with him or her. Specifically pray for protection and care. Children from broken homes are in a way 'orphaned', because both mother and father have changed. They cannot provide the same security for the children as before. Pray that harsh step-parents will read **Prov.23:10-11** and repent from wicked ways – *'Do not move an ancient boundary stone or encroach on the fields of the fatherless, for their Defender is strong; He will take up their case against you.'*

Focus on Bible translation: Digital publication in sensitive regions

An agency is focused on helping language communities make information, cultural material and Scripture in their own languages available on the Internet. As the team works to develop good methods for doing this, they experience many hindrances. Pray that God will protect this agency's staff, break

down the barriers, and guide them into effective and creative ways to publish materials online. Pray that the special expertise they need will be available, along with personnel and funding for this work. For many people in restricted access countries, the Internet may be the only way they can find the Bible in their own language. *Wycliffe Prayer Focus Bulletin.*

Website: <http://www.wycliffe.org/pray.aspx> or e-mail: Personnel_Southafrica@wycliffe.org

Wednesday 12 January 2011

Focus on the youth: Children who have no one to talk to during breaks

Rejected children go through intense suffering and loneliness. Pray that each school learner will have at least one friend. Ask that especially Christian children will refuse to take part in the tyranny of bullies and will take lone children under their wing. Pray for overweight children, those who stutter, who smell, with acne or anything that can be used by unkind children to shut out such a child. Pray that these children will find their identity in Jesus as their Saviour and Friend and not for example in the occult. Encourage your own children to include these children and to reach out to them, to be a friend to them.

Prov.15:24: '*A man of many companions may come to ruin, but there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother.*'

Focus on the nations: Niger

In Niger, around 60% of the population is likely to suffer from a shortage of food this year due to the drought that the country is facing. An estimated 19,000 children have been forced to leave school as a result, to help their parents find some way of providing for their families at this time. Many families had to move in search of water, food, and land where they can graze their animals. Pray for the people of Niger who are affected by this drought. Pray in particular for the children who had to give up their education in order to move with their parents. Ask God for rain in this region. Pray that the children moving with their parents will be kept safe from abuse and exploitation at a time when they are particularly vulnerable. *Children at Risk Prayer News.*

Website: <http://www.viva.org/> or e-mail: pray@viva.org

Thursday 13 January 2011

Focus on the youth: Sick children

There are children who suffer from incurable diseases worldwide. Their daily routine often centres on injections, chemotherapy, radiotherapy, pills, painful or uncomfortable procedures. Pray for those who experience pain and nausea or lose their hair. Plead with God that they will not have bad dreams at night or suffer anxiety about death. Ask that death will hold no terror for them. Pray for the healing of children with incurable diseases. Pray for medical breakthroughs. Pray for the brothers and sisters of sick children or of children who die. Their grief is often overlooked because the parents are too busy with the sick child or because they are still in mourning.

Focus on Rio de Janeiro

As the international spotlight shines on Brazil (experiencing sizeable economic growth), Rio's worsening gang violence, drug trafficking and expanding slums threaten to tarnish the nation's progress. Brazil's second-largest city, Rio de Janeiro, will host the upcoming *2014 FIFA World Cup* soccer tournament and *2016 Olympic Games*, two of the world's most popular sporting events. As a result, the news media has focused on the nation's rising poverty and crime rates. Violence is an everyday occurrence for law enforcement officials and the more than 11 million residents in and around the *favelas*, Rio's slum areas, which are overrun by heavily armed drug gangs. More than 6,000 people are killed each year, a rate comparable to that of a war zone.

Website: <http://www.realtruth.org/articles/100510-005-crime.html>

Please cry out to the Lord for the people of Rio de Janeiro, that there will be significant breakthroughs for the gospel into this nation over the next few years, touching especially the hearts of those involved in violence. Pray specifically for the children. God is able and He wants to help people in need!

Pray for children/young people (2)

Practical tips: For whom/how?

1. Your own children, grandchildren or your family's children: When you have received a promise from the Lord for a specific child, write it down on a brightly coloured piece of paper and paste it on a photograph of this child next to your bed; then remind the Lord of His promise day and night. Do it cautiously and tactfully so that the child is not embarrassed by this or becomes hostile.
2. Do the same with children outside your immediate family circle: Under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, write down on a brightly coloured poster, a few names of children/young people you would like to pray for – accompanying and supporting them as it were with prayer through their school and student years. Don't stop before the Holy Spirit takes the prayer burden away. (You might just be praying for a 20th century Martin Luther.)
3. Newborn babies: When you hear of the birth of a baby, pray straight away (if possible by name) for the baby to be born again and have a blessed and godly life. Make a habit of 'adopting a baby through prayer'!
4. Adopt a specific group of children through prayer, e.g. (a) The 1st/4th rugby, hockey, chess or netball team of a local school. Pray for every facet of their lives. (b) Adopt a group from a different cultural group than yours through prayer. For example, pray for the children of the Khoi, the street children of Egypt, war-torn children in Africa or for the children living in white squatter camps around Pretoria, South Africa, etc.

Friday 14 January 2011

Focus on the youth: Children who have lost hope and suffer from depression

All over the world children suffer from depression. Pray that ignorance and stigma will really change. Pray also that where necessary, it will be possible to help them with medication. Just breaking up with a boyfriend or girlfriend can make a teenager's whole world fall apart. Pray that they don't commit suicide, but that parents and friends will intervene in time. Children also often lose hope when their parents lose their job and suddenly their basic needs cannot be met. Among other things they experience the violence of war, fear terrorist attacks and worry that they won't find a job. Our children are under a lot of pressure – cry out to God according to the promises in His Word, especially for Christian parents and their children - **Prov.14:26**: *'He who fears the Lord has a secure fortress, and for his children it will be a refuge.'*

Focus on evangelism: Malto people of India

Maltos (1.2 million) are one of the aboriginal races of India, who inhabit the Rajmahal hills of Jharkhand. They are animists and very poor; they can hardly afford one meal per day. Being illiterates, they are easily cheated by the moneylenders and they become debtors for life. Pray **Prov.14:36** for these perpetrators. Pray for Christian outreach teams to teach them to read and write. Also pray for Christian doctors to minister to these people who are plagued by number of killer diseases like Malaria, Kalaazar, Diarrhea and TB. Pray especially for the children! Praise the Lord for at least 523 churches among the Maltos in Jharkhand.

Church Planter, June 2010. E-mail: ecichurchplanter@gmail.com

Article: Parents-2-pray: How to lead your child to the Lord

At least 80% of all people give their lives to the Lord before the age of fourteen. It is of critical importance that parents will actively pray for their children's conversion during this period. Also that they assume their spiritual responsibility to lead their children to the Lord. **Malachi 2:15** very clearly says

that God's purpose with marriage is to bring forth godly offspring that will honour Him. God places a big responsibility on the shoulders of parents and we may not ignore it. We will ultimately answer to God Himself for the upbringing of our children and also the spiritual responsibility we as parents have toward our children. As a parent your greatest responsibility is to lead your child to the Lord. It is far more important than upbringing, achievement or position.

1. Even before your children are born, pray for their relationship with God their Father and for their rebirth and conversion.
2. When praying, you may call on God's promises that He wants everyone to be saved (**2 Pet.3:9**), that Jesus Christ came so that people could be saved (**John 3:16**), that it is His will that every person will become converted (**Ezek.18:23**), that it is not the will of the Father that children will be lost (**Matt.18:14**), and that it is God's wish that all people will be saved and will come to a knowledge of the truth (**1 Tim.2:3-4**). Underline all these verses, write them down and keep on reminding the Lord of these promises and also His will for children.
3. Few things are as important to children as the example of parents who are true Christians. But we often make mistakes. Then it is important to admit it, and if necessary, to ask your children to forgive you if you did something that was not to their advantage. This makes an immense impression on children. It teaches them that God is merciful and forgives. There are people who think children lose respect for their parents when they admit to being in the wrong – however, exactly the opposite is true.
4. Don't lecture your children. Don't force the Bible or your own 'religion' on them, but testify to your experience of God and what He means to you and what He does for you and did for you.
5. Pray with your child as often as possible about all sorts of things. Help your children to also pray themselves, but don't force them. Even if they have not yet become converted. This teaches the child that there is Someone who can help; point out to your children when God has answered prayer. This encourages them and makes them more comfortable about praying themselves. Don't be too quick to correct your children's prayers. Teach your children to pray when you pray.
6. Don't scold your children when they do wrong or threaten them with 'hell'. Talk to them about the consequences of their actions, that they hurt God, harm themselves and hurt other people. Where discipline is necessary, discipline them but in accordance with the transgression.
7. Your children must learn that God is a Father who loves them unconditionally and wants to forgive their sins. Your children must also learn that God is a Father *and* God. They must learn to honour God and treat Him with respect.
8. Make your children aware of the fact that Jesus paid for all their sins. Teach them what is written in **1 John 1:9**.
9. Don't be in a hurry. Don't try to convert your child yourself. Don't pressurise him or her to commit. Allow the Holy Spirit to work. The Holy Spirit knows how to work with each child. Your job is to pray and to teach your child about God. It is the task of the Holy Spirit to convince them of sin, to accomplish rebirth in your child's heart and bring them to the point where they repent. Ask the Holy Spirit to make your children spiritually alive. A human being cannot do it (**John 6:63**).
10. **Revelation 3:20** is a very good verse to use when you want to help your children to accept the Lord Jesus as Saviour. Help them to open the door of their hearts and allow Jesus to come in. The following is a simple prayer that you can pray together with your child when he or she is ready: *Lord Jesus, today I open the door of my heart for you and ask that You will come into my heart and stay there forever. Cleanse my heart of all sin and forgive me for all sin. Fill me with the Holy Spirit so that I may live for You every day. Thank you that I can now be Your child. Thank you that I can now belong to You forever. Amen.* You can help your child to repeat the prayer after you bit by bit, but it is important that they must also pray it themselves – you cannot pray this prayer on behalf of your child.

Saturday 15 January 2011

Focus on the youth: Children/young people who 'don't count'

There are children and young people who never excel at anything, who are not particularly attractive, clever, sporty or popular. There are children who never get into trouble and therefore do not attract attention, achieve well but are just not good enough for a roll of honour. Pray for these children who do not 'qualify' for recognition, according to man-made standards. Pray that teachers and lecturers will stop showing favouritism or try to be popular among certain learners/students. Ask that these children will discover a sense of their own worth in God through Jesus, start walking a personal road with Him and realise at an early age how unimportant popularity and human awards are and that they will not be bound by that. **Acts 10:34b**: '*God does not show favoritism*'.

Focus on the nations: Hungary

Foreign investment and private companies are flourishing. The economy is strong, with low inflation and falling interest rates. European Union member countries account for more than 60% of Hungarian exports. Hungary joined the European Union in 2004. Pray that the church will be a truly relevant witness as Hungarians search for life solutions amidst times of extreme change. Ask for the work of the Holy Spirit to bring repentance, reconciliation and renewal among and between all denominations, and between the nation and God. Especially ask that God will raise up many workers, as well as enthusiastic support for them from the national believers to minister to the people of Hungary. Pray especially for the Hungarian children! **Luk.18:16**: '*But Jesus called the children to Him and said, "Let the little children come to Me, and do not hinder them, for the Kingdom of God belongs to such as these."*' Website: <http://www.24-7prayer.eu/#hungary/4541771303>

Sunday 16 January 2011

Pray the Word (6) (Cont. from 9 Jan.)

God's promises. God gives us His promises in writing in His Word. The Word is God's promise. The Spirit of God is the promise of God (**Acts 1:4**). We read in **Acts 1** how the early Christian church asked for the promise of God, the One God promised. They asked for God's promise and they got it. God acts on His Word, He keeps His promises and He fulfills His promises, because His promises are His words. In His sovereignty He voluntarily put Himself in submission to His Word. This means that His Word is His command to Himself. Take careful note of what the Word says about the promises (the words of God): *Let us hold tightly without wavering to the hope we affirm, for God can be trusted to keep His promise* (**Heb.10:23**). *For you are God, O Sovereign Lord. Your words are truth, and You have promised these good things to Your servant* (**2 Sam.7:28**). *Abraham never wavered in believing God's promise. In fact, his faith grew stronger, and in this he brought glory to God* (**Rom.4:20**). *Praise the Lord who has given rest to His people Israel, just as He promised. Not one word has failed of all the wonderful promises He gave through His servant Moses* (**1 Kings 8:56**). *But the Word of the Lord remains forever. And that Word is the Good News that was preached to you* (**1 Pet.1:25**). *Heaven and earth will disappear, but My words will never disappear* (**Matt.24:35**). *Make them holy by Your truth; teach them Your Word, which is truth* (**John 17:17**). *Your eternal Word, O Lord, stands firm in heaven* (**Ps.119:89**). (Quoted from *Praying with Purpose*, Bennie Mostert). Remind God of His promises to you about two things you are praying for, for a very long time already.

Breakthrough: Leprosy almost eradicated in Nepal

The ancient disease leprosy has only recently been contained in Nepal, which has managed to virtually eliminate the disease amongst its communities. Nepal is one of the last countries to rid itself of the disease. Nepal's health ministry said it had cut the number of leprosy patients to fewer than one in 10,000 of the population, the *World Health Organization (WHO)* standard for declaring the disease eliminated. The disease prevalence rate dropped to 0.89 per 10,000 people in 2009. The disease will no longer be categorised as a public health problem. Website: http://health.iafrica.com/illness_condition/2175580.htm

Give thanks to the Lord for testimonies like these. Continue to pray for the elimination of leprosy in other countries as well. Pray for the South African lady that regularly visit and care for people with leprosy in the Nepalese mountains.

Monday 17 January 2011

Focus on the youth: Black sheep (outcasts, rebels, 'exceptions' in families)

Being the black sheep of a family is a bitter experience – to be branded as the one who is not acceptable, the one who is not successful and whom nobody expects to ever be successful. Jesus died also for black sheep. Pray that parents will treat each child in the family fairly and won't favour anyone; that every child in every home will reach his/her full potential. Pray today that black sheep all over the world will be reconciled with their families.

Stewardship focus: World Future Energy Summit: 17-20 January 2011

The annual *World Future Energy Summit (WFES)* in Abu Dhabi is the world's largest meeting of influential figures from the renewable energy industry. In 2010 *WFES* uniquely brought together over 24,760 attendees from 130 countries including world leaders, international policy makers, industry leaders, investors, experts, academia, intellectuals and journalists to find practical and sustainable solutions for today's energy security and climate change challenges. This summit unites industry leaders, policy makers and researchers to discuss the challenges of rising energy demand and to map a cleaner and more sustainable energy future for the world. Website: <http://www.worldfutureenergysummit.com/en/summit/summit-overview.aspx>

Please pray for God's intervention in the hearts and minds of those attending this summit, so that they will make decisions that will glorify His Name with specific regard to renewable energy strategies, economics, technology, investment and education.

Tuesday 18 January 2011

Focus on the youth: Young people who lose their faith

Proverbs 21:30: *There is no wisdom, no insight, no plan that can succeed against the Lord.* Perhaps you know young people who enthusiastically start their theological studies and as time goes by, abandon their original convictions. They change and do not have a message anymore and look down on believers who remain true to the authority of the Word. Plead for students who are exposed to false doctrine. Pray for lecturers who query the authority of the Word, thereby letting young people stumble in their faith and are consequently in danger of bringing God's judgment upon themselves.

Focus on Bible translation: Unrest in sensitive regions

Think of countries which have been in the news during the past few weeks with episodes of unrest and violence. Bible translation teams are located in many of these places and their work is hampered by what is going on around them. Ask God to bring peace to troubled regions. Pray that governments will rule wisely and extend freedom to Christians to pursue their lives and calling. There are many stories of Bible translators who have suffered greatly in order to make the Word available to their people. Pray for courage to persevere. *Wycliffe Prayer Focus Bulletin*. Website: <http://www.wycliffe.org/pray.aspx> or e-mail: Personnel_Southafrica@wycliffe.org

Translators sometimes get ill or even die while doing translation of the Bible and they often experience severe spiritual resistance at the completion stage of a translation.

Wednesday 19 January 2011

Focus on the youth: Children/young people whose mothers leave them for another woman

There are children whose mother leaves them for another woman; and fathers who leave their family for another man. Over and above the violence of divorce, these children also experience the shock and confusion of the unnatural behaviour of parents they looked up to. They want to stay loyal to both

parents and don't know how to handle the situation. Pray that God will show these children what the truth is and what His intentions are with marriage; that He will help them not to feel bitter and rejected. Ask that the children will find a father in Him through Jesus so that they can bare their souls to Him. Pray that these children themselves will one day have healthy marriages.

Focus on the nations: Belgium

There are three regions in the federal state of Belgium: Flanders in the north (with 5.8 million people) where the official language is Dutch; Wallonia in the south (with 3.3 million people) where French is the official language; and the Brussels-Capital region (950,000 people) where both languages are used. The smaller German-speaking community (about 70,000) is in Wallonia. The regions and language communities enjoy autonomy in cultural and economic matters. Belgium is the world's largest producer of azaleas (a flowering shrub). Antwerp, Belgium's second largest city is the diamond capital of the world. Brussels is the headquarters of the European Union and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. Pray for the monarchy; national and local government, that those serving in these roles will have the strength to lead with righteousness and integrity, and will remain open to God's Word and Spirit. Pray for unity within and between churches in Belgium, and also for unity among denominations. Also lift up in prayer refugees and asylum seekers. That they will find love and feel welcome among Belgian people; and for the churches in the big cities to be effectively equipped to serve and support them.

Website: <http://www.24-7prayer.eu/#/belgium/4540591724>

Thursday 20 January 2011

Focus on the youth: Children/young people with sick parents, or those whose parents have died

There are children all over the world who have to take over the role of a parent after the father or mother becomes ill or passes away. These children usually bear a burden that is far too heavy to shoulder at their age. Girls are suddenly responsible for keeping house and taking care of younger children. Boys have to abandon their studies and find a job to contribute financially. For them there is no chance of a carefree youth. Pray for them for physical strength, for their finances, for protection and that Christians will support them in practical ways and in this manner testify to Him who sees the needs of all children. Ask that these children will get to know Jesus as their personal Saviour and Provider and that they will allow Him to relieve them of their burdens.

Focus on renewable energy

The South African Wind Energy Association's (SAWEA) research reveals that renewable energy could provide 100TWh of electricity, or 25% of South Africa's consumption, by 2025. SAWEA launched its submission to government with a call for the country to adopt a binding target of 25% of all its power consumption to come from renewable energy by 2025. Website: <http://www.esi-africa.com/node/11241>

Give thanks for the beginning of answer to prayers for ozone-friendly electricity producing projects. Pray for those involved to find solutions to the continuous energy supply shortage. Also that electricity will soon be made available by more than one company for healthy competitiveness.

What can we pray for our children/young people?

- For your own, and every child, to be born again and for assurance of salvation for these children. This is the most important prayer you can pray for any child/youngster. Jesus says that everyone must be born again (**John 3:3**).
- Pray that the work God started in each child's life will come to fruition so that His purpose for their lives can be fulfilled. Pray for this continually, as the Holy Spirit leads you (**Phil.1:6; John 10:28, 29**).
- It is not too early to start praying now for your children's marriage partners. Pray that young people will be pure as they enter into marriage and remain pure.

- Pray that God will keep them from harm (Jabez' prayer, **1 Chron.4:10**).
- Start praying now for your own descendants and the offspring of others; lift them up in prayer to their Creator.
- Do not forget to say thank you for answered prayers. NB: Give God all the credit and not yourself.

Friday 21 January 2011

Focus on the youth: Children who caused the death of a brother or sister or parent

Pray for children who were directly or indirectly responsible for the death of a sister or brother or who was involved in some way (a firearm going off, the drowning of a brother or sister while the parents were away). Pray that the parents will not blame the child intentionally or subconsciously. Especially pray for the young person himself – first of all for dealing with the unbelievable shock that something like this could have happened, and for deliverance from guilt feelings. Pray that they will forgive themselves and not live with this burden for years to come.

Focus on worldwide food security

The availability of water is of the utmost importance in food production worldwide. Water sources in South Africa are currently subjected to severe pollution. When this water is used for the irrigation of food products (especially fruit and vegetables), the produce becomes unsafe to eat. Pollution is mainly caused by mines and sewage plants because they deposit contaminated water in an unwise manner and their facilities for depositing this water do not function properly. Water pollution is a major problem worldwide.

Website: <http://www.grainmilling.org.za>

Pray for solutions that can be implemented quickly and effectively, especially also in South Africa.

Saturday 22 January 2011

Focus on the youth: Children at home alone and in danger

There are so many single parents who have no other choice than to leave their children in the care of others while they struggle to put food on the table. Some children are even left on their own while the parent or parents work. Pray for the children of parents in informal settlements who have to take buses or taxis as early as 04:00 in the morning and are often forced to leave toddlers at home in the care of young children. Pray for the safety of these children, that they are not molested, raped or kidnapped. Pray for more childcare centres. Pray that these little children will learn to pray for their own safety.

Focus on the nations: Republic of Ireland

The Republic of Ireland (with a population of 5.9 million) occupies about 83% of the island of Ireland. Northern Ireland, in the north-east, is part of the United Kingdom. The prosperity of recent years has evaporated fast, and many are in dire financial need. Pray for the growing Islamic community in Ireland, that Muslims everywhere will meet with Jesus. Also ask that God will raise up a generation of young people who are hungry and thirsty for Him and His glory. Pray that God will revive His church in Ireland.

Website: <http://www.24-7prayer.eu/#/republic-of-ireland/4540591723>

Sunday 23 January 2011

Pray the Word (7) (Cont. from 16 Jan.)

The Word is active. Hebrews 4:12 says the Word is sharper than the sharpest two-edged sword, cutting between soul and spirit, between joint and marrow. It exposes our innermost thoughts and desires. In Revelation 1:16 we read a sharp two-edged sword came from His (Jesus') mouth. The Word is like a sword that divides, exposes, brings to light, and helps us to understand what is really happening in our hearts. God says, "Does not My Word burn like fire? Is it not like a mighty hammer that smashes a rock to pieces?" (Jer.23:29). Pray that God's Word will cut through hearts of stone and bring salvation to many.

The Word and God's creative purpose: We are God's representatives on earth. We act on God's behalf on earth. **Genesis 1:26-27** teaches us that God commissioned *us* to rule on earth, to cultivate it and keep watch over it. We are God's co-workers; He rules over the earth *through* us. According to His Word, God chose not to rule on earth without us. The dominion over the earth was given to us. We are able to decide the course of events. God only achieves His purpose with creation when man allows God to reveal His will to him and then executes it in obedience. Without our *permission and co-operation*, He will not do it – not because He cannot, but because it was His decision and He made Himself subservient to His Word. Read **Matthew 17:20**: *Jesus told them, "I tell you the truth, if you had faith even as small as a mustard seed, you could say this to the mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it would move."* It is important to note that there is a connection between what we say and *what is possible or impossible*. What we say, will create, will bring into existence. (Quoted from *Praying with Purpose*, Bennie Mostert.) Is there anything 'impossible' that you are praying about? God says that it is NOT impossible for Him! Pray with strengthened faith to the God of **Matt.17:20**.

Monday 24 January 2011

Focus on the youth: Children of absent parents

All over the world there are absent parents – parents who are so busy with their own lives, status and success that they often realise too late, if ever, how much harm they cause their own children. Many of these children are left in their own care or that of a domestic worker over weekends, exam times and holidays. Unfortunately they often become involved in things that are dangerous. There are Christian men and women who become so involved in the church that they do not realise when they neglect their own children spiritually and emotionally. There is seldom time to pray for their own children. Plead with God that the eyes of parents will be opened to their children's great need of them and that they will do something about it. Pray for the children, to also turn back to their parents.

Breakthrough: Thai children see power of prayer at work

After forest fires threatened to destroy their home, Thai children saw the power of praying and trusting in God at work. A Children's Home in Thailand learned of forest fires nearby heading right for the orphanage. The workers sent out urgent prayer requests by e-mail and then moved the children to the top of a hill for safety, where the kids started worshipping and praying to God. Though Thailand was in the midst of their dry season, they trusted God to send rain. The fires quickly approached, but just before the orphanage was surrounded, they heard thunder. Less than an hour later it began drizzling, then pouring, until the fires were extinguished! Ask for the kids to respond to this miracle and use it as a life-long testimony to the power of Christ in their life. Pray that they will boldly and with child-like faith share Christ with the people of their community.

Website: <http://mnonline.org/archives/topics/orphanage>

Teens-2-pray: How do I pray for myself?

It is necessary that we also pray for ourselves and not always ask our parents and other people to pray for us. We must learn to stand before God's throne ourselves and talk to Him. When God created us, it was His intention that we would have fellowship with Him. Too often we have fellowship with everybody but God. What a privilege it is to have direct fellowship with the mightiest Person in the universe and to journey with Him.

1. Ask the Lord to show you who He is and to help you to get to know Him. This is why the Holy Spirit was poured out. He wants to teach us who Jesus is and also the meaning of Jesus Christ's words.
2. Ask the Lord to show you how He feels and thinks about you. You will learn this by reading the Bible. Start by reading the books of **John** and **1 John** and ask the Holy Spirit to show you how God feels and thinks about you.
3. It is also important to ask God what His will is for your life. But first ask God the Father to reveal Himself to you and to show you how He feels about you. Don't be in a hurry. We get to know God's

will for our lives first of all by reading the Bible. These days, people want instant answers. We want people to give us a prophetic word or we ask for signs or dreams. Of course God can reveal His will in this way also. It is however more important to read the Bible yourself and to understand God's will for Christians. Afterwards it is easier to understand God's will for your own life.

4. It is important that we regularly ask the Lord to show us the things in our life that bother Him. The things that bother Him are always things that are to our own disadvantage when we do them. Ask the Lord to point out to you any sin or anything dodgy in your life. Confess it before God and stop doing it. If we don't do it, these things hinder our prayers and start forming a wall between God and us (**Isa.59:1-2; Ps.66:18**). However, when we confess our sins, God forgives us and this clears the way to the throne of God for us again (**1 John 1:9**). We read in **Proverbs 28:13**: *He who conceals his sins does not prosper, but whoever confesses and renounces them finds mercy.*
5. Bring your personal needs, problems and hurt to God. The Bible says God has compassion for our weaknesses (**Heb.5:3**). He understands our pain and suffering because when He was on earth, He also suffered, was also misunderstood, rejected and He knew pain. So, when you speak to Him, you are definitely speaking to Someone who understands you because He experienced the same things Himself. Many people however, just bring their problems and pain and needs to God and then walk away. Take time to wait on God and to hear what He wants to say to you. It would help a lot to get yourself a diary or journal and jot down your prayers in short, and underneath that write down what you experience the Lord is saying to you. Pray about these matters again and again, listen and wait. Read the Bible and ask the Lord to teach you from the Word and give you answers. Remember **Matthew 7:7**: *Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you.* These are Jesus' own words.
6. Pray for your own spiritual growth. There are things each and every one of us should constantly pray for: for more love toward others, to be able to forgive, not to hurt others, not to talk badly of others, the ability to spiritually distinguish between truth and lies, and how to resist the onslaughts of the devil.
7. Finally, it is very important to ask the Lord to show you how you can be a blessing to others. Most of us are so self-centred: *our* comfort and convenience, *our* needs, *our* pain, *our* achievements, etc. Jesus came to give His life for us and for others. Let us learn from that to give our lives for others. And strangely enough, when we do it, our own lives start making sense and we have incredible joy in our hearts. Ask the Lord to show you opportunities to help others in need.

Tuesday 25 January 2011

Focus on the youth: Our children are exposed to an "idol" culture

They worshipped and served created things rather than the Creator – who is forever praised (Rom.1:25b). Worldwide, human stars appear regularly who 'sell' their looks, talents and popularity and eventually have the world at their feet. Hollywood stars are real jetsetters and live like gods. Children and teens slavishly follow the comings and goings of Hannah Montana and the Jonas Brothers, Brad Pitt and Angelina Jolie. Pray that we and our children will not allow ourselves to be tempted by temporary glitz and glamour, desiring at all costs to be like these stars even if it means giving up all our principles in following in their footsteps. Pray that they will see the glory of Jesus: *The Way, the Truth, the Life, Light, the All-sufficient One.*

Focus on Bible translation: Testing drafts in sensitive regions

Testing is a vital step in the Bible translation process. This is where mother tongue speakers who have had no previous exposure to the text, read or listen to a drafted portion and then answer questions about its meaning, naturalness and clarity. Their comments help the translation team to revise and improve the draft. Yet, in sensitive contexts it is hard to find people willing to listen to the Scripture and provide feedback. Please pray for wisdom and favour to find the right people to approach and that they would listen eagerly and give meaningful feedback. Pray that their hearts will be touched by God's

word. Ask for God's blessing and protection on those managing this important work, and pray for other teams also searching for mother tongue speakers. *Wycliffe Prayer Focus Bulletin*.

Website: <http://www.wycliffe.org/pray.aspx> or e-mail: Personnel_Southafrica@wycliffe.org

Wednesday 26 January 2011

Focus on the youth: Pray for the children of addicted parents

There are children who live every day with the humiliation and pain of a parent/parents who suffer from some or other form of addiction – a mother that is drunk or a father that used drugs, lying on a couch. Pray for these traumatised children. Pray that the children will not themselves become part of an addiction pattern. Plead for their physical safety and care and for finances to make their own dreams come true. Ask that friends, family and teachers will support them in all respects. Pray that they will get to know Jesus as the Hope of their life.

Focus on the nations: Kosovo

Kosovo (which was part of the former Yugoslavia) became a nation when its parliament declared independence from Serbia on February 17, 2008. The United States and many European countries have recognised Kosovo's independence, while Serbia and some of its allies, most notably Russia have denounced the declaration as illegal. About 90% of Kosovo's two million people are ethnic Albanians, most of whom are Muslim. In the 1990s poor economic policies, international sanctions, limited access to trade and finance, and ethnic conflict severely damaged Kosovo's economy, and it now has one of the poorest economies in Europe. Pray that the Christians within Kosovo will be strong and bold enough to share their faith with their friends and family. Also for the church within Gjakova; that it will be united and willing to deal with past hurts. Pray also for the planting of new sustainable churches and revival to come to the existing church.

Website: <http://www.24-7prayer.eu/#/kosovo/4541109665>

Thursday 27 January 2011

Focus on the youth: Children who are not disciplined

Not only Eli failed to discipline his children. In **1 Kings 1:6** we read in the *New Living Translation: Now his father, King David, had never disciplined him (Adonijah) at any time, even by asking, "Why are you doing that?"* Let us plead that parents, in spite of legislation worldwide beginning to forbid the implementation of discipline, will love their children so much that when necessary, they will positively discipline their children with love and wisdom, and show them the way of the Bible. Pray for the restoration of healthy authoritative structures in parental homes, schools and universities.

Focus on the nations: The Netherlands

The first defence against the ocean in the Netherlands went up some 800 years ago. Today more than 2,400 kilometers (1,491 miles) of dykes shield the low, flat land (almost half of which lies below sea level) from invasion by the North Sea. Without the existing dykes, 65% of the country would be flooded daily. The Netherlands had their election in June 2010. Please pray for the next government to pass more godly laws on abortion, prostitution, drug legislation, and euthanasia. Please pray for revival in all families and the church, as well as church leaders. Ask for this nation to make God their first love once again.

Website: <http://www.24-7prayer.eu/#/netherlands/4540114261>

There are many occurrences of sexual abuse within families because of the lack of good moral values; according to a reliable source. Pray that God will intervene and save complete families in the Netherlands.

Friday 28 January 2011

Focus on the youth: Children that you know

Today pray specifically for your own children/grandchildren and other children you know personally. Pray for neighbours' children by name, for children/young people in your local school or at a university in your city, friends of your children, and the children of acquaintances. Ask that God will clearly show you what to pray for. He made them and formed them in their mother's womb and wants to engrave their names in the palms of His hands (**Isa.49:16**).

Focus on worldwide food security

Part of the solution of providing enough food for everyone all over the world is for farmers to produce more and cheaper food with the help of biotechnology. Many governments in Africa, where there is food shortage and famine, won't allow biotechnology in their lands. It is not a matter of biotechnology being unsafe, but according to them they don't want to become dependent on other countries and private multi-national companies that sell seed. This distrust in humanity causes literally millions of children and adults to go hungry and often they even die of hunger. Website: <http://www.grainmilling.org.za>
Please pray urgently for a positive breakthrough at the highest level of decision-making with regard to food security.

Saturday 29 January 2011

Focus on the media: Christian Broadcasting South Africa (ACB)

The proposed *Public Broadcasting Services (PBS)* Bill not only has provisions to fund the SABC from an additional 1% tax (replacing licensing fees), but also has extensive regulations for Community Broadcasting, which could further side-line Christian radio and TV stations. (At this stage, satellite broadcasts are not affected.) Pray that Community Broadcasting will not be affected by this new legislation. The *Independent Communications Authority of South Africa (ICASA)* will license new FM Commercial radio stations in the Durban, Cape Town & Pretoria regions. There are two Christian applicants, who will compete with 12 to 15 other applicants for the Durban & Pretoria licenses. Pray that Christian broadcasters will be successful in breaking through into the commercial radio field. Website: www.acb.org.za or e-mail: info@acb.org.za

Focus on the nations: Estonia

Estonia, smallest in population of the former Soviet republics, is a low-lying land on the Baltic Sea with 1,500 lakes and plenty of forests. In March 2007, Estonia allowed Internet voting for Parliamentary elections, becoming the first country to do so. The introduction of capitalism has brought wealth – accompanied by a moral slide. In Estonia's growing economy, luxury co-exists with severe poverty. Western-style materialism is found everywhere, and crime and divorce have skyrocketed since 1991. Pray for the Holy Spirit to create a hunger and thirst after God and His righteousness. The Church is now free. Pray that it may not become 'soft' now that persecution has ended. Nominalism is widespread in an aging Lutheran state church. Younger churches (Pentecostals, Charismatics, Baptists) are growing more rapidly than others.

Website: <http://www.24-7prayer.eu/#/estonia/4541265175>

Sunday 30 January 2011

Pray the Word (9) (Cont. from 23 Jan.)

God's desire is not that we work *for* Him, but *with* Him. We are co-workers of God. *The heavens belong to the Lord, but He has given the earth to all humanity [literally: pledged to humanity] (Ps.115:16)*. The Word teaches us our creative purpose, why we were made, what our calling is, what we are destined for. The promises in the Word are to enable us to reach our creative purpose (destiny, calling). God is not interested in the first place in our plans, our ideas, our ideals and our desires. He created us for a purpose and in His sovereignty and omnipotence He is busy working out His creative purpose for us and for the world. That is why we have to *live on the basis of and out of the Word*. **Joshua 1:8** and

Psalm 1:1-2 teach us to reflect on the Word day and night. **Psalm 119** teaches us that the Word should control and saturate every facet of our lives, thoughts, will and emotions.

The sphere of the impossible: The Word helps us to understand what is possible for God. **Luke 1:37** teaches us: *For nothing is impossible with God.* The direct translation would be: "Not one of God's words is without power." The Word takes us into the sphere of the humanly impossible. The Word that goes out of God's mouth will not return empty but will accomplish what He desires and achieve the purpose for which He sent it (**Isa.55:11**). When we pray the Word, the creative, re-creational and restoring power of the Word is released. God is *I am*. That means He can, He is able. *I am* is present tense; He is there every moment, actively busy working. **Acts 20:32** tells us about the working of the Word: *Now I commit you to God and to the word of His grace, which can build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified.* (Quoted from *Praying with Purpose*, Bennie Mostert). Pray that Christians (worldwide) will pray the Word. Pray also that they will stop trying to do things in their own strength or making their own plans in stead of allowing God to lead them.

Focus on World Leprosy Day

Today is *World Leprosy Day*. According to the most recent calculations of the *World Health Organisation (WHO)*, which refer to the year 2007, there were 254,525 new leprosy cases during that year, with 212,802 people already being treated for it. Unfortunately, children are not spared this disease. According to the calculations of the *AIFO (the Italian Association of the Friends of Raoul Follereau)*, "each year in the world there are 40,000 children with leprosy". About 12% of all new cases of leprosy are children under the age of fifteen. Website: <http://www.leprosymission.org.uk/> Lift up in prayer every individual suffering from leprosy, asking God for their complete healing. Also pray for every family member living with someone suffering from leprosy.

Sanctity Life Sunday

Today is also *Sanctity Life Sunday*. Pastors in SA are encouraged to preach what the Bible teaches on the subject of abortion and to mobilise their congregations in prayer and repentance. If most churchgoers could understand what the Bible teaches about the beginning of life, the sanctity of life, and our Christian responsibility to stand up for the right of pre-born babies to life - then we could save thousands of precious lives from abortion.

For more info contact: *Africa Christian Action*, Tel.: 021 689 4480.

Website: www.christianaction.org.za or e-mail: info@christianaction.org.za

Pray for political leaders that will start to speak out against the law which allows abortion. Ask for Christians in influential positions to make known their views on this issue, and who will work towards having the law abolished that gives people freedom to have abortion on demand. Pray for doctors and nurses to speak out on this issue and that they will have the freedom to refuse to perform abortions. Ask the Lord's forgiveness for our nation for allowing abortion.

Monday 31 January 2011

Focus on health: New idea makes SA "leader in heart medicine"

Work to address heart rhythm disturbances in cardiac patients has been revolutionised at a major Cape Town hospital thanks to cutting-edge technology which sees cardiologists complete the procedure via robot while seated outside the operating theatre. With the experience to back it up, the technology has allowed South Africa to be "a leader in this field of heart medicine".

Website:

http://www.iol.co.za/index.php?set_id=1&click_id=125&art_id=vn20100312123244569C499959

Give thanks to the Lord for answering prayers concerning medical breakthroughs and research. Please continue to pray that this research would continue, and be of great benefit to SA in the future. Praise God for this breakthrough!

Focus on Bible translation: Virtual teams in sensitive regions

The ever-expanding variety of electronic communication tools is a great blessing and enables team members to work together effectively even when they live far apart. Pray for good communication skills especially concerning work done across culture and language barriers. Ask that misunderstandings won't occur. One lady in Europe is helping a colleague located in his home country to prepare a dictionary. Pray for her and for many translation teams in similar situations. *Wycliffe* Prayer Focus Bulletin.

Website: <http://www.wycliffe.org/pray.aspx> or e-mail: Personnel_Southafrica@wycliffe.org

Prayer focus on Buddhism

During February we focus in prayer specifically on Buddhists; what they believe, how it differs from what Christians believe and what is happening around Buddhism in South Africa. Hundreds of millions of people's lives worldwide are entangled and tied down by demonic forces, although they continually try to live good lives and become better people so that they can eventually go to 'heaven'. You can also add your own research to these prayer pointers to teach intercessors how to pray and minister to Buddhists this month.