

## Prayers for advent

### Advent prayer for Iraq

Dear God:

The newspaper brings nothing new  
only an old, old story of war in Iraq—  
more bombing, more shootings, more bloodshed.

One more family wailing a funeral song.

Against the backdrop of images from CBC and ABC and CNN,  
we hear the old, old story of an angel with good news  
who brought good tidings of great joy for all people.

Angel of Bethlehem, we long to hear your song again this night.

We want good tidings for Iraq, a country in crisis.  
We want good tidings for Iraqis, who long to govern themselves.  
We want good tidings for soldiers, caught in webs of violence.  
We want good tidings for terrorists, so that they might drop their weapons.  
We want good tidings for all who grieve, because they see no end to grieving.  
We want good tidings for the United States, so they can end the war.  
We want good tidings for the United Nations, so they can work for lasting peace.  
We want good tidings for ordinary Iraqis, so they can live ordinary lives free from fear.  
We want good tidings for Iraqi children, so they can inherit a country where  
peace has blossomed.

Jesus, our Saviour, born in the Middle East,  
you escaped Herod's best-laid plans.

May your Spirit of peace be born again this year in Iraq  
in the hearts of all who work for peace.

Amen.

## **Advent prayer for HIV/AIDS**

Dear God, you proclaimed your presence to Mary and Joseph and walked with them to Bethlehem.

This advent, we listen for your voice;  
we ask you to walk with us in our HIV/AIDS filled world.

We pray expecting your presence among us!

Be with all who live with the effects of this disease.  
Be with those who wait to die because they have no access to medication.  
Be with children who received HIV as a legacy from their parents.  
Be with orphans and families who have lost loved ones.  
Be with countries who have millions of citizens with HIV/AIDS.  
Be with all who are stigmatized and ignored because they have HIV/AIDS.  
Be with politicians and corporate executives who control access to affordable medications.  
Be with researchers and scientists who work to find a cure.  
Be with healthcare workers and caregivers who comfort and encourage.  
Be with all who have lost hope because of HIV/AIDS.

Lord, we hear the angel's song of peace!

Fill the hearts of people around the world with good will  
so that together we can work for justice and healing  
for all who suffer from HIV/AIDS.

Amen.

## **Advent prayer for people living with violence**

At this time of year as we sing "Silent night"  
with its echoes of calm and heavenly peace,  
we say a prayer for all who live in homes  
where peace is absent.

We pray for children who live with fear  
of beatings, both physical and verbal,  
whose homes are not a place of safety.

We pray for seniors and other vulnerable people  
whose caregivers do not care  
as they are neglected or degraded.

We pray for all who are emotionally abused,  
and who are not loved, honoured and cherished.

We pray for women who are physically abused  
and who have had to flee their homes  
or are afraid to flee their homes.

We pray for all who have been sexually violated,  
and who are haunted by fear of violation.

May love's pure light this season empower us  
to come to the aid of your hurting people.

We join together to sing Alleluia and thank you  
for your grace that transforms our world.

In the name of the Holy Infant,  
Christ our Saviour,

Amen.