

5th March 2022

Home

“Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.”

Bible, Matthew 25:40

Having a few days' break from my locum responsibilities, I've been at home. In the comfort and familiarity of my resting place and in the company of people I love, I find the peace and renewal I need. But as I sit in my home today, I can't disassociate myself from the images of over a million people who've had to flee their homes because of the invasion of Ukraine. Separated from family, displaced from their familiar environment, devoid of the basics of life such as medicines for their children, fearful, distressed and uncertain, my heart goes out to those who have lost their homes and their homeland. With people of our communities and nations, we will offer help. We will open our doors, give of our substance, support relief efforts, respond to charity appeals. Because home means so much to us, we must reach out to those who have lost their homes.

Our Ukrainian brothers and sisters are at the heart of a refugee crisis. A while back, I was invited by *Wild Goose Publications* to write a reflection for "World Refugee Day". This was published as a "digital download" (accessible at <https://www.ionabooks.com/product/jesus-was-a-refugee-pdf-download>) and sits alongside other reflections and worship material by John Harvey, Yvonne Morland, the Woolman House Community and others. It offers material from the UN's High Commissioner for Refugees, biblical reflections, prayers, poetry, worship material and a new hymn. At its heart is the piece which gives it its title: *Jesus was a Refugee*. Our Incarnate Christ was, as a child, a refugee. Fleeing persecution with his parents, fearful, uncertain, distressed, Jesus lost his home.

As we respond to the displacement of so many people from Ukraine, let's commend them, and our relief efforts, to the Grace of God. And in so doing, let us remember that, in the Christ who has been where they are now, God is fully Incarnate in their homelessness. In caring for our Ukrainian friends, we are responding to the living presence of Christ.

A prayer for today

Living God, I thank you for my home. And in my thanks, I pray for those who, displaced from their homes, seek peace, security and settlement. Ever-present Christ, bless them all. Guide them safely. And bring them home. Amen