

## Prayer Vigil at the Home Office for Victims of Global Migration June 2024

*Leader invites a few moments of silence and contemplation before the icon.*

### Opening Prayers

Leader We pray for those who will spend time during our service handing out leaflets to the public. We ask that our message will reach the hearts of people of good will on this street today.

Creator Spirit, wellspring of our lives, as the refreshing rain falls on the just and unjust alike,

All **Refresh us with your mercy, you who know our own injustice.**

Leader As the stream flows steadily on, defying all the odds of stone and water,

All **Flow over every boundary and border that separates us from each other.**

Leader As the waters of our baptism washed us and welcomed us,

All **Renew us now in newness of life and unity of love.**

### Hymn – “When I Needed a Neighbour”

When I needed a neighbour,

Were you there, were you there?

When I needed a neighbour, were you there?

**(Refrain:)** And the creed and the colour

And the name won't matter,

Were you there?

I was hungry and thirsty,

Were you there, were you there?

I was hungry and thirsty, were you there? **R**

I was cold, I was naked,

Were you there, were you there?

I was cold, I was naked, were you there? **R**

When I needed a shelter,

Were you there, were you there?

When I needed a shelter, were you there? **R**

When I needed a healer,

Were you there, were you there?

When I needed a healer, were you there? **R**

Wherever you travel,

I'll be there, I'll be there.

Wherever you travel, I'll be there. **R**

*Sydney Carter*

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### Canticle – “You’ll die at sea”

*by Abdel Wahab Yousif*

**A** You’ll die at sea.

Your head rocked by the roaring waves,

**B** your body swaying in the water,  
like a perforated boat.

**A** In the prime of youth you’ll go,  
shy of your 30<sup>th</sup> birthday.

**B** Departing early is not a bad idea;  
but it surely is if you die alone,

**A** with no woman calling you to her embrace:

‘Let me hold you to my breast,

**B** I have plenty of room,  
let me wash the dirt of misery off your soul.'

### **Prayers of Repentance**

*Leader:* Loving Jesus, as a child in fear of your life, you were forced to seek refuge in Egypt. You know what it is like to be rejected, and to be an outsider. You call us to love our neighbours as ourselves, but we have hardened our hearts against strangers.

**All: Forgive us, and help us to change.**

*Leader:* You told us to welcome strangers in our land, but we have hated, imprisoned, humiliated and killed those who have asked for our hospitality.

**All: Forgive us, and help us to change.**

*Leader:* We are called today to welcome those fleeing from war, famine and poverty. Open our hearts, and those of our neighbourhood, of our city, of our country and of our continent, to those who need shelter.

**All: Forgive us, and help us to change.**

### **The List of the Dead**

The names and details which follow are those of people who have died trying to obtain sanctuary in Europe or the UK. We read them so as to honour their lives and mourn the injustice of their deaths. Many are unknown, but as Pope Francis said, 'Every one has a name, a face and a story'. Today we mark those who died in June 2023.

After each entry, *Leader* says: Lord have mercy.

*All* respond: **Christ, have mercy.**

	<b>Date</b>	<b>Details</b>
1	?	15 people, including a baby, were presumed drowned, their bodies found by a Tunisian fisherman in his nets in the Mediterranean Sea.
2	2/6	1 person died of unknown causes, his body in advanced state of decay, caught in a fishing net off Alicante, Spain.
3	2/6	A young girl from Cameroon drowned, her body wrapped in a pink winter suit recovered by Tunisian coast guard off Kerkennah, Tunisia.
4	4/6	A Somalian man of 20 drowned in unclear circumstances while stuck on the Italian-French border, his body found on a beach in Bordighera, Italy.
5	5/6	20 Syrians, including at least 2 children, 3 women, and 3 men, drowned when a boat on the way to Spain sank off Arhat, Algeria; 7 bodies were probably found, 2 survived.
6	6/6	A man from Afghanistan was hit by a train, and died the next day in a hospital in Postojna, Slovenia.
7	6/6	The body of Miran Karim Habib, a 26-year-old man from Iraq, was found by Belarus border guards in Świsłoch River at the Belarus-Poland border in which he had drowned a year before.
8	7/6	9 people from Ivory Coast and elsewhere in sub-Saharan Africa drowned on the way from Teboulba, Tunisia to Lampedusa, Italy; their bodies were found on shore at Sayada and Teboulba, Tunisia. 29 survived.
9	8/6	20 people from Gambia, Mali, Nigeria, Senegal, and elsewhere drowned off the coast of Castelverde, Libya on the way to Europe; 90 survived.
10	9/6	2 men from Morocco drowned after being forced off a boat into the Alboran Sea on way from Nador, Morocco to Adra, Spain; 130 survived.

11	10/6	A man and a woman drowned, their bodies recovered by Algerian Coast Guard off Port of Cherchell, Algeria, in the Mediterranean sea.
12	11/6	14 people from north Africa drowned off the coast of the Balearic Islands, Spain; their boat left from Boumerdes, Algeria. 2 survived.
13	11/6	A 22-year-old man from Afghanistan was run over by a freight train, his body found at the Vojnegovac (Serbia) railway crossing near the Bulgarian border.
14	13/6	A man was presumed drowned, his body found in the sea by a fishing boat off Cap de la Nau near Alicante, Spain.
15	14/6	<p>609 people from Pakistan, Syria, Egypt, Palestine, Afghanistan, including roughly 100 children, drowned when the <i>Adriana</i>, an old fishing trawler carrying refugees bound for Italy, capsized off Pylos when a Greek coast guard ship tried to tow it. The coast guard ship did not begin rescue operations until 30 minutes after the boat had sunk. Some refugees tried to swim to the coast guard ship while the boat was sinking, but it was waiting too far enough away for them to reach, and they drowned. The coast guard ship did not fulfil its obligation to record the incident using the ship's cameras, and survivors who had recorded the event had their phones confiscated by the coast guard. Subsequent coast guard testimonies contradicted the accounts of those inside the vessel. To date none of the coast guard members responsible for the deaths have faced any legal consequences, although 9 of the survivors have been prosecuted on suspicion of people trafficking. 104 people survived; 82 bodies were recovered. These are the details of some of those who died:</p> <p>Mohammad Fawzi Sheikhi, a Syrian man, was travelling with his 14-year-old nephew, Waleed Mohammad Qasem, who had begged to go with him and wanted to be a doctor.</p> <p>Kamiran Ahmad, 17, from Syria, wanted to study in Germany. His cousin, who survived, remembered his last words as: "Didn't I tell you we were going to die? Didn't I tell you we were already dead?"</p> <p>Ahmed Kusar, 26, had left Syria for Libya 6 months before. People smugglers had beaten him, deprived him of food and stolen his documents.</p> <p>Sameer had left his 6 children behind in Pakistan because he wanted to give them a better future.</p> <p>Mohammed Akmal, 28, from Pakistan, wanted to earn money in Europe to repay his debts and support his family.</p> <p>Ali Raza, 19, from Pakistan.</p> <p>Mohammed Yasir, 30, Awais Asif, 21, and Haider, 21, had travelled with 4 others from their village in Pakistan to earn money to support their families there.</p> <p>Abubakr, 31, from Pakistan, wanted his family to have a better life.</p> <p>Shamsher Ali, 28, travelled from Pakistan with his 14-year-old nephew.</p> <p>Abuzar Pervaiz, 14, from Pakistan, wanted to support his family and disabled brother.</p> <p>Sajid Yousuf, 26, from Pakistan, wanted to support his 2 infant children and his father.</p> <p>Touqeer Pervez, 28, from Pakistan, wanted to earn money to build a roof for this family's house.</p> <p>Sami Ullah and Abdul Kariq, from Pakistan, were part of a group of 5 friends travelling together; all drowned.</p> <p>Moshin Shazad, 32, from Pakistan, wanted to support his 2 small children, wife, and mother.</p> <p>Ezra Aboud, from Syria, was on her way to join her husband in Germany.</p> <p>Elsherkawy, from Egypt.</p> <p>Abdulrahman Diab, 21, from Palestine.</p>

		<p>Muhammad Firas Mahameed, 23, and Mahmoud Khaled al-Saidi, 22, both from Syria, had been jailed in Libya on the way; neither could swim.</p> <p>Sufyan al-Dnifat, 17, had fled Syria the year before to avoid the military draft.</p> <p>Owais, Tariq, 19, from Pakistan.</p> <p>Abdul Jabbar, 38, from Pakistan, wanted to work for a better life for his wife and daughters.</p> <p>Mohamed al-Sayyed, 16, from Egypt, had left home without telling his family.</p> <p>Shawq Muhammad al Ghazali, 22, was a student originally from Syria. He had spent time as a refugee in Jordan.</p> <p>Matloob Hussain, 42, had been deported from Greece back to Pakistan.</p> <p>Mohamed Abdelnasser, 27, had left Egypt when he could not earn enough to support his family.</p> <p>Thaer Khalid al-Rahhal, 39, wanted to earn money to pay for treatment for his ill son.</p> <p>6 people, some from Syria and Pakistan, had died of thirst on the boat in the days before.</p>
16	19/6	A man of 25 died of exhaustion roughly 100km from the Turkish border in a forest near Iasmos, Greece.
17	19/6	A man was found dead by the driver of a Serbian lorry in its cargo area, near Staro Petrovo, Croatia. Another man in the lorry survived.
18	20/6	A man, a woman, and a child from sub-Saharan Africa drowned when a boat from Sfax, Tunisia got into distress near Lampedusa, Italy; the Italian coast guard ignored multiple requests for help before a ship was despatched.
19	20/6	5 people from Ivory Coast and elsewhere, including a child, drowned off Lampedusa, having travelled from Tunisia.
20	20/6	Mohsen Ahmed al-Huweisek, 26, from Yemen, and Waseem Abojesh, 21, from Syria, drowned in the Narewka River, Poland, in a forest near the Belarusian border.
21	20/6	A young man drowned trying to swim from Ventimiglia, Italy to France.
22	20/6	A pregnant woman died of unknown causes, her body found in a boat carrying 53 people from Africa by fishermen off the Canary Islands, Spain.
23	21/6	39 people from Senegal, Gambia and elsewhere, including a boy of 4 and 4 women, drowned off Gran Canaria, Spain; authorities delayed their rescue for 12 hours. 24 survived.
24	22/6	6 people from sub-Saharan Africa, including a child, drowned when a boat from Al-Lawata, Tunisia, sank off Sfax. 2 babies died in a boat on the same route. 113 survived from the two boats.
25	22/6	51 people from Morocco, all 15-37, including 4 girls, were presumed drowned, having gone missing on their way from Agadir to the Canary Islands
26	22/6	7 people from sub-Saharan Africa, including 1 child, drowned when a boat from Louza, Tunisia, sank off Sfax. 39 survived.
27	22/6	39 people from Cameroon, Burkina Faso and Ivory Coast, including 7 women and a newborn baby, drowned from a boat from Sfax, Tunisia capsized in strong winds off Lampedusa, Italy. 9 survived.
28	23/6	A 23-year-old man from Syria drowned off Malta after falling from a rubber boat. Maltese authorities ignored distress calls for 3 days before the 13 survivors were rescued.
29	24/6	Abdul Nabi, 30, drowned along with 13 young people from Narsingdi, Bangladesh, when their speedboat sank on the way from Libya to Italy.

30	24/6	The bodies of 20 people from West Africa were found near Turks and Caicos in the Caribbean, having drifted 6482km trying to get from West Africa to Spain.
31	28/6	13 people drowned on the way to Italy, their bodies retrieved off Sfax by the Tunisian coast guard.
32	29/6	14 people from Algeria and Morocco drowned on the way from Oran, Algeria to Almeria, Spain.
33	30/6	26 people from west Africa drowned when a boat from Sfax got into distress off Tunisia on the way to Europe; 19 survived.
34	End of June	3 boats, carrying about 60, 65, and 200 people, went missing on the way from Kafountine, Senegal to the Canary Islands, Spain; all those on board are presumed drowned.

*Taken from UNITED List of Refugee Deaths, produced by UNITED for Intercultural Action – campaign 'Fortress Europe No More Deaths' - unitedagainstreugeedeaths.eu – listofdeaths@unitedagainstracism.org. Collated from the following sources: ABCNews, AfricaNews, Aljazeera, Amesegura, APNews, ArabNews, Barrons, BBC, Biaggio, Caminando, CBC, Czaban, DarajMedia, ECRE, EFE, EPress, FundOcalenie, Guardian, GrupaGranica, HelenaMaleno, Heroes, HRW, IOM, IOMLibya, IOMSlovenia, InfoMigrants, Internazionale, LatestNews, Le Monde, Lighthouse, LiguriaNotizie, LoopNews, LR, MP, Mosaique, MSF, MurciaToday, N1Croatia, Naslovi, NewArab, NewDelhi, NYtimes, Paudal, PlusOnline, PrimoCanale, ProthomAlo, Rescue, Reuters, Riviera24, Seen, SeaWatch, SKGovBY, SkyArabia, Solomon, SOHR, Spiegel, Spiegel, SyriaDirect, SyrDelMar, Tasnim, TCweekly, TimeSerbia, TodayItaly, TVN24, VOA, Vassilis, WIKI, Wpost, and WSWS.*

**All: Eternal rest grant unto them O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them. May they rest in peace. Amen.**

### Hymn – “Wait for the Lord”

by Communauté de Taizé

Wait for the Lord, whose day is near.

Wait for the Lord: keep watch, take heart! **(x3)**

### Reading

*(Mark 4:26-34)* Jesus said to the crowds: ‘This is what the kingdom of God is like. A man throws seed on the land. Night and day, while he sleeps, when he is awake, the seed is sprouting and growing; how, he does not know. Of its own accord the land produces first the shoot, then the ear, then the full grain in the ear. And when the crop is ready, he loses no time: he starts to reap because the harvest has come.’

He also said, ‘What can we say the kingdom of God is like? What parable can we find for it? It is like a mustard seed which at the time of its sowing in the soil is the smallest of all the seeds on earth; yet once it is sown it grows into the biggest shrub of them all and puts out big branches so that the birds of the air can shelter in its shade.’

Using many parables like these, he spoke the word to them, so far as they were capable of understanding it. He would not speak to them except in parables, but he explained everything to his disciples when they were alone.

### Reflection – Fr Joe Ryan

#### Prayers of Intercession

*Everyone present reads in turn. All say the **response** in bold.*

We pray for the thousands of men, women and children, known and unknown, who set out to seek safety and a better life in Europe, but who were drowned in the Mediterranean, the

Atlantic, the Aegean Sea, or the English Channel, and for those who mourn them. O Lord hear our prayer, **and let our cry come unto you.**

We pray for migrants who have met hostility or violence from authorities or vigilantes. We pray for those pushed back into the sea, and those forced into the desert. O Lord hear our prayer, **and let our cry come unto you.**

We pray for all those seeking sanctuary in the UK who depend on its adhering to the European Convention for Human Rights, and pray that our government will respect the agreement that we helped to draw up over 70 years ago. O Lord hear our prayer, **and let our cry come unto you.**

We pray for the protection of all people in refugee camps in Calais and elsewhere and the communities they build. O Lord hear our prayer, **and let our cry come unto you.**

We pray for refugees arriving in the UK and being placed in detention in poor conditions at arrival, and those made homeless on being granted asylum. We pray for their mental and physical well-being and for the recognition of their right to decent housing. We pray for Ibrahima Bah and all others imprisoned through unjust laws. O Lord hear our prayer, **and let our cry come unto you.**

We pray for all those at risk of deportation to Rwanda, and those currently detained in order to be deported, that they will receive safety and security in this country. We pray for the failure of this Government's, and the next Government's, campaign of fear against migrants. O Lord hear our prayer, **and let our cry come unto you.**

We pray for a resolution to the conflicts and oppression which are forcing so many to flee in desperation, for the end of the arms trade, and the realisation of the right of people to remain in their homes. We pray for the people of Congo, Iran, Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, Eritrea, Sudan, Ukraine, and Palestine. O Lord hear our prayer, **and let our cry come unto you.**

We pray for those who are fleeing the effects of climate change, with rising sea levels, drought, flood or crop failure, yet who have caused little or no damage to our climate; for those who make decisions about compensation, and those who continue to exploit the earth for profit. We ask forgiveness for our complicity in this. O Lord hear our prayer, **and let our cry come unto you.**

We pray for the safety and success of those serving aboard the rescue ships: the *Sea Watch 3*, the *Life Support*, the *Aurora*, the *Imara*, the *Rise Above*, the *Nadir*, the *Geo Barents*, the *Wind Express*, the *Ocean Viking*, the *Open Arms*, the *Aita Mari*, the *Trotamar III*, and others; and of the volunteers of the Alarm Phone, and the reception teams on the Greek and Italian islands. O Lord hear our prayer, **and let our cry come unto you.**

We pray that you inspire compassion in all those who work with migrants on behalf of governments, and that they recognise all those they come across as their brothers and sisters. O Lord hear our prayer, **and let our cry come unto you.**

We pray that you create in all of us the strength and resilience to resist unjust immigration laws and to support one another in this struggle. O Lord hear our prayer, **and let our cry come unto you.**

*Leader invites those present to add other prayers if they wish.*

### **Concluding Prayer**

*by the Baptist Union of Great Britain*

**All:** God of all humanity,  
When your people were enslaved and displaced  
You led them to a land that they could call home.  
When your people were in exile  
Your promise was that one day  
They would live in streets of play and laughter.  
When your disciples were afraid and uncertain,  
You spoke of your Father's House  
With mansions and places prepared.

We pray today for all those who have no place to call home,  
Hearing the heart-cry of your word  
For those who are without refuge.  
Where shelter is ours to offer  
Grant us the will and resolve to reflect the generosity of our Creator.  
Where others stand in the way of those who need safe haven  
May our cry for justice never falter.  
May the idols of self-interest and economic gain  
Never deflect us from the ways of your Kingdom.  
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Blessing/prayer by Bishop Paul McAleenan, of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England & Wales

### **Hymn – "Amazing Grace"**

Amazing grace (how sweet the sound)  
That saved a wretch like me!  
I once was lost, but now am found,  
Was blind but now I see.

'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear,  
And grace my fears relieved;  
How precious did that grace appear  
The hour I first believed!

Through many dangers, toils, and snares  
I have already come:  
'Tis grace has brought me safe thus far,  
And grace will lead me home.

When we've been there ten thousand years,  
Bright, shining as the sun,  
We've no less days to sing God's praise,  
Than when we first begun.

Amazing grace (how sweet the sound)  
That saved a wretch like me!  
I once was lost, but now am found,  
Was blind but now I see.

*Words by John Newton, music by William Walker.*

*All introduce themselves briefly. Any announcements are given.*

*[List produced by UNITED for Intercultural Action – campaign 'Fortress Europe No More Deaths'  
unitedagainstreugeedeaths.eu – listofdeaths@unitedagainstracism.org]*