



40 DAYS OF PRAYER FOR AFRICA'S VULNERABLE CHILDREN AND HANDS AT WORK

February 22ND - APRIL 9TH, 2023

Thank you for praying with us. Please use this content to inform your prayers for the week. We appreciate that we are all busy, but it means so much that you would pause to bring these concerns to our Heavenly Father. There are a couple of questions at the end of each entry for you to engage your whole family.

February 27 - March 4

Day 5-6 of 40 - Jackie

"Jackie, you are a senior leader in Hands at Work. You've been with us for many, many years and currently you are situated, based in Zambia, but you move a lot and you also work in the DRC - Democratic Republic of the Congo, and you work in Nigeria today what would you urge us to pray for?"

So, for DRC, we have our Service Centre team, that is our local Hands office team. Recently we've realised just a huge need for more people. We currently have Mama Angel, and Erick, we also have Sammy and Francis. The team is small, but *we are trusting God, that God would bring people with the same passion, the same heart, because we care in the most vulnerable communities and we do need Godly, especially female, people that God can add to the team. The other thing that is big is we do have an opportunity to reach out to our local pastors there.* We are just trusting God for such a transformation in their lives because most of them, we realise, how much they mix culture and church and traditional things - witchcraft is involved even within the church. So, it's a big burden of our hearts that we can influence and that they'll be drawn close to Jesus.

For Nigeria, two things are big. This year we have an upcoming election, and in Africa, election can be very chaotic. That is when there can be a lot of confusion and a lot of distraction comes with that. *We are praying that as the election happens in Nigeria, that God would really intervene on behalf of the most vulnerable.* That's a big one.

The second one - we have opportunity this year to start strong in a rural community outside of Lagos, in a town called Ibadan and it's a small village called Alugbo. God has just opened our eyes to the huge needs there. We do have many children to be reached and even more villages around there that we could start caring for more children. *Please pray with us that God would give us favor and would be able to reach out to these children. Also, pray for the team there. We only have two leaders there and we have Toyin and Taiwo. So pray for them as their community expands, we desire that God would also add to them.*

- **In the audio, Jackie shares that in Nigeria and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), there aren't enough people for the amount of work there is to do. Let's pray that God will help Hands at Work to find great new people to add to the teams in these countries. Would you like to draw**

a picture of someone who could join the teams? Perhaps you could draw them with a huge heart if you think they will be very loving, or fantastic feet if they need to walk far, or mighty muscles to protect the children. What other qualities could they have? Once you have drawn a picture of who you think should join the teams in Nigeria and the DRC, pray for that person.

- **Have you ever had to come to a decision with your friends or siblings and you knew that not everyone would agree? What happened? Did everyone accept the result? How can we react in a way that pleases God and ensures peace?**

Day 7-8 of 40 - Xolani

Hi, my name is Xolani. I am from South Africa. I am married to Sara, currently serving here in Zambia. I want to ask you to *pray with us for our children and caregivers who are feeling rejected, unloved and hopeless*. I have sat in a home talking to a 73-year-old grandmother who's looking after seven children by herself, and the oldest of these children was about 12 years old because their parents have left them.

I could see the pain in her face as she shares how hurt she is that they have left and never came back. She has heard rumours that her daughter is married in another village and nobody knows where their father is. She shares how it breaks her heart that she can't provide for these children and her fear is that one day she will no longer be there.

She shares about how rejected and worthless the kids feel. How they feel like nobody sees them or loves them. Even their own parents have rejected them. And we know that scripture points us into the Psalms, the beautiful Psalms, which says, "even though my mother and father may forsake me, but the Lord will take me in".

And I *pray that God will raise men and women just like our volunteer Care Workers, that will stand in the gap for children like this*, that will come alongside our grandmothers because we know that this family represents thousands of families and thousands of children who are feeling the same. *And we pray that God will speak and that he will become their Father, and that their script will be flipped and that this will not be their story: that they were unloved, rejected, and worthless, but rather that they will have mothers and fathers who will fight for them, who will love them like Christ loves the church. Above all, we pray that the local church will take its own rightful position as the body of Christ.* Those who bring hope and bring good news and care for the most vulnerable. And care for the widows like this Gogo, who's 73 years old and in need of encouragement, in need of spiritual and emotional support.

We pray against the spirit of rejection, that it will not get hold of our children. That God will be glorified and that he will be our Father and that will be their story. Thank you.

- **Has anyone ever treated in the loving way like a parent? Maybe they helped you when you didn't know what to do, or maybe they listened to you when you were upset. What was that like?**
- **We heard in the audio from Xolani that many people feel rejected. Have you ever felt left out of something? Maybe you weren't invited to a party, or were left out of a sports team or your friends didn't let you play with them. Think about how that made you feel and pray that people would not feel like that. Think of one or two people you know who might be feeling left out. Are there ways that you could include them in something that would make them feel like someone loves and cares for them?**

Day 9-10 of 40 - Kara

Hello everyone. It's Kara McLaughlin sending many warm greetings from Kacele Farm here in Zambia. I

have the privilege of serving with the team that supports Nigeria, the DRC, and Zambia. So I would like to invite us into a time to pray for our Care Workers, our local volunteers from the local churches who have said, "Lord, send me to take care of the most vulnerable within my community."

Recently, we've had 18 Care Workers come and spend the weekend here in Kachele. It was such a special and rich time, but I was reminded that our Care Workers are carrying huge personal burdens themselves, and yet they are pouring themselves out on behalf of the children every day. So let's pray for them. *Let's pray for them that they would experience the healing of Jesus.* Then during that weekend, we had time to dig into the story in Mark chapter six of Jesus feeding the 5,000, and some of their reflections really struck me. They were saying that they realised that Jesus had compassion. Even before he fed the crowd he first taught them, because he could see that they were sheep without a shepherd. And they were saying, we want that heart of Jesus, that heart of compassion.

Then also they were struck by that part of the story where Jesus says, "go and see" to the disciples. Go and see what you have. And they only had the two fish and the five loaves, but when they offered that to Jesus, Jesus blessed it, and there was even leftovers. There was an abundance. And so our Care Workers were sharing with us that sometimes the need feels so big. They look at the, the brokenness, the pain, the needs that are there, but that if they just offer what they have to Jesus, they can trust him. *So let's pray for them as they see the needs day after day, that they would experience miracles as they offer to Jesus the little that they have, and that they would see him bringing healing and transformation in the communities.*

The Care Workers were sharing how they long for their children to know Jesus and to experience the healing because they realise that food isn't enough. They need and they long for their children to meet Jesus because they long to see a transformation in the next generation. *They were sharing that they know they're being trusted with the lives of the next generation within their communities. So let's stand and pray with them for that.* Thank you everyone.

- **Do you ever feel like you have too little to be generous with, or maybe that you are the one who could use some help?**
- **In the audio, Kara mentions praying for Care Workers, who support young people in their communities. Can you think of someone who has helped you in your life? Is there someone you look up to? Maybe it's a guardian, parent, friend, or teacher. What are some of the things that you like about them? How could you be a bit more like them to those younger than you?**