

MARRIAGE RESOURCE

PRAYER DIARY *January - March*

January

Marriage Problems

- 1 Pray for those who live in hope of a happier and more fulfilling marriage, that this year their hopes may be realised.
- 2 Pray for those husbands and wives who are weighed down with the stress of financial debt, that they will pray together and both seek and be given wise counsel, honesty and self-discipline.
- 3 Pray for couples whose lives have been afflicted with serious or long term illness, disability or through an accident. Pray for grace and understanding for both spouses.
- 4 Pray for those husbands and wives who are seeking to cope with unfaithfulness of a spouse. Pray that there will be true repentance, forgiveness and rebuilt trust.
- 5 Pray for those who are drifting apart in their marriage and living separate lives. Ask that they will recognise this and take action, including praying together.
- 6 Pray for those couples who have teenage children, that they may have wisdom and agreement in the years which can be difficult.
- 7 Pray for Christians whose spouse does not share their faith. Ask God to give them grace and patience and that many will come to know Jesus through their partner's witness.
- 8 Pray for courage for those who need help, but are afraid to ask, or who do not know where to turn, or whose spouse will not agree to seek help.

Marriage Milestones

- 9 Give thanks for the six "Marriage Milestones" leaflets, on this website, and pray that The Lord will continue to use them.
- 10 Pray for all those couples adjusting to the joys and pains of parenthood, that their marriages may be enriched, not endangered, by the experience
- 11 Pray for couples whose marriage has become dull, that they will avoid temptation, seek to restore their first love, and help their spouse to enjoy their marriage.
- 12 Pray for parents whose children have grown and left home, that they will find new joy and intimacy in their marriage.
- 13 Pray for anyone known to you whose life has been affected by redundancy and unemployment. Pray that they will have confidence in God to care for them. If they are married, pray that their spouse will know how best to help.
- 14 Pray for couples beginning retirement that it will bring new opportunities for sharing common interests, and that the adjustment may be smooth and happy. Pray for The Lord's guidance in the use of their time, their possessions and their gifts.

- 15 Pray for husbands who undertake most of the care of their children, that they will have grace for this need while it is necessary.

Marriage Preparation and Enhancement

- 16 Give thanks to God for the gradual increase in marriage preparation and enhancement, and for the Churches, Marriage Resource Branches, Community Family Trusts and other organisations who are providing it.
- 17 Pray that small and medium-sized churches will join with others in their locality to provide fuller marriage preparation.
- 18 Pray that The Lord will enable those who are leading marriage preparation courses, that they will help couples to a deep commitment to lifelong marriage whatever their background or previous experience.
- 19 Pray that teaching in marriage preparation courses will be relevant and helpful, especially for those who are not used to learning or self-examination.
- 20 Give thanks for the many opportunities that are available for couples to enhance their marriages and pray that they will become a normal part of marriage, not an exception.
- 21 Pray that churches will offer marriage enhancement courses at least once a year.
- 22 Pray that church members will invite non-churchgoers to a marriage course.
- 23 Pray for those who lead marriage enhancement events, that God will protect them and enrich them in their marriages as they give out to others.
- 24 Pray that those who attend marriage enhancement events will be able to apply the teaching and find new ways of helping their spouse to enjoy being married to them.

Prayer and Action in the Nation

- 25 Pray for all who use this Prayer Diary, that we will be equipped with perseverance, faith and protection to pray daily. Pray that more will use it.
- 26 Give thanks to God for the people who are committed to praying for marriage and family issues. Ask Him to bless them in their faithfulness and to encourage them.
- 27 Ask the Lord to increase the burden in people's hearts to pray for marriage and to join together with others to do so also.
- 28 Pray that organisations encouraging prayer nationally, like Prayer for the Nation, Crosswinds, Intercessors for Britain, The Lydia Fellowship, will encourage prayer for marriage.
- 29 Pray that Christians will be moved from inertia to action, to take a stand against the subtle schemes of the Devil to undermine marriage.
- 30 Thank God and pray for CARE, The Christian Institute, Christian Voice, and other national organisations which campaign for good legislation, and against unhelpful changes in the law.
- 31 Pray that CARE's website for those tempted by pornography will be used by those who need help.

February

Marriage Organisations

- 1 Give thanks for the 2-in-2-1 website with its wide range of resources, and for the weekly newsletter of news relating to marriage and family.
- 2 Pray for the counsellors of Catholic Marriage Care as they offer help from centres across the UK.
- 3 Community Family Trusts are encouraging Registrars to make their marriage preparation work known to couples arranging marriages. Pray for their success.
- 4 Restoration Christian Counselling and Connections Counselling both offer marriage counselling by email. Pray for special wisdom for their counsellors.
- 5 CWR and Pilgrims Hall are among the organisations which offer Counsellor Training Courses. May they succeed in advertising them widely.
- 6 Marriage Encounter in its various sections (Anglican, Baptist, Catholic, Engaged and United) offer weekends in various parts of the country. May they have a good response.

National Marriage Week

- 7 Ask for the Holy Spirit's guidance for all speaking at events and to the media during this Week.
- 8 Ask that churches will have a special opportunity for prayer for marriage in their services this week.
- 9 Some services of Marriage Thanksgiving and Rededication are being held this week. May they be joyful and meaningful occasions for all who take part.
- 10 Pray for marriage enhancement events and for Marriage First Aid Training evenings being held this week.
- 11 Pray that good articles in newspapers and magazines may bear fruit in all who read them. Give thanks for new resources for marriage published by some organisations this week.
- 12 Give thanks for happy marriages, especially those of your family and friends. Pray for those who are married but unhappy that they will seek help.
- 13 Pray that churches will also meet the needs of the unmarried, divorced and widowed.
- 14 Pray for those speaking at Valentine's Dinners and similar events today.

Marriage in Education

- 15 Thank the Lord for the marriage teaching resources produced by Care for Education for different age groups and pray for their use.
- 16 Pray for your local schools by name, especially for teachers that they will be moved by God to be very positive about faithful, lifelong marriage, especially in PHSE.

- 17 Pray that God will help children who have come from failed marriages and who have already decided that marriage is bad and to be avoided, to meet happily married couples.
- 18 Pray for children who know nothing about marriages and who live in a home with no permanent parental relationship, that they too might meet couples who are enjoying marriage.
- 19 Pray for the work of Explore, that more schools will invite them to conduct workshops and half-day conferences on marriage. Pray for more married couples to help with this initiative.
- 20 Pray for the work of The Family Education trust (Family and Youth Concern) as they campaign against unhelpful sex education in schools.
- 21 Pray for more Christians to enter teaching, especially RE and PHSE; and that Christianity will be the major subject in RE, and that it will be taught from the Bible.
- 22 Pray for Team Challenge UK, Lovewise and other organisations that give presentations in schools to encourage chastity. Pray that openings for them will increase.

Marriage Resource's Resources

- 23 Give thanks for all that is on the Marriage Resource website and pray that MR will be kept informed of necessary updates.
- 24 Pray that this website will become more widely known and used, especially by those involved in marriage work in churches.
- 25 May the page 'When Cohabitees Ask For Help' be read and used by Counsellors, so that Christian standards will not be compromised.
- 26 Pray that teachers will use resources described on the page on Marriage Education.
- 27 Ask that material from the page 'Chastity – The Teaching of the Bible' will be used in sermons.
- 28 Pray that the Marriage Resource all-age talk 'God's Plan for Marriage and Sex' will be helpful to young people, and that ministers and youth leaders will give teaching on this subject.
- 29 (Pray that any girls who are "popping the question" today will get the right answer, whatever it be.)

March

Marriage in the Media

- 1 Praise God that He has already won the victory over sin and death, and that when the Lord Jesus returns all evil and sources of evil will be destroyed.
- 2 Pray that writers who are living immoral lives will not be able to foist their views on the nation. Pray that producers will reject indecent material, despite pressure to gain viewing figures.

- 3 Pray that men, especially Christian men, addicted to pornography will find release.
- 4 Pray that programme makers will find good ideas for TV and radio. Pray that the nation will have the opportunity to hear more lovely and pure things through all the media outlets.
- 5 Pray for writers to portray good, lifelong marriage as a normal lifestyle for the majority through soaps and dramas, which undoubtedly have an impact on society.
- 6 Pray for Christian channels and broadcasts, especially Premier Radio and United Christian Broadcasters, and that they will give space to programmes about good marriage.
- 7 Pray that newspapers and magazines will carry some helpful articles on lifelong, faithful marriage.

Marriage Strategy for Churches

- 8 Pray that ministers will become convinced of the importance of marriage work.
- 9 Ask that this website's pages 'What Can a Church Do?' and 'Taking Marriage Seriously in Your Church' will be read and used by churches.
- 10 Pray that ministers will appoint a lay couple to head up a local church's marriage work, with other couples in support.
- 11 Pray that ministers will involve laity in marriage preparation, including use of PREPARE or FOCCUS questionnaires.
- 12 Ask for guidance for churches about regular use of a marriage enhancement course.
- 13 Pray that ministers will find and make known to their church various forms of help with marriage difficulties.

More Marriage Organisations

- 14 Give thanks for Christian Marriage Ministries (Mission to Marriage) and pray that their residential weekends for married couples will continue to be a help to many.
- 15 Pray for Christian Guidelines in their breadth of work for marriages in Northern Ireland.
- 16 Give thanks for Cardiff Concern Christian Counselling, Swansea Christian Counselling and Bridge Christian Counselling as they offer help to marriages in difficulties in South Wales.
- 17 Huddersfield's United Churches Healing Ministry encourages a number of smaller counselling organisations in Yorkshire and Lancashire. Give thanks for that, and pray for further developments and training.
- 18 The Institute of Counselling in Glasgow offers training and counselling. May its work be greatly blessed.
- 19 The Lighthouse of Coventry, Insight of Leicester, King's Way of Wolverhampton, The Well of Stourbridge, The Well of Malvern, Sycamore of Nuneaton and Manna House of Northampton are among those offering counselling and

counsellor training in the Midlands. Pray that their work will be even more widely known.

- 20 Philippi Trust are based in Blackpool but have branches in Rossendale, Newquay, Reading and overseas. Pray for the development of their marriage counselling work.

Marriages in Crisis

- 21 Pray for those couples who are desperate to have children and who are unable, pray that God will comfort them and draw them closer together.
- 22 Pray for those in prison who want to rebuild their life and marriage on release. Pray for strength and hope for those who work with them, especially prison chaplains, prison visitors, and those running Time for Families courses.
- 23 Pray for those who suffer financial hardship and/or debt, that they may find help. Pray for Credit Action and other organisations which provide advice.
- 24 Pray for those for who are lonely despite being married. Ask God that intimacy and openness will increase between partners.
- 25 Pray for those couples whose lives have been devastated by accident or disability, that the Lord will turn difficult situations to good and give new hope to those who see none.
- 26 Pray for those couples who are trying to cope with unfaithfulness of a spouse. Pray that there will be true repentance, forgiveness and rebuilt trust.
- 27 Give thanks for all the marriages that have been restored through counselling or other means this past year, and pray that they will continue to improve.

Marriage Preparation

- 28 Praise the Lord for the tens of thousands of couples who will choose to get married in church this year because they believe that God is an important element of their marriage.
- 29 Pray that all couples realise the need for good marriage preparation and find it either through the churches or through other agencies. Give thanks for increased use of the pre-marriage questionnaires.
- 30 The spring sees the beginning of the busier months for weddings in some churches, so pray for ministers that this will be an opportunity and a joy rather than a burden, and that they will offer thorough preparation.
- 31 Pray for couples for whom preparation raises serious questions about whether they are ready to make a commitment, that they will make the right decision for their future.

This Prayer Diary is updated each year, so please download this quarter's Prayer Diary again in nine months time.