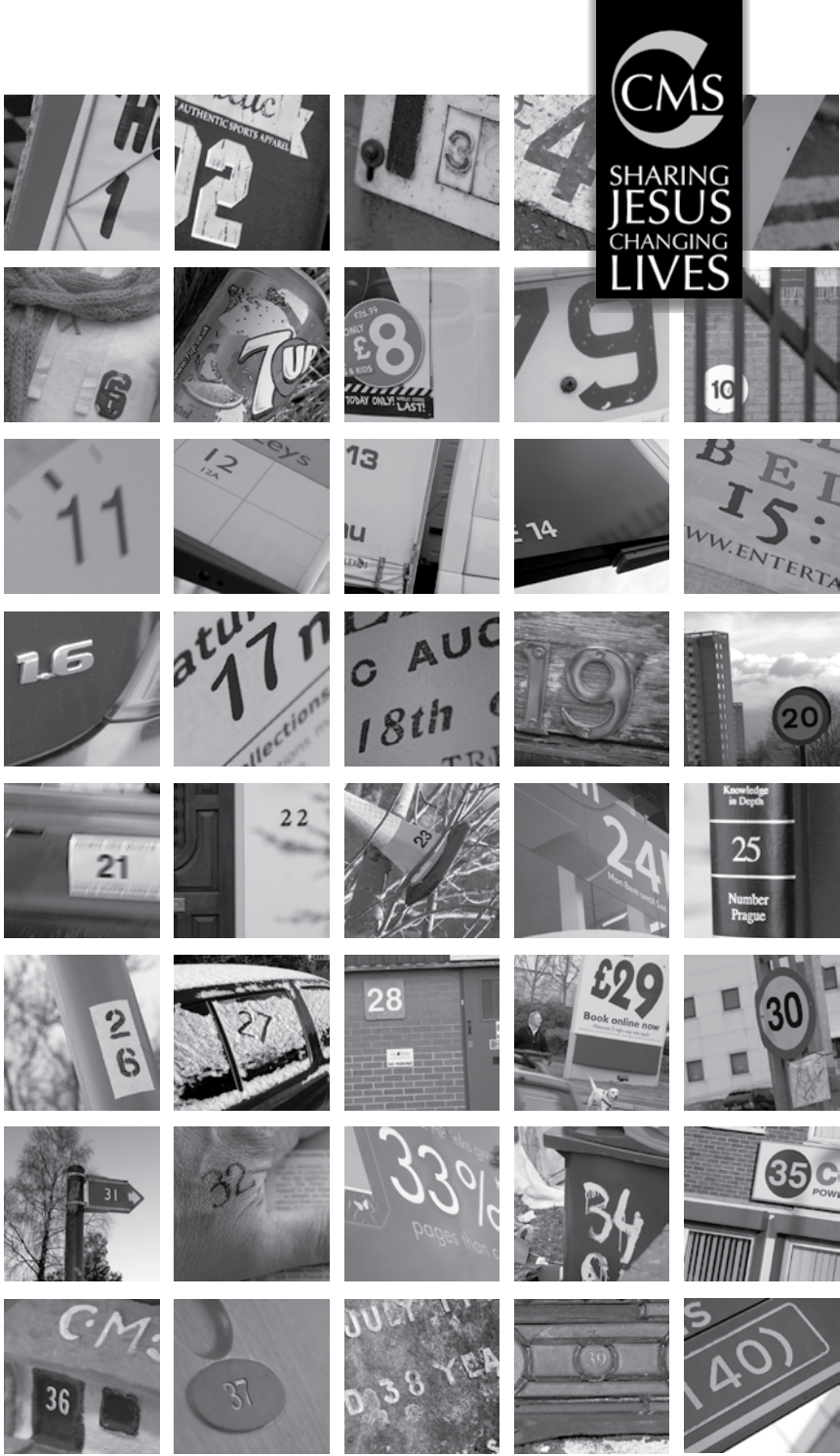


40 Days of Yes – CMS Members Resource



40 DAYS OF “YES”:

IS GOD CALLING ME TO MISSION IN THE COMMUNITY OF MISSION SERVICE?

Welcome! We're delighted that you're exploring becoming part of the Church Mission Society (CMS) community of mission service, and hope that this course will help you to discover what you will be saying “yes” to should you decide to sign the member declaration.

How the course works: The course is spread over 40 days, so it is ideal material to use during Lent, although it can be used at any time of the year. It is designed to enable individuals to explore what the call to mission means and how we might respond. We suggest setting aside a period of time each day to reflect on the material and having a Bible, notebook and a pen to hand. There are pauses for reflection, where you are invited to prayerfully consider the questions raised – and determine what you can say “yes” to in your life and calling.

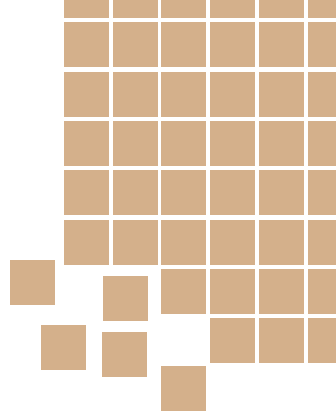
Although the course is designed for individuals, it may be helpful to meet on a weekly or fortnightly basis with another person or perhaps a small group who are also using the material. An important part of the ethos of the CMS community is a commitment to support and learn from one another as we seek to be more intentionally mission-focused in our local churches and our daily lives.

More copies of the course can be obtained from CMS in Oxford, or by visiting the CMS website www.cms-uk.org/community where the material can be downloaded.

Our prayer is that you will find the course inspirational, and that we will all sense a fresh call to say “yes” – perhaps for the first time, perhaps as a recommitment – to living a mission lifestyle and sharing the good news of Jesus Christ for all creation. Please feel free to contact me if you have any queries or concerns, or if we can support you in any way.

The Rev Anita Matthews

CMS Community Mission Facilitator





The seven promises. The mission spirituality of the community.

The seven membership promises provide the shape and distinctive character of the community.

The promises also offer an overarching rationale for mission, express the vision of the community, and invite members to enter into that vision and mission through practical action, daily disciplines and the regular renewal of their mission lifestyle. The outcome to which we aspire is that we might all grow as a community in our mission service. Members of the CMS Community also affirm the Ethos Statement and Declaration which can be found at the back of this booklet.



Mission of God in Christ

To participate in the life and mission of the community so as to engage more fully in God's transforming mission amongst all peoples in all places.

Every member commits themselves to a life of participation in Christ's mission. This involves mission in their own local context, a willingness to go wherever he may send them into his world and an openness to be shaped by him in the life of the community.



Image of God restored

To encourage the transformation of individuals, communities and societies by sharing Jesus and encouraging others to become his disciples.

Every member of the community is committed to encouraging and helping others to discover the significance of Jesus and to begin a life of discipleship with him. The outcome of this is the transformation of people's lives in the hope of the whole world's redemption and recreation.



Serving Christ in others

To discern and live out my vocation, my mission service – encouraging and learning from others in theirs.

Mission can only be authentic when it is a response to God's call – a vocation. As part of the community each individual member determines the place and nature of the Lord's call on their life, and then seeks to fulfil it in mutual exchange with others in the CMS community, and in the wider outcomes of community transformation in society.



Sharing the Good News

To follow the Lord Jesus daily, witnessing to his love in everything I am, say or do, and with all the resources that I have, encouraging others to do the same.

Discipleship has to be a daily commitment, and the life of every member is to be lived in such a way that Christ is commended, others are drawn to him, resources are shared and all grow in this pattern of living for Jesus in a transformational way.



Inspiration for daily life

To shape my life by regular prayer, Bible reading, study, reflection and mutual encouragement

These rhythms are the proven Christian disciplines and are key to the life and health of the community. Members share a common bond through these practices but may also meet and connect together to share with each other, encouraging growth in their discipleship.

of the Episcopal Visitor to encourage this to happen. Each Lent, material will be available to enable this review.



Outcomes in local-global mission

To be part of a local Christian community, working to see its life shaped by the global ministry of Jesus and by sharing in the mission of the worldwide church.

Community members are committed to a local expression of Christ's body, recognising that this might take different forms. Each member is committed to helping the local Christian community discover its place in the wider fellowship of Christ's global church and how CMS can enable it to express its part in Jesus' global and eternal community of disciples.

The seven Promises Restated

- I want my life to be about mission
- I believe God is still working in this world
- Mission isn't someone else's job, it's mine
- I want to live for Jesus every day
- I realise I need fuel for my journey
- I want to help my local Christian community keep mission a priority
- I want to regularly renew my mind and spirit



New life in the Spirit

To participate in the regular review and renewal of discipleship and the life of the community, reviewing personal 'rhythms of life', and being open to sharing with others.

As a community, CMS is constantly being transformed through members' fellowship in the mission of Christ. A regular review or audit is part of this ongoing process for individuals and for the community as a whole, and it is part of, the responsibility

**The current CMS Episcopal Visitor is
The Rt Rev Dr Christopher Cocksworth**

DAY 1: SETTING OUT



Bible reading Genesis 12:1–5

Reflection

Pilgrim

By Dom Helder Camara

when your ship,
long moored in harbour, gives the illusion
of being a house;
when your ship
begins to put down roots
in the stagnant water by the quay: put out to sea!
save your boat's journeying soul and your own pilgrim soul,
cost what it may.

As you begin this journey exploring the seven promises of the CMS community, make time to reflect on where you are in your walk of faith; identify any parts of your life that are perhaps too-safe harbours or even stagnant waters, areas where God might be calling you on to new things and fresh encounters with him and with others.

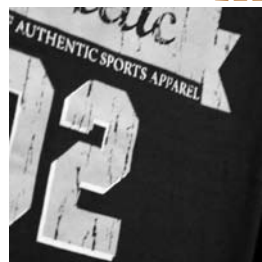
Prayer

Father, lead me deeper in my journey with you
cost what it may.

By your grace, may I be prepared to put out to sea
to leave the safety of the harbor, and to follow your call
cost what it may.

Amen.

DAY 2: CLAIMING OUR BIRTHRIGHT



Bible reading Genesis 25:27–34

Reflection

Do I believe that I am God's child, whom God wants to bless and use abundantly?

Do I have confidence in who I am in Christ?

Hebrews 12.16 says: "See to it that no-one is godless like Esau, who for a single meal sold his inheritance rights as the oldest son." Are there ways in which we "sell our birthright" as God's children for the immediate satisfaction that the world offers rather than living for the blessings that God yearns to pour upon us?

Prayer

Lord God, give us, your children, the grace to recognise your calling to live as your children, beloved, blessed and free and to be confident in our identity in you.

Amen.

DAY 3: RECOGNISING OUR UNIQUENESS



Bible reading Psalm 139:13–16

Reflection

Da Vinci painted one Mona Lisa, Beethoven created one Fifth Symphony, and God made one version of you. You're it!

You're the only you there is. And if we don't get you, we don't get you. You're the only shot we have at you. You can do something no one else can do in a fashion that no one else can do it. You are more than just a coincidence of chromosomes and heredity, more than just an assemblage of somebody else's lineage. You are uniquely made...

Can you be anything you want to be? I don't think so. But can you be everything God wants you to be? I do think so.

And you become that by discovering your uniqueness.

(Max Lucado, *Cure for the Common Life*, www.maxlucado.com)

Take some time to think about how God has created you with a particular set of skills, abilities, and personality type. It may be helpful to note down a few of the gifts that you feel God has given to you, and how/where you are using them at present.

Prayer

Spend some time thanking God that you are "fearfully and wonderfully made", and praying that in the coming days you will discover a deepening awareness of how he wants to use you to share in mission and in the life of the CMS community of mission.

DAY 4: REFLECTING ON EXPERIENCE



Bible reading Philippians 4:11–13

Reflection

People go abroad to wonder at the heights of mountains, at the huge waves of the sea, at the long courses of rivers, at the vast compass of the ocean, at the circular motion of the stars, and they pass by themselves without wondering.

(St Augustine of Hippo)

How often do we allow ourselves to stop, reflect on our life experiences, and see God's hand within our lives – both in good times and bad, in painful experiences and in times of joy? How might God want to use our experiences, both good and bad, to help bring new life to others as we share in mission?

Prayer

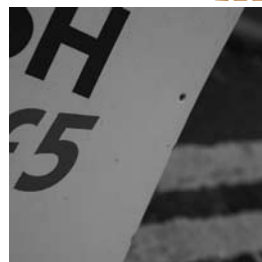
"What if the essence of who you are is enough?... pay attention and wait... then just let go and dance."

(Oriah Mountain Dreamer, *The Dance*)

Lord, we bring all that we are before you
we wait on you...
teach us to let go
teach us to dance.

Amen.

DAY 5: SHAPED BY CHRIST FOR MISSION



Bible reading Acts 20:24

Reflection

God has given each of us a unique emotional heartbeat that races when we think about the subjects, activities or circumstances that interest us. We instinctively care about some things and not about others.

These are clues to where you should be serving... Repeatedly the Bible says to “serve the Lord with all your heart.” God wants you to serve him passionately, not dutifully. People rarely excel at tasks they don’t enjoy doing or feel passionate about. God wants to use your natural interests to serve him and others. Listening for inner promptings can point to the ministry God intends for you to have.

(Rick Warren, *The Purpose Driven Life*, p 238)

“The same breath is blown into the flute, cornet and bagpipe, but different music is produced according to the different instruments.

“In the same way, the one Spirit works in us, God’s children, but different results are produced, and God is glorified through them according to one’s temperament and personality.” (Sadhu Sundar Singh)

Prayer

Come Holy Spirit Breathe upon me. Fill me with your life.
Be glorified in me. *Amen.*



Promise 1: I want my life to be about mission.

“The CMS Community helps me think about the mission of God in new ways and get Involved with mission personally. I don’t want mission to be just something I do from time to time; I want God’s mission to shape who I am”

Pause for Reflection

Saying Yes

Can I say “Yes, I trust that I am created and treasured by God”?

Can I say “Yes, God has shaped me to be the person I am – with my strengths and weaknesses, experiences and passions, gifts and needs”?

Can I say, “Yes, I want this life I’ve been given to be shaped by God’s mission”?

DAY 6: A CALL TO MISSION



Bible reading Matthew 4:18–22

Reflection

What is most satisfying about my calling to be a mission partner is that it is out of the ordinary. With my training and qualifications, I could be doing a job more lucrative and “attractive.” I chose to become a mission partner more as a calling of God upon my life. When I was young, I have seen and known people in a similar vocation who became role models in my life. I have had no second thoughts about my choice. I am sure of this direction in my life as I am convinced that this is God’s direction for my life. I would not be more fulfilled in any other job. What I love about the job is the freedom to do a pioneering role, working cross-culturally in spite of its challenges, and the opportunity to equip and enable the church/people of God.
(Emil and Mano Chandran, CMS mission partners, Kenya)

Reflect on these words: “For we are God’s workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works which God prepared in advance for us to do.”
(Ephesians 2:10, NIV)

Prayer

Lord, where are you calling me?
What are you asking me to do?
What are the “good works” – the mission - that you call me to fulfill?
Like the first disciples, may I hear your call afresh
and follow in faithfulness and trust.
Amen.

DAY 7: MISSION IN COMMUNITY



Bible reading Luke 10:1–2

Reflection

Once we get past the rebellious or reactive countercultural paradigm and muster up the courage to try living in new ways, most of us find that community is very natural and makes a lot of sense, and that it is not as foreign to most of the world's population as it is to us. Community is what we are created for. We are made in the image of a God who is community, a plurality of oneness. When the first human was made, things were not good until there were two, helping one another.

The biblical story is the story of community, from beginning to end. Jesus lived and modeled community with his little band of disciples. He always sent them out in pairs, and the early church is the story of a people who were together and were of one heart and mind, sharing all in common....But that doesn't mean community is easy. For everything in this world tries to pull us away from community, pushes us to choose ourselves over others, to choose independence over interdependence, to choose great things over small things, to choose going fast alone over going far together.

(Shane Claiborne, *The Irresistible Revolution*, p. 134–135)

Prayer

Spend some time reflecting on the communities in which God has placed you (work, home, church, neighbourhood, social networks) and give thanks for the people who support and sustain you in your walk of faith. Ask God to bless and guide you as you develop new relationships and as you begin to explore how the CMS community of mission service might enrich your discipleship and offer a different kind of global, mission-focused community.

DAY 8: MISSION IN ALL PLACES



Bible reading Luke 4:16–24

Reflection

“Can someone from Kibera [the vast informal settlement outside Nairobi] be ordained in the Anglican Church?” I posed this question to a class of students from an ecumenical university who were studying at our Centre for Urban Mission, based in Kibera. It wasn’t a very original question. Forty years ago, our vicar in Bermondsey had asked something similar about dockers in London’s East End. Thousands of years ago, Nathanael asked regarding Jesus: “Can anything good come from Nazareth?”

“No”! my class replied. Whether the students were being pessimistic about Kibera residents or the Anglican church, I’m not sure. Either way, they were proved wrong. On 26 October the Archbishop ordained three Centre for Urban Mission graduates. Lillian had lived in Kibera virtually all her life until she had to flee the post-election violence a year ago. Her classmates, Zadock and Barrack, helped her get out of Kibera with the few belongings she could carry. Seeing all three of them ordained was a wonderful affirmation of the gifts, calling and experiences that people from Kibera and other “slums” can bring to the rest of the church. I don’t know whether they were the first people from Kibera to be ordained, but three in one day – that must be a first!

(Anita and Colin Smith, mission partners in Nairobi)

Where do you see mission flourishing in your local context?

Is God stirring up a new call to mission in surprising people or places you know?

Is God stirring up a surprising new call to mission within your own life?

How might God be stirring up the CMS mission community for action – and what might your part in that look like?

Prayer

Lord, grant us eyes to see your presence and peace
in strange places and unlikely people,
even in ourselves.

Amen.

(Prayer from the USA, in ‘A Procession of Prayers’, ed. John Carden)

DAY 9: MISSION AND INTEGRITY



Bible reading Matthew 25:14–23

Reflection

Ruth Coggan, daughter of Donald Coggan, a former Archbishop of Canterbury, spent nearly 30 years working as a CMS missionary doctor on the northwest frontier in the Afghan border region of Pakistan. One day, while travelling on a local bus, she suddenly realised she'd forgotten to pay the fare. Every eye followed as she got up from her seat, and paid the driver. Her action set in motion a buzz of conversation. What the locals didn't know was that Ruth understood what they were saying: "Look at the foreigner, how honest she is. Do you know she's a doctor at the Christian hospital? Do you know they never operate on anyone without praying to God first? ... Do you know a lot more of their patients get better after their operations than in the government hospitals?" Ruth's eyes filled with tears. This was one of those moments when her decision to leave her family circle, a career path as a National Health Service surgeon and the material well-being of England made complete sense. About 150 years ago CMS built five missionary hospitals on the Afghan borders. It was a strategy that required great faith to sustain. But one thing's certain: the word that's got round about those five hospitals, and about the work of doctors like Ruth Coggan, is that Christians care. Who knows what all this could mean for Afghanistan...even yet?

(John Martin)

"Be faithful in small things because it is in them that your strength lies."
(Mother Theresa)

Prayer

O God, mindful of the presence of your son arraigned before his accusers yet maintaining absolute integrity; we ask that, In thought and in deed, in speech and in silence, at work or at leisure, in public and in private, our lives also may embody the perfect consistency of his life and death; to his glory. *Amen.*



Promise 2: I believe God is still working in this world.

"There are many troubles in our world, yet God is still redeeming and transforming people and communities. I want to be part of that. And I want to share that hope with others."

Pause for Reflection

Saying Yes

Can I say "Yes" to God's call to me to follow wherever he takes me – whether far afield or in my local context?

Can I say, "Yes, this is a calling I can share with others in a community of mission"?

Can I say, "Yes I believe God is at work in the world"?

DAY 10: MUSTARD SEED MISSION



Bible reading Mark 4:30–32

Reflection

“Do you know what’s in a bottle of washing-up liquid?” asks Caroline Gilmour-White, a SAMS partner.

“At a training day in an urban church in Asunción, Paraguay, we saw the following ingredients being added:

- Water
- Caustic soda
- Sulphuric acid
- Trietanalomina - an ingredient that softens and/or lubricates the skin
- Scent
- Colouring

“The government programme DEAG, a bit like the UK Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, uses every opportunity to share their trained knowledge to improve people’s lives or economic situations. We had sewing in the morning and detergent making in the afternoon. The day was a hit with everybody. Our prayer is that lots of people take initiative and start mixing, bottling and selling. Everyone uses detergent and the supermarket quality is often not as good as homemade. People can boost their incomes very easily by selling door to door.”

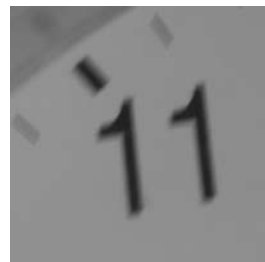
Reflect on how God can use even small things to bring transformation to people and societies. Where have you seen God at work in the small things?

Prayer

Lord, great things grow from small beginnings.
 Trees from tiny seeds. New quality of life from a small business venture.
 Faith in Christ from a word shared or kindness performed.
 The Kingdom of God from shoots of faith
 Lord, please - give us vision and give us faith.

Amen.

DAY 11: FAITH IN ACTION



Bible reading James 2:14–17

Reflection

In the winter months, the homeless suffer greatly, particularly in countries where weather is severe: warmth and sustenance are equally hard to come by. A charity in Toronto, Canada, has devised a novel solution: it gives baked potatoes in socks to homeless people to keep them warm and, when the warmth wears off, to feed them. In Toronto, temperatures fall as low as minus 40 degrees, and fifteen people die yearly from exposure. Ve'ahavta, the organisation behind the Potato Tikun Olam program, says the potato-sock keeps sleeping bags warm for five hours and pockets for about three. The potatoes then provide a good source of fibre, potassium, and energy.

(In 500 Ways to Change the World – Global Ideas Bank p 167)

Reflect on your own local community and the particular needs and challenges it faces.
How might you demonstrate Christ's love in action?
How are you doing that at the moment?

Prayer

Lord God, so often it's the simplest actions that offer hope and love
Yet so often, we make it all too complicated
And end up doing nothing.
Teach us, we pray, to put our faith into action.
Action that speaks louder than words.

Amen.

DAY 12: YOU DID IT FOR ME....



Bible reading Matthew 25:35–40

Reflection

For I was *hungry* and you volunteered for Crisis at Christmas, read with a teenager who constantly disrupted the class because he starved for attention, regularly took a single Mum – off her tether looking after three young children – to the supermarket. I was *thirsty* and you supported projects removing arsenic from water supplies in Bangladesh and gave generously to support the mission partners doing this work. I *needed clothes*; you culled your wardrobe, mended and dry cleaned, and added new socks and underwear for a local clothing appeal. You made friends with the women's shelter and ran a whip-round when they said they needed toiletries. You gave your spare coat to a homeless man.

I was new, a stranger; you introduced me to people in the neighbourhood. You walked me and my children to the school gate on the first day of term. You told me the best places to shop, where to find the dentist and how to sign up for the doctor's surgery.

I was sick with swine flu and you brought in hot food, did my washing and took my children to school.

I was in prison and you joined the support group for prisoners' families. I was in a prison because I spoke little English; you gave of your time so I could practice English conversation.

"I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did it for me."

(Matthew 25: 35-40, paraphrased by John Martin)

Prayer

Almighty God, whose Son our Saviour Jesus Christ taught us that to serve the least of his brethren is to serve him; we give you thanks that Simon from Africa was there to help Jesus our Lord carry his cross, and we beseech you to grant us compassion like his and a ready willingness to serve the weak and helpless as though we were serving Jesus.

Amen.

(Prayer from the Middle East, in "A Procession of Prayers")

DAY 13: GO TO YOUR OWN PEOPLE....



Bible reading Mark 5:18–20

Reflection

I thought there would be far-off scenes the challenge of lost souls; till thou didst show in seas of sameness ordinary folk I passed in blind familiarity – more lost than those whom distance still enhances.

(Ruthe Spinnanger, www.cmf.org.uk)

How often do we look far away when we consider the call to mission and miss the needs and opportunities under our noses?

Why is it sometimes easier to do that?

How might we engage both globally and locally as we respond to God's call to mission?

Prayer

O God, you have made of one blood all the peoples of the earth and sent your blessed son to preach peace to those who are far off and to those who are near.

Grant that people everywhere may seek after you and find you.

Bring the nations into your fold. Pour out your spirit upon all flesh, and hasten the coming of your Kingdom through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.



Promise 3: Mission isn't someone else's job; it's mine.

"I used to think mission was something that – for lack of a better word – professional missionaries or mission partners did in far-off locations. Now I know that some people are called to go overseas, but all of us are called to mission wherever we are."

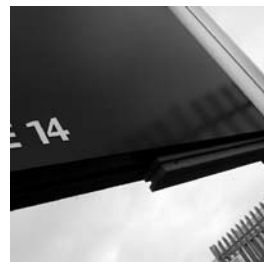
Pause for Reflection

Saying Yes

Can I say, "Yes, I believe that great things come from small beginnings"?

Can I say, "Yes, mission is my job, too"?

DAY 14: MISSION AT THE HEART



Bible reading John 12:1–5

Reflection

Shannon Hopkins is an entrepreneur in mission with incredible energy. Her latest venture is a recycled fashion accessories business called Sweet Notions. She and a friend are collecting thousands of chic treats and selling them in unique boutique events. Shannon explains: “I don’t want to just generate income to enable mission work. Instead, I want the way we carry out Sweet Notions to be fully integrated with the Kingdom as a missional act, living out the gospel through the social enterprise itself.”

How might our income generation and prayer, both so vital in supporting mission partners around the world, become part of mission so that others are drawn in and captivated by the gospel?

Prayer

Servant Christ,
Help us to follow you into the city,
To claim its whole life for God whose image we bear
To confront the ambitions of those hungry for power,
The inhuman orthodoxy of the legalist,
With the startling message of your present action,
Your living power.
Servant Christ, help us to follow you.

Amen.

(India: Litany of the Disciples of Christ the Servant)

DAY 15: HOSPITALITY AS MISSION



Bible reading Hebrews 13:2&16

Reflection

Just married, my wife and I moved into a new area of London and the housewarming party six weeks later was our deadline for clearing the boxes. At least, enough boxes so we could have people round. Our new place is in a cul-de-sac and we decided to invite all the neighbours in the street – maybe about 14 houses. We'd been thinking about our new life together and had said we wanted our house to be open and hospitable. But on the evening we'd designated for knocking on our neighbours' doors, we spent at least an hour trying to think of reasons why we shouldn't: some of our friends and family would be coming from quite a distance – would it make them uncomfortable to have strangers round the place? What if the one person that turned up was smelly, socially awkward, and just planted themselves on the sofa for three hours? Both of us had spent time volunteering in other countries but nothing we'd experienced there seemed quite as daunting as knocking on a stranger's door in London. We finally convinced ourselves to stick to our original vision, said a little prayer for courage and hit the street. Only to find out that it was full of delightful people who were mainly very pleased to see us – and pleased we'd taken the initiative to get to know them. About four sets of neighbours showed up at the party, and another household, who were struck down with colds, sent round a pre-chilled bottle of bubbly even though they couldn't come. We were really touched by people's goodwill. It feels good to have started our life here by opening up to others instead of hiding away. (*Anonymous*)

Reflect on these words from a Christian in Polynesia:

"Lord, you made us known to friends we did not know, and you have given us seats in homes which are not our own.

You have brought the distant near, and made a brother/sister of a stranger.

Forgive us, Lord.... We did not introduce you."

Give thanks to God for the opportunities to befriend others – pray that he may use us and give us courage to share his grace with wisdom, compassion and sensitivity.

Prayer

O God our Father,
give us a passion for your Word
and boldness in telling our neighbour about your grace.
May the Holy Spirit convict the lost
and draw them to the Saviour, Christ our Lord.

Amen.

(A prayer from Kenya, in "A Procession of Prayers")

DAY 16: EVERYDAY HOLINESS



Bible reading Romans 12:1–2

Reflection

Why is this a common statement? “I teach Sunday School 45 minutes a week and they haul me up to the front and the whole church prays for me. I teach school 45 hours a week and no one ever prays for me.” Would that be true for you and your job? The answer, of course, is that the secular-sacred divide is well and truly entrenched in church culture. The “really spiritual” is divorced from the real world. True worship has to do with how we live the whole of our lives, not just that part which we take along to church on Sundays. Worship has to do with getting involved in God’s world precisely because that is where he is involved.

(Graham Buxton, *Celebrating Life*, p 41–42)

Reflect on the secular-sacred divide in your own life. Do you allow your faith, your commitment to mission, to spill over and bring life to everything you do – even the most ordinary things?

How might the world be different if we all did that?

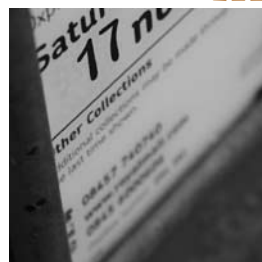
Prayer

Earth’s crammed with heaven,
And every common bush afire with God:
But only he who sees takes off his shoes.
(*Elizabeth Barrett Browning*)

Lord – teach me to see.

Amen.

DAY 17: EVERYTHING IN TURN TO ALL...



Bible reading 1 Corinthians 9:19–23

Reflection

Janet had been a Reader and church leader for many years, and also ran a cell group. Much of her life was devoted to church ministry, but she also had a passion for making cards. Once she began to share that passion, she gathered together a nucleus of 40 or so local people who all wanted to learn the craft and find community too. As a good cell leader, she also wanted to make a connection between her craft friends and Christian friends, so she extended many invitations to her cell group, all of which were politely declined. One day, we began to apply the 'what we might have in common' principle and dream of what the church might look like in the setting of her card group, and where it might begin. The natural starting point came with the seasons. As Christmas approached, they started to make Advent cards, and Janet gave a little introduction on the meaning of Advent. She did it briefly and tentatively, asking whether people minded as she moved around the tables after her little talk. To her surprise, they were not only enthusiastic but the explanation opened up the most natural conversations about what was happening in lives and where God and faith fitted in.

(The Challenge of Change, Phil Potter, p 109)

Are there ways that you could make connections between your passions and interests and your Christian faith to enable you to share your faith creatively with others? How might we become "everything in turn to all, so that in one way or another we can save some?"

(1 Cor 9:22)

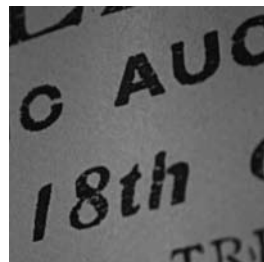
Prayer

O God, help me to walk in the boots of the miner,
The shoes of the trader,
The moccasins of the trapper,
And in the sandals of Jesus Christ the Master
And to see others as he would see them.

Amen.

(Canada: an Indian Prayer from the far north)

DAY 18: BREAD OF LIFE



Bible reading John 6:32–35

Reflection

Jonathan and Hilary Rowe, mission partners in Spain write: “A few days ago, Hilary got talking to one of the local bakers. El Escorial has three bread shops. There is obviously fierce competition between them. The nearest one to our flat is usually a bustle of activity. Recently the owner of this bakery has opened another tiny shop on the main street. He is in there on his own every day. Hilary went in the other day for our usual bread and just to make a little conversation asked him what he felt about being on his own in this little shop, since it seemed such a contrast. It’s amazing, sometimes, what a casual question can start. The man described how he was alone at work and alone at home. He has been a widower for years and although his two sons work in the business they have their own lives when not at the bakery. He said how hard it was for him to go home after work and be alone and face all the jobs to be done alone. We have had various chats as a family as to why we go to church, what we expect to give and receive when we are there. One of the reasons is that Christians meet together so that they are not alone in their faith. Our church building is now situated in the same main street as the new bakers. There are several events organised for this month and it would be great if the baker could come along and find enjoyment being with other people.”

What is the spiritual hunger of those in our local communities – even our own families?
How might we share our experience of Christ as the true and living bread?
How can we build relationships with those who live and work in our neighbourhood?

Prayer

Lord, we pray for all who are hungry. Hungry for food. Hungry for companionship. Hungry for warmth. Hungry for acceptance and love. May they find in you, the true and living bread. The grace and nourishment they need. *Amen.*



Promise 4: I want to live for Jesus. Every day.

“Can you imagine what a difference it would make if we all got up every morning and said, ‘Today I want to be proof of Christ’s love in I everything I do and say and with everything I have?’ I don’t think any of us is under the delusion that we can live up to this alone, but if we all help each other...well, that’s part of what the CMS community is all about.”

Pause for Reflection

Saying Yes

Can I say, “Yes – I want to look for daily chances to live out God’s mission”?

Can I say “Yes, it would be great to join with people who felt the same way”?

DAY 19: TRANSFORMING COMMUNITIES



Bible reading Matthew 5:13–16

Reflection

One British family decided they would arrange for one of their children to regularly invite a different family from their street in for a meal. They report that after a few months there was a discernable change in the neighbourhood. There is a change, too, in the children of that family. They are more outwardly focused and have concern for the needs of others rather than just wanting more, bigger and better for themselves. How can we be salt in our communities – salt that seasons and transforms the world? How can we better encourage young people within our community to be shaped and transformed by their encounter with Jesus and their encounter with others?

(Tom Sine, Yes magazine interview, Autumn 2009)

Prayer

Lord God, in community we are drawn together,
Different ages, different experiences, different needs, different gifts
And yet the same calling – to be salt and light, leaven and love,
Help us to appreciate one another
To learn from one another
To recognize our need of each other
As we share together in the call to mission.
Amen.

DAY 20: CHERISHING AND CELEBRATING



Bible reading Luke 2:25–32

Reflection

For many years we had a long-held dream to build a home for the elderly. In Sri Lanka it has been traditional for children to look after their parents. This has changed for many reasons, especially increasing living costs. As a result, many elderly men and women are left alone to fend for themselves. Some of them live in appalling conditions. We've spent years praying and holding fundraising events here in Sri Lanka and in the UK so that we might care for the needs of these most vulnerable people. Then in 2007, a lovely couple gave us a large, beautiful house for this purpose. This past November, we welcomed our first residents to the Eventide home for the elderly! It was wonderful to see the gratitude on their faces as we interviewed them and found out about their lives and their desire to move into the home. By Easter we will have at least 11 residents. At Eventide, the love of Jesus is shared in word and deed with people from all faiths and communities.

(Paul and Ina Watson in Sri Lanka)

Sister Constance, a 105 year old sister of the Sisterhood of St John the Divine in Canada, says this: "The latter years of our lives are given us by God to give Him thanks, to use our maturity, to use our manifold gifts because there's no one more varied than the elderly person. These years are not just ours to salt away; they are ours to help leaven society."

(IAFN Newsletter)

Prayer

Father, there are those among us who like Simeon have worked all their lives in your service.

Thank you for all they have taught us and demonstrated to us of your kingdom.

Keep them fresh in their faith and a continued inspiration to the young.

Make us sensitive to their growing physical needs and give us a generous spirit in serving them.

Amen.

(A prayer from Pakistan in *A Procession of Prayers* ed John Carden)

DAY 21: SHARING THE LOAD



Bible reading Galatians 6:2

Reflection

“Are you sure we should bring Coke?” We were saddened to hear that our friend Christine, who works for the Kigali Diocese guest house, had lost one of her two remaining children. Christine’s family has lived most of their lives as refugees; they returned to Rwanda only a month after the genocide ended. Sue visited Christine’s family at their home. When she asked what she should bring, local people advised her to take a box of food for the family and bottles of Coke and Fanta. It seemed strange to take soft drinks, which are usually associated with celebrations. However, the family has had a great number of callers and they find it financially difficult to provide for them. They feel obliged to offer soft drinks, especially to Westerners, so by bringing Coke as a gift we were all able to enjoy the treat together. It was humbling to sit in the house that they’ve established themselves in their own homeland. Stories from the Bible about the exiled Israelites returning to the promised land come alive when one has friends who have lived for years in refugee camps. We were also challenged by the community support at this time of grief. Surely this is something we in the often relationship-poor West can learn from our African brothers and sisters.

(Richard and Sue Kellow in Rwanda)

Richard and Sue’s story sums up the heart of the CMS mission community – we are enriched by one another in so many ways. Spend some time thanking God for Christians from different cultures who have shaped and enriched your Christian journey. Pray that God will make us ever more open to receive from one another.

Prayer

Brother, sister, let me serve you
 Let me be as Christ to you.
 Pray that I may have the grace
 To let you be my servant too.
 We are pilgrims on a journey
 Fellow travellers on the road.
 We are here to help each other
 Walk the mile and bear the load.

(Richard Gillard, Kingsway Thankyou Music)

DAY 22: KNOWING AND LOVING



Bible reading Luke 18:18–24

Reflection

I asked participants who claimed to be “strong followers of Jesus” whether Jesus spent time with the poor. Nearly 80 percent said yes. Later in the survey, I sneaked in another question, I asked this same group of strong followers whether they spent time with the poor, and less than 2 percent said they did. I learned a powerful lesson: We can admire and worship Jesus without doing what he did. We can applaud what he preached and stood for without caring about the same things. We can adore his cross without taking up ours. I had come to see that the great tragedy of the church is not that rich Christians do not care about the poor but that rich Christians do not know the poor.

(Shane Claiborne, The Irresistible Revolution p 113)

How do we model Jesus’ compassion, not pity, for the poorest in our societies?

Is this at the heart of our faith?

How might a being part of a community of mission help us to engage with different people and different needs?

Prayer

God of compassion, help us not simply to “know about” people
but to know people;

help us not just to “care about” people

but to care for people;

break down the barriers that divide us

and help us to walk together as your children.

Amen.

DAY 23: SERVING AND LOVING



Bible reading John 13:3–5

Reflection

Being a Mum is never easy. Added to that, many mothers we've got to know here are doing the job with added pressures of debt, addiction, ill-health or heartache. So the Saturday evening before Mothering Sunday, we wanted to let area mums know how special they are to us and to God. Around 40 mums were invited to an elegant evening in a local church. After being greeted at the door and assisted with their coats, they were ushered into a pampering room where they could have a massage and hairstyle, and get their portrait taken by a professional photographer or sketched by an artist. They were then treated to a three-course candlelit supper accompanied by music. Volunteers served them with the utmost care, treating them as honoured guests.

It was a huge amount of work, a bit like organising a wedding reception, but it was also great fun and incredibly rewarding. At the end, one mother said, "The night was a real encouragement. It makes me want to be a better mum." Another told us she wanted to be more involved in our work here: "Tonight's really made me want to give something back." For us, the evening was a powerful image of God's Kingdom, with the hurt and the bruised and the unconfident and the abused sitting down to eat.

(Anna and Chris Hembury, *CMS mission partners in Hull*)

How might we learn to wash one another's feet?

'Do we only wash each other's feet in a huddle, or do we wash those of the stranger?'

Prayer

So let us learn how to serve
And in our lives enthrone him;
Each others needs to prefer
For it is Christ we're serving.
This is our God, the servant King
He calls us now to follow him
To bring our lives as a daily offering
Of worship, to the servant king.

Amen.

(Graham Kendrick)

DAY 24: PASSION FOR SERVICE



Bible reading Luke 9:12–17

Reflection

Tango (Together As Neighbours Giving Out) was spawned by a small group of people led by Avril, who was moved and motivated by the deprivation that dominates whole sections of our community. Under her leadership, they built up a thriving ministry, connecting with scores of families, opening a common meeting place, and providing clothing, food and furniture on a huge scale. Again, the emphasis was on ‘what we have in common’ (in this case a common concern for the disadvantaged), and again the building blocks of church were put in place, with cell groups, pastoral care, and a worship gathering. As it developed, the feeling had emerged that our own church building would quite frankly feel too ‘posh’ for many of the Tango clientele, so an alternative venue was set up. Fascinatingly, both church and Tango offer lunches each day, situated on opposite sides of the same road, both consistently busy, yet offering startlingly different menus, prices and approach. Each of them is working with ‘what we have in common’, but with two very different cultures that exist on opposite sides of the same parish fence.

They are also operating out of the gifts and vision of one person, who happens to have a passion for hospitality, a lifelong connection with the church and community, and an even bigger heart for the poor.

(Phil Potter, *The Challenge of Change*, p 110–111)

Jesus says (verse 13) “Give them something to eat yourselves”.

Where do your passions, or the passions of your local church, connect with the differing needs of your community?

How might your church building be used (or not!) to welcome people in?

Prayer

Pray that our churches may receive all guests as they would receive Christ himself.
(A prayer from Rwanda)



Promise 5: I need fuel for my journey.

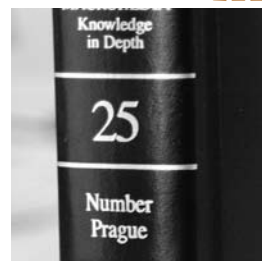
“I know I don’t have all the answers. I need to constantly re-fuel my passion for mission by regularly reading the Bible, praying, and connecting with people who can challenge my assumptions. Through CMS, I’ve met people who can help me grow in this way, and I’ve been able to encourage others, too.”

Pause for Reflection

Saying Yes

Can I say, “Yes there’s much to learn from people whose perspectives are different to mine”?

DAY 25: A GOSPEL RHYTHM



Bible reading Acts 2:46–47

Reflection

Tom Sine recounts a life-changing experience during work on a project in rural Haiti; the people among whom he labored had a “Gospel-rhythm” to their lives, always having time to stop and talk with passers-by: “On many warm Haitian evenings during my sojourn we would visit the homes of friends. They would open up their homes to us and serve us food and drinks. We would spend a whole evening telling stories, laughing, singing, and playing with the children to the flicker of kerosene lamps...I thank my Haitian friends for helping me discover a more biblical approach to my time.”

(cited in Celebrating Life, Graham Buxton, p 41)

Do we have a “biblical approach to time”?

How might developing a gospel rhythm of life help us to live in a more balanced, open-hearted way?

Prayer

Bless our home, Father,
That we cherish the bread before there is none,
Discover each other before we leave,
And enjoy each other for what we are,
While we have time.

Amen.

(A prayer from Hawaii, in A Procession of Prayers)

DAY 26: PRAY WITHOUT CEASING



Bible reading Jeremiah 29:11–13

Reflection

In a time of change and crisis, we need to be much in prayer, not only on our knees, but in that sweet form of inward prayer in which the spirit is constantly offering itself up to God, asking to be shown his will. One good form of prayer at such a juncture is to ask that doors may be shut, that the way be closed, and that all enterprises that are not according to God's will may be arrested at their very beginning.

(Frederick Brotherton Meyer, *The Secret of Guidance*)

Prayer

Seven whole days, not one in seven,
I will praise thee;
in my heart though not in heaven,
I can raise thee.
Small it is, in this poor sort
to enrol thee:
e'en eternity's too short
to extol thee.

Amen.

(*George Herbert*)

DAY 27: PRAYER AND LOVE



Bible reading Matthew 5:43–45

Reflection

God never gives us discernment in order that we may criticise, but that we may intercede.
(Oswald Chambers)

There is nothing that makes us love someone so much as praying for them.
(William Law)

Prayer

Loving God, help me make your love the foundation of my life.
Teach me to be truly thankful for your gifts in others.
Give me grace: to build up, not tear down; to encourage not criticise;
to forgive not harbour hurts or disappointments.
Knowing that you are faithful and just and ever-ready to forgive whenever I fail or fall.
Amen.
(John Martin)

DAY 28: PRAYER IS COOPERATION



Bible reading Matthew 6:7–13

Reflection

Prayer is not just communication. It is cooperation. It is the means by which we receive divine instruction from God for us to build a ministry according to his blueprint and design. E. M. Bounds says, “Prayer is not preparation for the battle. It is the battle.” A healthy personal prayer life is an indispensable discipline. Set aside set times each day to meet with God. Recruit a team of intercessors to be praying for you. Prayer keeps your eyes on the one who called you and helps you close your eyes to the one who is trying to stop you.

Here are seven things to pray for every day:

1. Pray for every member of your family
2. Pray for wisdom
3. Pray for faith
4. Pray for courage
5. Pray for favour
6. Pray for a discerning heart
7. Pray for specific needs (Clifton Clark, from *Called to Serve*)

Prayer

O Master, teach me to pray,
and thus help me bore a hole
through which I may see you.

Amen.

(A Prayer from New Guinea, cited in A Procession of Prayers ed. John Carden)

DAY 29: RAISING THE BAR



Bible reading I Corinthians 9:24–27

Reflection

How can we help people raise the bar of discipleship to become more missional? The first step is to help people discern their calling. We encourage people to compose what we call a “personal calling statement”. Then we encourage them to work in small groups to help each other re-imagine and free up time for daily Scripture reading and prayer, free up time to build relationships and free up a couple of hours a week for witness and service as the opportunity presents itself.

(Tom Sine, *Mustard Seed Community*, *Yes magazine interview*, Autumn 2009)

Prayer

Look upon us, Lord.
Hear and enlighten us.
Show us your very self.
Take pity on our efforts and strivings toward you,
For we have no strength without you.
Teach me to seek you,
And when I seek you show yourself to me,
For I cannot seek unless you teach me,
Nor can I find you unless you show yourself to me.
Let me seek you in desiring you
And desire you in seeking you,
Let me find you by loving you,
And love you in finding you.
Amen.

(From Anselm’s “Proslogian”)



Promise 6: I want to help my church keep mission a priority.

“Being a member of the CMS community has helped me be part of a local congregation and encourage them to keep focusing on mission. Not only locally, where we live and work, but globally, by staying connected to what God is doing in his church in other places and learning from them as well.”

Pause for Reflection

Saying Yes

Can I say, “Yes, I want to pray for global and local mission”?

Can I say, “Yes, I believe it’s important for other Christians to see mission as global and local”?

DAY 30: IN AT THE DEEP END



Bible reading Luke 6:20–30

Reflection

Most of all we're taking our leap in the dark because we've belatedly realised that the sermon on the mount might actually be a manifesto for life, rather than a few nice ideals to take out for a spin on a Sunday morning. We've come to believe in the survival of the weakest, not just the fittest. William Vanstone once came out with the great line that the Church is like a swimming pool: all the noise is at the shallow end. We felt called to the deep end, to the place where it's more quiet, more dangerous maybe, more radical. (Tobias Jones, author of *Utopian Dreams*, cited in *The Guardian*, Tuesday 17 Nov 2009)

How does the sermon on the mount speak into, challenge or confirm your mission lifestyle?
How does it challenge us as a Christian community?
What does it mean to be called to the deep end?

Prayer

Father, may we be a community of mission at the "deep end"
a community committed to transformation and hope
a community of Christ.

Amen.

DAY 31: WHERE CAN WE START?



Bible reading Ephesians 1:17–19

Reflection

A parish church in a fairly well-off town in Hertfordshire struggled to find ways to reach out to their community. Then someone said: "Let's look for things that are ugly and find ways to bring the beauty of the gospel to them." It didn't take long to make a start. The churchyard was a favoured loitering place for homeless people who left cans and bottles strewn about. The parish started a drop in centre for these people. Later they invited them to the annual carol service. That's the simple beauty of the gospel at work.

(Story told at a CMS members meeting)

Prayer

We ask the God of our master, Jesus Christ,
That we will be good apprentices in our manner of life;
In our direction, faith, and steadiness;
In our love and patience;
In troubles and in sufferings.
And as the Scriptures train God's servants
To do all kinds of good deeds
We ask the glorious father to give us his spirit,
To make us intelligent and discerning in knowing him personally
And knowing how to serve.

Amen.

DAY 32: SETTING CAPTIVES FREE



Bible reading Isaiah 58:6–8

Reflection

A Vineyard church in Southampton challenged members to live at the level of welfare recipients for a period of time and to give the surplus money to the Jubilee 2009 Fund. This small congregation managed to release an amazing £24,000.

(Tom Sine, Yes magazine interview, Autumn 2009)

How can we use all we have, (however little that may be) to bring freedom and transformation?

Prayer

Come, Holy Spirit, grant us the Gospel of Jubilee, the good news of liberation, freedom and unity; proclaim the release of the prisoners of division, recover the sight of those blinded by hatred, jealousy, greed and power; grant peace and freedom for the poor, oppressed, and lost.

Amen.

(Korea: Prayers for 1995 as a Year of Jubilee for Unification)

DAY 33: ONE SQUARE MILE



Bible reading Acts 3:6

Reflection

A Baptist Church in Bangor, Maine, USA realised it didn't know its neighbours. So they ran a bonfire picnic in the churchyard and invited everyone in. Next it offered some of its space around the church building for a community garden. This kind of project is beginning to catch on in many other parts of the USA. In the UK the Evangelical Alliance has encouraged churches to think in similar ways with One Square Mile projects, setting up simple mission initiatives aimed at people living within one square mile of where they are located.

(Tom Sine, Yes magazine interview, Autumn 2009)

Prayer

Lord, help us to offer what we can
even if what we can offer seems paltry at times.
Give us hearts to love and serve our neighbours
For the glory of your kingdom.

Amen.



Promise 7: I want to regularly renew my mind and spirit.

"There is a rhythm to life in the CMS community and part of that rhythm is regularly reviewing and taking stock of all I'm doing and aspire to be as a disciple of Jesus. I know the journey is ongoing, and it's easy to get complacent, so I regularly review my commitment to Christ's mission in my life as a member of CMS."

Pause for Reflection

Saying Yes

Can I say, "Yes, there is nothing that would keep me from joining the CMS community"?

DAY 34: COMING HOME (AGAIN)



Bible reading Luke 15:11-24

Reflection

Contrary to what many may think or feel a period of spiritual endeavour (during Lent, perhaps, or while taking part in a retreat) is a time of joy because it is a time for coming home, a period when we can come back to life. It should be a time when we shake off all that is worn and dead in us in order to become able to live, and to live with all the vastness, all the depth and all the intensity to which we are called.

(Metropolitan Anthony Bloom, *Meditations on a Theme*, p 1)

Do we dare to shake off all that is dead in us and live in the fullness of life God offers?

Prayer

From the cowardice that dare not face new truth;
From the laziness that is content with half-truth;
From the arrogance that thinks it knows all truth;
Good Lord, deliver me.

Amen.

(A Prayer from Kenya)

DAY 35: SPACE TO REFLECT



Bible reading Mark 6:31

Reflection

Benedictine Abbot Christopher Jamieson (comments) that many of us choose a busy life while pretending it is forced on us...We choose to be busy because it facilitates our consumerist lifestyle that requires us to work harder and harder and to fulfil our consumerist ambitions. It distracts us from the deeper realities of life. When given space for stillness and silence, we prefer to rationalize our discomfort rather than face the sources of our restlessness. Communities who build in contemplation as a regular practice can begin to address these sources of restlessness. It is a gift we can offer non-Christians as they search for ways to de-stress and become less anxious in what has been described as “the general mayhem of modern life.”

(Encounters on the Edge: No 38, The Cost of Community, p 9)

Is taking time to regularly review your prayer life, your mission, your commitment to social justice, part of your Christian journey? How has it benefitted you in the past? How might it benefit you in the future?

Prayer

Servant Christ,
help us to follow you
into the place of quiet
to intercede for the confused, the despairing
the anxiety-driven,
to prepare ourselves for costly service with you;
Servant Christ, help us to follow you.

Amen.

(India: Litany of the Disciples of Christ the Servant)

DAY 36: GOD BE IN MY HEAD...



Bible reading Matthew 5:8, 6:22–24

Reflection

The cleansing of the heart is, we might say, the cleansing of the “eye” by which we see God. In keeping that eye “single” we must take the kind of extreme care that is demanded by the great dignity of the One we behold with such an eye. Yet even when the eye is cleansed, it is difficult to prevent a certain dust from creeping over it without our awareness, arising from those things that tend to accompany even good actions, for example the praise of others. If those among whom you live won’t praise you when you live uprightly, then they are of course in error. But if they will praise you, you’re actually in danger. You can avoid this danger only if you have a heart so single and pure that, when you act uprightly, you aren’t doing so because of the praises of others.

(St Augustine of Hippo, *Commentary on the Sermon on the Mount*)

Prayer

God be in my head
And in my understanding
God be in my eyes
And in my looking
God be in my mouth
And in my speaking
God be in my heart
And in my thinking..

Amen.

(Walford Davies)

DAY 37: BEING KNOWN



Bible reading Ephesians 4:1–6

Reflection

When I imagined living in community, I envisaged myself turning overnight into a paragon of virtue, simply by sheer force of will. I would leave behind my bad habits, my judgmental attitudes, and any tendency towards gossip. I would never make myself vulnerable by exposing my weaknesses, because I wouldn't have any. I believed that in order to find my place in the community I would need to be perfect. A year in, I have found that it is precisely in times when our weaknesses are exposed by close communion with others that we are transformed in more than a cosmetic way. God uses others to knock rough edges off us and refine our characters. As humans we have a deep desire to be known, even in all our imperfection. The relief in living closely with others and finding that they are not perfect is magical. The acknowledgement that you don't have to be perfect to be loved and accepted is an important step in healthy Christian growth and transformation. *(Emma Woo, member of the CMS Mission House)*

Do we dare to take off our masks, risk vulnerability, and allow ourselves to be known (and loved)? How might being a member of a Christian community enable that to happen?

Prayer

May you be blessed as you engage with others, as you find the time to participate and give others the chance to do the same.

May you have the courage to create and take risks, and may you find your rest in God.

May you be blessed, as you show your weaknesses and accept God's grace.

May others see that you are fragile that they might join in your fragility.

May our broken edges fit together to become one body.

As Christ kept the holes in his hands and feet having rose from the dead, may we keep our wounds even after we have healed.

May you be blessed as you are healed by Christ's own wounds.

May you become broken in order to become whole.

May you become whole by knowing you are broken.

May you remember your wounds and embrace your hurt.

May you go into the places that scare you. May you deal with anger and with sadness
And may God be with you all the way.

May you be blessed, that you are perfect in your imperfections -

as you are forgiven, but never forgotten. May you be blessed, as you are accepted as you are.

As you are broken. As you are wounded. As you are hurt. As you are loved.

Amen.

(adapted from 'Broken Blessing', Harry Baker, Grace Community)

DAY 38: WHAT DO YOU DO...?



Bible reading John 17:6-19

Reflection

What do you do... *What do you do* when the people on your street (the street you love) are in such dire need? *What do you do* when your neighbour (a fantastic family man, helpful in the community and very handy-selflessly so) is picked up by the police and “thrown in”, leaving his family struggling for sheer survival? *What do you do* when your other neighbor (whom you have grown to trust as a friend) is a “distributor” and uses the teenage children of your other friend as runners? *What do you do* when your newest street dweller is robbed twice in the same month and consequently moves off the street? *What do you do* when a good member of the residents association has her door kicked in while her partner is at work, while she is looking after her one-year old and four-year old in the house? And by four hooded men who had obviously mistaken her house for a den? These are just a few things that have happened in the last six months on my street. The question is, what do you do? What does one do to be effective in a community like this? Leaving is not an option.

(Cyprian and Jayne Yobera in Harpurhey, Manchester)

What do you do? What do you do in the midst of the pain and suffering of the world? How might we respond together as a community of mission service?

Prayer

Lord

There are no easy answers

No quick-fix solutions to the pain and suffering of this world.

And yet, we trust.

We trust that you are with us.

We trust that you will always be with us.

You did not choose to take us out of the world
but you promise to protect us from the evil one.

Lord, consecrate us again in your truth.

Send us out again to share your gospel,
to respond to with grace and love and mercy
even when we cannot know what to do
so that lives may be transformed..

Consecrate us, Lord and unite us as your people-
a people of mission. A people of light. A people of love.

Amen.

DAY 39: WHY WOULDN'T I WANT TO BE A PART OF THAT?



Bible reading Luke 10:17–20

Reflection

I have to say, I love the seven CMS promises. They help me keep my life intentionally focused on mission in the name of Jesus. They help me regularly renew my commitment to Jesus and to seeing his love shared with others – not only in those I seek to support overseas, but in my own life. There is integrity in this. I can look my African, Asian, South American and other brothers and sisters of faith in the eyes and say, “Yes, I believe in mission where you are and am seeking to make a difference there through my praying, giving and sending. But I am also helping to make a difference for the gospel here where I am too. I am living a mission lifestyle. You can trust me on that.” For me, living for Jesus, seeing him shared and lives changed is what my life is about. Being a part of the CMS Community helps make that happen and helps me help others with the same passion to do likewise.

Why wouldn't I want to be a part of that?

(Joseph Steinberg, *Director of Mission Stewardship, CMS*)

Prayer

Lord, as you have entered into our life and death,
and call us into your death and risen life,
continue to draw us, we pray, by the power of your Spirit,
into an exchange of gifts and needs,
joys and sorrows, strengths and weaknesses
with your people everywhere; that united
we may be obedient to your commission,
and together enjoy the promise of your presence.

Amen.

DAY 40: LIVING IN NEWLY-DISCOVERED REALITY



Bible reading Romans 12:1–5

Reflection

The prevailing impression I have ... is of an ever-widening chasm between the fantasy in terms of which the media induce us to live, and the reality of existence as made in the image of God, as sojourners in time whose true habitat is eternity. The fantasy is all-encompassing; awareness of reality requires the seeing-eye that comes to those born again in Christ. It is like coming to after an anaesthetic; the mists lift, consciousness returns, everything in the world is more beautiful than ever it was, because related to a reality beyond the world – every thought clearer, love deeper, joy more abounding, hope more certain. *Who could hesitate confronted with this choice between an old fantasy and a newly discovered reality?*

(Malcolm Muggeridge)

Prayer

Glory to you our Lord and our God.

In your great love you have called us to be your people.

By your Spirit you have endowed us with an abundance and diversity of gifts to share in your mission.

We pray, Lord, that you will shape us to become a community of faith.

Make us instruments of peace, love and justice.

Help us to boldly go forth to tell of your saving work in Christ.

Amen.

CMS: THE CALL TO COMMUNITY

Commissioned to serve: Inspiring mission

Inspired by the Holy Spirit, the Community aims to be an inspirational model of mission service.

To express in public discipleship the call of the Lord Jesus, to make his name known throughout the world and to teach all peoples his commandments to love the Lord God and love their neighbours.

The Community's Priority: evangelistic mission

Evangelistic mission is the voluntary and intentional service by which we share the love of Jesus with others so that they may know his love and follow him in his way of life as a disciple. CMS is committed to this evangelistic mission, working to see our world transformed by the love of Jesus.

The global mission of the Community is carried out through the voluntary activity of its members as individuals and as groups and through its common mission causes. The Community is therefore the fellowship of those

who have voluntarily committed themselves to transformation as this is expressed through daily discipleship, pioneer leadership, mission groups and houses, and through mission projects and campaigns. The aim is to be like Jesus Christ in his **mission service**. The founding **purpose** and **policies** of CMS and today's **vision** and **mission** all reflect this priority.

1. Founding Purpose and Policies

'As you go, make disciples of all peoples ... teaching them all I've commanded you' (Matt 28:19).

The Community's foundational **purpose** is evangelistic mission: *CMS is a community of people in mission obeying the call of God to proclaim the Gospel in all places and to draw all peoples into fellowship with the Lord Jesus Christ.* (The stated Object of the Community's organisational arm).

The five foundational **policies** of the Community (developed by John Venn, first chair of CMS) shape its mission strategy and the way in which its purpose is put into practice:

Follow God's lead

Put prayer first, money second

Success depends on the quality of those appointed

Begin small

Rely on the Spirit of God

2. Today's Vision and Mission

Members are called to serve, wherever they are, in God's mission. Fellowship is based on a common **vision** of *mission service* as the way of life by which the love of Jesus is shared. *'CMS is committed to evangelistic mission, working to see our world transformed by the love of Jesus.'*

The **mission** of CMS is summed up as *Sharing Jesus, Changing Lives* achieved through the three aims of mission service: **making disciples, resourcing leaders** and **transforming communities**.

Making Disciples, eg development of members' spirituality shaped by seven Promises; courses on the Bible, evangelism, public discipleship, cross-cultural encounter, becoming Christlike

Resourcing Leaders, eg the training of members who will lead the Community itself, or those who will pioneer local or transcultural mission resulting in community transformation

Transforming Communities, eg the transformation of local churches into mission-shaped communities, and the transformation of the wider society in diverse cultural contexts

Christians are inspired by the Spirit
to serve in God's mission of drawing all things together into the love
of the Lord Jesus Christ. The calling of CMS
is to practice inspiring mission: to be a model of mission service, enabling others
to discover this gospel and encouraging people to follow Christ.

ETHOS STATEMENT

(from the Memorandum
and Articles of Association)

The Company is a community of people in mission, working in Africa, Asia, Europe and the Middle East, and Latin America. We are an international voluntary community united in obedience to the call of God to proclaim the Gospel in all lands and to draw all peoples into fellowship with the Lord Jesus Christ.

As a community the Company

seeks to express four key values: pioneering, evangelistic, relational, faithful;

engages in evangelistic mission through the exchange of people, ideas and resources; in project funding and training, with a particular commitment to work in places where the name of Jesus is rarely heard;

works in five key contexts: on the margins; in cities; among peoples of many faiths; against a background of materialism and secularism; amongst and with women in marginalised situations, young people and children;

works in partnership with churches and Christian communities. With them we are engaged in evangelism, leadership and theological training, church planting, social transformation, health care and education, so that people may hear the Gospel and

respond in faith and discipleship, changing individuals and whole communities;

affirms the Christian faith as uniquely revealed in the Bible and expressed in the Church's historic creeds. We believe in the sovereignty and grace of God the Holy Trinity – in the initial and ongoing power and love of the Father in and through creation; in the incarnation life, death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ as the unique ground for our salvation and sanctification; and in the Holy Spirit who gives life to all creation and is given to individuals and the Church for an on-going ministry of comfort and challenge; and

affirms the teaching of Scripture as the normative ethical framework and guidelines in human relationships, upholding faithfulness in marriage between a man and a woman in lifelong union, and abstinence for those not called to such marriage.

Individuals within the Company are personally committed to:

live and work in ways that express our mission spiritually, including regular prayer and bible reading and active concern for the renewal of the Church in mission; and

commit ourselves to a generous, responsible and thoughtful lifestyle, seeking ways to be involved prophetically in our communities and ready to move as the Spirit prompts.

DECLARATION

The Company, as an acknowledged community of the Church of England serving the worldwide mission of the Church, especially the Anglican Communion, professes the Trinitarian faith as it is uniquely revealed in the Holy Scriptures and set forth in the Catholic creeds. Under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, this faith has been preserved in the historic formularies of the Church, particularly the 39 Articles of Religion, the various books of Common Prayer, and the ordinals of the different Provinces and Churches of the Anglican Communion. This faith, however, has to be proclaimed afresh and applied in each generation and in every culture.

The Company encourages in mission service those who have experienced conversion to Christ, are being renewed by the work of the Holy Spirit, are committed to the local as well as the worldwide mission of the Church and who can assent to this declaration in good faith.

**If you would like to become a member of the CMS community,
please contact us to receive a membership form.**

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Questions about joining the CMS community?
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