

Street Pastors Prayer in Response to the Current Violence and Knife Crime



Dear Father,

We pray for the families of those who have been victims of violent crime – and especially for the parents. We acknowledge their deep pain and grief, the loss of the hope they had cherished for their children's future, the loss of the sons and daughters they had loved and nurtured and prayed for through childhood.

Father we believe that *You also grieve* over this loss of life, the death of these young people, and the broken hearts of the families left behind.

We declare that You care about young people and their families; You care about *these* young people and their families.

We pray for these families who have lost their precious young people, one after another, for no reason.

We ask you to bring comfort to every person grieving their loss.

Father we lament over the wickedness that is rampant in our cities; we lament that violence and bloodshed, murder and crime are so commonplace, that the lives of people You have created are treated with such carelessness and contempt.

We declare that You have good plans for every precious life that you have created;

We uphold the value and dignity that You have placed within each of these young people who have lost their lives.

We acknowledge the injustice of their deaths.

We acknowledge the shame and defilement that these things bring on our land

We cry out to You for mercy on our cities for this great wickedness.

We plead the blood of JESUS over our communities and our cities, for cleansing of this terrible guilt of bloodshed, violence and murder;

we pray for cleansing for our land.

Father we ask that You will stir up the hearts of Your people, black and white, old and young, to care, to care deeply, to care enough to take action.

Father will You give wisdom. Show us *how* to pray, *how* to take action.

Open up doors of opportunity, doors of inspiration, doors of connection and resources.

Stir up people in local government; stir up people in the voluntary sector;

Will You stir the hearts of police officers to look out for vulnerable young people.

Above all, Father, *stir up Your people in the church* to care, to pray and to take action – to stand alongside these families (families just like ours) and give them support.

Stir our hearts to rise up and go beyond our church differences, to be willing to work together in partnership, to make available the resources at our disposal, whether buildings, expertise or finance. For the sake of healing these wounds, dear Father, let our differences melt away!

Show each of us how we can help.

Holy Father, *let there be a true sense of outrage, a public outcry* about this ongoing knife crime. *It cannot continue like this!*

Let there be an outpouring of care and compassion for those whose lives have been devastated by the loss, by the injustice of it all.

Let our communities be stirred up, so we care deeply about the lives of our young people and learn how we can do our part in bringing peace in our community.

Father, *we take a stand in the Name of JESUS against the strongholds of lawlessness and crime*, that threaten to destroy peace and order in our communities.

We say NO! to the enemy; *we say NO!* to the violence and bloodshed and we *refuse* to accept this as the norm.

Father *we say YES! To Your righteousness, YES! To Your love*; we pour Your comfort into the hearts of the bereaved. We ask that in Your mercy You will in time bring them through to a place of being able to forgive the perpetrators.

We declare that in JESUS there is mercy, even for those who have taken life, and we say: Lord Jesus, let Your love be poured out, Your love that alone has mighty power to transform hearts. Soften hearts that have become like stone and flush out the hardness and hatred that come from being disenfranchised and marginalised.

Father, as we pour out our hearts to You, we acknowledge that this issue is much too big for us.

We do not know what to do. But our eyes are on You Father, for we believe that You are the One who is mighty to deliver, mighty to bring healing to our hearts, to our communities and to our cities.

We pray in Jesus' Name,

Amen