

The Isaiah Journey seeking truth, bringing hope, finding healing from abuse

What is the Isaiah Journey?

The Isaiah Journey (formerly 'Let's Be Honest') is a working group of the Bishops' Conference that has grown out of the need for a pastoral-spiritual response to the suffering of victims and survivors of abuse in the Church. Inspired by the writing of the prophet Isaiah, it has three strands:

Seeking Truth

The prophet Isaiah describes himself as 'A voice of one calling, 'In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord; make straight in the desert a highway for our God.' (Isaiah 40:3)

This invites us on a journey to face the truth of the anguish of those who have been impacted by abuse. In listening to survivors, families and communities, we begin the work of 'preparing a way' for God's healing and renewal through our repentance and desire to respond.

Bringing Hope

Isaiah gives the words which Jesus uses at the beginning of his earthly ministry:

Jesus stood up to read in the synagogue at Nazareth; the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him, and he unrolled it and found the place where it was written:

'The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour.' (Luke 4:16-21 quoting Isaiah 61:1-2)

Jesus embodies the words of the prophet Isaiah and we, as baptised members of his Body, the Church, are called and anointed by the gift of the Holy Spirit to do the same.

Finding Healing

Isaiah writes that the Messiah (and by implication those who follow him) is a healer: 'A bruised reed he will not break, and a faintly burning wick he will not quench; he will faithfully bring forth justice. He will not grow faint or be discouraged until he has established justice in the earth.' Isaiah 42:3-4

Many in the Church have been broken and their faith extinguished. Together as people of God, we seek to acknowledge the immense harm that has been inflicted. We intend not to 'grow faint or weary or be discouraged', but with renewed trust, we believe in God's power to bring healing and hope, to victims and survivors, families and communities and the wider church.

Pastoral Resources for the wounded Body of Christ, the Church, to accompany the journey of lament, healing and hope. The Isaiah Journey – a Working Group of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England & Wales.

- <https://www.cbcew.org.uk/the-isaiah-journey/>

Isaiah Journey resources

Each year the group produces resources for the National Day of Prayer for Survivors of Abuse, which is marked on Tuesday of the 5th Week of Easter. They are intended to be used on the day and surrounding week but also throughout the year. It is hoped that they will build up to form a pastoral spiritual resource for the Church in England and Wales.

Resources include:

2019

- Prayers from around the Church
- Intercessions
- Devotions: Praying the Rosary & Stations of the Cross
 - <https://www.cbcew.org.uk/day-of-prayer-for-survivors-of-abuse-12-april-2019/>

2020

- Prayer for Healing and Reconciliation
- Let's Be Honest — A Service of Sorrow and Acknowledgement of Abuse written by survivors
- Diocesan/Deanery Mass
 - <https://www.cbcew.org.uk/prayer-abuse-survivors-2020/>

2021

- Listening with Love — a series of Conversations by Survivors through hurting, healing and hope
- Parish intercessions
 - <https://www.cbcew.org.uk/prayer-for-survivors-of-abuse-2021/>

2022

- The Light of Christ — a holy hour
- The Paschal Candle — reflections of hope
- The Isaiah Journey — reflection
- General guidance
 - Safeguarding and Support
 - Listening
 - <https://www.cbcew.org.uk/prayer-for-survivors-of-abuse-2022/>

2023

- A Guide for Survivors of Abuse - leaflet
- A Guide to listening to those among us impacted by Abuse in the Church
- *I will make a way in the wilderness* — supporting parishes, communities and individuals which have been affected by the abuse of victims
 - Reflections and Intercessions
- *Lets Journey Together* — A week of online Guided Prayer for all who have been affected by clerical abuse in the Catholic Church
- Northampton Healing Garden
 - <https://www.cbcew.org.uk/prayer-for-survivors-of-abuse/>