



Remember Road Victims

PRAYERS FOR VICTIMS OF ROAD ACCIDENTS

Loving God, thank you for your most precious gift of life which no-one has the right to take away.

We pray for those who have suffered injury as a result of a road crash; those who have lost confidence and who are unable to use the roads without anxiety; those who grieve for a loved one who has died in a road calamity.

We pray for those who tend to be careless in the way that they use the roads and their vehicles. Give them an insight into the risk and danger into which they put other road users through their lack of thought and consideration for the safety of others.

We pray for those who build vehicles and those who design and build our roads that they may have the highest objectives in their work.

Grant to those who drive vehicles consideration for others and a determination to avoid driving in ways which could be a danger to others. Give us control over our anger on the road that can be dangerous for ourselves and others.

We pray for ourselves, may we grow in our love and respect for each other and treat each other with great dignity.



Every year, the third Sunday of November is the 'World Day of Remembrance for Road Traffic Victims'.

The next World Day is Sunday 21 November 2010.

This day in particular focuses on both the overall scale and the individual devastation caused by road deaths and injuries and the impact upon families and communities around the world. Almost 4,000 people are killed and many hundreds of thousands injured on roads throughout the world every day. Many more have to cope with bereavement or the effects of injury and thus become part of the huge group of people affected by road carnage.

RoadPeace originated the World Day of Remembrance in 1993 and it was adopted by the UN in 2005 as a response to road crash victims' need for a proper public recognition.

Today World Day of Remembrance activities take place in countries of

every continent around the world. Between January 2010 and 1st November 2010 there were 1,063,225 global road deaths.

Prayers for Road Traffic Victims will be offered at Brecon Cathedral at 3.00pm on Sunday 21st November.

The latest National Statistics on 'Police Recorded Road Casualties in Wales: Quarterly Provisional Estimates 1st Quarter 2010' produced by the Welsh Assembly Government were published on 5th August 2010 according to the arrangements approved by the UK Statistics Authority. Provisional estimates show that during the March quarter 2010, in Wales:

- 26 road casualties were reported as killed
- 176 were reported as seriously injured, and
- 1,933 as slightly injured

Comparing the most recent 12 month period, that is April 2009 to March 2010, with the previous 12 month period, April 2008 to March 2009, shows:

- All road casualties were down by 7 per cent; and within this total
- The numbers killed were 29 per cent lower.
- Seriously injured were 13 per cent lower

VEHICLES CAN BE REPLACED ... PEOPLE CANNOT ...

- A road death is not a normal death - it is sudden, violent, unexpected, and premature
- Every day, 6 people die on the roads in the UK and 3900 die worldwide
- 1 in 75 of us is bereaved through a road crash

Losing a loved one in a crash is devastating. Lives are shattered, and some never recover from the trauma. Family breakdown, job loss, depression and even suicide are the unfortunate consequences of losing a loved one in this way. Despite this:

- Crashes are still seen as unfortunate 'accidents', instead of preventable collisions
- Society tolerates road death and disability as an acceptable price to pay for increased motorisation and convenience
- Crash victims do not have the same rights or support as other victims of crime or trauma.





WELSH FIGURES

This tax year, Wales receives £15 billion from Central Government. This will reduce to £14.6 billion by 2014/15. Based on the figures it shows a reduction of 2.7%, but in real terms it is much higher, estimated at 11%. This takes into account such things as inflation etc.

There will therefore be less money in the Welsh Economy:

- 344,000 people work in the Public Sector:
- 24,000 work in Public Corporations
- 138,000 work in Central Government
- 182,000 work in Local Government

Of these 92,000 work in the National Health Service and 81,000 in Education. Some of these people will lose jobs, but those that keep them are subject to a 2 year pay freeze, and a further 3% in pension contributions.

There are no available figures projecting the effect of welfare cuts, but because Wales has the highest take up of welfare benefits in the UK, it will be more adversely affected than England.

UK Trends - Figures show that the gap between rich and poor, relative to 1975, rose dramatically during the Thatcher years, levelled out during the Major years, and did not reduce during the Blair years. The United Nations Development Programme shows the U.K. to be amongst the top unequal societies. (Wilkinson and Pickett, 'The Spirit Level', Penguin, 2009)

Christians are by their very calling concerned about the poor. The Psalmist reminds us "that the poor shall not always be forgotten: the patient abiding of the meek shall not perish forever." (Psalm 9.18), and Jesus abiding concern was for the poor and those relegated to the very margins of society. The historic mission of the Church is to stand up for the poor, and to work for a better society, which equates with working for the Kingdom of God in the here and now.

We're all in this together?

Fairness and the Comprehensive Spending Review



The Comprehensive Spending Review seeks to reduce public spending by £84 billion. Whilst this figure is for the entire UK, there is agreement that Wales is not in a good position to face the future because 71% of the National Wealth comes from the state. If you want to make a comparison, in the south east of England it is 33%, or in a region like the North West, around 56%.

The reason for this is largely historic; the decline of heavy industry and mining was not balanced with new investment and employment from the private sector.

A brief snapshot of Britain

The following is taken from an editorial in "The Times" dated 20th August 2010.

- Britain's richest and poorest regions have been drawing apart since 1995. Yorkshire and the Humber now have disposable incomes that are 12% below the national average.
- Comparative household incomes are subject to huge differences:
- In inner London, average Household income is £30,672
- In Nottingham, average Household income is £10,361
- For a baby born in the Borough of Kensington and Chelsea, life expectancy is 85 years. A child born at the same time in Hartlepool has a life expectancy of 76 years.

Iain Duncan Smith and Gemma Griffiths

News Wales reported (22nd October) *Conservative minister Iain Duncan Smith has told people in the south Wales town of Merthyr Tydfil they have become static and should seek work in Cardiff. The work and pensions secretary suggested unemployed people "get on a bus" to find work ... He said that even as Britain recovered from the recession there were nearly half a million jobs advertised in job centres each week. In recent research commissioned by BBC Wales, Merthyr was shown to be one of Wales' most vulnerable areas to cuts in public spending. Out of 22 local authorities, it came 21st, with only Blaenau Gwent featured as less resilient.*

Gemma Griffiths is a young woman from Merthyr Tydfil who has just started studying at Merthyr Tydfil College. She has made a film with her sister Donna, about what it is actually like coping with the challenges of unemployment, ill health and lack of opportunity. Their life has been difficult, but they give a frank and honest account of what it is like to experience poverty, and what a huge effort it requires to try and improve your life. Gemma and Donna do not give easy answers to the questions of poverty and social exclusion, but they provided a human face to the subject, and it may be that people will benefit from watching this short film to provide them with some perspective on the human faces which lie behind the statistics. It can be accessed on Youtube.com/enginehouseprod.

Images supplied by
www.freedigitalphotos.net

Faith in Families

Swansea and Brecon
Diocesan Board for Social Responsibility,
7 Talfan Road, Bonymaen, Swansea, SA1 7HA
Tel: 01792 644106
alanjevons.bsr@swanseabrecon.org.uk