



PRAYER GUIDE

JANUARY-MARCH 2024

Welcome to the Winter edition of the Toybox Prayer Guide. Thank you so much for all your prayers for our work with street children.

Please feel free to share this guide with your church and friends.



www.toybox.org.uk/pray

JANUARY

Week 1 – (Sunday 31 December – Saturday 6 January)

I wonder how many of us make a New Year resolution, and then completely fail to keep it beyond January! It is so easy to start a year with good intentions, but not so easy to carry on. This New Year we think of all the children who hope to change their lives around and make a fresh start, and we pray that they will receive the support they need to carry this out, not only throughout the year ahead, but for the rest of their lives.

Week 2 – (Sunday 7 – Saturday 13 January)

This week we pray concerning the air pollution in Delhi. The quality of the air has become so poor that schools had to close for a while last November. Our partner, CHETNA, shared with us that street children from West Delhi came together to raise awareness about the impact the pollution has on them. This event drew the attention of community leaders, and so we pray that there will be collective action to tackle the extreme levels of pollution and protect vulnerable children from its impact.

Week 3 – (Sunday 14 – Saturday 20 January)

Back in November we told you about Bernard Arevalo, the president-elect of Guatemala. Please pray for him in the face of continued opposition, as it is not certain that he will be permitted to take up his position, which should start officially on 14th January. Please pray also for the children and families we support in Guatemala, whose lives and livelihoods are being disrupted by this uncertainty.

Week 4 – (Sunday 21 – Saturday 27 January)

As we celebrate the International Day of Education on Wednesday 24th January, we give thanks for the school reinforcement days being offered by Viva, our partner in El Salvador. These sessions provide vital support to children in street situations, helping them to improve their skills in literacy and numeracy. Many of these children have had interrupted access to education through needing to work to support their family. Teachers also have large classes and limited time and resources to provide the dedicated help needed for each child to learn effectively, so these days are really important.

JANUARY



FEBRUARY

Week 1 – (Sunday 28 January – Saturday 3 February)

This week we give thanks for the workshops held by Alalay, our partner in Bolivia, focussing on job and interview skills. During these workshops, the participants were also able to learn about their labour rights, and it was revealed that some were expected to work more than the permitted number of hours, for very low wages. We pray that this knowledge may gradually translate into fairer work conditions for all concerned.

Week 2 – (Sunday 4 – Saturday 10 February)

As citizens head to the polls in February, we pray for peaceful, free and fair elections in El Salvador. We pray for the presidential candidates, that they and their political parties will be aware of the needs of those facing daily challenges, especially children and families in street situations, and focus their policies on responding to these needs.

Week 3 – (Sunday 11 – Saturday 17 February)

This week we want to share with you an activity that was led by the children with whom we work in Kenya. Following a successful mediation meeting between the children and the area police officers, the children wanted to build trust by making a positive contribution in the community. Having contacted the local agricultural officer who gave them tree seedlings, the children planted them at the police station compound and committed to tending the trees until they were fully grown.

Week 4 – (Sunday 18 – Saturday 24 February)

This week we give thanks that a team of children supported by CHETNA, our partner in India, was able to participate in the Street Child Cricket World Cup. It gave them an opportunity to travel within their own country, including their very first visit to a beach! We give thanks for the opportunities this trip gave for them to interact with their peers from other countries, fostering cross-cultural exchanges and expanding their horizons.

Week 5 – (Sunday 25 February – Saturday 2 March)

This week we give thanks that our partner in Bolivia is helping young people to access training and seed funding to start their own business. One of these young people, Jose, is working hard to achieve his dream of running a motorbike and bicycle repair workshop. He already runs a bicycle repair workshop with his brother and has recently completed a training course in motorbike mechanics and repair and is now searching for a job to build his practical experience.

FEBRUARY

MARCH

Week 1 – (Sunday 3 – Saturday 9 March)

On Friday 8th March, when we celebrate International Women's Day, we give thanks for all the girls and young women whose lives have been turned around through the work of Toybox's partners. We especially give thanks for Asha, in Nepal, who finally received her birth certificate at the age of 20. Asha says that now she has been registered, "I've found my happiness and my confidence has increased... Now, I actually want to make plans for the future."

Week 2 – (Sunday 10 – Saturday 16 March)

This weekend our Easter Appeal will be dropping on supporters' doormats across the country and beyond. Spring is a time of new growth and new hope, and we pray that people will respond to our Easter Appeal so that the children and families with whom we work will be able to look to the future with eyes and hearts that see their dreams becoming a reality.

Week 3 – (Sunday 17 – Saturday 23 March)

Nothing can be sadder than when families are torn apart and children separated from their families, but this is an all-too-common story for children living on the streets. Therefore, imagine the joy and happiness when children are reunited with their families. This week, during which we celebrate the International Day of Happiness on Wednesday 20th March, we celebrate with the 186 children and 51 young people who were successfully reintegrated with their families and communities across Toybox projects over the last financial year.

Week 4 – (Sunday 24 – Saturday 30 March)

This is Holy Week. From the Triumphant Entry on Palm Sunday, through to Good Friday, both Jesus and His disciples must have gone through a whole gamut of thoughts and emotions. We will be celebrating the Resurrection in the next issue of the Prayer Guide, but for now we are invited to journey with Jesus, as He shows the extent of His love for the world, and we stand with the disciples, waiting and watching for the dawn of new hope.

MARCH