

## Rainbow Prayer Day

Orange 'On-line Grooming or Abuse'

Prayer-Poem:

For all abused or groomed to be  
on social media for all to see  
Give them discernment on who to believe  
and help them to grow without having to grieve

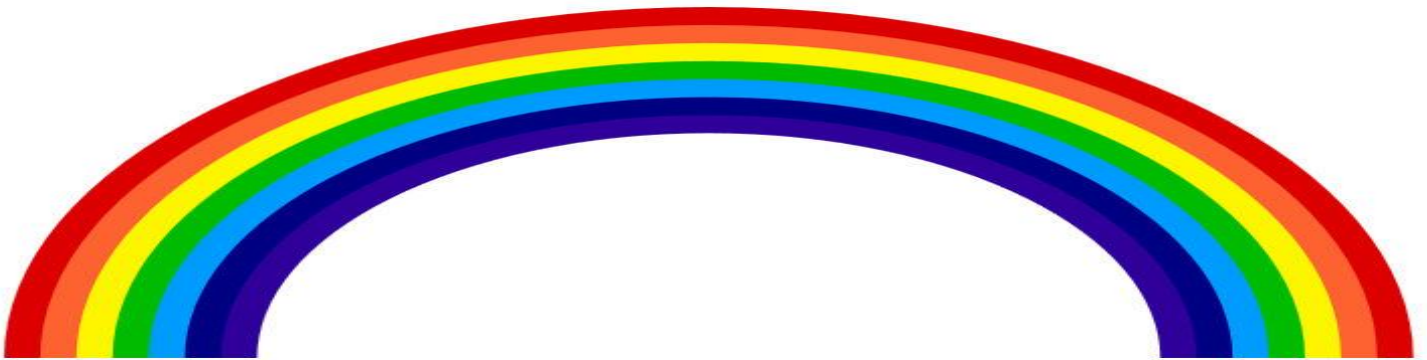
Creative-Craft:

Using orange card, make a computer shape or anything you would associate with this issue  
and add to the display on the table

When you are ready to move on to the next 'prayer station', please tie an orange ribbon to the fish

Please refer to Rainbow Prayer Day 03B & 03C [image & reflection which can be used as part of this 'prayer station']

Our very grateful thanks go to Liz Curtis, a Mothers' Union member from the Diocese of Gloucester for the ideas to provide this thought-provoking and inspirational time for reflection in preparation leading up to the 16 Days of Activism from 25 November until 10 December each year. If you use this material, it is requested that you acknowledge that the prayer-poems and creative ideas that accompany them come from her. Thank you.



# Rainbow Prayer Day



Our very grateful thanks go to Liz Curtis, a Mothers' Union member from the Diocese of Gloucester for the ideas to provide this thought-provoking and inspirational time for reflection in preparation leading up to the 16 Days of Activism from 25 November until 10 December each year. If you use this material, it is requested that you acknowledge that the prayer-poems and creative ideas that accompany them come from her. Thank you.

My daughter turned thirteen recently. She is now officially a teenager. Of course she has been an unofficial teenager for some time with the attitude to go with it. But the passing of this particular landmark has caused me to reflect a little on the world my daughter is entering and in particular the effects of the so-called feminist revolution.

In 2010 Lily Allen won an award for her song *The Fear*, which brilliantly captured the manipulation, insecurity and fear which is at the heart of consumerism. Four years and two babies later, Allen has returned with a song called *Hard out Here*, which angrily and poignantly captures how far the feminist revolution has not brought us.

Allen highlights the double standards in private sexuality and public work. It is fine for men to boast about their sexual conquests while women are blamed for being loose and free. She highlights the way women are endlessly reduced to sexual objects, even in supposedly respectable publications and TV shows.

None of this is new of course. Indeed, it is depressingly familiar. But it is worth stopping to think about the way the feminist revolution, while bringing huge gains in some areas, has had almost no impact in others. Far more women may go out to work now than they did fifty years ago yet a woman is paid £82 for the work a man will be paid £100 for.

Several news outlets recently reported a video made by a female journalist documenting a walk through the streets of New York. This young woman dressed modestly, walking on her own, was repeatedly approached by men, subjected to catcalls and even followed for several minutes by complete strangers trying to engage her in conversation. 'Is it because I'm ugly?' complained one man when she refused to stop and talk.

Globally the situation is even worse: selective abortion, female genital mutilation, honour killing, sex trafficking, forced marriage, and rape as an instrument of war. As Allen puts it [with a touch of cynicism] 'Inequality promises that it's here to stay. Always trust injustice 'cause it's not going away'.

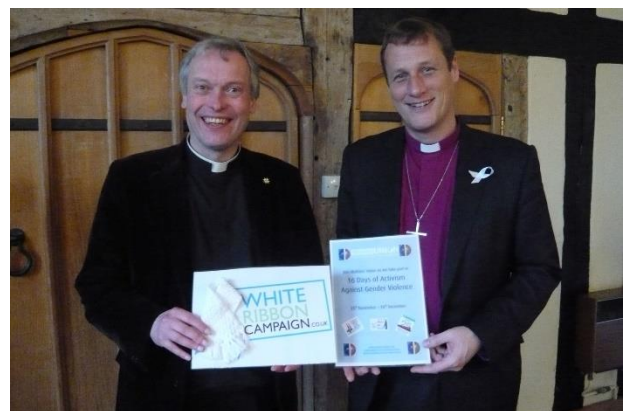
By now, you may be asking how a bishop in the Church of England would dare to write about feminism. After all, it has taken us twenty years to accept that women can not only be vicars but can also hold senior leadership positions in the church. We are hardly the model of equality. And my female colleagues are very clear that even as the first woman is appointed as a bishop [expected in the next few months], misogyny is still very evident in the pews of our churches.

So the church is no better than the rest of society but at least we are moving in the right direction. And I have repeatedly made the point that even as the first female candidates are interviewed to be bishops, this is far from the end of the road. We have many more choices to make about how we become a truly just and equal community.

These choices will need to start with a re-examination of our core values. It is all very well talking of love, but we live in a society that claims that the highest form of love is sex. Contrast this with the Biblical picture of self-sacrifice as the supreme display of love. As I enjoy reminding couples on their wedding day, Hollywood may teach that the champagne fizz of sex is what makes a marriage work, but the reality is a little more mundane: it's about who washes the pots and who puts out the rubbish.

So if I am honest, part of me is a little anxious about my teenage daughter entering a world where I know her experience will be rather different to that of her brothers. But the other part of me trusts that we have instilled such values in her [and her brothers] that they will set an example of how things can be different.

+Marty



Bishop of Leicester [written in November 2014 when he was Bishop of Tewkesbury in the Diocese of Gloucester]

Our very grateful thanks go to Liz Curtis, a Mothers' Union member from the Diocese of Gloucester for the ideas to provide this thought-provoking and inspirational time for reflection in preparation leading up to the 16 Days of Activism from 25 November until 10 December each year. If you use this material, it is requested that you acknowledge that the prayer-poems and creative ideas that accompany them come from her. Thank you.