

# Prayer Guide for 18 to 24 March

**To deny people of their human rights is to challenge their very humanity.” Nelson Mandela**

On Thursday we celebrate Human Rights Day, also known as Sharpeville day. It originally commemorated the police firing on a crowd of 7000 demonstrators, killing 69 people with some shot in the back as they fled. Now we “celebrate” human rights in our country on this day. This does not mean that abuse has stopped. We see and hear of (and perhaps experience) abuse in the papers and electronic media. We are approaching 30 years of freedom from the yoke of apartheid, but still, we see prejudice and injustice around us.

In a few weeks, we will be going to the polls to elect a new government. We need to keep the many political parties in our prayers, for safety for all who attend rallies and for all the candidates, workers at the polling booths and the voters.

On Sunday we will celebrate our Lord’s arrival in Jerusalem, and we remember the citizens welcoming Him with palm fronds and loud hallelujahs! And yet a few days later calling for His crucifixion. We pray for the many who do not recognize Jesus as their Lord and King.

Lord, we pray....

- † For the oppressed and downtrodden in our country, for the people who are denied justice, protection and access to accommodation and food. For those in positions of authority, whose role it is to provide for the needs of others, that they may fulfil their work with justice and compassion.
- † For the foreigners in our country, that they may be free of xenophobic attacks. For those who would attack them, that they may exercise tolerance and acceptance.
- † For the members of the LGBTQ community, as they suffer attacks and even death. We pray too for a change of heart and understanding in the perpetrators of the violence. For the violence in the world, the child and sex slaves, the drug enslaved and gangland victims.
- † For ourselves, that we may be aware of any inadvertent unjust acts we may have committed and need to set right.
- † For the war situation in Ukraine and Gaza, where so many abuses are taking place, the bombing of hospitals and civilian buildings, the destruction of places of worship.
- † We give You praise for the many who do “Act justly, love mercy and walk humbly with our God” (Micah 6:8)

