



***Archbishop Justin and Caroline Welby visited St Paul's Anglican Church in Amman, Jordan, with Archbishop Suheil Dawani, the Anglican Bishop in Jerusalem. Read Archbishop Justin's reflections on the visit:***

Yesterday we visited St Paul's Anglican Church in Amman, Jordan. It is an extraordinary place - a congregation made up of Jordanians, a few Egyptians, some Syrians (though many of these have been resettled) and Iraqi refugees.

It was their stories which I found especially moving. The intense suffering of Iraqi Christians does not end when they leave Iraq. As I listened, there was this awful sense of lives torn apart.

People are divided from their children and families and have no idea what will happen. One woman has children in both Germany and the Netherlands, but has been refused entry to both so she doesn't know when or if they will ever be reunited.

Young men are vulnerable to being recruited to extremist causes because their community and networks have been stripped away.

One man told me he has no hope at all. He said he is caught between Islamic State, the government and NGOs who further discriminate against him because he is a Christian.



The Iraqi Christians I met yesterday say they feel the world has forgotten them, because the focus of the international community is now on Syria. Iraqis, they say, are at the bottom of the list when it comes to resettlement or support.

One woman told me that she can endure persecution as a Christian because the Bible teaches that that is to be expected. What she did not expect was that the worldwide church would ignore their plight.

As we left I prayed for God's protection over their community. And I prayed that we, the Western Church, would be stirred up to do something. We are human beings with our persecuted brothers and sisters. We must embrace them.

As well as supporting the communities in England that have already received migrants, we need to keep on welcoming those who are homeless.

We must also find ways of improving things in this region. We do not want a Middle East without Christians. Christians have a long history in the Middle East, they are still here, and they surely must be part of its future.

2 min read

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