

Advent 1: Hope

As these days are becoming shorter and various restrictions keep us in our homes, I must admit that the TV has been quite a good companion in recent days.....

I have recently revisited that old favourite film 'The Shawshank Redemption', and have also been following the journey of Robert Rinder, as he looks into his Jewish Family's experience of the Holocaust on BBC1.

The former is a great work of fiction. The latter, a terrible true story. From both gloomy settings I have seen drawn out before me the delicate, priceless, golden thread of HOPE.

In the film, prisoner Andy Dufresne explains how he has managed to endure his prolonged time in solitary confinement:

"there's something inside that's yours, that they can't touch....Hope"

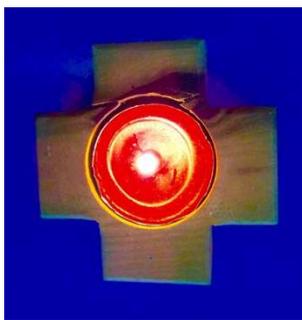
They are words which also reflect the real-life defiance of Holocaust survivor Elie Wiesel.

She said: **"Just as a man cannot live without dreams, he cannot live without hope."**

Hope is what has sustained the Jewish people through their long and bitter exile. Hope leaves room for God and His providence. Hope lets us believe that no matter how dark the world seems today, there can be a better tomorrow.

As the Church season of Advent begins, one tradition is to make an advent wreath with four candles to mark the four weeks of advent. The first of these is often taken to symbolise hope, and it is easy to see how lighting a candle reminds us to remain hopeful, that the darkness will not prevail.

Jesus is known as the light of the world. The more He is shared, the lighter the world becomes.



God of hope,
we cling to you,
for you renew the face of the earth.

Through the gift of your Son,
our Lord Jesus,
we follow you on the path of dawn.

Enlightened by your love and wisdom,
help us to lead each other
and all creatures
back to your open arms. **AMEN**

Rachel McCarthy/CAFOD

Why not light a candle this week as we share this daily prayer:

"May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit." – Romans 15:13