

Dear praying friends in Europe,

Sport is a great blessing for our societies, for those of us privileged enough to have recreational time. It can motivate individuals to work together, develop character and a sense of FairPlay; it can drive people to achieve more than they thought possible, to hold a common goal, and to work with loyalty and for a sense of national identity. From the smallest boy who kicks a ball in his back garden, to the most highly paid professional athlete training daily, it is inspiring.

I marvel at how our Heavenly Father has designed the human body, by His infinite wisdom, to persevere, overcome, repair itself, to race, reach and perform. We are truly "fearfully and wonderfully made" (Psalm 139). Let's marvel at the creator, as well as his creation.



Paul Moynan

FOOTBALL

Football has been described as a game where 22 people run around chasing a ball needing rest, watched by thousands of seated spectators who need the exercise. This month millions will follow the European Football Championship, an event uniting sport and national pride. In the midst of the celebrations and excitement many are concerned that the tournament takes place in safety.

It is also a time for Christians to reach out to those visiting the tournament. Amidst the turbulence and excitement we should remember the witness of the local churches seeking to welcome visitors, and share their living faith.

Please pray that national pride would be expressed in a good way; where the best of

our cultures are celebrated, and separatist or racist elements are neutralised.

Please pray that terror threats will come to nothing. Given the heightened security alerts, the attacks in Belgium and France and an atmosphere of fear, we should pray that any terror plans would be prevented.

Please pray for the host nation of France, struggling with national strikes, severe flooding and heightened levels of security.

Please pray that relationships between those attending the tournament would improve.

Sadly within days of the opening, violence had broken out between rival fans and the police.

Please pray for the churches in France, especially those in the main cities hosting the Football Championships.

Please also pray for

- As mentioned in Canopy 2, the UK is going to vote on remaining in the EU. Given the serious consequences of this referendum, Brits and indeed other Europeans are in a state of uncertainty. Opinion polls don't reassure either camp; and many are worried for the future (either in or out). Please pray for the vote on June 23rd.
- Trafficking, slavery and people smuggling are more widespread at this point in history than at any previous time. The International Justice Mission team are working to set the captives free - literally - by working with law enforcement officials around the world to liberate slaves and hand over criminals for punishment. Please pray for the lawyers, interns and law enforcement agencies that work for justice. I have come "to free captives from prison and to release from the dungeon those who sit in darkness. I am the Lord; that is my name!" (Isaiah 42:7) for more information: www.ijm.org
- Please pray for the Health Committee of the Council of Europe discussing a controversial Surrogacy report on 21st June. The rapporteur is seeking to legalise surrogacy arrangements, having had their original report rejected on grounds including conflict of interest (Mr/Ms De Sutter runs a surrogacy unit in a Belgian hospital). Pray that this damaging report would also be thoroughly rejected, ensuring babies cannot be bought and sold. [Click here](#) for more information.