



Dear Confereres,

**Warmest and Blessed greetings to all!**

# WORLD REFUGEE DAY

*" Each person has a sacred story to tell "*



**World Refugee Day – Monday, June 20**

We invite you to join with us this **June 20** to celebrate **World Refugee Day** which not only highlights the courage, perseverance and resilience shown by refugees in overcoming enormous odds to rebuild their lives but also calls each one of us to do whatever we can, wherever we are, **"to recognize one another as sisters and brothers."**

Drawing on Pope Francis's theme of the *"Year of Mercy"* in which he challenges us to make this a time to overcome our indifference to the needs of others, we are pleased to make available to you this Prayer Service which you can use for your personal and/or communal reflection to help mark the lives and struggles of refugees around the world.

**Together may celebrate the bonds across cultures and religions  
that make us stronger and more resilient.**

**In the spirit of Leo John Dehon**



## World Refugee Day Prayer Service

### “Migrants and Refugees Challenge Us. The Response of the Gospel of Mercy”

(Pope Francis Message for World Refugee Day 2016)



**Leader:** May we realize that in our interconnected world we are linked with all displaced persons by our common humanity. May we proclaim our solidarity with our sisters and brothers as we recognize our common human dignity as children of God. May we follow St. Paul’s admonition to “welcome one another as Christ welcomed you for the glory of God,” and open our hearts to refugees around the global community.

Jesus, Mary, and Joseph, remember the women, men and children who long for home as they weep beside the rivers of exile. In your mercy, grant them new life. With your grace, help us to embody your concern and compassion.

#### **OPENING SONG: “All Are Welcome”** *Gather pg. 846*

Let us build a house where love can dwell  
and all can safely live,  
a place where saints and children  
tell how hearts learn to forgive.  
Built of hopes and dreams and visions,  
rock of faith and vault of grace;  
Here the love of Christ  
shall end divisions;  
All are welcome, all are welcome.  
All are welcome in this place.

Let us build a house where love is found  
in water, wine and wheat:  
a banquet hall on holy ground,  
where peace and justice meet.  
Here the love of God, through Jesus,  
is revealed in time and space;  
as we share in Christ  
the feast that frees us:  
All are welcome, all are welcome.  
All are welcome in this place.

Let us build a house  
where prophets speak,  
and words are strong and true,  
where all God's children dare to seek  
to dream God's reign anew.  
Here the cross shall stand as witness  
and a symbol of God's grace;  
here as one we claim the faith of Jesus:  
All are welcome, all are welcome.  
All are welcome in this place.

**Welcome**  
Hospitality and God's gracious love to all

## Opening Prayer:

We praise You, God of Migrants,  
who hears the cries of the poor,  
who lifts up the weak  
and gives them strength

We praise You, Bread of Life,  
who feeds the hungry  
and satisfies the longing  
of those in need

We praise You, God of Gentleness,  
who holds with tenderness  
the orphan and widow and gives  
the stranger a land and a home.

We praise You, God of Deliverance  
who brings an end to oppression  
and suffering, and delivers those imprisoned  
with freedom and hope. Amen

## Reading: Grant Silva: Immigration, Mercy and Justice

“It is quite amazing to think that human beings, oftentimes children (which raises a whole host of other issues), are willing to risk dehydration, hypothermia, drowning and violent death, in addition to kidnapping, enslavement, deportation, and imprisonment, in order to enter a developed country or region like the United States or Europe by crossing an unforgiving desert, hiding in a hollowed-out car door, or boarding an overcrowded boat. Upon arrival, these individuals will be treated as second class “citizens” or disease-ridden nuisances. For many, their labor and bodies will be exploited, and most likely they will be subjected to overt and institutional racism—and yet they still come.” *Mendoza and Silva*, “Introduction,” *Public Affairs Quarterly* Vol. 29, No. 2 (April 2015): 136-137 . . . “Mercy as forgiveness should be reserved for us, those sinners who live with our first world privileges and yet do nothing for our brothers and sisters who reside in horrendous conditions.”



## Reading: Message of Heiner Wilmer, SCJ for the Feast of the Sacred Heart



“Fr Dehon tuned up his sensitivities so as to be able to feel the heartbeat of Jesus in order to make Jesus’ heartbeat his own and to make Jesus’ vision his own. As Dehonians we see migration as the greatest challenge of our times . . . In our parishes, schools, universities, in education and formation institutes, in our social works, in whatever areas that we have influence on public opinion, for example, in our media outlets and publications, let us make migration our theme. We are convinced that every confrere can do something. Every community has an opportunity to do something creative. Every institution and every work can contribute in some particular manner to the demands and needs that result from migration. At the same time, in every community where we live, in every institution where we work, we can make evident the opportunities and benefits that arise from migration.”

Response: “**Ubi Caritas**” *Gather* pg. 408

Reading: Message of Pope Francis for World Refugee Day

“Biblical revelation urges us to welcome the stranger; it tells us that in so doing, we open our doors to God, and that in the faces of others we see the face of Christ himself. Many groups are experiencing the wonder and joy of the feast of encounter, sharing and solidarity. They have heard the voice of Jesus Christ: “Behold, I stand at the door and knock” (Rev 3:20).



Yet there continue to be debates about the conditions and limits to be set for the reception of migrants. Faced with these issues, how can the Church fail to be inspired by the example of Jesus Christ?

**The answer of the Gospel is MERCY.**

Mercy is a gift of God the Father who is revealed in the Son. Mercy nourishes and strengthens solidarity towards others as a necessary response to God’s gracious love, “which has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit” (Rom 5:5). Each of us is responsible for his or her neighbour: we are our brothers’ and sisters’ keepers, wherever they live. Concern for fostering good relationships with others and the ability to overcome prejudice and fear are essential ingredients for promoting the culture of encounter, in which we are not only prepared to give, but also to receive from others.

**Hospitality, in fact, grows from both giving and receiving.”**

For complete text, see:

[https://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/messages/migration/documents/papa-francesco\\_20150912\\_world-migrants-day-2016.html](https://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/messages/migration/documents/papa-francesco_20150912_world-migrants-day-2016.html)

Refugee  
Week



**Personal/Communal Reflection:**

*(Let us pause for a few moments and ask ourselves...)*

How is God speaking to me/us?

What is a blessing that I/we have received through an encounter with someone from another culture/land?

What is the request that God asks of me/us at this moment?

## Litany for Refugees

**Leader:** For refugees and internally displaced persons around the world,  
we pray that they may know the safety and grace of a secure home.

**Community:** God, in your mercy, grant your children justice and peace

**Leader:** For the 60 million refugees currently around the world, we pray:

**Community:** God, in your mercy, grant your children justice and peace

**Leader:** For the 4.8 million Syrian refugees fleeing violence from ISIS, we pray:

**Community:** God, in your mercy, grant your children justice and peace

**Leader:** For the 535,000 refugees from the D. R. Congo  
remaining in neighbouring countries, particularly Burundi, Rwanda, Uganda.

**Community:** God, in your mercy, grant your children justice and peace

**Leader:** For the 470,000 refugees from the Central African Republic  
who have fled the deteriorating situation in their country of origin, we pray:

**Community:** God, in your mercy, grant your children justice and peace

**Leader:** For the 1.5 million refugees in Pakistan, we pray:

**Community:** God, in your mercy, grant your children justice and peace

**Leader:** For the 5.8 million Palestinian descendants  
who are awaiting return to their land and homes in Palestine, we pray:

**Community:** God, in your mercy, grant your children justice and peace

**Leader:** For the 46,000 Afghan refugees who returned home in the beginning of 2015  
and the 1.6 million documented Afghan refugees living in Pakistan, we pray:

**Community:** God, in your mercy, grant your children justice and peace

**Leader:** For the more than 240,000 internally displaced people from Myanmar,  
many of whom have lived in refugee camps for more than 20 years, we pray:

**Community:** God, in your mercy, grant your children justice and peace

**Leader:** For the more than 1.1 million Somalis displaced internally and the nearly 2 million  
refugees living in neighbouring countries such as Kenya, Ethiopia, and Yemen, we pray:

**Community:** God, in your mercy, grant your children justice and peace



**Leader:** For the more than 2.3 million Sudanese displaced, we pray:

**Community:** God, in your mercy, grant your children justice and peace

**Leader:** For the more than 4 million Iraqi refugees forced to leave their homes, we pray:

**Community:** God, in your mercy, grant your children justice and peace

**Leader:** For the 470,000 refugees from the Central African Republic who have fled economic crises and violence, we pray:

**Community:** God, in your mercy, grant your children justice and peace

**Leader:** For the more than 6.5 million internally displaced persons in Colombia, we pray:

**Community:** God, in your mercy, grant your children justice and peace

**Leader:** For the ever growing number of child migrants and refugees fleeing Honduras, El Salvador and Guatemala, we pray:

**Community:** God, in your mercy, grant your children justice and peace

**Leader:** For Central Americans traveling by La Bestia, the dangerous freight train that transports many children and adults north to the U.S. every year, we pray:

**Community:** God, in your mercy, grant your children justice and peace

**Leader:** For the thousands of evacuees in southern Philippines, who are in the grip of uncertainty following clashes between government armed forces and armed rebel groups and preventing displaced families from returning to their homes, we pray:

**Community:** God, in your mercy, grant your children justice and peace

## **Our Father**

### **Closing Prayer:**

We hear the cries of the suffering;  
we see the violence in our midst.  
May we remember them in our prayers  
and be in solidarity with our actions.  
Teach us to recognize Your presence in every human being.  
May we follow the lead of Leo John Dehon:  
proclaiming the boundless riches of Your love and mercy.  
We pray for this in Christ's name. Amen

