



“Child Migrants, the Vulnerable and the Voiceless” (Pope Francis)

JANUARY 15, 2017

“Migration today is not a phenomenon limited to some areas of the planet.

It affects all continents and is growing into a tragic situation of global proportions. Not only does this concern those looking for dignified work or better living conditions, but also men and women, the elderly and children, who are forced to leave their homes in the hope of finding safety, peace and security. Children are the first among those to pay the heavy toll of emigration, almost always caused by violence, poverty, environmental conditions, as well as the negative aspects of globalization. They constitute the most vulnerable group, because as they face the life ahead of them, they are invisible and voiceless: their precarious situation deprives them of documentation, hiding them from the world’s eyes; the absence of adults to accompany them prevents their voices from being raised and heard. In this way, migrant children easily end up at the lowest levels of human degradation, where illegality and violence destroy the future of too many innocents, while the network of child abuse is difficult to break up.”

(Pope Francis: World Day of Migrants and Refugees)

CALL TO PRAYER:

Our faith challenges us to a journey, an ongoing conversion of the heart.

Scripture is filled with such journey stories: Abram and Sarai bring their family to a new land as part of a new covenant, Moses leads his people through the desert back to the Promised Land, Ruth accompanies Naomi to become one with the covenant people in Judah, Mary and Joseph must travel to Bethlehem and later flee to Egypt. Jesus spends his ministry journeying through Palestine, often “with no place to lay his head.”

Today, we, too, are called to offer our outstretched hands and hearts to those who migrate from their homes and from loved ones because of the violence of conflict and poverty.

LET US PRAY:

Holy God,

You are a God on the move.
You move in the world and in our lives.
You shape and direct Creation, and us.

Your people have always been on the move.
Moses led your people out of slavery in Egypt.
The Holy Family fled to Egypt as refugees.

Today, people continue to move.
War, poverty, oppression and violence
drive people from home and country.

We pray that today's refugees, forced migrants, and internally displaced people may know you are always with them, in and through us.

Holy, moving God, hear our prayer
for the sake of your own uprooted son, Jesus Christ. Amen.



SCRIPTURE: Leviticus 19: 33-34

“When aliens settle with you in your land, you shall not oppress them. They shall be treated as native-born among you, and you shall love them as people like yourselves, because you were aliens in Egypt. I am the Lord your God.”

REFLECTION: Let us pause for a few minutes.

Consider the reasons that make people leave their country, families, homes, jobs... Remember the faces and names you know and place them before God.

READING: “Can consumer people be Christmas people?” *Ilia Delio*, OSF

“Christmastime should be an awakening of consciousness that *all* is a gift freely given and that our task is to receive in poverty of spirit and give thanks. The lowliness of Christ's birth shows us where the gift of divinity is to be found: in the poor, the humble, the forgotten, the weak, the simple, the laborer, the migrant, the unwed, the old, the dumb ox and smelly sheep.--- Life in God is about living in the gift of life, and to receive graciously is to live in the flow of life abundant.” [Click Here to Read Full Article](#)

Time for Quiet Reflection: Music is appropriate, either instrumental or vocal.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS:

“Abraham was a migrant, a stranger among strangers in the land of Canaan and in Egypt, an immigrant and an economic refugee. With Lot he shared a new country. Foreign customs, strange practices and the power of strangers frightened him (Gen. 13:1) . . .

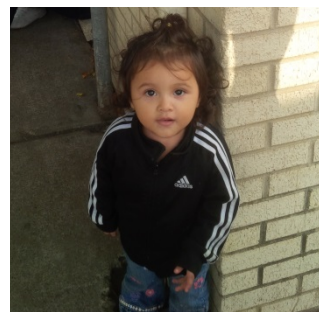
As sons of Father Leo Dehon, we want to give real answers to the real needs of our time, and offer concrete help to the problems that arise from migration and globalization . . .

To form our heart more closely after the heart of Jesus, we propose that in the years ahead, at all levels that are available to us, we consider anew the seven works of mercy and live them.” (*Mercy, In the Footsteps of God: Program of the General Administration 2015-2021*)

“---As disciples of Jesus we meet people who suffer from the loss of their homes, their countries. We listen to those who suffer from broken relationships. We see the rejected. Being open to margins of our societies, means being open to the wounded Heart of Jesus.

(*Heiner Wilmer, SCJ November 28, 2016*)

- Recall a moment where you felt lost or “in a strange land”?
Who/What helped you find your way?
- How is God gently nudging, even urging, you/your local community to encounter/welcome a migrant and/or refugee?
- What is one action of solidarity that you/your local community will undertake?



OUR FATHER

SHARING/PETITIONS: Each one is invited to a time of faith sharing

SOLIDARITY/SUGGESTIONS FOR ACTION

- o . [Read the text](#) of Pope Francis for World Day of Prayer for Migrants and Refugees.
- o CENTER OF CONCERN: “*The Message of World Day of Migrants and Refugees*”
See: <http://bit.ly/2h6HVB8>
- o Become a member of the refugee sponsorship group in your local parish and/or become an active member of the US Province JPR Commission
- o Keep migrants, refugees and those who provide support to them in your daily prayers.
- o Attend the movie “*LION*” with friends ([click here for trailer](#))

CONCLUDING PRAYER:

Lord Jesus,
through your Incarnation
you united yourself with us.

Send us your Spirit
that we may live for others as you did.

May we go wherever people long
to hear your word of love and mercy:
in the marketplace,
on the streets of the world,
and wherever
they no longer hope for justice.

In this way,
may we follow our Founder’s lead:
proclaiming the boundless riches
of your love and mercy,
building a world fit for human dwelling
and bringing your hope to all we meet.
Amen

*(Reparation: Week III: Wednesday
“THIS DAY OF GOD”)*

SIGN OF PEACE

