

the World Day of Migrants and Refugees

SEPTEMBER 25, 2022

**“BUILDING THE FUTURE WITH MIGRANTS AND REFUGEES”
welcoming, protecting, promoting and integrating internally displaced persons.**

*When we talk about migrants and displaced persons, all too often we stop at statistics.
“But it is not about statistics, it is about REAL people!”*

“No one must be excluded. God’s plan is essentially inclusive and gives priority to those living on the existential peripheries. Among them are many migrants and refugees, displaced persons, and victims of trafficking. The Kingdom of God is to be built with them, for without them it would not be the Kingdom that God wants. The inclusion of those most vulnerable is the necessary condition for full citizenship in God’s Kingdom ...

Building the future with migrants and refugees also means recognizing and valuing how much each of them can contribute to the process of construction ... Openness to one another creates spaces of fruitful exchange between different visions and traditions, and opens minds to new horizons. It also leads to a discovery of the richness present in other religions and forms of spirituality unfamiliar to us, and this helps us to deepen our own convictions.”

“Building the Future with Migrants and Refugees”– Pope Francis

CALL TO PRAYER:

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

Scripture is filled with such journey stories: Abraham 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, 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 forced to leave their homes to escape war, persecution, poverty and natural disasters, to plunge into the unknown and to seek refuge in lands and cultures not their own.

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: Isaiah 60:11

“Your gates shall always be open; day and night they shall not be shut,
so that nations shall bring you their wealth”.



REFLECTION: Let us pause for a few minutes.

Consider the reasons that make people leave their country, families, homes, jobs... Remember the people you have encountered. Place them in the heart of God.

READING: *“our sister earth, along with all the abandoned of our world, cries out and pleads that we take another course” (Laudato Si’, 53)*

“...we have the chance to know better our world and its beautiful diversity. We can grow in our common humanity and build together ... [a] sense of togetherness. Openness to one another creates spaces of fruitful exchange between different visions and traditions, and opens minds to new horizons. It also leads to a discovery of the richness present in other religions and forms of spirituality unfamiliar to us, and this helps us to deepen our own convictions.”

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REFLECTION QUESTIONS:

- o Recall the history of your own family arriving in North America. What were some of their struggles and hopes for the future? What helped them to make this country their home?
- o How can you put the most vulnerable at the centre?
- o How is God gently nudging, even urging, you/your local community to offer HOPE to a migrant and/or refugee ?

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

ACT OF REPARATION

We are mindful of refugees fleeing violence in their own countries,
only to face additional violence as they cross unwelcoming borders.

Our special love shall go to them,
who have the greatest need of being acknowledged and loved.
We should do our utmost to avoid every form of social injustice.

Only in this way will we be able to awaken consciences
to the tragedies of misery and the demands of justice.

His way is our way, and so we promise:

All: Following Leo John Dehon, according to the signs of the times,
and in communion with the life of the Church,
we want to contribute to establishing
the reign of justice and Christian charity in the world.

(Friday Act of Reparation: North American Dehonian Retreat)

OUR FATHER

SOLIDARITY/SUGGESTIONS FOR ACTION

- o [Read the text](#) of Pope Francis for World Day of Prayer for Migrants and Refugees.
- o View: "[*IT IS NOT JUST ABOUT MIGRANTS. It's also about our fears*](#)"
- o Become a member of the refugee sponsorship group in your local parish and/or offer your time, talents and treasures to the US Province JPR Commission and the CA Region Migration, Justice and Peace Committee
- o [Read the Final Message of the IX General Conference](#)
- o Keep migrants, refugees and those who provide support to them in your daily prayers.

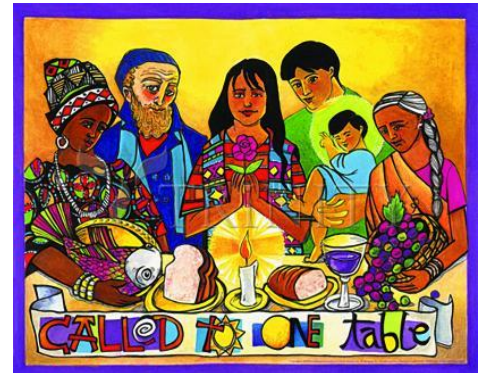
CONCLUDING PRAYER:

“Lord, make us bearers of hope,
so that where there is darkness,
your light may shine,
and where there is discouragement,
confidence in the future may be reborn.

Lord, make us instruments of your justice,
so that where there is exclusion, fraternity may flourish,
and where there is greed, a spirit of sharing may grow.
Lord, make us builders of your Kingdom,
together with migrants and refugees
and with all who dwell on the peripheries.

Lord, let us learn how beautiful it is
to live together as brothers and sisters. Amen.”

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Drawing by Mickey McGrath, OSFS

SIGN OF PEACE

