
December 21, 2018

Call to Prayer

God of our Advents, once again we enter this season of waiting when we cry out “Come, come Lord Jesus.” We wait for so many things, but deep within our hearts, we wait for the coming of your kingdom of peace and justice, of compassion and love for all peoples.

God of all peoples, today, we pray especially for children who live in fear of the loss of their parents, and mothers and fathers who bear the pain of separation from their families. Be their hope as we work to repair the brokenness of our unjust system.

Reading

This is what the LORD Almighty said: ‘Administer true justice; show mercy and compassion to one another. Do not oppress the widow or the fatherless, the foreigner or the poor. – *Zechariah 7:9-10*

As the United States bishops have said, greater attention must be given to “the needs of the poor, the weak and the vulnerable, in a debate often dominated by more powerful interests.” We need to strengthen the conviction that we are one single human family. There are no frontiers or barriers, political or social, behind which we can hide, still less is there room for the globalization of indifference. – *Laudato Si’, 52*

Prayer

Who will listen to the cries of the poor –
To the hopes and needs of those seeking a better life?
Who will listen if we don’t?

Who will speak so their voices will be heard –
So the wisdom and aspirations of migrant peoples will be heeded?
Who will speak if we don’t?

Who will see Christ in our brothers and sisters – in those who reveal new and unique aspects of God’s love as they seek to make a home with us?
Who will see Christ if we don’t?

Who will be the hands and feet of Christ – the hands that heal and nurture, and the feet that “bring good news?”
Who will be Love if we aren’t?

Story (Optional)

Rosa from Mexico

In 2010, Rosa (not her name) left her home to take her usual morning walk around her neighborhood. As she was leaving, a few cars surrounded her outside her house. In 2010, Rosa (not her name) left her home to take her usual morning walk around her neighborhood. As she was leaving, a few cars surrounded her outside her house. surrounded her outside her house. Armed men got out, telling Rosa

that she had to return to Mexico because she was undocumented. The men allowed Rosa to say goodbye to her three US citizen children — ages six, eight, and 12 — who were in the house, getting ready for their last day of school. Rosa entered the United States in 1997 on a tourist visa. Her brother, a US citizen, filed a family based visa petition for her in 2001, which was approved, but placed her in a multiyear visa backlog. After her arrest, Rosa was detained for 23 days. Ultimately, immigration officials released her, but detained and deported her husband to Mexico instead. Six months after being released, the government told Rosa she would have to leave the country. Yet in 2011, Rosa’s parish and other organizations launched a campaign to stop her deportation. The campaign led immigration officials to grant her a temporary reprieve from deportation. She was then able to renew her work permit and stay of removal every year between 2011 and 2017. During this period, she worked from 5 a.m. to 7 p.m. and family members helped to pick up and drop off her children from school [because her husband had been deported]. In her 2017 check-in, Rosa was told that, due to new instructions issued by the Trump administration, she would have to leave the country. At the time, Rosa was supporting her oldest daughter who was in college. She was also planning her second daughter’s quinceañera. She decided to take her two youngest children with her to Mexico, although they wanted to remain in the United States. Her oldest daughter stayed in the United States to attend college. Rosa reports that her children have had many difficulties at school in Mexico due to the language barrier and culture shock. Rosa’s oldest daughter says that “not only did (my mom) get deported but both of my siblings also went away. In a way, I lost my family.” Her mother’s deportation was scheduled during the week of her final exams. Afterwards, the daughter found someone to rent the family’s house, threw away most of their furniture, put some other belongings in storage, and returned their car to the dealer. She now lives with her uncle and waits tables, often taking extra shifts to help support her family in Mexico. She hopes to petition for a visa for her parents when she turns age 21. (Source: <http://cmsny.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/FINAL-Communities-in-Crisis-Report-ver-5.pdf>, 15.)



Time for Reflection/Sharing

Consider listening to [Rune of Hospitality](#) as you reflect. Click the link to listen. (See Day 1 for lyrics.)

Suggested Action

Today, read [this fact sheet](#) on immigration (U.S.) or “[Five Myths about Immigrants](#)” (Canada), so you can counter the misinformation offered as justification for the unjust treatment of immigrants.

Closing Prayer

God of the journey, God of the traveler, draw near to us. Fill us with the Spirit’s desire to shape a future full of hope for our brothers and sisters who are strangers in this land. Give us the courage to open the doors of our hearts and our country to our neighbors, and give us the grace to build a society of justice and compassion.

We pray for our legislators, as they craft new immigration legislation – may they find the wisdom and courage to enact policies that do justice for our country and for those who would migrate here.

Move us to new frontiers as we remember how you crossed every border between Divinity and humanity to make your home with us. Remind us of Blessed Theresa and all those who gave all they had so that the immigrants in America might have better lives. Move us to new frontiers, for we are all migrants journeying with you and one another toward your Kingdom.

We ask this through Christ, our Lord. Amen.