

December 16, 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 our brothers and sisters forced to flee their homelands because of violence, corruption, and poverty. May they find safety, security, and welcome in our land.

Reading

“When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit upon his glorious throne, and all the nations will be assembled before him. And he will separate them one from another, as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. He will place the sheep on his right and the goats on his left. Then the king will say to those on his right, ‘Come, you who are blessed by my Father. Inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was ... a stranger and you welcomed me. Then the righteous will answer him and say, ‘Lord, when did we see you a stranger and welcome you? And the king will say to them in reply, ‘Amen, I say to you, whatever you did for one of these least brothers [and sisters] of mine, you did for me.’” – *Matthew 25:31-46* (abridged)

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)

Ahmed from Syrian Arab Republic

I left Syria when I was still in high school. I haven't been able to complete my studies yet, but I want to. I'm really interested in IT and computer engineering. I'm from a village around the city of Idlib. It's mainly agricultural, tourists didn't go there much. We lived a calm life, but we had everything we needed. Everything was so simple. I used to play football with my



friends, always thinking of my favorite teams, Barcelona and Manchester United! It never crossed my mind to move before the war. I had a happy life in Idlib. Everything is gone now. There wasn't even a choice of living there anymore, and there was also no chance of building a life in Lebanon. There are eight people in my family and we are all moving to Canada, but my case came up first so I am going alone. I know that Canada respects human rights and cares about people. That's why they are running this program, and I hope they continue it. My biggest hope now is that I can go back to school. Arabs have a lot of potential, but no opportunities to develop their skills and capabilities in their home countries. I hope to have that chance in Canada." (Source: <http://iamamigrant.org/stories/canada/ahmed>)

Time for Reflection/Sharing

Consider listening to [Rune of Hospitality](#) as you reflect. Click the link to listen. (Lyrics below.)

I saw a stranger yestereen.
I put food in the eating place,
drink in the drinking place,
music in the listening place.

And in the sacred name of the Triune,
He blessed myself and my house,
my cattle and my dear ones,
And the lark said in her song,

"Often, often, often goes the Christ in stranger's guise.
Often, often, often goes the Christ in the stranger's guise."

Suggested Action

Today, resolve to make this novena every day and pray intentionally for immigrants and refugees the entire 9 days.

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.

