

December 20, 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 all those who on this day are unjustly detained. Be their strength and give us the courage to continue to demand an end to the immoral detention of your people.

Reading

You shall treat the alien who resides with you no differently than the natives born among you; you shall love the alien as yourself; for you too were once aliens in the land of Egypt. I, the LORD, am your God. -
Leviticus 19:34

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)

Claudia, Colorado Resident

Claudia had been fighting with her husband. The fight had turned physical, and she feared for the safety of herself and her three young children. So, she ran to her neighbor's house with her kids in tow and asked her neighbor to call the police for help. Arapahoe County law enforcement arrived and ended up arresting Claudia on a misdemeanor domestic violence charge, which was dismissed soon afterwards.

Claudia had never been arrested before. She had also never been away from her children for more than 24 hours. But, because she called the police for help, Claudia spent three nights in jail. Claudia saw a judge on the domestic violence



charge the next morning. Her husband admitted in open court that he was the aggressor, and the judge ordered Claudia released on a personal recognizance bond. But the Arapahoe County Sheriff's Office refused to release Claudia. Instead, it held her for three additional days because Immigration and Customs Enforcement ("ICE"), a division of the Department of Homeland Security, had requested that the sheriff hold Claudia in jail while it investigated her immigration status. The sheriff's office, like most others in Colorado at the time, chose to comply with the federal government's request, and it imprisoned Claudia for three additional days without a warrant and without probable cause. Those three days in jail were deeply painful for Claudia. She had been living in Denver since 1999, where her three children had been born. During that time, she had never had a run-in with the law, other than for minor traffic offenses. She never dreamed she would be imprisoned, especially for calling the police for help. (Source: <https://aclu-co.org/profile-claudia-valdez/>)

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, send a Christmas card to an immigrant detained in the U.S. You could say, "FELIZ NAVIDAD! Que el Señor les bendiga grandemente con Su protección, Su amor y Su luz." (Merry Christmas! May the Lord greatly bless you with His protection, His love, and His light.)

Below are some addresses to use:

- Annunciation House, 815 Myrtle Avenue, El Paso, Texas 79901
- Humanitarian Respite Center
C/o Catholic Charities, San Juan Office, 700 North Virgen de San Juan Blvd., San Juan, TX 78589

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.

