



SISTERS OF CHARITY OF
THE INCARNATE WORD

SAN ANTONIO

LIKE JESUS CHRIST, FORCED TO FLEE

*Welcoming, protecting, promoting and integrating
internally displaced persons.*

Every year since 1914, the last Sunday of September our Church celebrates the World Day of Migrants and Refugees (WDMR).

In the light of the tragic events that have marked 2020, the Holy Father has chosen **“Forced like Jesus Christ to flee”** as the theme for this year to focus on the pastoral care of internally displaced people (IDPs). He calls us to recognize the realities of internally displaced persons, and to embrace all those who are experiencing situations of precariousness, abandonment, marginalization and rejection as a result of COVID-19.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.



Psalm

When we talk about migrants, immigrants, refugees and displaced persons, all too often we stop at statistics. But it is not about statistics, it is about real people! Creator of life, we want to *know in order to understand*.

All: Give us your grace not just to know about them, but also, to be available to understand them.

May our fears not distance us from others, may nothing stop us from “being a neighbor” and to serve with love. Creator of life, we want to *be close in order to serve*.

All: Give us your grace of readiness to draw near and to serve lovingly beyond a mere sense of duty.

Open our ears, mind, and heart to listen to the plea of the vulnerable, the displaced and our seriously ill planet. Creator of life, we want to *listen in order to be reconciled*.

All: Give us your grace to be reconciled with neighbors, with all those who have been “discarded”, with ourselves and with You.

The pandemic has reminded us how we are all in the same boat. No one can be saved alone.

Creator of life, *in order to grow, we want to share*.

All: Give us your grace of learning to share in order to grow together, leaving no one behind.

The pandemic has reminded us of how essential co-responsibility is, and that only with the contribution of everyone

– even of those groups so often underestimated – can we face this crisis.

Creator of life, we want to *be involved in order to promote*.

All: Gives us your grace to find the courage to create spaces where everyone can recognize that they are called. May we create new forms of hospitality, fraternity and solidarity.

Building the Kingdom of God is a duty common to all Christians, and for this reason, it is necessary that we learn to cooperate, without yielding to the temptation to jealousy, discord and division. Creator of life, we want to *cooperate in order to build*.

All: Gives us your grace to commit ourselves to ensuring international cooperation, global solidarity and local commitment, leaving no one excluded.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit...

SACRED SILENCE

Reading

During the flight into Egypt, the child Jesus experienced with his parents the tragic fate of the displaced and refugees, “which is marked by fear, uncertainty and unease. Unfortunately, in our own times, millions of families can identify with this sad reality. Almost every day the television and papers carry news of refugees fleeing from hunger, war and other grave dangers, in search of security and a dignified life for themselves and for their families.” In each of these people, forced to flee to safety, Jesus is present as he was at the time of Herod. In the faces of the hungry, the thirsty, the naked, the sick, strangers and prisoners, we are called to see the face of Christ who pleads with us to help. If we can recognize him in those faces, we will be the ones to thank him for having been able to meet, love and serve him in them. Displaced people offer us this opportunity to meet the Lord, “even though our eyes find it hard to recognize him: his clothing in tatters, his feet dirty, his face disfigured, his body wounded, his tongue unable to speak our language.”

Extract of Pope Francis' Message 2020



Sacred Silence

ACTION: Each person lights a candle and then places it around the image of St. Joseph.

FINAL PRAYER

Father, you entrusted to Saint Joseph what you held most precious:
the child Jesus and his Mother, in order to protect them from the dangers
and threats of the wicked.

Grant that we may experience his protection and help.
May he, who shared in the sufferings of those
who flee from the hatred of the powerful,
console and protect all our brothers and sisters driven
by war, poverty and necessity to leave their homes and their lands
to set out as refugees for safer places.

Help them, through the intercession of Saint Joseph,
to find the strength to persevere, give them comfort in sorrows
and courage amid their trials.

Grant to those who welcome them some of the tender love
of this just and wise father, who loved Jesus as a true son
and sustained Mary at every step of the way.

May he, who earned his bread by the work of his hands,
watch over those who have seen everything in life taken away
and obtain for them the dignity of a job and the serenity of a home.

We ask this through Jesus Christ,
your Son, whom Saint Joseph saved by fleeing to Egypt,
and trusting in the intercession of the Virgin Mary,
whom he loved as a faithful husband in accordance with your will.
Amen.

Praised be the Incarnate Word!

© All prayers and readings are inspired, adapted and selected from the Message of His Holiness Pope Francis for the 106th World Day of Migrants and Refugees 2020.

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