

Advent Prayers for Refugees and People Seeking Asylum

'Jesus Christ is always waiting to be recognised in migrants and refugees, in displaced person and in exiles, and through them he calls us to share our resources, and occasionally to give up something of our acquired riches.'

Pope Francis, World Migrant Sunday, Jan 2015

'Asylum seekers, who fled from persecution, violence and situations that put their life at risk, stand in need of our understanding and welcome, of respect for their human dignity and rights, as well as awareness of their duties.'

Benedict XVI, Message for World Day of Migrant and Refugees 2011

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1. Prayers of the Faithful

- That people who have known little peace in their communities and forced to flee their homes and loves ones may find welcome, peace and hospitality from those who boldly say with the Jesus and the prophets that building fences and walls is not the way we should treat people , we pray, *Come to us and be born in our world.*
- That we may recognise that the aspiration to peace is rooted in our hearts and which spurs people to seek paths to a better future for themselves and their families: may we all resolve to build a culture of peace in all our actions, we pray, *Come to us and be born in our world.*

We Pray: Christ is our peace and through Him we implore peace for the entire world

P. We pray for Pope Francis, our bishops and all in the Church who give voice to the plight of migrants, asylum seekers and all people on the move. May all be sustained by the words of Jesus, "I was a stranger and you welcomed me".

R. Christ is our peace and through Him we implore peace for the entire world.

P. "Let us enable the power of God's love transform our lives so that we may become agents of God's mercy and channels through which God can water the earth, protect all creation and make justice and peace flourish"

R. Christ is our peace and through Him we implore peace for the entire world.

P. Let us pray that the power of God's love will transform our lives by changing any hatred into love, any vengeance into forgiveness, any war into peace and end every act of violence.

R. Christ is our peace and through Him we implore peace for the entire world.

P. May the power of God's love transform the lives of all those torn by conflict, all those who have been forced to leave their homes and all those who continue to live in fear.

R. Christ is our peace and through Him we implore peace for the entire world.

P. May the power of God's love help us to work for a renewed spirit of Peace in a world wounded by selfishness that threatens human life and family and a selfishness that enslaves many in forced labour and human trafficking.

R. Christ is our peace and through Him we implore peace for the entire world.

P. May the risen Christ bring comfort to the victims of natural disasters and make us responsible guardians of creation

R. Christ is our peace and through Him we implore peace for the entire world.

Christ is our peace, and through him may we help build "one family of brothers and sisters in our diverse societies "acting justly, loving tenderly and walking humbly with God". We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Sr Ann Laidlaw dc. - Australian Catholic Migration and Refugee Office

<http://www.acmro.catholic.org.au/resources/migrant-refugee-kit/booklet/431-100th-world-day-migrant-and-refugee-kit-2014/file>

2. Prayers for Immigrants

Our God, you have given us in your word
the stories of persons who needed to leave their homelands—
Abraham, Sarah, Ruth, Moses.

Help us to remember
that when we speak of immigrants and refugees,
we speak of Christ.

In the One who had no place to lay his head,
and in the least of his brothers and sisters,
you come to us again, a stranger seeking refuge.

We confess that we often turn away.

You have chosen that the life of Jesus be filled
with events of unplanned travel and flight from enemies.

You have shown us through the modeling of Jesus
how we are called to relate to persons from different nations and cultures.
You have called us to be teachers of your word.

We ask you, our God, to open our minds and hearts
to the challenge and invitation
to model your perfect example of love.

Amen.

~ adapted from Justice for Immigrants, "Prayer and Liturgy Suggestions,"
www.justiceforimmigrants.org/ParishKit/LiturgyPrayerSuggestions.pdf Posted on Acts of
Faith. http://actsofffaith.org/resources/downloads/Year_A/09%20Immigration_final.pdf

Loving God, may our eyes be opened
as we celebrate this season of Advent
and prepare for the coming of Christ into our lives.

Open our ears that we may hear the cries
of our sisters and brothers
and open our hearts so that
those without protection may receive support.

May Jesus' message of peace, welcome, hospitality

Overcome our fears so that we defend those who are weak and the poor and the stranger.

Open our eyes so that we see where love and hope and faith are needed and the strength in our legs to bring them to the places they are needed.

May we raise our voices in opposition to the inhumane treatment of asylum seekers and refugees.

May we see as God comes into our lives through the other we will recognise the face of God who seek our hospitality.

May we see our response coming from a broken heart rather than political or economic concerns.

May we consider all people as our neighbours even those who society vilifies.

May we show that we are neighbours when we stand with those who seek sanctuary and inclusion.

May we remember that we are all aliens and strangers and that we are called to show radical hospitality to all as it was shown to us.

May we truly celebrate this season of Advent and prepare for Christmas by

giving food to the hungry, drink to those who are thirsty and welcome to the stranger (from Matthew 25:35)

You have come from afar

and waited long and are wearied:

let us sit side by side

sharing the same bread drawn from the same source

to quiet the same hunger that makes us weak.

Then standing together let us share the same spirit, the same thoughts

that once again draw us together in friendship and unity and peace.

3. Prieres d'Ozawamick, Canadian Indian liturgical text.

Loving God, you are the God who comes.
Your Son came among us
to gather into one all your scattered people.
Grant that in sincerity of heart
we may show true compassion
towards strangers
and the abandoned
and that all of us may
be gathered together
in the land of the living
Adapted from **Roman Missal (RM)** 1364

Neighbour God,
no one is a stranger to you
and no one is ever distant from your care and help.
Look with compassion
on all lost people
refugees and asylum seekers and displaced people,
on segregated persons
give us a kind heart
for all people who are need and in a strange land,
and restore them to a homeland,
and give us hearts
that are kind towards the needy and strangers.
Adapted from **Roman Missal (RM)** 1364

Lord, no one is a stranger to you
and no one is ever
far from your loving care.
In your kindness watch over
refugees and exiles,
those separated from their loved ones,
young people who are lost,
and those who have left
or run away from home.
Bring them back safely
to the place where they long to be
and help us always
to show your kindness
to strangers and those in need.

Roman Missal: For Refugees and Exiles

Compassionate God,
make your loving presence felt to refugees and migrants,
torn from home, family and everything familiar.
Warm, especially, the hearts of the young,
the old, and the most vulnerable among them.
Help them know that you accompany them
as you accompanied Jesus, Mary, and Joseph in their exile to Egypt.
Lead refugees and migrants to a new home and a new hope,
as you led the Holy Family to their new home in Nazareth.
Open our hearts to receive them as our sisters and brothers
in whose face we see your son, Jesus. Amen.

(Source: http://www.bc.edu/bc_org/prs/stign/arrupe.html)

'Lord, no one is a stranger to you
and no one is ever far from you loving care.
In your kindness watch over refugees and exiles,
those separated from their loved ones,
young people who are lost,
and those who have left or run away from home.
Bring them back safely to the place where they long to be
and help us always to show your kindness
to strangers and those in need.'

(Source: *New St. Joseph People's Prayer Book, #331, Catholic Book Publishing Co., 1980.*)

4. African Prayer for Refugees

O Brother Jesus, who as a child was carried into exile,
remember all those who are deprived of their home or country,
who groan under the burden of anguish and sorrow,
enduring the burning heat of the sun,
the freezing cold of the sea,
or the humid heat of the forest,
searching for a place of refuge.

Cause these storms to cease, O Christ.
Move the hearts of those in power
that they may respect the men and women
whom you have created in your image;
that the grief of refugees may be turned to joy,
as when you led Moses and your people out of captivity.

(Source: *Peace and Justice Support Network of Mennonite Church U.S.A.*)

Lord Jesus, when you multiplied the loaves and fishes, you provided more than food for the body, you offered us the gift of yourself, the gift which satisfies every hunger and quenches every thirst! Your disciples were filled with fear and doubt, but you poured out your love and compassion on the migrant crowd, welcoming them as brothers and sisters.

Lord Jesus, today you call us to welcome the members of God's family who come to our land to escape oppression, poverty, persecution, violence, and war. Like your disciples, we too are filled with fear and doubt and even suspicion. We build barriers in our hearts and in our minds.

Lord Jesus, help us by your grace,

- To banish fear from our hearts, that we may embrace each of your children as our own brother and sister;
- To welcome migrants and refugees with joy and generosity, while responding to their many needs;
- To realize that you call all people to your holy mountain to learn the ways of peace and justice;
- To share of our abundance as you spread a banquet before us;
- To give witness to your love for all people, as we celebrate the many gifts they bring.

We praise you and give you thanks for the family you have called together from so many people. We see in this human family a reflection of the divine unity of the one Most Holy Trinity in whom we make our prayer: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen.

Source: US Conference of Catholic Bishops <http://www.usccb.org/prayer-and-worship/prayers-and-devotions/prayers/prayer-for-migrants-and-refugees.cfm>

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