

Homily 26th Sunday Year C - World Day of Prayer for Migrants & Refugees 2022

Building a Future together

Pope Francis: We must encourage initiatives that foster fraternity among all local cultural, ethnic and religious groups [...] Situations of conflict and humanitarian crises, aggravated by climate change, are increasing the numbers of displaced persons and affecting people already living in dire poverty. Many countries experiencing these situations lack adequate structures to meet the needs of the displaced. Sadly, a consistent international response to help address the phenomenon of internal displacement does not exist. There is a lack of an internationally agreed definition, since this phenomenon takes place within national borders. As a result, internally displaced people do not always receive the protection they deserve, and depend on the policies and response capabilities of the nations in which they find themselves.

WCR: We must have the courage not to turn away from refugees and forcibly displaced persons. Allow their faces to penetrate your heart and welcome them into your world. Listen to their hopes and despair, and understand their feelings. Offering hospitality is the response God's call asks us to make. We will come to recognise God's presence in those we encounter. Charity makes it impossible to remain silent before the disquieting images showing stretches of refugee and Internally Displaced People camps throughout the world. Welcoming them with compassion and treating them fairly are simple steps that offer them hope for the future.

Pope Francis: By walking together in prayer, humility and love, by doing something together for others and for our common home, let us rediscover, at the heart of our catholicity, the ancient significance attributed to the Roman See, called to 'preside over the whole assembly in charity.'

WCR: Assistance or 'first welcome' are of the greatest importance [...] Let our welcome aim at progressive integration and promote self-sufficiency. Everyone has the right to life, to bodily integrity, and to the means suitable for the proper development of life primarily: food, clothing, shelter, rest, medical care, and the necessary social services. The acceptance of migrants and refugees is an opportunity for new understanding and broader horizons, both for those accepted, who have the responsibility to respect the values, traditions and laws of the community which welcomes them, and on the part of the latter, called to acknowledge the beneficial contribution each immigrant can make to the whole community.

Pope Francis: Our response to the challenges posed by contemporary migration can be summed up in four verbs: **welcome, protect, promote and integrate**. Verbs that apply not only to migrants and refugees but describe the Church's mission to all those living on the peripheries, who need to be **welcomed, protected, promoted and integrated**. Today, marked by great movements of migration, identity is not a secondary issue. Those who migrate are forced to change some of their most distinctive characteristics and those who welcome them are also forced to change. Let us experience these changes not as obstacles to development, but as opportunities for genuine human, social and spiritual growth. Let this growth which respects and promotes these values make us more humane and help us live a balanced relationship with God, with others and with creation.

God our refuge, you share the journey with migrants and refugees, lightening their footsteps with hope.

For you, Lord, are close to the broken-hearted.

Pour out your Spirit upon world leaders.

May they see the tragedies of our human family,

and be moved to respond with wisdom, compassion and courage.

Open our eyes and hearts to the God-given dignity of all your people.

Move us to welcome our neighbours, and so bear witness to your love. Through Christ our...