

IMMIGRATION

**You shall not oppress an alien; you well know
how it feels to be an alien, since you were once aliens
yourselves in the land of Egypt.**

Exodus 23: 9



PRESENCE of GOD

**We pause and remember that we are all Your people.
You, O Lord, have created us and called us to holiness and justice.
May we always be aware of Your holy presence in and among us
as we pray and work for justice, peace and love for all peoples.
In the name of God our Father Who has called us into being.
In the name of Jesus, His Son and our Brother, Who redeemed us,
and in the name of the Spirit Most Holy, Who calls us to life.
Amen.**

HYMN: HARVEST OF JUSTICE

**Refrain: May we find richness in the harvest of justice
Which Christ Jesus has ripened for us.
Bread for the journey, bread for the hungry,
All for the glory and praise of God.**

**Gather with patience for those who have nothing.
Leave them your riches, and you will receive.
Make room for the poor ones; make way for the stranger;
For I am the Lord, the Lord your God. Refrain**

**For to have mercy on those forgotten,
This is My true law, this is My command;
Clothe the naked, be home for the orphan,
Be hope for the widow, and welcome the lost. Refrain**

**For to have little is to be in abundance.
To give what remains, to give all we have
Is to walk with the poor ones, and become the stranger,
One with the Lord, the Lord our God. Refrain**

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PRAYER BEFORE THE PROCLAMATION OF THE HOLY SCRIPTURES

**Open your ears, O Christian people
Open your ears and hear the Good News.
Open your hearts, O Christian people
Open your hearts and receive the Good News.**

READINGS FROM HOLY SCRIPTURE

EPHESIANS 2:11-18

But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have become near by the blood of Christ. For [Christ] is our peace, He who made both one and broke down the dividing wall of enmity, through His flesh, abolishing the law with its commandments and legal claims, that He might create in Himself one new person in place of the two, thus establishing peace, and might reconcile both with God, in one body, through the cross, putting that enmity to death by it.

ROMANS 12: 2-12

Do not conform yourselves to this age but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and pleasing and perfect . . . For as in one body we have many parts, and all the parts do not have the same function, so we, though many, are one body in Christ and individually parts of one another. . . Let love be sincere; hate what is evil, hold on to what is good; love one another with mutual affection; anticipate one another in showing honor. Do not grow slack in zeal, be fervent in spirit, serve the Lord. Rejoice in hope, endure in affliction, persevere in prayer.

MARK 12: 29-31

Jesus replied, "The first is this: 'Hear, O Israel! The Lord our God is Lord alone! You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.' The second is this: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these."

REFLECTION

Much faith based reflection on the theme of refugees and migration focuses on the Biblical call to welcome the stranger. The stranger, by definition, is outside our community, set apart by different beliefs, customs, and ways of speaking. Often the stranger inspires fear. The Biblical call to welcome the stranger invites us to go beyond our mistrust and suspicion in order to welcome newcomers into our community.

But what happens when the stranger in our midst remains forever a stranger? People of color, both new immigrants and American born, are too often treated as if they don't belong.

They face systemic barriers in accessing employment, housing and social services. They find themselves forever labeled as "immigrant" rather than American. Even citizenship represents no more than a fragile hold on belonging. The rights of strangers and immigrants are easily suspended in the name of national security.

The Bible clearly speaks against this kind of discrimination. In Leviticus, we read: "The alien who resides with you shall be to you as the citizen among you (Lev 19: 34). When we recognize the stranger as fellow citizen, then their well being is no longer seen as a matter of charity, but as a matter of rights and entitlement.

In order to truly welcome the stranger, we must recognize the stranger as one of us. The borders and barriers between "us" and "them" are merely human constructions that serve to justify exploitation and violence. The truth is that we are sisters and brothers, one people under God.

The social teaching of the Church is concerned with the nourishment of all the people of the world spiritually and also physically. Whenever we share the Eucharist, whenever we break bread together -- we cannot but be aware of all those who are hungry. We cannot but be aware that all human beings share a common story. We cannot but be aware of our need to share what we have. We cannot but be aware of the need for justice in the world.

DON'T CALL ME A STRANGER

**Don't call me a stranger;
I need to feel at home;
Especially when loneliness cools my heart.**

**Don't call me a stranger;
The soil we step on is the same;
But mine is not the promised land.**

**Don't call me a stranger;
The color of my passport is different;
But the color of our blood is the same;**

**Don't call me a stranger;
The language I speak sounds different,
But the feelings it expresses are the same.**

**Don't call me a stranger;
I toil and struggle in your land;
And the sweat of our brows is the same.**

A LITANY OF CHRISTIAN HOPE

- (L) When people everywhere learn that hate can only be overcome by love and justice,**
(All) What a wonderful world this will be.
- (L) When people with so much, learn the joy of sharing with those with so little,**
(All) What a wonderful world this will be.
- (L) When people everywhere respect our earth and learn to walk softly on her,**
(All) What a wonderful world this will be.
- (L) When people everywhere recognize our sameness by seeing the one God within us all,**
(All) What a wonderful world this will be.
- (L) When people strive more for spiritual and moral attributes than for material possessions, power over others, and sense gratification,**
(All) What a wonderful world this will be.

- (L) When people are judged by the content of their character and not the color of their skin, their gender, their religion, their sexual orientation, or any superficial characteristic,**
(All) What a wonderful world this will be.
- (L) When people of different values and beliefs can honor and respect one another,**
(All) What a wonderful world this will be.
- (L) When people learn the transforming power of non-violence coupled with persistently speaking the truth in soft clear voice,**
(All) What a wonderful world this will be.
- (L) When Jesus teachings of love, justice, sharing, and simplicity are followed more than Madison Avenue's urgings,**
(All) What a wonderful world this will be.
- (L) When people all over the world have clean water, nutritious food, adequate shelter and clothing, basic healthcare. opportunity for education and meaningful work, and basic human rights.**
(All) What a wonderful world this will be.
 - Steve Swearingen, of Anderson, SC

OUR FATHER

THE DISMISSAL

For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord.

Live as children of light. Ephesians 5:8

We are called to be beacons of God's light. We are called to glow like candles allowing God to decrease our self-centeredness in the flame of Jesus' love. We are called to follow Christ's example and reflect his light and love in the world by spreading His message of love by the way we live the lives God gave us. As we reflect God's love like a lighthouse we can light the way for others. We can be Beacons of God's Light. We can pledge to shine for God and reflect His light.

As a beacon of God's light we will allow God to strengthen our faith.

We will ...

... be still and know that He is God and that God loves us.

... love God and worship Him with all our heart, mind, soul, and strength.

... equip ourselves for all things by daily reading and knowing God's Word.

... follow Jesus Christ's loving and perfect example in all things.

As a beacon of God's light we will pray unceasingly as God taught us.

We will ...

... pray that we will seek, understand, and follow God's will for our lives.

... pray for the salvation of others.

... pray for others and be there for them both in good times and bad.

... pray that we focus on a Godly perspective, ask to be forgiven, and be forgiving.

As a beacon of God's light we will let God's love shine in our lives. We will ...

... work in God's service as God leads us to show love for one another.

... seek to live in peace and fellowship with all people, praising God.

... encourage and care for others in unselfish ways for all God's children.

HYMN: WE ARE MANY PARTS

Refrain: We are many parts. we are all one body, and the gifts we have we are given to share. May the Spirit of love make us one indeed; one, the love that we share, one, our hope in despair, one, the cross that we bear.

- 1. God of all, we look to you, we would be Your servants true, let us be your love to all the world.**
- 2. So my pain is pain to you, in your joy is my joy, too; all is brought together in the Lord.**
- 3. All you seekers great and small, seek the greatest gift of all; if you love, then you will know the Lord.**



Saint Frances Xavier Cabrini, (Feast day November 13) St. Frances was born in Lombardi, Italy in 1850, one of thirteen children. At eighteen, she desired to become a nun, but poor health stood in her way. She helped her parents until their death, and then worked on a farm with her brothers and sisters.

One day a priest asked her to teach in a girls' school and she stayed for six years. At the request of her Bishop, she founded the Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart to care for poor children in schools and hospitals. Then at the urging of Pope Leo XIII she came to the United States with six nuns in 1889 to work among the Italian immigrants.

Filled with a deep trust in God and endowed with a wonderful administrative ability, this remarkable woman soon founded schools, hospitals, and orphanages in this strange land and saw them flourish in the aid of Italian immigrants and children. She died in Chicago, Illinois on December 22, 1917. In 1946, she became the first American citizen to be canonized when she was elevated to sainthood by Pope Pius XII. St. Frances Xavier Cabrini is the PATRONESS OF IMMIGRANTS.

A PRAYER FOR IMMIGRANTS

**God of the journey, God of the traveler,
We pray for those who leave their homes in search of new beginnings and possibilities,
may they know Your presence with them.**

**We pray that those who seek to make a home in this country
may find us welcoming and willing to help them find a path toward citizenship,**

We pray that our legislators, as they craft new immigration legislation

may find the wisdom and courage to enact new policies that do justice for our country and for those who would emigrate here.

We pray for those who fan the flames of fear and discrimination against the undocumented

may be touched with your Divine Compassion.

We pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

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Saint John Baptist de La Salle

and all you holy Brothers who have gone before us,

help us to see the face of the Christ in the poor, the stranger

and in all whom we meet this day.

Live Jesus in our hearts.

Forever!