

“Building the future with migrants and refugees”

INTRODUCTION

Given the increasing flow of migration in the world, in 2000 the UN General Assembly proclaimed December 18 as International Migrants Day, in order to promote the exchange of experiences and opportunities for collaboration between countries and regions, faced with the difficulties of international migration.

With the creation of this event, it is intended to make visible the challenges, difficulties and adversities that must face migrants in the world, as well as make an appeal to all the nations to make migration a safe, regular and dignified process.

The main reason for migration is the possibility of improving the quality of life for migrants and their families, as well as overcome economic, social and demographic inequalities in their countries of origin: Hunger, unemployment, armed conflicts, persecution due to political, ideological or religions, climatic changes and natural catastrophes. It also influences the fact that the most developed countries require labour that they can hardly cover with local residents. The presence of migrants who can perform certain types of tasks; in most cases, with low pay and no benefits, so that their rights are violated and they are placed in a state of vulnerability. Pope Francis in the message for the 108th day of migrants and refugees specified that the Kingdom of God inaugurated by Jesus will find his full realization when he returns in his glory, *a Kingdom where no one should be excluded. His project is essentially inclusive and places the inhabitants of the existential peripheries at the centre. Among them are many migrants and refugees, displaced persons and victims of trafficking. It is with them that God wants to build his Kingdom, because, without them it would not be the Kingdom that God wants. The inclusion of the most vulnerable people is a necessary condition to obtain full citizenship. In fact, the Lord says: “Come, you that are blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was hungry and you gave me food; I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink; I was a stranger and you welcomed me; I was naked, and you gave me clothing; I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me” (Mt 25:34-36)*



SONG

**Chorus: Whatsoever you do to the least of my people,
that you do unto me.**

When I was hungry, you gave me to eat.
When I was thirsty, you gave me to drink.
Now enter into the home of My Father.

When I was homeless, you opened your door.
When I was naked, you gave me your coat.
Now enter into the home of My Father.

When I was weary, you helped me find rest.
When I was anxious, you calmed all my fears.
Now enter into the home of My Father.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=125Hgnf3uk>

Mt. 25: 34-40 READING & REFLECTION

The Gospel passage from Matthew 25 illustrates the depth of Jesus' love for the human race. His identification with "the least of these" is so profound that, when we enter their pain and reach out to them with love it is Jesus himself, we love and embrace.

God wants our lives to overflow with mercy, love, and compassion. As followers of Jesus, which is our choice, to respond to unsettling realities in fear and withdraw, or follow Him in responding to the greatest needs of our day with love and hope? Indeed, caring for those in needs is evidence of a faith that changes lives.

Together, we can tell our suffering brothers and sisters that they are not forgotten. When we show Christ's love to the world through acts of kindness, compassion, and justice, we open the way for the message of our Saviour who transforms men and women for all eternity and without expecting something incredible will happen to us. We will encounter the living God working through us to usher in His kingdom of love and justice on earth.

PRAYER WITH A SYMBOL

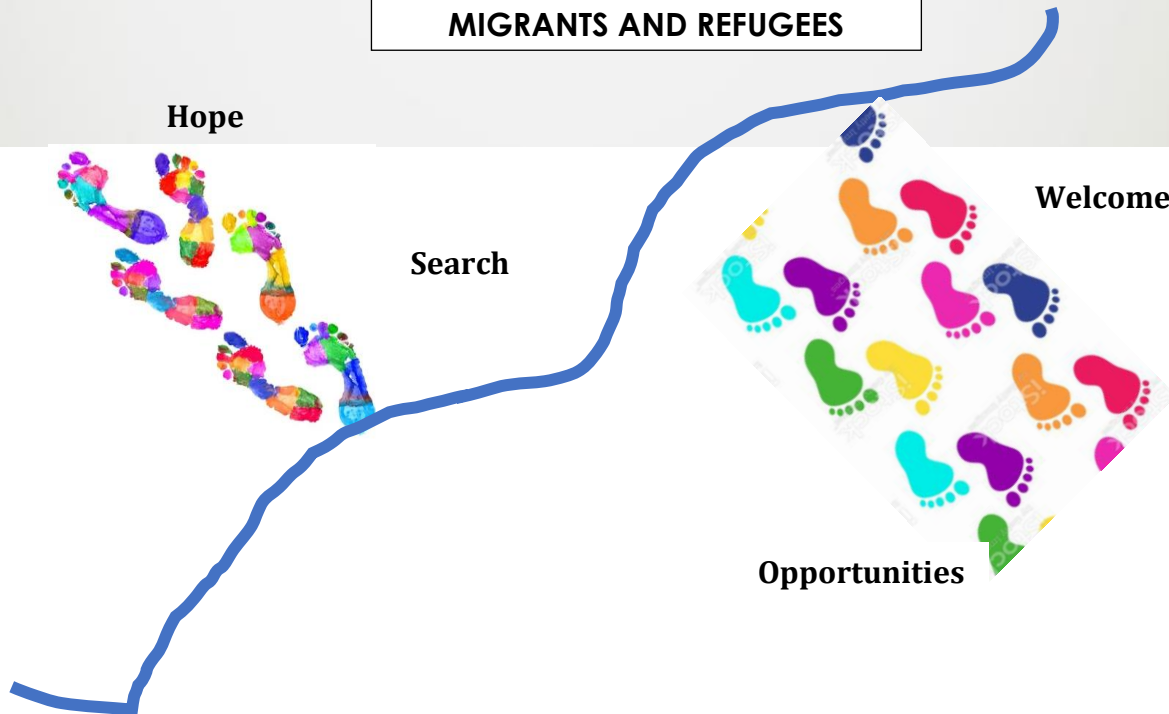
Let us contemplate the *image of the footprints*. We wonder whose footprints those are, what kind of people they belong to: Stranger or friend, brother or relative never seen, from my land or from another world.

Do I do my best to become a sister or brother to all of them, as Jesus does?

Let us listen to and meditate a song: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fB19i3HIFVE>

We say the names of some people that, outside of our family or friends, we carry in our hearts.

INTERNATIONAL DAY OF MIGRANTS AND REFUGEES



With one heart, let us pray that we may share with them God's blessings and recognize that, as one human family, we are all migrants, journeying in hope to God, our true home, where every tear will be wiped away; where we will be at peace and safe in his embrace.

POPE'S VIDEO

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S6J69LjKdoU>

What decisions need to be made starting right today to build an inclusive and better future for all?

PETITIONS

Our responses for the petitions: ***Defender of the poor and migrants, hear us.***

1. *"Abraham confidently looked forward to that has foundations, whose architect and builder is God" (Hebrews 11:10)*

We pray for Pope Francis and for all the members of the Church, so that we may ceaselessly proclaim the Gospel of salvation to all creation and consolidate a Church that **welcomes, protects, promotes and integrates** all people, in particular the most vulnerable. *Let us pray the Lord.*

2. *"Your gates shall always be open; day and night they shall not be shut." (Isaiah 60:11)*

We bring before the Lord all peoples, so that, inspired by your wisdom and goodness, they can build peace, unity and harmony in defence of the fundamental rights of human beings, especially migrants and victims of human trafficking. *Let us pray the Lord.*

3. “God will repay each one according to his deeds”. (Romans 2:6)

Lord of peace and justice, we ask you to enlighten those of us who administer justice in righteousness, honesty and love of truth, guide our actions towards a world of peace. *Let us pray the Lord.*

4. “Lift up your eyes, because we're all coming home!” (Isaiah 60:4)

We pray for all members of human family, especially for refugees and migrants, so that each day they can hear the call to renew their commitment with their children, and thus together they can build their future according to God's plan without ever losing hope. *Let us pray the Lord.*

5. “Come, you who are blessed by my Father...” (Matthew 25:34)

Lord, we pray for all who dedicate themselves to the service of evangelization within the Church, especially those who walk along with the migrants and victims of exploitation, so that, enlightened and guided by God, they may be granted: humility, simplicity and generosity in their current service. *Let us pray the Lord.*

OUR FATHER

FINAL PRAYER

Lord, make us bearers of hope,
so that where there is darkness,
your light may shine,
and where there is discouragement,
may confidence be reborn in the future.

Lord, make us instruments of your justice,
so that where there is exclusion, fraternity may flourish,
and where there is greed, may grow a spirit of sharing.

Lord, make us builders of your Kingdom,
together with migrants and refugees
and with all who dwell on the peripheries.

Lord, let us learn how beautiful it is
to live together as brothers and sisters. Amen.

