

HOMILY & PRAYER SUGGESTIONS
WORLD DAY OF MIGRANTS & REFUGEES
January 17, 2016

The Message by Pope Francis for the 2016 World Day of Migrants and Refugees is found on the website of the Holy See at

http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/messages/migration/documents/papa-francesco_20150912_world-migrants-day-2016.html.

THEME: “Migrants and Refugees Challenge Us. The Response of the Gospel of Mercy”

HOMILY NOTES/SUGGESTIONS

- ✓ Pope Francis, in his Message, refers to “Challenge” and “Mercy”. We are now in the Jubilee Year of Mercy. Challenge – this is a difficult process. Mercy – we are changed and so is the refugee. Pope Francis says, “In the face of the refugee we see the face of Christ.” The change is inevitable and there is no turning back.
- ✓ Canada is blessed to have thousands of committed, faithful, and well-trained people who have come forward to sponsor and support refugees. The Church gives thanks to God for these wonderful people. They are performing the corporal works of mercy – feeding the hungry, sheltering the homeless.... Pope Francis has identified these as concrete actions during the Jubilee Year of Mercy. As a reminder that these are part of living our faith, there is an indulgence for these works of mercy.
- ✓ Jesus, Mary and Joseph experienced migration as well, when the Holy Family fled to Egypt to escape persecution by King Herod.
- ✓ Refugees are not just political “concepts” but real people who have experienced violence, persecution, environmental disaster, and other hardships.
- ✓ The recent Pastoral Letter by the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops (CCCB) on welcoming refugees calls the faithful to action – to talk with government, to provide formation for clergy and pastoral workers; to set up local diocesan services, to establish a ministry for migrants, and more.

The Pastoral Letter by the CCCB Commission for Justice and Peace is found on the Conference’s website at

http://www.cccb.ca/site/images/stories/pdf/Pastoral_Letter_Refugees.pdf.

SUGGESTED PRAYERS OF THE FAITHFUL

- For Pope Francis, that he continue to lead, guide and call us to solidarity with all migrants, refugees and vulnerable populations, we pray to the Lord.

- For an end to the violence and poverty that displaces so many people from their homes, we pray to the Lord.
- For all of us gathered here today to pray for our sisters and brothers on the move, that we learn to recognize Jesus in the migrants and refugees who come to our land, and welcome them in His name, we pray to the Lord.
- For all refugees forced to leave their homeland and turned away by others, that they be brought to a place of safety where they may find warm and welcoming hearts, we pray to the Lord.
- For migrants and refugees, that in the hospitality of Christians they experience God's compassion, we pray to the Lord.
- For all people encountering each other in a new way because of migration, that they never lose hope for a better life and a welcoming hand, we pray to the Lord.
- That our hearts be enlarged and our eyes opened to see the hope and faith alive in migrants and refugees, we pray to the Lord.
- That in the example of the Holy Family, we recognize our own pilgrim journey on earth through the eyes of migrants and refugees, we pray to the Lord.

FURTHER RESOURCES FOR THE 2016 WORLD DAY OF MIGRANTS AND REFUGEES

- September 2015 Appeal by Pope Francis
http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/angelus/2015/documents/papa-francesco_angelus_20150906.html
- Message by Pope Francis for the 2015 World Day of Migrants and Refugees
http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/messages/migration/documents/papa-francesco_20140903_world-migrants-day-2015.html
- “Responding as Catholics to the Refugee Crisis: An Open Letter to Catholics” by the CCCB President http://www.cccb.ca/site/images/stories/pdf/Responding_to_the_refugee_crisis_-_EN.pdf
- September 2015 Resolution by the Catholic Bishops of Canada on Refugees
http://www.cccb.ca/site/images/stories/pdf/Plenary_resolution_on_refugees_-_EN1.pdf