



# PRAYER SERVICE for Migrants and Refugees

## Opening Song *(optional)*

“In Christ there is no East or West”

“There's a Wideness in God's Mercy

“Hail to the Lord's Anointed”

**Leader:** Let us begin with a moment to remember all forgotten migrants and refugees living in our world today.

*(Moment of silence, 3-4 seconds)*

## Opening Prayer

O Lord Jesus - who crossed the border between heaven and earth in the Incarnation, who lived as a child refugee in Egypt, who wandered about Galilee with no place to lay your head – please be here with us today. Help us to pray for migrants and refugees in our world. Where there is darkness and despair, bring the light of Your hope. Where there is sadness and crying, bring Your gentleness and love. Where there is fear and anxiety, bring Your comfort and everlasting peace. Lord Jesus, raise our minds and hearts to the most vulnerable and marginalized of our human family. Help us to recognize your Presence in all things, especially our brothers and sisters cast aside by society. Amen.

**Leader:** Please be seated. As we listen to Psalm 137, let us imagine what it may have been like to be a refugee in a foreign land.

For some, this may have been an experience for you or members of your family. As a community, we pray this psalm in solidarity.

## Psalm 137

- <sup>1</sup>By the rivers of Babylon we sat and wept  
when we remembered Zion.
- <sup>2</sup>There on the poplars  
we hung our harps,
- <sup>3</sup>for there our captors asked us for songs,  
our tormentors demanded songs of joy;  
they said, "Sing us one of the songs of Zion!"
- <sup>4</sup>How can we sing the songs of the Lord  
while in a foreign land?
- <sup>5</sup>If I forget you, Jerusalem,  
may my right hand forget its skill.
- <sup>6</sup>May my tongue cling to the roof of my mouth  
if I do not remember you,  
if I do not consider Jerusalem  
my highest joy.

*(moment of silence, 5-10 seconds)*

**2<sup>st</sup> Reader:** Leviticus 19:33-34

<sup>33</sup>When a foreigner resides among you in your land, do not mistreat them. <sup>34</sup>The foreigner residing among you must be treated as your native-born. Love them as yourself, for you were foreigners in Egypt. I am the Lord your God.

**Leader:** As we reflect upon these readings, let us ask ourselves, in what ways are migrants and refugees mistreated in our world today? How are these people cast aside, forgotten, and abused? Let us take a moment of silence to sit with the images that come to mind.

*(moment of silence)*

**Leader:** In what ways can we respond to this injustice in our world? If you were to imagine a civilization of love, what would it look like? Let us imagine what a better future for migrants and refugees would look like.

*(moment of silence)*

**Leader:** Now, let us turn to a message from Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI from the 2013 World Day of Migrants and Refugees.

**3<sup>rd</sup> reader:** Message of His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI for the World Day of Migrants and Refugees. (*Alternate Readings can be found on page 6*)



Where migrants and refugees are concerned, the Church and her various agencies ought to avoid offering charitable services alone; they are also called to promote real integration in a society where all are active members and responsible for one another's welfare, generously offering a creative contribution and rightfully sharing in the same rights and duties [...] Migrants trust that they will encounter acceptance, solidarity and help, that they will meet people who sympathize with the distress and tragedy experienced by others, recognize the values and resources the latter have to offer, and are open to sharing humanly and materially with the needy and disadvantaged. It is important to realize that "the reality of human solidarity, which is a benefit for us, also imposes a duty" [...] Human promotion goes side by side with spiritual communion, which opens the way "to an authentic and renewed conversion to the Lord, the only Saviour of the world.



HIS HOLINESS POPE BENEDICT XVI FOR THE WORLD DAY OF MIGRANTS AND REFUGEES. (2013)

**Extended Quiet Reflection:** Instrumental Music is appropriate.

## Intercessions

**Reader 4:** The response is, “Lord hear our prayer”.

Lord Jesus, help all migrants and refugees seeking refuge in a new land. Grant them physical safety on their journey. For this we pray,

Lord Jesus, please fulfill the spiritual needs of migrants and refugees. Grant them your grace, peace, and love in whatever darkness they encounter. For this we pray,

Lord Jesus, inspire the nations of our world to care for migrants and refugees. Soften our hearts so that we may not be indifferent to their cries. For this we pray,

Lord Jesus, inspire the wealthier nations of the world to care for the poorer ones. May we rise in awareness of the root causes of migration and seek to fix them. For this we pray,

Lord Jesus, help us to see your face in the faces of migrants and refugees. Help us to realize their inherent human dignity. For this we pray,

*(Add your own intentions here.)*

**Leader:** In solidarity with migrants and refugees around the world, let us hold hands and proclaim the prayer that Christ taught us. “Our Father...”

As a sign of gratitude for one another here today, let us share with one another the sign of peace.

## Final Prayer

Lord, Jesus. Thank you for your Presence amongst us today. Help us to always see you in the most vulnerable and marginalized among us, especially migrants and refugees. Protect them on their journeys just as you have protected us on ours. Teach us to stand together as One People under you, Our One Lord and migrant God, Jesus Christ. Amen.

## Final Song *(optional)*

“Christ be our Light”

“And They'll Know we are Christians by our  
Love (We are One in the Spirit)”

“When I Needed a Neighbour”

### **Alternate Readings:**

- » Genesis 16:1-11: Hagar and Ishmael flee as refugees into the desert.
- » Genesis 18:1-16: Three foreigners bear good news that Sarah will be pregnant.
- » Deuteronomy 10:18-19: Called to the cause of the marginalized, particularly migrants and refugees
- » Exodus 12:33-42: Israelites flight from Egypt
- » Joshua 20:1-8: God deems cities of refuge
- » Ruth 1:1-5: Famine at home causes Elimelech's family to flee to Moab
- » Psalm 77: In a day of trouble I seek the Lord
- » Psalm 61:1-4: David finds spiritual refuge in the Lord.
- » Hebrews 13:2: Show hospitality to strangers; they might be angels.
- » Matthew 2:13-18: Holy Family's flight to Egypt
- » Matthew 11:28-30: Jesus inviting us to take spiritual refuge in Him
- » Matthew 25:31-46: The sheep and the goats

### **Alternate papal documents on migrants and refugees:**

- » Message Of His Holiness Pope Francis For The 104th World Day Of Migrants And Refugees 2018
- » Strangers No Longer Together on the Journey of Hope, USCCB 2003
- » Exsul Familia Nazarethana, Apostolic Constitution, Pope Pius XII - 1952

### **Alternate Songs:**

- » "We Are Many Parts" by Marty Haugen
- » "Diverse in Culture, Race and Nation" by Ruth Duck



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Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS) is an international Catholic organization serving refugees and other forcibly displaced people. JRS's mission is to accompany, serve, and advocate on behalf of refugees and other forcibly displaced persons, that they may heal, learn, and determine their own future. Founded as a work of the Society of Jesus (Jesuits) in 1980, JRS today works in 57 countries worldwide to meet the educational, health, and social needs of more than one million refugees.