



en·coun·ter
{ to come upon face to face }

WORLD DAY OF MIGRANTS AND REFUGEES 2015

Church Without Frontiers, Mother To All

Sunday, January 18, 2015

“Migration movements, in fact, call us to deepen and strengthen the values needed to guarantee peaceful coexistence between persons and cultures. Achieving mere tolerance that respects diversity and ways of sharing between different backgrounds and cultures is not sufficient. This is precisely where the Church contributes to overcoming frontiers and encouraging the “moving away from attitudes of defensiveness and fear, indifference and marginalization ... towards attitudes based on a culture of encounter”

(Pope Francis **WORLD DAY OF MIGRANTS AND REFUGEES**)

“The only way for individuals, families, and societies to grow, the only way for the life of peoples to progress, is via the culture of encounter, a culture in which all have something good to give and all can receive something good in return.”



Pope Francis

REFLECTION

Canadians of Syrian origin have family members who are displaced by the conflict, irrespective of their religion. To limit resettlement to religious minorities would be to say to Muslim Canadians that their family members are not worthy.

INTER-FAITH STATEMENT ON SYRIAN REFUGEES

“All of our religions teach the fundamental worth of every human being. A person should never be excluded from refugee protection or resettlement on the basis of his or her religion.

In responding to situations of conflict where people are divided by religious affiliation and persecuted for their religion, it is all the more important that Canada assert that our humanity unites us all and that discrimination based on religion is unacceptable.

REFUGEES MUST BE SELECTED FOR RESETTLEMENT BASED ON NEED.”



QUESTIONS TO PONDER

*Have you ever witnessed religious discrimination against someone you know?

What happened? What stirred within you?

*Pope Francis calls the experience of “encounter” with the other a primary part of discipleship in the modern world, and he speaks about it often – and models it often.

How have you had an authentic encounter with a refugee and/or migrant?

How has this encounter “enlarged your heart?”

*Which scripture passage calls to mind the teaching that God’s protection and care is for all?



PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL

Lord Jesus, you taught us to look after one another, “I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me.” (Mt 25:35-36) When we look after our neighbour, we show our love for you. Lord help us to love like you, to become a Church with open arms! Together, we pray...

RESPONSE: God of encounters, hear our prayer

For the poorest and most abandoned trying to escape difficult living conditions and dangers of every kind—that they may find security, dignity, and respect in this land. **(R)**

For a culture of acceptance and solidarity, where we nourish and guide newcomers drawing close to them through prayer and works of mercy. **(R)**

For all women and men searching for employment, both native and newcomer, that they may find work to provide for their needs. **(R)**

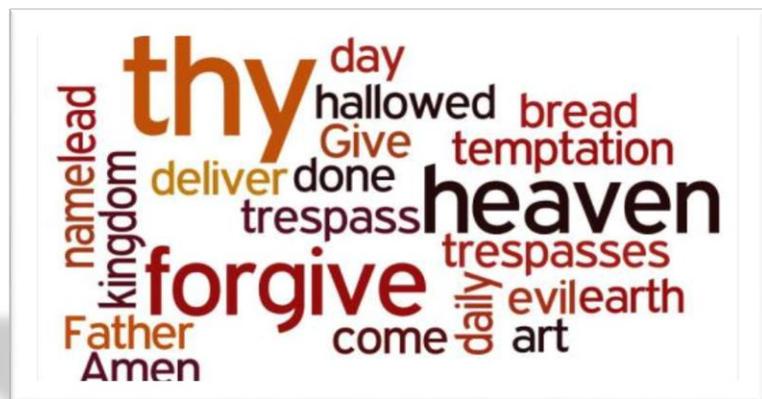
That our hearts may be enlarged and our eyes be opened to see the hope and faith alive in migrants and refugees. **(R)**

For the Church that she may proclaim that “God is love,” by welcoming all people, without distinctions or limits. **(R)**

For all people encountering each other in a new way because of migration that they may they never lose hope that there will be a better life and a hand of welcome. **(R)**

For Church Leaders, Catholic agencies and members of faith communities that they will continue to show leadership in speaking out for the rights of refugees and migrants. **(R)**

OUR FATHER



SOLIDARITY ACTION

- 1) Plan a viewing of **THE GOOD LIE**
Based on a true story of Sudanese refugees given the chance to resettle in Kansas City, Missouri.
- 2) Learn about refugee services in your community
- 3) Become a prayer partner for a refugee
- 4) Sign a petition to protest religious discrimination
<http://cpj.ca/syrian-refugees-discriminating-religion-unacceptable>
- 5) Attend the 11:00 am – Sunday, January 18, 2015
Archdiocese of Toronto Mass to Celebrate *World Day of Migrants and Refugees* at Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish (202 St. Patrick St.) Chinese Catholic Centre. Celebrant: Bishop Wayne Kirkpatrick.



CONCLUDING PRAYER

Blessed are You, Lord Jesus Christ.

You crossed every border between Divinity and humanity to make your home with us.
Help us to welcome you in newcomers, migrants and refugees.

Blessed are You, God of all nations.

You bless our land richly with goods of creation and people made in your image.
Grant that we will be stewards and peacemakers, who live as your children.

Blessed are You, Holy Spirit.

You work in the hearts of all to bring about harmony and goodwill.
Strengthen us in human solidarity and in hope.

God of all people, grant us vision to see your presence in our midst,
especially in our immigrant sisters and brothers. Amen.

With special thanks to Tony Moreno, CSsR (n) for his assistance
and to all our resource providers:

http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/messages/migration/documents/papa-francesco_20140903_world-migrants-day-2015.html

<http://files.www.iwj.org/resources/a-prayer-for-immigrants/CollectedPrayers4Imm4.131.pdf>

<http://cpj.ca/syrian-refugees-discriminating-religion-unacceptable>

Becoming Neighbours 2685 Kingston Road, Toronto, ON M1M 1M4
416.267.4817 jam@becomingneighbours.ca www.becomingneighbours.ca