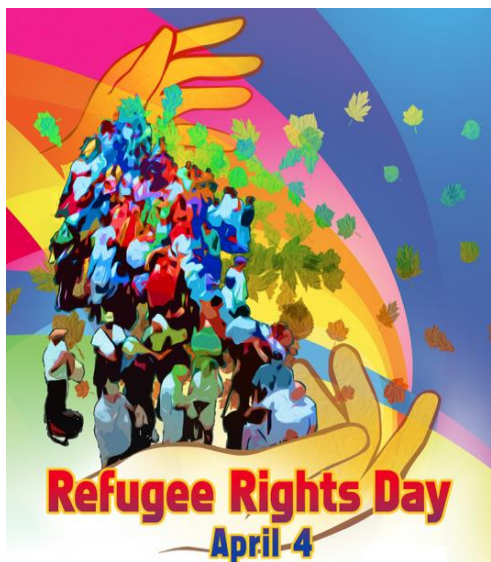


Prayer Service to Commemorate Refugee Rights



“REFUGEE RIGHTS DAY commemorates the April 04, 1985 Supreme Court Singh Decision – that the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms protects the right of refugee claimants in Canada to life, liberty and the security of person, and that claimants are therefore entitled to an oral hearing. Yet, as we celebrate this anniversary, the one nagging image that continues to haunt us is the reflection of refugees who continue to endure in silence because of social resistance to recognize the anguish, isolation and vulnerability of refugees or the breaking of the promise that Canada is indeed a safe haven for those who are persecuted. On April 04, REFUGEE RIGHTS DAY let us recognize that three decades since the Singh Decision, we must continue our active stand in the fight for the basic human rights of our refugee sisters and brothers.”

GATHERING SONG: [“Gather Us In”](#) CBW III # 587

OPENING PRAYER:

Gracious God,
You called Sarah and Abraham to find a home in a new land.
You welcomed the outsider and made them family.

We know their story, for it is our story.
Our families, many of them,
fled violence and oppression on every continent.
And You gave us Your own Son as a refugee from violence.

Following Your example, help us
make the story of the immigrant, the victim of human trafficking,
the refugee, and outsider part of our own story.

Today, your children still seek new homes, long for freedom,
hope for welcome and need protection.
Help us, most gracious God, to recognize one another as neighbour. Amen



SCRIPTURE: RUTH 1:7-19

Naomi set out from the place where she had been living, she and her two daughters-in-law, and they went on their way to go back to the land of Judah.

But Naomi said to her daughters-in-law, *“Go back each of you to your mother’s house.”* They said to her, *“No, we will return with you to your people.”* But Naomi said, *“Turn back, my daughters, why will you go with me?”*

Orpah kissed her mother-in-law, but Ruth said, *“Do not urge me to leave you or to turn back from following you! Where you go, I will go and where you stay, I will stay.*

Your people will be my people, and your God my God. Where you die, I will die.

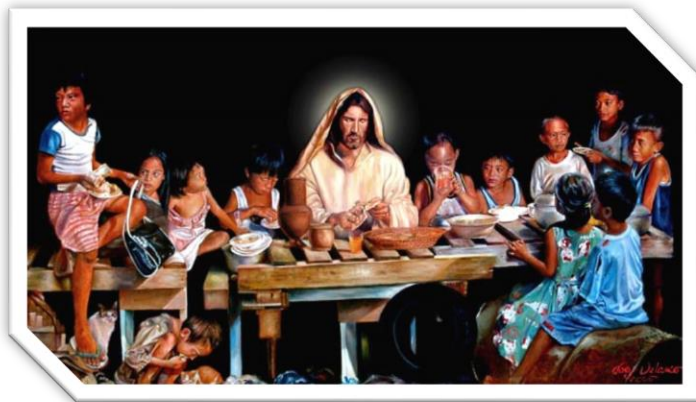
May the LORD do thus and so to me, and more as well, if even death separates me from you!”

So the two of them went on until they came to Bethlehem.”



PERSONAL/COMMUNAL REFLECTION:

- Listening to the story of Naomi, Ruth, and Orpah, what thoughts and feelings surfaced within you?
- Ruth left her homeland and kin behind to enter a foreign land and culture. Today, how does her courage inspire you to extend a welcome to refugee(s)?
- What is the connection between the story of Ruth and the stories of many of the refugees who have recently arrived in Canada?



“I ASK YOU TO WORK CONCRETELY TO WELCOME REFUGEES.”

(Pope Francis: Apostolic Letter Announcing the year of Consecrated Life”)

EVERY HUMAN HAS RIGHTS

Suggestions for Action

- Learn about the culture and background of one refugee. See [Canadian Council for Refugees](#)
- Promote the benefits and successes of refugees in your community.
- Demand the government legislate to protect the rights of trafficked persons in Canada. See [Amnesty International](#)
- Visit/contact your federal MP in their constituencies focused on [these three demands](#).
- Keep refugees and those who provide support to them in your daily prayers.
- Become more involved in the ministry of Becoming

CALL TO ACTION:

The time is here, the time is now.
We can change things.
Give the earth your dream for harmony;
she is waiting for you, waiting for me.



Show the earth you care about her future,
melt the walls of hate and fear that keep us apart.
Believe we can live together as friends of the earth.

So be the reason, be the hope for others
to believe that the earth is meant for
beauty, goodness and peace,
and that our God of love is God of the Earth's one family.

("Touch the Earth" by Kathy Sherman, CSJ)

QUESTION

What is one action God is inviting you to undertake?

OUR FATHER

FINAL BLESSING:

As you cleave to me in love, I will deliver you;
I will protect you who call upon my name.
When you call to me, I will answer you;
I will be with you in times of trouble,
I will rescue you and reverence your life.
All through the years, I will dwell in your heart,
As your loving companion forever. Amen

(Psalm 91 adapted by Nan C. Merrill)

We ask Your blessing through Jesus, the Risen One. Amen.

