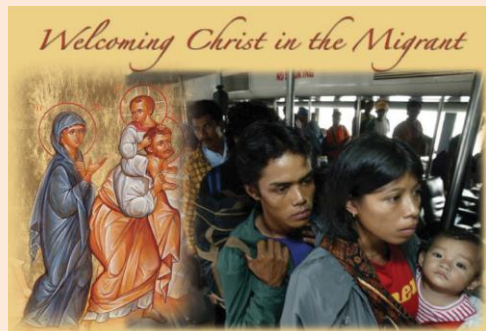


To all of our dear friends, we encircle you with God's love and peace ---

When the song of the angels is stilled,
when the star in the sky is gone,
when the kings and magi are home,
when the shepherds are with their flocks
the work of Christmas begins ---



to find the lost,
to heal the broken,
to feed the hungry,
to bring peace
to release the prisoner,
to rebuild the nations,
to recognize one another as **Neighbour**.
— Howard Thurman

NOW OUR WORK OF CHRISTMAS BEGINS ---

To help situate ourselves in what we are to be about, let us listen to Pope Francis in his "Message for the Celebration of the 2020 World Day of Peace" calling us to an "ecological conversion ... [which] will lead us to a new way of looking at life, as we consider the generosity of the Creator who has given us the earth and called us to a share it in joy and moderation. This conversion must be understood in an integral way, as a transformation of how we relate to our sisters and brothers, to other living beings, to creation in all its rich variety and to the Creator who is the origin and source of all life".

We need to be clear: what destroys the earth; destroys wounded humanity.

During this FESTIVAL OF LIGHTS, together, let us be ministers of peace and healing for refugees throughout our world and for every place in the world caught in conflict and at this critical moment, we place before God the people and the land of Iran and the United States.

Together, may our hearts and our actions be in solidarity with all the suffering of our world.

Lois Anne Bordowitz, FCJ

Peter McKenna, SCJ