

BECOMING NEIGHBOURS

United Nations International Migrants Day 2020



Source: [UN International Migrants Day](#) (To view stories, click image above)

International Migrants Day 2020 focuses on the stories of social cohesion, which are as varied and unique as each of the 272 million migrants, living new lives and building new communities in every corner of the globe. We learn together, create together, work, sing, dance and play together.

WE LIVE TOGETHER. #WeTogether.

BACKGROUND

“We mark this International Migrants Day in the midst of dramatic social change.

A pandemic has tested our strength and highlighted systematic inequalities.

It has also connected us in new ways and renewed our motivation to act for equality.

International migrants day commemorates the adoption of the International Convention on the Protection and Rights of All migrants workers and members of their families.

In the time of COVID, NO MATTER WHO YOU ARE OR WHERE YOU COME FROM, PANDEMIC OR NOT; EVERYONE OF US, WE TOGETHER, CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE.”

Source: UNHCR

GATHERING PRAYER: Prayer to the Creator

Loving God of our human family,
you created all human beings equal in dignity:
pour forth into our hearts a fraternal spirit
and inspire in us a dream of renewed encounter,
dialogue, justice and peace.
Move us to create healthier societies
and a more dignified world,
a world without hunger, poverty, violence and war.

May our hearts be open
to all the peoples and nations of the earth.
May we recognize the goodness and beauty
that you have sown in each of us,
and thus forge bonds of unity, common projects,
and shared dreams. Amen.

(Fratelli Tutti)

READING: FRATELLI TUTTI #69 & 81

69. "The parable [of the Good Samaritan] is clear and straightforward, yet it also evokes the interior struggle that each of us experiences as we gradually come to know ourselves through our relationships with our brothers and sisters. Sooner or later, we will all encounter a person who is suffering. Today there are more and more of them. The decision to include or exclude those lying wounded along the roadside can serve as a criterion for judging every economic, political, social and religious project. Each day we have to decide whether to be Good Samaritans or indifferent bystanders. And if we extend our gaze to the history of our own lives and that of the entire world, all of us are, or have been, like each of the characters in the parable. All of us have in ourselves something of the wounded man, something of the robber, something of the passers-by, and something of the Good Samaritan."

81. "Jesus asks us to be present to those in need of help, regardless of whether or not they belong to our social group. In this case, the Samaritan became a neighbour to the wounded Judean. By approaching and making himself present, he crossed all cultural and historical barriers. Jesus concludes ... by saying: "GO AND DO LIKEWISE" (Lk 10:37). In other words, he challenges us to put aside all differences and, in the face of suffering, to draw near to others with no questions asked. I should no longer say that I have neighbours to help, but that I must myself be a neighbour to others."



"Rumichaca, border of Colombia with Ecuador. Laila, three years old sitting on the shoulders of her father Jose. Jose is a fisherman from Venezuela, now travelling with his wife and two daughters to Quito". © UNICEF/Santiago Arcos

PERSONAL/COMMUNAL REFLECTION:

(Let us pause for a few moments and ask ourselves...)

Revisit an experience of you reaching out to a newcomer or of you being one who has been welcomed into a different cultural reality.

What is a blessing that you have received through an encounter with someone from another culture/land?

What is the request that God is asking of you at this moment?



PRAYER OF PETITION: (R)esponse: GRACIOUS GOD, HEAR OUR PRAYER

Waiting along roads, along borders,
Waiting for boats, for help to come,
 Waiting in tents, in camps,
 Waiting in detention centers,
 Migrants are children of God
With no end to the waiting in sight.



Let us pray for all migrants, women, men, children; walking and waiting, longing for security,
 the safety of a home, for welcome, for inclusion, We pray. **R**
Let us pray that the day will come, through God’s grace and our work for justice, when the walking
 and waiting will be over when all migrants find the welcome they seek
 and the embracing community they long for. We pray. **R**
(Adapted from Center of Concern)

OUR FATHER

CLOSING PRAYER

Gracious loving God,
We “dream, then, as a single human family, as fellow travelers sharing the same flesh, as children
of the same earth which is our common home, each of us bringing the richness of his or her beliefs
and convictions, each of us with his or her own voice, brothers and sisters all”. (FT #8)
Bring us, we together, as one family at the banquet table of Your love. Amen.

ACTION(S) OF SOLIDARITY

- * Pray for one migrant whom you have encountered
- * Reach out and meet a migrant who lives in your neighbourhood.
- * Learn about migrant services in your community. See [Toronto Catholic Charities](#)
- * Celebrate the bonds across cultures and religions that make us stronger and more resilient.
- * Re-read “[Fratelli Tutti](#)”.
- * Sign-up for [Global Migration Film Festival](#)

