

TOWARDS AN EVER WIDER “WE”

Prayer for every day

Holy, beloved Father,
your Son Jesus taught us
that there is great rejoicing in heaven
whenever someone lost is found,
whenever someone excluded, rejected or discarded
is gathered into our “we”,
which thus becomes ever wider.
We ask you to grant the followers of Jesus,
and all people of good will,
the grace to do your will on earth.
Bless each act of welcome and outreach
that draws those in exile
into the “we” of community and of the Church,
so that our earth may truly become
what you yourself created it to be:
the common home of all our brothers and sisters. Amen.

Day 1: A “WE” AS WIDE AS HUMANITY

Biblical Passage:

Behold, God's dwelling is with the human race. He will dwell with them and they will be his people and God himself will always be with them (as their God). (Rev 21,3)

Passage from Fratelli Tutti:

Once this health crisis passes, our worst response would be to plunge even more deeply into feverish consumerism and new forms of egotistic self-preservation. God willing, after all this, we will think no longer in terms of “them” and “those”, but only “us”. (Ft 35)

Reflexion:

This year, the theme I have chosen for the World Day of Migrants and Refugees is: **“Towards an ever wider we”**. This is an invitation for all of us to commit ourselves to restoring our human family.

We are all in the same boat and we are called to commit ourselves so that no more walls separate us, so that there are no longer them and those but only “one we”, a “we” as wide as all of humanity.

Prayer:

God of our human family, you created all human beings equal in dignity. We are all sisters and brothers, your beloved children.

Send your Spirit upon us so that we may break down the walls of division, poverty, indifference and exclusion. Help us to be bridge-builders who practice intercultural and interreligious encounter.

Day 2: ONE CHURCH, ONE HOME, ONE FAMILY

Biblical passage:

There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in the fellowship of Jesus Christ. (Gal 3:28).

Passage from Fratelli Tutti:

We too are called to unite as a family that is stronger than the sum of small individual members. For “the whole is greater than the part, but it is also greater than the sum of its parts.” (Ft 78)

Reflexion:

We are called to be ever **more faithful to being Catholic**, which means universal, inclusive, open to all humanity without distinction of race, culture, gender or condition of life. To be Catholic is first and foremost a personal commitment by every Christian to live a life worthy of his Lord Jesus Christ who, on the cross, opened his arms to embrace all humanity without distinction. His outstretched arms on the cross also invite Catholics to do the same, to open their hearts and stretch out their arms in love to welcome others, especially those who suffer, who are under threat of exclusion, who no longer have a "home", such as refugees, and who are desperately seeking open arms to welcome them.

In fact, being Catholic requires going beyond oneself, being open to others who, like oneself, have been created in the image and likeness of God. Therefore, openness to the other is also a way of opening oneself to the Divine, which shines through in the face, however disfigured, of my brother and sister in humanity.

Prayer:

Lord and Father of our human family, calls upon the Church to widen the space of her tent to welcome the suffering humanity that is caused by impoverishment, the pandemic of Covid-19, war, terrorism, environmental destruction and many natural disasters.

Day 3: A CHURCH THAT REACHES OUT

Biblical Passage:

As you go, make this proclamation: 'The kingdom of heaven is at hand.' Cure the sick, raise the dead, cleanse lepers, drive out demons. Without cost you have received; without cost you are to give. (Mt 10,7-8)

Passage from Fratelli Tutti:

The Church is a home with open doors, because she is a mother. And in imitation of Mary, the Mother of Jesus, “we want to be a Church that serves, that leaves home and goes forth from its places of worship, goes forth from its sacristies, in order to accompany life, to sustain hope, to be the sign of unity... to build bridges, to break down walls, to sow seeds of reconciliation”. (FT 276)

Reflexion:

The World Day of Migrants and Refugees calls for a missionary Church, a Church that goes out to encounter others, especially refugees and migrants.

A Church that encounters migrants and those who are excluded from our societies is a Church that prays, that seeks the face of its Master Jesus in the disfigured faces of the women and men of our time. For, as Jesus himself affirms: “Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did it to me” (Mt 25:40).

Prayer:

God of the human family, help us to be attentive to those who feel like strangers around us and who face obstacles to social integration.

Day 4: LEARNING TO LIVE TOGETHER

Biblical Passage:

We are Parthians, Medes, and Elamites, inhabitants of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the districts of Libya near Cyrene, as well

as travelers from Rome, both Jews and converts to Judaism, Cretans and Arabs, yet we hear them speaking in our own tongues of the mighty acts of God. (Act 2, 9-11)

Passage from Fratelli Tutti:

In some areas of our cities, there is still a lively sense of neighbourhood. Each person quite spontaneously perceives a duty to accompany and help his or her neighbour. In places where these community values are maintained, people experience a closeness marked by gratitude, solidarity and reciprocity. The neighbourhood gives them a sense of shared identity. Would that neighbouring countries were able to encourage a similar neighbourly spirit between their peoples! (FT 152)

Reflexion:

The future of our societies is a colourful future, enriched by diversity and intercultural relations. We strongly believe that we **are able to build a stronger society together** rather than to have very fragmented groups living apart.

It is a challenge for all of us to learn to live together in harmony and peace. It is also an opportunity to learn from one other and to enrich each other.

Prayer:

God of the human family, support our efforts to live together in harmony and peace!

Day 5: BUILDING A "WE" THAT CARES FOR OUR COMMON HOME

Biblical Passage:

A nobleman went off to a distant country to obtain the kingship for himself and then to return. He called ten of his servants and gave them ten gold coins and told them, 'Engage in trade with these until I return.' (Lk 19, 12-13)

Passage from Fratelli Tutti:

To care for the world in which we live means to care for ourselves. Yet we need to think of ourselves more and more as a single family dwelling in a common home. (FT 17)

Reflexion:

The message of the World Day of Migrants and Refugees proposes a new world and a new way of living in it: **"to make good use of the gifts that the Lord has entrusted to us"**. Indeed, to live in the world without recognizing that we have received what is necessary to make this world beautiful and prosperous for all, is to live selfishly and ungratefully.

On the other hand, to see and measure the challenges of our time and their consequences for future generations is to discover our responsibility to make this world a space and a historical moment of sustainable and good life for all generations.

Prayer:

God of the human family, help us to recognize the good and beauty that you have sown in each of us and give us the audacity and perseverance to commit ourselves for the generations to come by protecting our common Home.