

A Daily Photo Journal: Remembrance of the Little Ones for the World Day of Migrants and Refugees January 15, 2017



“...on the occasion of the annual World Day of Migrants and Refugees, I feel compelled to draw attention to the reality of child migrants, especially the ones who are alone. In doing so, I ask everyone to take care of the young, who in a threefold way are defenceless: they are children, they are foreigners, and they have no means to protect themselves. I ask everyone to help those who, for various reasons, are forced to live far from their homeland and are separated from their families.”

—Pope Francis, *Message for the World Day of Migrants and Refugees*, 2017



Photographs can powerfully pull us into someone else's experience. On World Day of Migrants and Refugees, reflect on your relationship with migrants and refugees in your communities. Are you welcoming of those who "find themselves in the existential peripheries of our societies?" Do you show solidarity with the most vulnerable of the poor, the disabled, and the sick, migrants and refugees, the elderly, and the young who lack employment?

Begin by reflecting on St. Matthew's Gospel 18:1-6.

"The disciples came up to Jesus with the question, 'Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?' Jesus called for a little child to come and stand among them. Then, Jesus said, 'The truth is, unless you change and become like little children, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven. Those who make themselves as humble as this child are the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. Whoever welcomes a child in my name welcomes me.'"



Sunday, January 15: Begin by lighting a candle. As your prayer begins, take a few moments to open your heart and mind to God. What does this little girl fear? Who is accompanying this little girl? How might you act to help other children in this situation? Write her a note.





Monday, January 16: Begin by lighting a candle. As your prayer begins, take a few moments to open your heart and mind to God. As you look at this photo, what thoughts and emotions does it elicit in you? What might these young people be thinking? What would you like their welcome too include? What will they need and what can you provide? Consider writing a prayer for adolescent migrants fleeing their countries.



Tuesday, January 17: Begin by lighting a candle. As your prayer begins, take a few moments to open your heart and mind to God. As you look at this photo, what thoughts and emotions does it elicit in you? Imagine being separated from your family. What might happen to this girl as a result of being separated from her family unit? Learn about the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) to see what services they provide for the world's most vulnerable children (<http://bit.ly/1RRUxqs>).



Wednesday, January 18: Begin by lighting a candle. As your prayer begins, take a few moments to open your heart and mind to God. As you look at this photo, what thoughts and emotions does it elicit in you? What questions of justice come to mind? Learn about Annunciation House's work to accompany migrants, the homeless, and economically vulnerable peoples of the border since 1978 (<http://bit.ly/2h7L4N6>).



Thursday, January 19: Begin by lighting a candle. As your prayer begins, take a few moments to open your heart and mind to God. As you look at this photo, what thoughts and emotions does it elicit in you? Learn about Sister Norma Pimentel's service to unaccompanied minors crossing at the Texas Rio Grande Valley (<http://bit.ly/2g1m8Lf>).



Friday, January 20: Begin by lighting a candle. As your prayer begins, take a few moments to open your heart and mind to God. As you look at this photo, what thoughts and emotions does it elicit in you? What words of comfort is this older woman offering to this little one? What words of comfort would you offer to refugee children? Turn these words of comfort into a poem.





Saturday, January 21: Begin by lighting a candle. As your prayer begins, take a few moments to open your heart and mind to God. As you look at this photo, what thoughts and emotions does it elicit in you? How can your prayers and actions bring justice and joy to migrant children? Consider writing a letter to the editor of your local newspaper about declaring your community a sanctuary for migrants and refugees.



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