

Office for Immigrant Affairs and Immigration Education



Prayers & Intentions

For Immigrants and
Immigration Reform

For Parish Use

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**This packet of prayers has been collected and compiled by the
Office of Immigrant Affairs and Immigration Education
Archdiocese of Chicago, Illinois**

Feel free to use these, giving credit to the authors as noted.

**You may find these prayers on our website at:
<http://www.archchicago.org/Immigration/>**

PRAYERS FOR THE IMMIGRANT AND IMMIGRATION REFORM

For Parish Use

For the Migrant Journey

Prayer for Migrants

For all those who see “home” and all it means
Disappear behind them;
For all those who cannot see a home
In the days ahead of them;
For all those who dwell in
Daily insecurity;
For all those who are weary and
Without a safe place to rest their heads;
For all families in migration we pray.
May the image of the Holy Family
Fleeing oppression stay with us as we enter a New Year,
And stay with us each night as we are blessed
With returning to a home.
May we also be blessed
With compassion for those
Still weary, still seeking,
Still with so far to go.
by Jane Deren, 2007

A Prayer for Immigrants 1

God of the journey, God of the traveler,
We pray for those who leave their homes in search new beginnings and possibilities,
May they know your presence with them.
We pray that those who seek to make a home in this country
May find us welcoming and willing to help them find a path toward citizenship,
We pray that our legislators, as they craft new immigration legislation
May find the wisdom and courage to enact new policies that do justice for our country and for those who
would immigrate here.
We pray for those who fan the flames of fear and discrimination against the undocumented may be touched
with your divine compassion.
We pray in Jesus’ name.
Amen

~ The Archdiocese of Chicago, adapted



A Prayer to Jesus Christ for Immigrants

O Jesus, who in the very first days of Thine earthly life wast compelled,
together with Mary, Thy loving Mother, and Saint Joseph,
to leave Thy native land and to endure in Egypt
the misery and discomforts of poor emigrants,
turn Thine eyes upon our brethren, who, far away from their dear country
and from all that is dear to them, are not infrequently constrained
to struggle with the difficulties of a new life,
and who are likewise often exposed to grave dangers and snares
for their immortal souls.

Be Thou their guide in their uncertain journey,
their help in trouble, their comfort in sorrow;
keep them safe in their faith, holy in their lives,
and faithful to their children, their wives, and their parents;
Grant, O Lord, that we may be able to embrace them affectionately,
and hereafter to live inseparably united to them
at the foot of Thy throne in our heavenly country.

Amen.

<http://www.catholicculture.org/culture/liturgicalyear/prayers/view.cfm?id=945>

A Prayer for the Human Tragedy Behind the Immigration

<http://oga.pcusa.org/immigration/liturgical-resources.htm>

Holy God,

Your presence transcends all human made borders and your love crosses all boundaries. Help us join you at the borders and help us to extend some hope to those who live without future and dignity at the border. We pray that you help us to promote laws that protect the rights and dignity of everyone, especially those most vulnerable.

God of justice

Your loves transcends our limitations and our unfair rules that discriminate human beings and divide the humankind. We pray that the dignity of all God's children will be acknowledged and protected in every country of the world but especially in our country.

God of mercy

Your wisdom transcends our limited understanding and our conditioned charity. Help us to end the violence and poverty that displaces so many people from their homes and homelands to find new dreams and horizons. We pray that employers and corporations may choose the dignity and worth of each human person over profit and power.

God of all peoples

Your merciful compassion transcends our unlimited selfishness that condemns millions of people around the world to lives of misery, hungry, sick and utterly without hope.

A Prayer for the Human Tragedy Behind the Immigration (cont'd)

Creator and Sustainer, we offer our prayer...

For the children who cross the border looking for a better education because of the lack of opportunities in their own countries.

For those victims of human trafficking forced to slave labor and prostitution while they pursuing the American dream.

For the multitude of refugees, forced from their homes to alien places through war or through the destruction of their environment.

For the migrant workers, who are forced to travel to other countries looking for better salaries because there are not fair remunerated jobs in their countries.

God of all nations

We are indeed a nation of nations. Help us to incorporate newcomers into the ever growing and diverse body we call the United States of America. You made us different yet all bearing your image. As we work to live in community with our brothers and sisters help us to discern that image in those around us.

God of all cultures, races and languages

Give us the wisdom to find the way to proclaim a Comprehensive Immigration Reform to restore the dignity of millions of men and women who live in darkness and to reshape the image of the country that is proud to be the land of free and the house of braves.

In your Holy Name we pray. Amen

Submitted By:

The Rev. Jose Luis Casal



Buen Coyote

You walk with us in deserted places,
And show us the way to Promised Land.
Guide us through the thorny thickets that entangle us,
the arid refuge of serpents and scorpions that puncture our resolve.
That our determination to continue in your ways,
Despite the hardships we encounter,
Will never falter.
Por favor Buen Coyote, for it is in your name, Jesus Christ, we pray.
Submitted By: George Tatro

Prayer for My Brother and Sister Migrants

Prayer on the wall at CCAMYN (Centro Comunitario de Atencion Migrante y Necesitado) in Altar, Mexico.

Heart of Jesus full of love and mercy, watch over my sister and brother migrants.

Have pity on them and protect them.

They suffer mistreatment and humiliations on their way,

Are looked upon as dangerous by most,

and marginalized for being foreigners.

Help us to respect them and appreciate their dignity.

Touch with your goodness the hearts of we who see them pass by.

Take care of their families until they return home,

Not with broken hearts but with their hopes fulfilled.

May it be so. We ask this through Christ Our Lord.

Amen <http://www.nfwm.org/worshipresources/prayers.shtml#Brother%20and%20sister%20migrants>

Prayer for Those Who Migrate

Mary knew the weariness

Of the journey;

To Bethlehem, To Egypt,

Back to Nazareth.

She knew the weariness,

The fear, the longing for home,

The need to continue moving, moving,

The longing for journey's end,

the longing for at least

a semblance of a home.

To Mary we entrust

The mothers, the fathers, the children

who today are holy families

Migrating in hope, in fear, in longing,

for peace, for some security,

For something like a home.

May they find their journey's end

as we open ourselves to their stories,

their need, their spirits;

We ask for mercy

for all migrants

and for our communities

who are challenged to welcome them,

to give them hope for a new life.

--by Jane Deren

<http://www.educationforjustice.org>



Walk with Us

Prayer for Immigrant Rights Sunday—May 2, 2010

<http://www.ucc.org/m/worship-ways.html>

Journeying God
Migrant Christ
Border-crossing Spirit

You are always making something new in us.
You weave together the textures and colors
of all cultures, and races.

You move in us,
calling us to leave everything behind,
our homes, families, identities and culture.

No wall is too high or too wide to keep us from your table.
No laws are so strong as to lock us away from your love.
No visa is needed to enter your Kindom*.

Walk with us as we find our way to freedom.
Stay with us as we confront the barriers that keep us from your good.
Breathe new life in us as we live into a new creation,
in which we join you at your most holy table,
where everyone is welcome.

Amen

* “Kindom of God” is a term growing in usage as an alternative to “Kingdom of God”--it describes a vision of community where God is all in all, and human hierarchies give way to relationships of justice.



A Prayer for Immigrants 2

Journeying God, travel with those who move from one place to another. Provide strength and courage and reminders of your presence. Lead people around the world to extend hospitality to immigrants and in so doing encounter sisters and brothers. Guide those who make and enforce immigration policy to do so wisely and well. We pray in the name of Jesus, whose parents fled to Egypt to keep him safe. Amen.

Submitted By: The Rev. W. Mark Koenig
Associate for Resources and Publications, Presbyterian Peacemaking Program



Prayer of the Immigrant

Hear my cry, O God;
listen to my prayer.
From the ends of the earth I call to you,
I call as my heart grows faint;
lead me to the rock that is higher than I.
For you have been my refuge,
a strong tower against the foe
I long to dwell in your tent forever
and take refuge in the shelter of your wings.

Psalm of David - Psalms 61.1-4
Education for Justice

Prayer for Migrants and Refugees

Mary Most Holy, you, together with St. Joseph and the Child Jesus, experienced the suffering of exile. You were forced to flee to Egypt to escape the persecution of Herod. Today we entrust the men, women and children who live as migrants and refugees to your maternal protection.

Grant us the grace to welcome them with Christian hospitality, so that these brothers and sisters of ours may find acceptance and understanding on their journey.

Teach us to recognize your Son

in the migrant who labors to bring food to our tables

in the refugee seeking protection from persecution, war, and famine

in the woman and child who are victims of human trafficking

in the asylum seeker imprisoned for fleeing without documents

May all those who are far from their place of birth find in the Church a home where no one is a stranger. We ask this in the name of your blessed Son, Jesus, our Lord. Amen.

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Litany of the Displaced

God of all people,
We bring before you all who work for the fullness of justice,
All who long for the widening of welcome
To which your Gospel calls us.

RESPONSE: Open hearts, open arms, open doors in welcome!

Displaced God,
Born in flight to parents anxious and weary,
Born anew in those who flee oppression,
leaving home and loved ones behind,
And staking their lives on the hope of abundant life,
we pray: RESPONSE

Journeying God,
Turned away over and over again
By our world.'s collective fear of the stranger, we pray: RESPONSE:

Uprooted God,
Suspended in the endless uncertainty
that is the daily life of the migrant,
we pray: RESPONSE

Waiting God,
Waiting today with all who suffer separation
from home and the familiar,
Waiting for safe return,
Waiting for war.'s end,
Waiting for justice to be restored, we pray: RESPONSE

God of all people,
Stir us to holy anger over the wounds of our world.
Move us to action for justice
Until the fullness of welcome is fulfilled in our midst
And the problems that cause migration--the poverty, the fear, and the suffering--
Are confronted by all people of good will
And transformed by the power of compassion.

Amen!

Adapted from Chris Koellhoffer, IHM
Education for Justice



For Migrant Workers



Prayer for Our Migrant Sisters and Brothers

By: Jill Rauh

A mother migrates with her children.
They hope to escape poverty.
No one will let them try.
They are turned back at the border.
A family flees to escape war and death.
They leave with nothing.
They will never return.
A father entrusts his son to a relative
who knows of a job for the boy.
The boy becomes a slave in a factory.
A young woman responds to an ad:
"Work in a factory! Make money!"
She is made to prostitute her body.
A teenager migrates to the city, looking for work.
He performs heavy labor for pennies.
He sleeps with cockroaches.
He almost starves,
but he sends money to his family.
Today we remember the plight of migrants.
God, they are all your children.
Help us, as Pope Benedict XVI calls us:
to understand the causes of migration,
to feel solidarity with those who migrate, and
to work for safety and justice for those who flee poverty and war. Amen.

The Farm Workers' Prayer by Cesar E. Chavez (1927-1993) Founder, United Farm Workers

Show me the suffering of the most miserable;
So I will know my people's plight.
Free me to pray for others;
For you are present in every person.
Help me to take responsibility for my own life;
So that I can be free at last.
Grant me courage to serve others;
For in service there is true life.
Give me honesty and patience;
So that I can work with other workers.

Bring forth song and celebration;
So that the Spirit will be alive in us.
Let the spirit flourish and grow;
So that we will never tire of the struggle.
Let us remember those who have died for justice;
For they have given us life.
Help us to love even those who hate us;
So we can change the world.
Amen.

Prayer of the Farm Workers' Struggle

Cesar e. Chavez

Show me the suffering of the most miserable;
So I will know my people's plight.

Free me to pray for others;
For you are present in every person.

Help me take responsibility for my own life;
So that I can be free at last.

Grant me courage to serve others;
For in service there is true life.

Give me honesty and patience;
So that the Spirit will be alive among us.

Let the Spirit flourish and grow;
So that we will never tire of the struggle.

Let us remember those who have died for justice;
For they have given us life.

Help us love even those who hate us;
So we can change the world.

Amen.

For Migrant Women

Prayer for Women Who Are Immigrants and Seek Refuge <http://rcrc.org/perspectives/sermons/immigrants.cfm>

Adapted from a prayer by Reverend Ignacio Castuera

Gracious God, you who guided Naomi and her family to look for bread in Moab, a foreign land, protect the women everywhere who have to leave behind their home or homelands so that they and their families can survive.

May those who are escaping the ravages of war find shelter and sustenance. May the land in which they seek refuge welcome them and treat them with hospitality.

May those who are seeking to stop the threats of violence against them find a peaceful and healing place. Help them hold on to their hope for a new beginning. And may those who are fleeing from the famines that starve them and their children find relief from their painful and debilitating hunger. May they find food both for their journey and for their bodies.

You who guided Ruth to go to the Promised Land, grant that, like her, women may be lifted from the fields where they harvest to be part of royal lineage. And grant that we who are the spiritual descendants of those of old who were told that the holiest of trinities was made of the widow, the orphan and the migrant, be given the courage to see your face, your real presence, in the faces of women who have great need. Amen.

Prayer for Women Migrant Domestic Workers

By: Education for Justice

Blessed are the women who care for others' children
in order to provide for their own,
Who leave their homes, their families, their friends and their cultures,
Who do all of this, not by choice, but by force of necessity.

Blessed is their strength.

Blessed is their courage.

Blessed is their sacrifice.

Blessed are the children who must grow up without their mothers' care,
Who experience loneliness and sadness at the great void in their lives.

Blessed is their strength.

Blessed is their courage.

Blessed is their sacrifice.

Cursed is the global economic system that impoverishes billions of women, men and children throughout the
world.

Cursed are those who take advantage of these women
as they seek to provide for their families,
denying them their rights and their dignity.

Cursed are those who see the suffering of these women and do nothing.

Blessed be the communities of people that are impoverished, underemployed and hungry due to unjust economic conditions

dictated by the countries of the North.

Blessed be these communities that lose woman after woman
as they leave to find work in the countries of the North.

Blessed be these communities

as the children grow up in them without mothers.

O God, we confess to you that we have allowed our hearts to harden: we are filled with selfish desires and apathy towards the suffering. Heal us with your life-giving Spirit of love. Help us to work compassionately and mercifully for a more just world.

Amen.

For One Family, Brothers and Sisters

Prayer for My Brother and Sister Migrants

Prayer on the wall at CCAMYN (Centro Comunitario de Atencion Migrante y Necesitado) in Altar, Mexico.

Heart of Jesus full of love and mercy, watch over my sister and brother migrants.

Have pity on them and protect them.

They suffer mistreatment and humiliations on their way,

Are looked upon as dangerous by most,

and marginalized for being foreigners.

Help us to respect them and appreciate their dignity.

Touch with your goodness the hearts of we who see them pass by.

Take care of their families until they return home,

Not with broken hearts but with their hopes fulfilled.

May it be so. We ask this through Christ Our Lord.

Amen <http://www.nfwm.org/worshipresources/prayers.shtml#Brother%20and%20sister%20migrants>

One Family, Under God

God in heaven, precious be your name,

Today we pray for all the people of the world who live hiding and in fear from persecution. We pray God that you may give the politicians who are making these laws, compassion. Compassion for all the people who will be affected by their decisions and live in fear everyday that their lives may be in turmoil or that they may become separated from their family and love ones. We pray for all the children and their parents to protect them from any harm and that they may grow freely in your name.

Glory to you God for all the blessings you have given us, let us share all our blessings with others that they may know you are Lord and Savior. We ask for strength in the pursuit for a better life. Help us, give us strength and courage to continue to help our families and loved ones.

In Jesus' name we pray -

Amen

<http://www.jesuswillcome.com/a-prayer-for-all-illegal-immigrants-who-live-in-fear-of-deportation-p92.html>

Prayer for Those Who Migrate

Mary knew the weariness
Of the journey;
To Bethlehem, To Egypt,
Back to Nazareth.
She knew the weariness,
The fear, the longing for home,
The need to continue moving, moving,
The longing for journey's end,
the longing for at least
a semblance of a home.

To Mary we entrust
The mothers, the fathers, the children
who today are holy families
Migrating in hope, in fear, in longing,
for peace, for some security,
For something like a home.
May they find their journey's end
as we open ourselves to their stories,
their need, their spirits;
We ask for mercy
for all migrants
and for our communities
who are challenged to welcome them,
to give them hope for a new life.



--by Jane Deren <http://www.educationforjustice.org>

Prayer for Migrants and Refugees: Renewing Hope, Seeking Justice

<http://www.usccb.org/mrs/nmw/prayer.shtml>

Lord Jesus, when you multiplied the loaves and fishes, you provided more than food for the body, you offered us the gift of yourself, the gift which satisfies every hunger and quenches every thirst! Your disciples were filled with fear and doubt, but you poured out your love and compassion on the migrant crowd, welcoming them as brothers and sisters.

Lord Jesus, today you call us to welcome the members of God's family who come to our land to escape oppression, poverty, persecution, violence, and war. Like your disciples, we too are filled with fear and doubt and even suspicion. We build barriers in our hearts and in our minds.

Lord Jesus, help us by your grace,

To banish fear from our hearts, that we may embrace each of your children as our own brother and sister;
To welcome migrants and refugees with joy and generosity, while responding to their many needs;
To realize that you call all people to your holy mountain to learn the ways of peace and justice;
To share of our abundance as you spread a banquet before us;
To give witness to your love for all people, as we celebrate the many gifts they bring.
We praise you and give you thanks for the family you have called together from so many people. We see in this human family a reflection of the divine unity of the one Most Holy Trinity in whom we make our prayer: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen.

Prayer for Migrant Families

Good and gracious God, we thank you for the gift of families.
We are grateful for all of the joy and love that they bring into our lives, and we ask that you provide special protection for all families, particularly those who face hardships as they move in search of a better life.

Show mercy to those who travel in danger,
and lead them to a place of safety and peace.

Comfort those who are alone and afraid because their families have been torn apart by violence and injustice.

As we reflect upon the difficult journey that the Holy Family faced as refugees in Egypt, help us to remember the suffering of all migrant families.

Through the intercession of Mary our Mother, and
St. Joseph the Worker, her spouse, we pray

that all migrants may be reunited with their loved ones and find the meaningful work they seek.

Open our hearts so that we may provide hospitality
for all who come in search of refuge.

Give us the courage to welcome every stranger as Christ in our midst.

We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God forever and ever.

Amen.

For Seeing Christ in the Immigrant

Let Us See

Dear God, our journey through life is long and hard. We cannot make this trip alone; we must walk together on the journey. You promised to send us a helper, your Spirit.
Help us to see your Spirit in those you send to journey with us.

In the refugee family, seeking safety from violence, Let us see your Spirit.
In the migrant worker, bringing food to our tables, Let us see your Spirit.
In the asylum-seeker, seeking justice for himself and his family, Let us see your Spirit.
In the unaccompanied child, traveling in a dangerous world, Let us see your Spirit.

Teach us to recognize that as we walk with each other, you are present.
Teach us to welcome not only the strangers in our midst but the gifts they bring as well:
the invitation to conversion, communion, and solidarity.
This is the help you have sent: we are not alone.
We are together on the journey, and for this we give you thanks.
Amen.

Submitted By: The Rev. Enock De Assis

Prayer for Immigrants and Refugees

National Migration Week 2003

All Come Bearing gifts

<http://www.borderangels.org/migrantprayers.html>



Response (all): LORD, YOU ARE THE GIFT AND YOU ARE THE GIVER.

We welcome you into our hearts and our homes, Dear Jesus. R

We welcome you in the person of the migrant farm worker, whose labor brings the fruits of the field and the vine to our tables. R

We welcome you in the persons of the seafarer and the truck driver, whose long journeys bring goods and fuel to our homes. R

We welcome you in the persons of the refugee child alone in the world, whose hope and courage bring us inspiration. R

We welcome you in the person of the asylum seeker, detained in our prisons without cause, who teaches us to thirst for justice. R

We welcome you in the persons of the immigrant teacher, scientist, artist, athlete, and doctor, all of whom bring their gifts to enrich our land and our lives. R

Let us pray (together):

Lord Jesus, help us to recognize you in the face of the stranger and welcome your presence among us.

You have graced us with the gifts of many cultures and nations.

Free us from the fear of those from other lands.

Teach us to share our gifts with newcomers in return, so that you may say, "I was a stranger and you welcomed me. Come now into my Kingdom."

We ask this in your name, from the Father through the power of the Holy spirit. Amen.

Immigration Prayer

<http://www.ucc.org/justice/immigration/worship/worship-resources/prayer.html>

By Rev. Loren McGrail

Creator God,
open our eyes so we can see you in the eyes of our immigrant brothers and sisters,

eyes downcast for having lived so long in the shadows,
eyes challenging us to join them in the streets or picket lines,
eyes lifted looking for the Christ light in us.

Compassionate God, who has come to dwell among us,
open our ears to hear the cries of your children,

children being separated from their parents,
rounded up in raids,
led to detention centers,
silently giving up dreams.

God of Justice, who crosses all boundaries,
give us courage to resist, to say NO
to unfair labor practices,
to unjust laws like SB 1070,
287g contracts.

Give us the strength to stand with and for
your inclusive love,
faith to believe,
another world is necessary and possible.

Let it begin with us. Amen.

from the book ***When Silence Falls***
by Anna Burke

O God of the Calvary hour, as we gather in our community to pray the Stations of the Cross, we are aware that in this hour our story merges with yours and that together we face that journey when the cross brings us to the ground. In your death every death is transformed, every shadow and every loss. As we walk with you again on the longest mile, help us to be instruments of the new creation where every tear will be wiped away.

May we see the Light on the hill.
May we hear the Peace in the noise.
May we touch the Hope in the fading light.
May we feel the Sorrow in the earth.
May we hold the Teardrop in the towel.
May we feel the Healing in the pain.
May we drink the Water from the source.
May we give the Pardon to the one who asks.
May we sense the Victory in the failure.
May we seek the Beginning in the last breath.
May we await the Morning in the silence.



Untitled

(This prayer for the immigrant is written by and offered by the students of LASA.)

God of Cultures, we pray for the millions of immigrants who are living around the world in countries that may be hostile "strangers." Teach us to look beyond the borders of the nation and city in which we live.

God of the Poor, we pray that immigrant families and especially children who have restricted access to shelter, food, health care, and education would cease to be marginalized by the systems in which they live and instead be treated with dignity. We pray that they would be provided with covering shelter, nourishing food, sustaining health, and a nurturing education.

We pray for those who were born in the United States whose thoughts and actions may be fueled by racist and ethnocentric attitudes towards those who were born elsewhere. We pray for the abolition of individual and institutional racism.

We pray for those who live in constant fear of deportation and separation from their family. We pray that families would be able to remain together.

We pray that you would help us remember that all people possess inherent human dignity as your children, made in your image, regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, age, socio-economic status, or legal status; in the undocumented sister and brother, let us see your Spirit, O Lord.

Help us not forget that you were an immigrant; that your family fled to Egypt when you were a child to escape Herod's decree to kill every infant boy.

God, help us see you in the eyes of the migrant and to recognize your presence amongst the oppressed.

<http://leviticustwentyfour22.blogspot.com/2009/04/prayer-for-immigrant.html>
Pax Christi

Prayer for Immigrants, suffering as the condemned Christ

By: Kathy McGourty, 2011

Almighty God, you sent us your Son to redeem the world, yet he was not welcomed. We call to mind our sins as a country when we do not welcome the immigrant in our midst, even though we are all immigrants on this earth.

Loving God, you sent us your Son to redeem the world, yet he was condemned unjustly. We call to mind our sins as a people when we condemn the undocumented based on unjust laws and a broken immigration system.

Healing God, you sent us your Son to redeem the world, yet he was crucified and died. We call to mind our sins as one family when we crucify the immigrant through deportation and broken families.

Guide us God and be with us as we walk with the unwelcomed, condemned, and crucified immigrants in this country. Be with us as we work for conversion of hearts and minds. Be with us all, your children, living as one family.

We ask this through Christ our Lord, Amen.

For Justice, Healing and Hope

Prayer for Healing and Wholeness in our Country of Immigrants

By: Kathy McGourty, 2011

Lord God, Giver of Life, Source of all healing,
You alone can help us grow in wholeness:
Be with us as we welcome the immigrant and listen to their voice.
Guide us as we work for immigration reform in our country.
Hear our prayer as we pray with those being deported and
with their families, broken and separated.

Lord, God Giver of Life, Source of all healing,
who alone can help us grow in wholeness:
Deepen our faith,
Strengthen our hope,
Heal our divisions,
Be our guiding light.

We ask this through Christ, Our Lord. Amen.

Justice Prayer

By: Mother Teresa

O God, we pray for all those in our world
who are suffering from injustice:
For those who are discriminated against
because of their race, color or religion;
For those imprisoned
for working for the relief of oppression;
For those who are hounded
for speaking the inconvenient truth;
For those tempted to violence
as a cry against overwhelming hardship;
For those deprived of reasonable health and education;
For those suffering from hunger and famine;
For those too weak to help themselves
and who have no one else to help them;
For the unemployed who cry out
for work but do not find it.
We pray for anyone of our acquaintance
who is personally affected by injustice.
Forgive us, Lord, if we unwittingly share in the conditions
or in a system that perpetuates injustice.
Show us how we can serve your children
and make your love practical by washing their feet.



Creed for Immigrants

I believe in almighty God, who guided his people in exile and in exodus, the God of Joseph in Egypt and of Daniel in Babylon, the God of foreigners and immigrants.

I believe in Jesus Christ a displaced Galilean, who was born away from his people and his home, who had to flee the country with his parents when his life was in danger, and who upon returning to his own country had to suffer the oppression of the tyrant Pontius Pilate, the servant of a foreign power. He was persecuted, beaten, tortured and finally accused and condemned to death unjustly. But on the third day, this scorned Jesus rose from the death, not as a foreigner but to offer us citizenship in heaven.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the eternal immigrant from God's kingdom among us, who speaks all languages, lives in all countries, and reunites all races.

I believe that the church is the secure home for all foreigners and believers who constitute it, who speaks the same language and have the same purpose.

I believe that the communion of saints begins when we accept the diversity of the saints.

I believe in the forgiveness, which makes us all equal, and in the reconciliation, which identifies us more than does race, language or nationality.

I believe that in the Resurrection, God will unite us as one people in whom all are distinct and all are alike at the same time.

I believe in the eternal life beyond this world, where no one will be an immigrant but all will be citizens of God's Kingdom that has no end.

Amen.

Submitted By:

Jose Luis Casal, General Missioner

Tres Rios Presbytery of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

The Search for Justice, Peace and Truth

By: Rabbi H. Rolando Matalon

O God Source of Life, Creator of Peace,
help Your children, anguished and confused,
to understand the futility of hatred and violence
and grant them the ability to stretch across
political, religious and national boundaries
so they may confront horror and fear
by continuing together
in the search for justice, peace and truth.
With every fiber of our being
we beg You, O God,
to help us not to fail nor falter. Amen.

The Justice Prayer

<http://www.usccb.org/mrs/jfi/JFIJusticePrayer.pdf>

Come, O Holy Spirit!

Come, open us to the wonder, beauty, and dignity of the diversity found in each culture, in each face, and in each experience we have of the other among us.

Come, fill us with generosity
as we are challenged to let go and allow others to share with us
the goods and beauty of earth.

Come, heal the divisions
that keep us from seeing the face of Christ in all men, women, and children.

Come, free us to stand with and for those
who must leave their own lands in order to find work, security, and welcome in a new land, one that has
enough to share.

Come, bring us understanding, inspiration, wisdom, and
the courage needed to embrace change and stay on the journey.

Come, O Holy Spirit, show us the way.



Love Your Neighbor As Yourself

By Kathy McGourty, 2011

Loving Jesus, you teach us to love our neighbor as ourself.
How do I love myself?

I search for food and you provide it through employment and security.
Help me to protect the immigrants as they search for food.

I search for life and you provide it through health care and medical aid.
Help me to protect the immigrants as they search for life.

I search for love and you provide it through family and friends.
Help me to protect the immigrants being deported away from family and friends.

Help me to protect the immigrant searching for love, life and dignity.
Make me an instrument of your justice in this country.

Bless me and guide me in loving my neighbor as myself.
Amen.

We Ask You, God
By Kathy McGourty, 2011

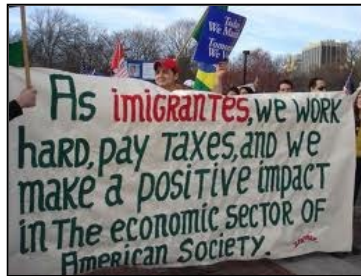
Good and Loving God; Your son, Jesus, says 'Ask and it shall be given to you'
And so we ask...

For love that fills our souls to overflowing,
Enough to transform the hardened heart
Of those who fight against the immigrant.

For hope that strengthens our resolve
So much that even in the face of despair
We continue to work for immigration reform.

For faith so deep that we cannot help
But remember that evil will not have the last word
And Your Will will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

We ask this through Christ, our Redeemer. Amen.



A Four-Fold Franciscan Blessing

May God bless you with a restless discomfort
about easy answers, half-truths and superficial relationships,
so that you may seek truth boldly and love deep within your heart.

May God bless you with holy anger at injustice, oppression,
and exploitation of people, so that you may tirelessly work for
justice, freedom, and peace among all people.

May God bless you with the gift of tears to shed with those who suffer
from pain, rejection, starvation, or the loss of all that they cherish, so that you may reach out your hand to
comfort them and transform their pain into joy.

May God bless you with enough foolishness to believe that
you really CAN make a difference in this world, so that you are able,
with God's grace, to do what others claim cannot be done.

And the blessing of God the Supreme Majesty and our Creator,
Jesus Christ the Incarnate Word who is our brother and Saviour,
and the Holy Spirit, our Advocate and Guide, be with you
and remain with you, this day and forevermore. AMEN.

Celebrating Our Diversity, Overcoming Prejudice

by Cyprian Lamar Rowe, FMS

Beloved God,
Creator of the just and the unjust
Lover of all humankind
share your eyes of love
so that we will see beauty in all creation.
Let us, God, as we pass this way,
make it a way that sings the glory
of all your creation
and celebrates the infinite variety
of your divinity in all and through all.
Help us, O God, to understand
that the violence of “isms”
whether racism or sexism or anti-Semitism
heterosexism or militarism
is a violation of your creative will.
Help us to understand, God,
that we have neither knowledge
nor power to know
the infinite designs of worlds
where by your grace we may inhabit.
Help us explore the heights and depths
of our need to love and be loved,
to understand that what we hate is often
our sense of incompleteness.
We shout against creations that we cannot love
because we fear and do not understand.
We need to understand because we need
to bow before them as being godly
as we too are godly.
Help us, God,
and in the spirit of Mary, Mother of the afflicted,
let us stand by the cross of our own humanity
loving it and knowing that dying to hatred
is the only path to salvation
in the name of our loving Brother, Jesus Christ.
Amen.



A Prayer For Immigrant Justice

Blessed are You, Lord God,
King of all creation.
Through Your goodness, we live in this land
that You have so richly blessed.
Help us always to recognize our
Blessings come from You
and remind us to share them
with others, especially those who come
to us today from other lands.
Help us to be generous, just, and welcoming,
as You have been and are generous to us.

Taken from Justice for Immigrants website, CCIR



Blessed Are

Blessed are those who are on the move, transforming exodus and flight into energy for a new search. From the victims will come the protagonists of history.

Blessed are those who, forced to wander without directions, with wisdom learn and teach the lesson for the road. They will be the architects of a new time.

Blessed are those who suffer pain, nostalgia, loneliness, yet know how to make of every arrival a new beginning. They shall act with faith, hope and love.

Blessed are those who open borders and mix anthems, flags, races and creeds. Without discrimination, they make the world everyone's home.

Blessed are the wayfarers of the roads. In the tears, sweat and the work of their hands they prepare a tomorrow of justice and right.

Blessed are those who open the door to pilgrims, making solidarity the passport to our common homeland. They are construction new citizenship.

Blessed are those who forment encounters and re-encounters, sowing peace. They will harvest flowers and stars in the new heaven and the new earth.

Blessed are the excluded without opportunities, without voice. They will be the first guests in the great banquet, where bread will not be lacking on anyone's table.

“Blessed Are: by Fr. Jose Alfredo Goncalve in Prayer Without Borders, CRS, 2004.



Prayer for Tolerance

By: Education for Justice

Dear Lord, we who are
divided
unloving
prejudiced at times
inclined to misunderstanding
intolerant
Make us instead
united
loving
open to learning
understanding and forgiving
tolerant

May your Spirit be present in us as you are in all peoples.

Prayer for Migrants and Refugees: Renewing Hope, Seeking Justice

<http://www.usccb.org/mrs/nmw/prayer.shtml>

Lord Jesus, when you multiplied the loaves and fishes, you provided more than food for the body, you offered us the gift of yourself, the gift which satisfies every hunger and quenches every thirst! Your disciples were filled with fear and doubt, but you poured out your love and compassion on the migrant crowd, welcoming them as brothers and sisters.

Lord Jesus, today you call us to welcome the members of God's family who come to our land to escape oppression, poverty, persecution, violence, and war. Like your disciples, we too are filled with fear and doubt and even suspicion. We build barriers in our hearts and in our minds.

Lord Jesus, help us by your grace,

To banish fear from our hearts, that we may embrace each of your children as our own brother and sister;
To welcome migrants and refugees with joy and generosity, while responding to their many needs;
To realize that you call all people to your holy mountain to learn the ways of peace and justice;
To share of our abundance as you spread a banquet before us;
To give witness to your love for all people, as we celebrate the many gifts they bring.

We praise you and give you thanks for the family you have called together from so many people. We see in this human family a reflection of the divine unity of the one Most Holy Trinity in whom we make our prayer: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen.

INTENTIONS FOR THE IMMIGRANT AND IMMIGRATION REFORM **For Parish Use**

Topic: Children

For the children who are US citizens, but live in fear of broken families because of the undocumented status of their parents, that God may bring them Hope as we work toward conversion of hearts and minds. Let us pray to the Lord,

For the children whose families are broken and separated because of the current deportation system, that God will guide their families to be reunited while we work for reform of the flawed immigration system. Let us pray to the Lord,

For the teens and young adults brought to this country as children and who live in fear and injustice, may God bring them dignity and Hope through all that we do so that they can become good citizens of this country. Let us pray to the Lord,

For the teens and young adults who were brought to this country as children and have now been deported to a country they barely know, that God will be with them and guide them to reunite with their families. Let us pray to the Lord,

For the children of immigrants who continue to live in poverty and fear of separation, that our actions for conversion of hearts and minds will bring them dignity and comfort. Let us pray to the Lord,

For the children of immigrants, brought to or born in this country and suffer the most at the hands of our broken immigration laws, that we remember it is for them that we work for a conversion of hearts and minds and a reform of the laws. Let us pray to the Lord,

Recalling that Our Lord told his disciples to ‘let the children come to me’, that we may welcome the children of immigrants and work to provide security and dignity to the lives of their families, we pray to the Lord...

For unaccompanied migrant children, that they may be protected from all harm and reunited with loving families, we pray to the Lord.

Topic: Deportees and broken families

For immigrant families, suffering in the shadows from poverty and brokenness, may God bless them and protect them as we all work for a reform of the immigration laws. Let us pray to the Lord,

For immigrant families searching for life and dignity, that they may find it wherever God leads them as we work together for conversion of hearts and minds. Let us pray to the Lord,

For immigrant families living in fear of separation, that they may find Peace and Hope in God’s call to live as one family, sisters and brothers to all, doing God’s will on earth as it is in heaven. Let us pray to the Lord,

For immigrant parents, who have been deported from this country, that their fears for their children are eased and their Hope of reuniting be realized. Let us pray to the Lord,

For those who have been deported from this country, may God bless them and protect them from harm as we continue to work for immigration reform through a conversion of hearts and minds. Let us pray to the Lord,

Topic: DREAMERS and Dream Act

For the immigrant children who have known only this country and work hard at school, that they may know the value of their work through the support of the DREAM Act, we pray to the Lord.

For migrant families, who during their struggles and fear still hold their children accountable for good grades and hard work at school, that their efforts are supported and valued with the passage of the Dream Act, we pray to the Lord.

Topics: Plight of the immigrant: pain, rejection, and fear

For the Immigrant that faces rejection and pain in this country, that they may know the value of their life and work no matter where they live, and that they find a welcoming community here in this country. Let us pray to the Lord,

For the immigrant in search of food, work, and security, that God may guide them and accompany them in their journey. Let us pray to the Lord,

Recalling the fear that the disciples felt after the death of Jesus, may the immigrant in this country come to know the power and strength of the Holy Spirit through our welcoming embrace. Let us pray to the Lord,

That by seeing God's presence more clearly in every human life, we may repent of the ways that we have failed to honor, protect, and welcome that life, including the life of the immigrant, we pray to the Lord...

That the gift of hospitality may fill our families and communities, and shape the way we respond to the undocumented immigrant, we pray to the Lord...

For an end to human trafficking, that the dignity of all of God's children be protected, we pray to the Lord.

For all those who are overwhelmed by loneliness, poverty, and despair, that they may be comforted through our help and kindness, we pray to the Lord.

Topic: Violence at the Border

For those fleeing the violence and corruption in their homelands of Mexico or South America, that they may find safety and security as they search for safety in a new land. Let us pray to the Lord,

For the immigrant families here that worry for the safety of their loved ones back home, that they may be comforted in knowing God accompanies their loved ones and will not leave them alone. Let us pray to the Lord,

For immigrants that face violence and hatred in this country, that they experience God's welcome and love in all we do and that together we may bring about a conversion of hearts and minds and an end to the violence and hatred. Let us pray to the Lord,

For an end to the violence and poverty that displaces so many people from their homes and homelands, we pray to the Lord.

Topic: Immigrant workers in this country

For migrant workers, that they may labor in safe and justice conditions, and that we who benefit from their labor may be truly grateful for what they provide, we pray to the Lord.

For those who labor in the shadows of this country for unjust wages and security, that we may bring dignity to their work through reform of immigration and labor laws. Let us pray to the Lord,

For all that we receive from your bounty, O Lord, including that which we receive through the work of immigrant hands, that we may always remember them and work to bring justice and security to their lives. Let us pray to the Lord,

For the migrants, refugees, and strangers in our midst, that they may find hope in our concern for justice and feel the warmth of our love, we pray to the Lord.

Topic: Conversion & transformation of hearts

That God, who always hears the cry of the oppressed and the immigrant, may enable us to hear those cries and be moved to conversion and transformation, working to reform the unjust immigration laws in this country. Let us pray to the Lord,

As you transform the death of the cross into the resurrection of new life, may you also transform the despair and fear of the life of the immigrant into new life as a member of our community, Let us pray to the Lord,

For a conversion of the hearts and minds of all your people so the discrimination against the immigrant will be transformed into the welcome of all God's people. Let us pray to the Lord,

That as we acknowledge our heavenly citizenship, we may work to be active and effective citizens of our homeland here on earth, we pray to the Lord...

For God's forgiveness for those citizens who have not been welcoming and tolerant of the immigrant in this country, that they may come to realize God's call to welcome Christ in the immigrant. Let us pray to the Lord,

For our community, gathered here today to celebrate our unity under the Lord, and his mother, Mary, that we may come to greater understanding and acceptance of our differences, we pray to the Lord.

That we may all work to convert hearts and change unjust laws that victimize the undocumented, taking courage from the Holy Spirit that empowered the apostles, we pray to the Lord...

That God may bring joy to those who are persecuted as they work to welcome the immigrant and reform the unjust immigration laws in this country, Let us pray to the Lord,

That we may not be afraid to be faithful to Jesus' teachings on the dignity of human life, even if our faithfulness causes some to separate themselves from us, we pray to the Lord...

Let us pray for all the marginalized in our society who like the Samaritan woman are not welcomed or treated with the dignity they deserve as human beings. Let us pray that in all we say and all we do, we treat others with respect and dignity. Let us pray to the Lord,

Immigrants and Displaced Persons

OPENING

Holy God, Holy Might One, Holy Immortal One,
Have mercy on us and on the whole world.
In the ocean of your mercy,
Teach us to be merciful towards others.

INTERCESSIONS

Jesus, we remember your family's flight into Egypt and wonder about your experience as a stranger in a new land. We pray, then, for all those who seek new, safer, better life in a new homeland.

For victims of war and violence, political oppression, religious persecution, economic distress, or natural disasters:

*May we recognize them as our neighbors, O God,
and be instruments of your mercy among them.*

For immigrants and displaced persons whose plight is met with indifference:

May they find new life through your love expressed through us.

For the refugees of the world, for the strangers in new lands:

May they be comforted and assisted by their sisters and brothers in Christ.

For newcomers among us, those seeking security, employment, and basic freedoms:

May we respect their gifts and welcome their contributions to our nation's welfare.

For migrant workers who struggle to build healthy, hopeful lives for themselves and their children:

May you who knew the burden of daily labor strengthen and console them, O Christ.

For indigenous peoples, who are often disregarded or treated as strangers in their own ancestral lands:

May we recognize their wisdom and seek their forgiveness as we honor their dignity and cultures.

PRAYER

God of our journey, we pray with humble hearts, grateful for your constant care for us. Aware of your blessings, we pray for the needs of all those with whom we share this earth as our common home. May our words and deeds extend your gifts of life and holiness to all peoples and hasten the coming of your reign. We pray in the name of Jesus and under the guidance of the Spirit. Amen.

CLOSING

May Christ Jesus, who became human and shared our earthly life,
strengthen our faith. Amen.

May Christ Jesus, who remains among us hidden in our neighbors,
enliven our charity. Amen.

May Christ Jesus, who will greet us at death and at the end of time,
grant us mercy. Amen.



Topic: Specific Sundays

Passion Sunday (Palm Sunday)

That as Christ saved us when we were helpless, we too may save the helpless among us, including the poor, the unwelcome, and the unborn, we pray to the Lord...

That the light of the Risen Christ may illumine the minds of government leaders to enable them to protect the rights of those searching for life and security in this country, we pray to the Lord...

Sunday of Easter,

That Christ's farewell gift of peace may be preserved through a renewed respect and protection for every human life including the undocumented, we pray to the Lord...

Feast of the Ascension

That through the Ascension, public servants and all people may have a deeper understanding of the dignity of each and every human person, we pray to the Lord...

Sunday of Easter,

That we may prepare the world to welcome Christ's Second Coming by welcoming the poor, the sick, the burdensome, and the unborn, we pray to the Lord...

Pentecost Sunday

That the Holy Spirit, Lord and Giver of Life, may renew the face of the earth and make it a place where the poor are fed, the strangers are welcomed, and the unborn are brought safely to birth, we pray to the Lord...



Judge not, and you shall not be judged.
Condemn not, and you shall not be condemned.
Forgive, and you will be forgiven.

Luke 6:37 - Jesus

