



Catholic Action with Immigrant Children

August Prayer

Week #3

Gathering and Welcome

Welcome! We gather today in the presence of our God of infinite love and compassion. Our God has called us here today to bear witness to the dignity of every human person and to hold our elected representatives accountable for the atrocities perpetrated on our brothers and sisters—immigrants, refugees, and asylum seekers—mothers, fathers, aunts and uncles. We remember especially the children—frightened, alone, hungry, and cold. These are God’s children—our children! We must not—we will not—let this continue. We pray loudly, clearly: Stop the inhumanity—NOW! We are here today to stand with God’s precious children. They cry out and so we must speak.

Opening Song: Suggested “All Are Welcome” (Marty Haugen) [All Are Welcome](#)

Let us build a house
where love can dwell
And all can safely live,
A place where
saints and children tell
How hearts learn to forgive.

Built of hopes and dreams and visions,
Rock of faith and vault of grace;
Here the love of Christ shall end divisions;
Let us build a house where prophets speak,
And words are strong and true,
Where all God's children dare to seek
To dream God's reign anew.

Here the cross shall stand as witness
And a symbol of God's grace;
Here as one we claim the faith of Jesus:
Let us build a house where love is found
In water, wine and wheat:
A banquet hall on holy ground,
Where peace and justice meet.

Here the love of God, through Jesus,
Is revealed in time and space;
As we share in Christ the feast that frees us:
All are welcome, all are welcome,
All are welcome in this place.

Litany Naming the Children with Response

**We bow our heads in prayer and we remember the children known
to have died in U.S. custody since December 2018**

Jakelin Caal Maquin: Guatemala: Age 7: December 8, 2018	“ We Remember You”
Felipe Gómez Alonzo: Guatemala: Age 8: December 24, 2018	“ We Remember You”
Juan de León Gutierrez: Guatemala: Age 16: April 30, 2019	“ We Remember You”
Mariee Juárez: Age 1: May 10, 2018	“ We Remember You”
Wilmer Josué Ramírez Vázquez: Guatemala: Age 2: May 14, 2019	“ We Remember You”
Carlos Gregorio Hernández Vásquez: Guatemala: Age 16: May 20, 2019	“ We Remember You”
Darlyn Cristabel Cordova Valle: El Salvador: Age 10: May 29, 2019	“ We Remember You”
Wilmer Josue Ramirez Vazquez: Guatemala: Age 2: May 14, 2019	“ We Remember You”

Readings

A 12-year-old from Ecuador at a border patrol facility describes mistreatment by officers:

“The officers took everything from us except our documents. They even took our shoelaces. There was a mother in our group traveling with a very young baby. The officers took her diapers, baby formula, and nearly everything else she had and threw it away. The water here is horrible. It tastes like chlorine. The officials here are very bad to us. During the night when we’re trying to sleep, they come in and wake us up, yelling and scaring us. The guards who are yelling don’t speak much Spanish, so it’s hard to understand what they’re saying. Every night my sisters keep asking me, ‘When will our mommy come to get us?’ I don’t know what to tell them. It’s very hard for all of us to be here.”

Lord have mercy.

Response: Lord Have Mercy

Pope Francis in his message for the World Day of Migrants and Refugees says:

“It is not just about migrants: it is a question of seeing that no one is excluded. Today’s world is increasingly becoming more elitist and cruel towards the excluded. Developing countries continue to be drained of their best natural and human resources for the benefit of a few privileged markets. Wars only affect some regions of the world, yet weapons of war are produced and sold in other regions which are then unwilling to take in the refugees produced by these conflicts. Those who pay the price are always the little ones, the poor, the most vulnerable, who are prevented from sitting at the table and are left with the “crumbs” of the banquet. The Church which ‘goes forth’... can move forward, boldly take the initiative, go out to others, seek those who have fallen away, stand at the crossroads and welcome the outcast. A development that excludes makes the rich richer and the poor poorer. A real development, on the other hand, seeks to include all the world’s men and women, to promote their integral growth, and to show concern for coming generations.”

Christ have mercy.

Response: Christ Have Mercy

The Book of Deuteronomy says:

“You shall not deprive the foreigner or the orphan of justice, nor take the clothing of a widow as pledge. For, remember, you were slaves in Egypt, and the Lord, your God, redeemed you from there; that is why I command you to do this. When you reap the harvest in your field and overlook a sheaf in the field, you shall not go back to get it; let it be for the foreigner, the orphan, and the widow, so that the Lord, your God, may bless you in all your undertakings. When you knock down the fruit of your olive trees, you shall not go over the branches a second time; let what remains be for the foreigner, the orphan, and the widow. When you pick your grapes, you shall not go over the vineyard a second time; let what remains be for the foreigner, the orphan, and the widow. For remember that you were slaves in the land of Egypt; that is why I command you to do this.”

Lord have mercy.

Response: Lord Have Mercy

Responsorial Psalm

Psalm Response: Who Will Speak If We Don't? Who will speak so their voice will be heard?

(from Marty Haugen, "Who Will Speak If We Don't")

Psalm 102

Lord, hear my prayer; let my cry come to you. Do not hide your face from me in the day of my distress. Turn your ear to me; when I call, answer me quickly.

Response: Who Will Speak If We Don't? Who will speak so their voice will be heard?

For my days vanish like smoke; my bones burn away as in a furnace. My heart is withered, dried up like grass, too wasted to eat my food. From my loud groaning I become just skin and bones.

Response: Who Will Speak If We Don't? Who will speak so their voice will be heard?

But you, Lord, are enthroned forever; your renown is for all generations. You will again show mercy to Zion; now is the time for pity; the appointed time has come.

Response: Who Will Speak If We Don't? Who will speak so their voice will be heard?

Let this be written for the next generation, for a people not yet born, that they may praise the Lord: "The Lord looked down from the holy heights, viewed the earth from heaven, to attend to the groaning of the prisoners, to release those doomed to die."

Response: Who Will Speak If We Don't? Who will speak so their voice will be heard?

Prayers of Petition

For those forced to flee their countries of origin because of fear, violence, corruption, and poverty, we cry out,

Response: Stop the Inhumanity

For the president, his staff and Cabinet, for members of Congress and all who are complicit in inflicting suffering and harm on immigrants, asylum seekers, and refugees that they repent, end the torture and stop the violence, we cry out,

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For the children who have been taken from their families and incarcerated by our government and for those who love them and pray for their safe return, we cry out,

Response: Stop the Inhumanity

For all who denigrate and scapegoat immigrants and refugees for their own political gain, that they might see the profound harm they have done to the fabric of our nation and seek instead the common good, we cry out,

Response: Stop the Inhumanity

For all those living in filthy, inhumane conditions in U.S. detention centers, we cry out,

Response: Stop the Inhumanity

Closing Prayer

**Invite each to share a prayer in their own words
or use the following as a guide/suggestion:**

Merciful God, through your grace, may we imitate your love and show true compassion by welcoming the immigrant and the refugee, and Inspired by the teaching of Jesus, may we greet each stranger as neighbor, receive and care for children as your own children, and may we live in the peace that comes from your love.

Closing Song: Suggested:

[We Are Called](#), David Haas

1. Come! live in the light!
Shine with the joy and the love of the Lord!
We are called to be light for the kingdom,
to live in the freedom of the city of God!

Refrain: We are called to act with justice.
We are called to love tenderly.
We are called to serve one another, to walk humbly with God.

2. Come! Open your heart!
Show your mercy to all those in fear!
We are called to be hope for the hopeless,
so all hatred and blindness will be no more!

3. Sing! Sing a new song!
Sing of that great day when all will be one!
God will reign and we'll walk with each other as sisters
and brothers united in love!

