

EPIPHANY RETREAT 2017

DAY ONE — MORNING



Prayer

Dear Jesus,
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.

FLORES READING:
Introduction, p.1
Part I. Into the Woods, pp.1-3



***"The human mind...is involved in an immigrant journey,
a kind of itinerant trek in search of something better."
What do I seek?***

***In what I have just read, what invites me to prayer?
to bring my seeking to prayer?***

Prayer

Blessed are You, Lord Jesus Christ.

You crossed every border between Divinity and humanity to make your home with us.

Help us to welcome you in newcomers, migrants and refugees.

Blessed are You, God of all nations. You bless our land richly with goods of creation and with people made in your image.

Help us to be good stewards and peacemakers, who live as your children.

Blessed are You, Holy Spirit. You work in the hearts of all to bring about harmony and goodwill.

Strengthen us to welcome those from other lands, cultures, religions, that we may live in human solidarity and in hope.

God of all people, grant us vision to see your presence in our midst, especially in our immigrant sisters and brothers. Give us courage to open the door to our neighbors and grace to build a society of justice. **Pax Christi**

God of the journey, God of the traveler, we pray for those who leave their homes in search of new beginnings and possibilities, may they know your presence with them. Amen.



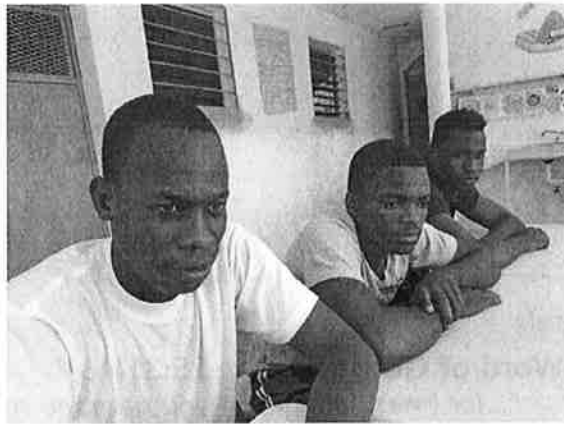
DAY ONE — AFTERNOON

Prayer

You are the God who bears the brunt of the question, “Why didn’t you stay where you belong?” You feel the red-faced embarrassment when we hear, “Keep your distance, you foreigner, with your different-colored skin and your strange-sounding speech, with your culture, food, religion, and clothing that are inferior to my own.”

You are the God who sits along side of us who work in sweatshops, with our bloodshot eyes and aching fingers squinting under the soulless glare of a florescent light.

You are the God who rises early in the morning with us as we go to harvest fresh vegetables and fruits picked with fingers stained by the pesticides and fungicides that penetrate our skin.



You are the God who stands with us in the chill of the morning in the parking lot at Home Depot, with anxious stomachs hoping that we too would be picked to work just for that one day.

Loving God, as we stand before you today, help us to remember that when we speak of immigrants and refugees, we speak of Christ. Hear our prayers for necessary, just, and comprehensive immigration reform. Make us strong in the work for immigrant justice and remind us that our work is no easier than the everyday work of our immigrant sisters and brothers. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

adapted from Justiceforimmigrants.org by Fr. Jon Pedigo

Reflection

Which story or part of a story in the Flores article speaks to me most clearly?

What do these stories say to us about human longing and Christian life?

What do they say to my personal longings and my life in Christ?



Word of God: Matthew 25:31-46

"...for I was hungry and you gave me something to eat...thirsty...a stranger... needing clothes...sick...in prison.... Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these, you did for me."

How does this scripture touch my heart today?



DAY ONE — EVENING

Prayer

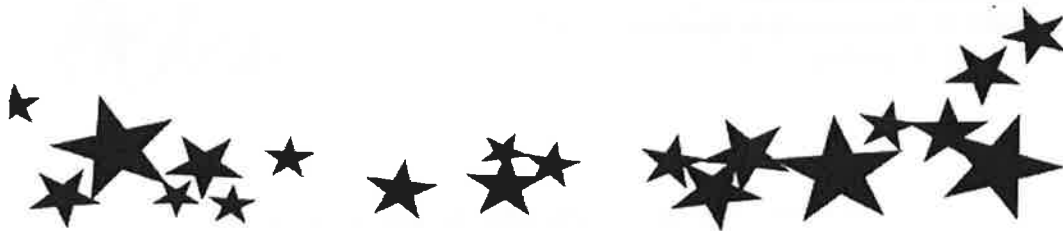
For all those who see “home” and all it means disappear behind them; for all those who cannot see a home in the days ahead of them; for all those who dwell in daily insecurity; for all those who are weary and without a safe place to rest their heads; for all families in migration we pray.

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. Jane Deren

Remember the graces you have experienced today. Give thanks.

Spirit seeking light and beauty,
Heart that longest for thy rest,
Soul that asketh understanding,
Only thus can ye be blest.
Thro' the vastness of creation
Tho' your restless thought may roam,
God is all that you can long for,
God is all his creatures' home.

Taste and see him, feel and hear him,
Hope and grasp his unseen hand;
Tho' the darkness seem to hide him,
Faith and love can understand.
God, who lovest all thy creatures,
All our hearts are known to thee;
Lead us thro' the land of shadows
To thy blest eternity.



DAY TWO — MORNING

Prayer

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. US Conference of Catholic Bishops

FLORES READING:
PART II. Voices within Earshot pp. 4-7
Part III. & Spirit p. 7-12



In what I have just read, what moves me to pray?

Prayer

God, our Father, no one is a stranger to you. You watch over each of us with your loving gaze. May those people fleeing from their homes in search of refuge be reminded that your own Son, and Mary our Mother, also experienced life as refugees and be renewed in their faith and hope. Guide political leaders to act generously and work towards lasting and meaningful peace in those areas affected by violence and conflict. May we, through Christ's example, open our arms and hearts in welcome to those most in need of safety, shelter and compassion. Grant this through Christ our Lord. Amen. Cardinal Vincent Nichols



DAY TWO — AFTERNOON

Prayer

Merciful God, we pray to you for all the men, women and children who have died after leaving their homelands in search of a better life. Though many of their graves bear no name, to you each one is known, loved and cherished.

May we never forget them, but honour their sacrifice with deeds more than words. We entrust to you all those who have made this journey, enduring fear, uncertainty and humiliation, in order to reach a place of safety and hope. Just as you never abandoned your Son as he was brought to a safe place by Mary and Joseph, so now be close to these, your sons and daughters, through our tenderness and protection.

In caring for them may we seek a world where none are forced to leave their home and where all can live in freedom, dignity and peace. Merciful God and Father of all, wake us from the slumber of indifference, open our eyes to their suffering, and free us from the insensitivity born of worldly comfort and self-centredness.

Inspire us, as nations, communities and individuals, to see that those who come to our shores are our brothers and sisters. May we share with them the blessings we have received from your hand, and recognize that together, as one human family, we are all migrants, journeying in hope to you, our true home, where every tear will be wiped away, where we will be at peace and safe in your embrace. Pope Francis at Lampedusa Prayer Service



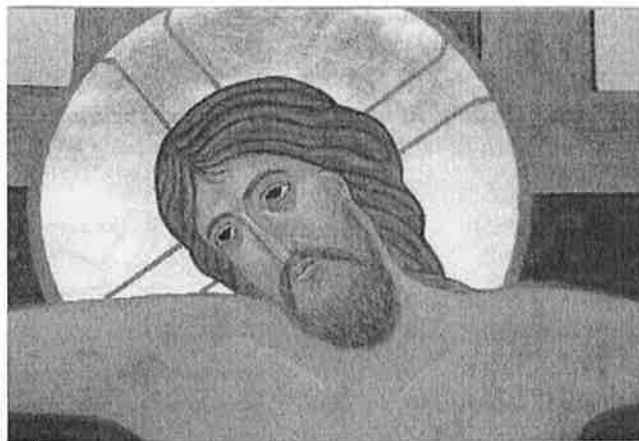
Reflection

Words used to describe the ETA West (economically and technologically advanced west) : isolation, alienation, disorientation, listless lack of hope.

**How do you experience these in your ministry,
your community, even in yourself?**

If we are in the ETA West, what should be the words to describe us?

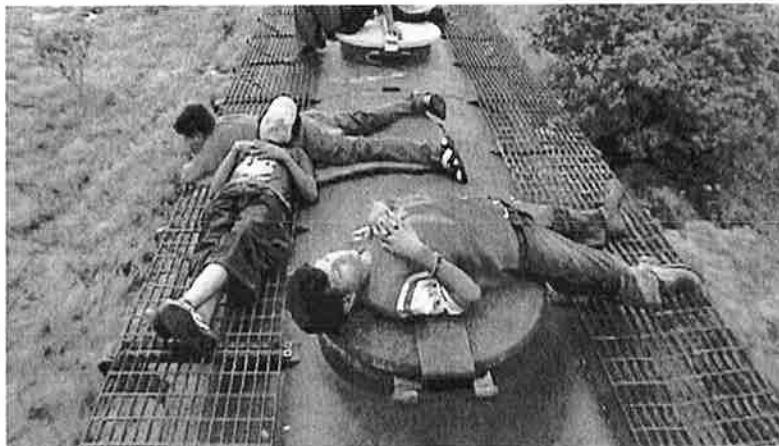
**How and where do you experience "motion-less sickness"?
What will cure us?**



Word of God: Romans 5: 5-8

"...God's love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us....at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for us..."

How does this scripture touch my heart today?



DAY TWO — EVENING

Prayer

O God, you keep us company in the heart of our suffering and helplessness. All our hope is in you. Give courage and confidence to those who seek safety in our country. Stay with them, protect them, surround them with your love. Inspire them always to carry something beautiful in their hearts and keep them from being crushed and embittered by their sorrows.

We trust that through loving kindness, solidarity and practical help, given and received in your name, O God, a bright bridge will be built across the dark chasm of injustice and conflict towards a new dawn. Amen. Teresa White FCJ

Remember the graces you have experienced today. Give thanks.

Spirit seeking light and beauty,
Heart that longest for thy rest,
Soul that asketh understanding,
Only thus can ye be blest.
Thro' the vastness of creation
Tho' your restless thought may roam,
God is all that you can long for,
God is all his creatures' home.

Taste and see him, feel and hear him,
Hope and grasp his unseen hand;
Tho' the darkness seem to hide him,
Faith and love can understand.
God, who lovest all thy creatures,
All our hearts are known to thee;
Lead us thro' the land of shadows
To thy blest eternity.



Jesus heals the paralytic



DAY THREE — MORNING



Prayer

Merciful God,
We pray for all whose desperation leads them to the sea,
to undertake perilous voyages,
often following dangerous journeys over land:
those escaping brutal wars,
those fleeing religious persecution,
those escaping climate disasters and economic ruin,
those looking for hope in a hopeless situation.

FLORES READING:

Part IV. There was a man on his way to Jericho pp. 12-14

Part V. A Good Place to Stop pp. 14-15



In what I have just read, what invites me to pray?

Prayer

Merciful God,
May we look beyond our own fears and concerns to the needs of those who have nothing, risk everything, and depend on the kindness of strangers.

May our hearts be opened, our leaders be challenged, and our self-interest be called out, in Jesus' name. Amen. **Christian Aid**

DAY THREE —AFTERNOON

Prayer

Lord of mercy, compassion and all comfort, we pray to You for our brothers in difficult circumstances and we offer to Your Goodness:

Nurture the infants; instruct the youth; strengthen the aged; give courage to the faint hearted; reunite those separated; sail with those who sail; travel with those who travel; defend the widows; protect the orphans; liberate the captives; heal the sick.

Remember, O God, those who are in mines, in exile, in harsh labour, and those in every kind of affliction, necessity, or distress; and all those who entreat Your loving kindness; those who love us and those who hate us; and pour out upon all Your rich mercy, granting them their petitions for salvation.



Again we pray, Lord of life and of death, grant eternal repose to the souls of Your departed servants, those who lost their lives during their exodus from war-torn regions and during their journeys to places of safety, peace and prosperity.

For You, Lord, are the helper of the helpless, the hope of the hopeless, the saviour of the afflicted, the haven of the voyager, and the physician of the sick.

Be all things to all, You who know each of us, our requests, our household, and our need. Deliver this island, O Lord, and every city and country, from famine, plague, earthquake, flood, fire, sword, invasion of foreign enemies, and civil war. Amen. Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew of Constantinople – Lampedusa prayer service

Reflection

What will we learn when we “remember what it can be like to risk losing everything, even life, for the sake of a hope that there can be something better?”

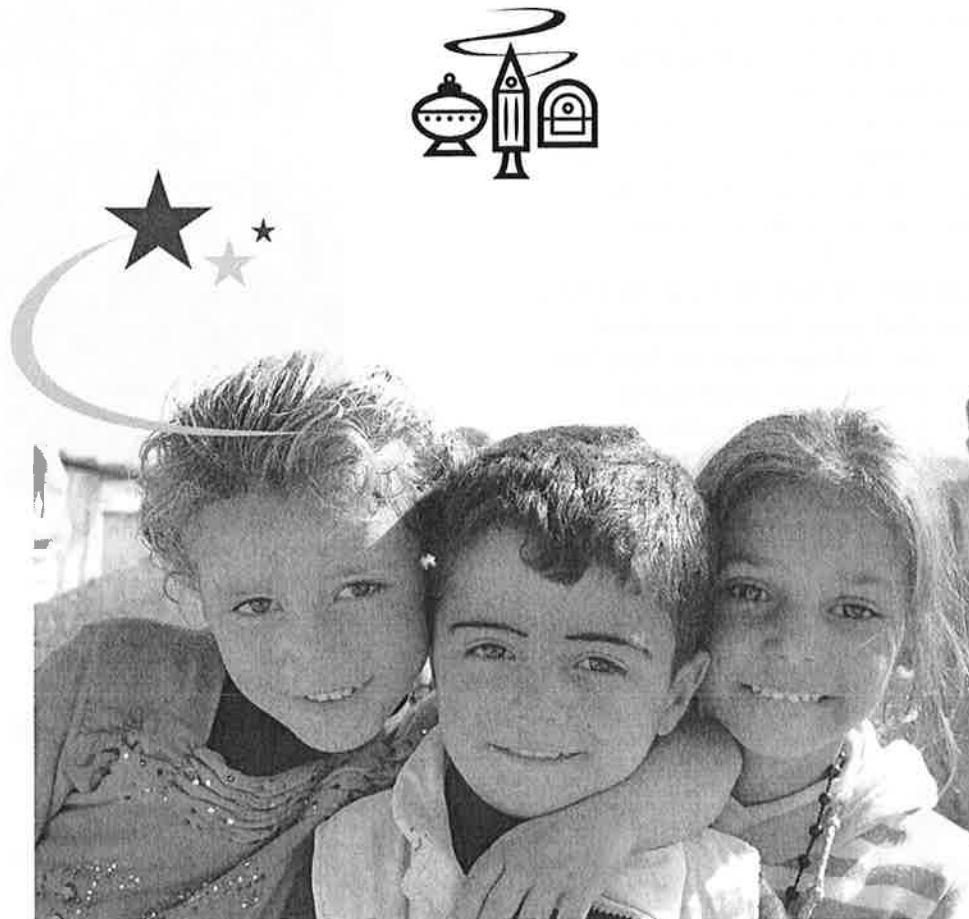
How has the Gospel been preached to me through these reflections?

Imagine the SHCJ on the side of the road in need of help; imagine that migrant people are the Samaritan; what can they do for us? For me?

Word of God: Luke 10: 29-37

“...when he saw him he took pity on him. He went to him and bandaged his wounds... The next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper...Which of these three do you think was a neighbor to the man who fell in with robbers?...The one who had mercy on him. Go and do likewise.”

How does this scripture touch my heart today?



Prayer

For Peace and Healing in Our World. Wilderness God: whose Son was a displaced person in Bethlehem, a refugee in Egypt, and had nowhere to lay his head in Galilee.

Bless all who have nowhere to lay their head today, who find themselves strangers on earth, pilgrims to they know not where, facing rejection, closed doors, suspicion and fear.

Give them companions in their distress, hope in their wandering, and safe lodging at their journey's end.

And make us a people of grace, wisdom and hospitality, who know that our true identity is to be lost, until we find our eternal home in you.

Through Christ, our rejected yet risen Lord. Amen. **Archbishop Justin Welby**

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The Good Samaritan

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