

SISTERS AND BROTHERS OF IMMIGRANTS

The following was a prayer service used at the first meeting on January 25, 2007.

Leader: As we gather together, let us take a moment to remember our baptismal call to conversion, to communion, to solidarity. May we quiet ourselves to listen to that voice deep within calling us, compelling us to stand with the immigrant, to walk as pilgrims in this journey of hope.

*Spirit of the living God, Fall Afresh on us
Spirit of the living God, Fall Afresh on us
Melt us, mold us, fill us, use us...
Spirit of the living God, Fall afresh on us*

Leader: Send your Spirit to be with us this afternoon as we share our visions of justice and hope for immigrants.

All: Fill us with courage to listen to the signs of the times and respond with compassion. Reveal to us what is stirring in our lives and empower us to further Your reign.

Leader: God of Justice, whenever we settle for the way things are instead of the way you would have them to be, forgive us. Whenever we are paralyzed by fear or limited in vision, increase our trust in you. Whenever we offer charity, but fail to work for justice, show us the more excellent way that your love requires. Whenever we tire of the struggle and tomorrow feels overwhelming, restore our hope. We pray this in Jesus' name. AMEN.

Reading: Isaiah 61:1-3: *"They will be called oaks of justice, planted by the Lord to show God's glory"*

"The spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me; God has sent me to bring glad tidings to the lowly, to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives and release to the prisoners, 2 To announce a year of favor from the Lord and a day of vindication by our God, to comfort all who mourn; To place on those who mourn in Zion a diadem instead of ashes, To give them oil of gladness in place of mourning, a glorious mantle instead of a listless spirit. They will be called oaks of justice, planted by the Lord to show God's glory."

Silent Reflection

Please respond: *Here I am Lord, I come to do your will.*

- ❖ May we each be oaks of justice, rooted in Christ's love and willingness to stand with those on the margins or those being persecuted. We pray...
- ❖ May we recognize our urgent duty and challenge to stand in solidarity with immigrants seeking fullness of life. We pray...
- ❖ That we search for ways that favor a spirit of solidarity. May we practice a faith that transcends borders and work toward the globalization of love. We pray...
- ❖ May we remember we are called to be both host and guest, both welcoming the stranger and being welcomed and transformed. We pray...
- ❖ May we open our ears and hearts to the cries of the voiceless. As leaders may we be filled with courage to be a voice for those who suffer from injustice of any form. We pray...
- ❖ May we walk in humble solidarity on this journey of hope, trusting in our God of Justice to guide us with love. We pray...

Leader: For the Christian acceptance of and solidarity with the stranger is not only a human duty of hospitality, but also a precise demand of fidelity itself to Christ's teachings. For the believer, caring for migrants means striving to guarantee a place within the individual Christian community for his brothers and sisters coming from afar, and working so that every human being's personal rights are recognized.

All: Lord, help to keep us always aware of the inherent rights of all human being and in a particular way, to the rights of the migrants who come under our care.

Leader: The Church invites all people of goodwill to make their own contribution so that every person is respected and discrimination that debase human dignity are banned. Her action, sustained by prayer, is inspired by the Gospel, and guided by her age-old experience.

All: Lord, grant that, following the example of Christ, we may always respect the dignity and rights of every individual and support the cause of social justice.

Leader: The phenomenon of human mobility calls to mind the very image of the Church, the pilgrim people on earth, but constantly on her way to the heavenly homeland. Even in the innumerable hardships it involves, this path reminds us of the future world those prospective image spurs us to transform the present, which must be freed from injustice and oppression in view of the encounter with God, the ultimate goal of all people.

All: Lord, we are but pilgrims on a journey to be with you for eternity. Help us to be true shepherds, serving your people and leading them to their personal salvation.

We close together with Mary's song. In this song of courage and grace she sings of justice and that we, like all creation, thirst for a just world. Mary stands for all concerns that attempt to give this world a new heart, and mind, and face. May we call on Maria, La Virgen for guidance, strength, and vision. May we learn from her example of saying yes to what life is inviting us to. Together we prayer:

Mary's Song -- The Magnificat

*My soul glorifies you my God,
My spirit rejoices in you my Saviour!
For you have blessed me lavishly
and make me ready to respond.
You shatter my little world
and let me be poor before you.
You take from me all my plans
and give me more than I can hope for or ask.
You give me opportunities and the ability
to become free and to burst through my boundaries.
You give me strength to be daring,
to build on you alone,
for you show yourself
as the ever greater One in my life.
You have made known to me this ----
It is in my being servant that it becomes possible
for your realm to break through here and now.*

■ adapted by Olga Worenski, IBVM

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