

Catholic Relief Services

Prayer Service for Immigrants from Latin America

“We are together on the journey, *Estamos juntos en el camino*”

(Facilitator note: *This service is an opportunity for your campus community to prayerfully connect with those who are impacted by migration. As you arrange your environment for the prayer service, consider the use of multicultural art and other visual elements to enhance the solidarity of the experience. Please also visit: <http://www.nccbuscc.org/mrs/liturg2.htm> to see recommendations on how to be culturally sensitive in your liturgical setting. Finally, in this service the participants will be asked to change their seats as a simple way to be in solidarity with people who are “on the move.” Please be mindful of any potential complications with candles etc...)*

CALL TO PRAYER:

Leader 1: God of movement, God of stillness, calm our hearts so we may recognize your presence with us now. *(Pause)* Help us to grow in prayerful solidarity with all those who immigrate to this country, to our community. We especially lift up our brothers and sisters from Latin America, and the significance they hold in our lives. *(Pause)* Help us to realize that, “We are together on the journey.” *Estamos juntos en el camino.*

All: We are together on the journey, *Estamos juntos en el camino.*

GATHERING SONG SUGGESTIONS:

“One Spirit, One Church” by Kevin Keil

“Pan de Vida” by Bob Hurd

”Somos el Cuerpo de Cristo / We Are the Body of Christ” by Jaime Cortez

(From OCP Publications, 5536 NE Hassalo, Portland, OR 97213, www.ocp.org)

Leader 1: Good and gracious God, the story of migration is long entwined in our collective history. Open our minds so we may listen anew to the ancient story of our Hebrew ancestors, as they journey out of Egypt.

SCRIPTURE:

Leader 2: A reading from the book of Exodus:

The Israelites set out from Rameses for Succoth, about six hundred thousand men on foot, not counting the children. A crowd of mixed ancestry also went up with them, besides their livestock, very numerous flocks and herds.

Since the dough they had brought out of Egypt was not leavened, they baked it into unleavened loaves. They had been rushed out of Egypt and had no opportunity even to prepare food for the journey. The time the Israelites had stayed in Egypt was four hundred and thirty years.

At the end of four hundred and thirty years, all the hosts of the LORD left the land of Egypt on this very date. This was a night of vigil for the LORD, as he led them out of the land of Egypt; so on this same night all the Israelites must keep a vigil for the LORD throughout their generations.

(Exodus 12:37-42)

(Moment of silent reflection)

Leader 1:

The following principles on migration are taken from the “Pastoral Letter Concerning Migration” co-written by the Catholic Bishops of Mexico and the United States. In between each passage we will be asked to *silently* change our seats as a way to connect to those who are “on the move.” Let us now embrace the challenges our Bishops place before us.

Leader 2:

“The Five Principals on Migration from Catholic Social Teaching

I. Persons have the right to find opportunities in their homeland.

All persons have the right to find in their own countries the economic, political, and social opportunities to live in dignity and achieve a full life through the use of their God-given gifts. In this context, work that provides a just, living wage is a basic human need.”

All: We are together on the journey, *Estamos juntos en el camino*.

Leader 2: In solidarity with those who have little opportunity at home, let us rise and change our seats.

Leader 3:

“II. Persons have the right to migrate to support themselves and their families.

The Church recognizes that all the goods of the earth belong to all people. When persons cannot find employment in their country of origin to support themselves and their families, they have a right to find work elsewhere in order to survive. Sovereign nations should provide ways to accommodate this right.”

All: We are together on the journey, *Estamos juntos en el camino*.

Leader 3: In solidarity with those who are denied the right to migrate, let us rise and change our seats.

Leader 4:

“III. Sovereign nations have the right to control their borders.

The Church recognizes the right of sovereign nations to control their territories but rejects such control when it is exerted merely for the purpose of acquiring additional wealth. More powerful economic nations, which have the ability to protect and feed their residents, have a stronger obligation to accommodate migration flows.”

All: We are together on the journey, *Estamos juntos en el camino*.

Leader 4: In solidarity with those communities who receive immigrants, let us rise and change our seats.

Leader 5:

“IV. Refugees and asylum seekers should be afforded protection.

Those who flee wars and persecution should be protected by the global community. This requires, at a minimum, that migrants have a right to claim refugee status without incarceration and to have their claims fully considered by a competent authority.”

All: We are together on the journey, *Estamos juntos en el camino*.

Leader 5: In solidarity with those who seek protection, let us rise and change our seats.

Leader 6:

“V. The human dignity and human rights of undocumented migrants should be respected. Regardless of their legal status, migrants, like all persons, possess inherent human dignity that should be respected. Often they are subject to punitive laws and harsh treatment from enforcement officers from both receiving and transit countries. Government policies that respect the basic human rights of the undocumented are necessary.”

All: We are together on the journey, *Estamos juntos en el camino*.

Leader 6: In solidarity with those whose basic human rights are not respected, let us rise and change our seats.

(Strangers No Longer: Together on the Journey of Hope, November, 2002 (No's. 35-38)

CLOSING PRAYER:

Leader 1:

Together on the Journey
A Prayer for Migrants and Refugees

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.

Juntos en el Camino
Oración para Migrantes y Refugiados

Querido Jesús, nuestro viaje por la vida es largo y duro. No podemos hacer este recorrido solos; debemos caminar juntos durante el viaje. Prometiste enviarnos un ayudante, tu Espíritu. Ayúdanos a ver tu Espíritu en los que envías a viajar con nosotros.

En la familia refugiada, que busca seguridad ante la violencia, Déjanos ver tu Espíritu.

En el trabajador migrante, que trae alimento a nuestras mesas, Déjanos ver tu Espíritu

En el solicitante de asilo, que busca justicia para sí y su familia, Déjanos ver tu Espíritu

En el niño sin compañía, que viaja solo en un mundo peligroso, Déjanos ver tu Espíritu

Enséñanos a reconocer que cuando caminamos juntos, Tú estás presente. Enséñanos a acoger no sólo al forastero entre nosotros sino también los dones que nos trae: las invitaciones a la conversión, la comunión y la solidaridad.

Pues esta es la ayuda que has enviado: no estamos solos. Estamos juntos en el camino, y por esto te damos las gracias.
 Amén.

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SENDING FORTH SONG SUGGESTIONS:

"E Na Lima Hana" by David Haas and Joe Camacho

"We Are Many Parts" by Marty Haugen

"Diverse in Culture, Race and Nation" by Ruth Duck

(From GIA Publications, 7404 South Mason Avenue, Chicago, IL 60638, www.giamusic.com)