



Current Issues in Prayer

November 2016

Welcome! The Pope invites people of different faiths to come together and pray:

That the countries which take in a great number of displaced persons and refugees may find support for their efforts which show solidarity.



Getting started:

Let me go to a quiet place and time ... Let me see the Lord looking at me with loving eyes ... let me see him internally as he shows me his great trust ... and as he tells me that I may give my support within good works of solidarity And now let me remember the many who in the world are poor and marginalized ... who long not so much for pity, but for those who will become their companions and friends.



Short story:

In 1987, the poorest, Jesuit run, parish in the Los Angeles, USA area, called Dolores Mission, became like a shrine welcoming the homeless. In a very short time, this Church would fill up with Mexicans and Central Americans who had no official documents, who would come to spend the night there.

Early on Sunday mornings, volunteers would come in so as to clean up the Church, but some foul odours would linger on. It goes without saying that many parishioners would grumble and complain. Some even decided to move elsewhere. Since no solution to this problem could be found, the Jesuit community decided to take the issue up during a shared homily at Mass.

“What smell do you pick up in the Church” asked the priest. “That of smelly feet” someone replied. The priest went on: “But tell me, why is there such a smell?” “Because the homeless slept here” replied a woman. “Why are we allowing this to go on?” A third person replied: “Because this is a commitment we have taken.” “And why is it that we have taken this commitment?” “Because that is what Jesus would have done!” “And so, what smell do you pick up in the Church?” asked the priest once again. “The smell of commitment!” shouted another. The congregation made sounds of approval. “There is a smell of roses!” called out another. All laughed heartily.

This congregation had not only learned how to help migrants, but also how to suffer with those who, along with them, belong to the same one family of God.



Time to reflect:

What do you make of this story? Do you agree with what this Christian community did?

Had you been there, what would you have done? Would you have moved to another Church or would you have kept the commitment to welcome migrants?



Let us pray:

Lord, I pray that my own household and my own country will not keep back from giving their share in what is done in aid of migrants. Lord, may we show such solidarity both in word and deed.



Inspiration:

It is necessary to respond to the globalization of migration with the globalization of charity and cooperation.

Pope Francis



Hands on:

Examine the way I have spoken about refugees and migrants these last days. Could I have spoken about them in a more positive way?

Do I know of initiatives in aid of migrants? Could I do something to help?