



Catholic Action With Immigrant Children

Prayer #4

Gathering and Welcome

Welcome! We gather here today in the presence of our loving God to reflect on the lives of our brothers and sisters who have been detained by the U.S. government in their search for a better life, and especially to reflect on the children in detention, frightened, alone, hungry and cold. We come also to ask for the strength and courage of our God to act through us as we call for justice for these children and their families, for an end to child detention, and for a moral and humane response to all who come to our country seeking refuge. Finally we come here to ask for our merciful God to bestow wisdom on our lawmakers so that they do not shy away from their moral duty and show compassion to all, especially the most vulnerable, the children, in their work to create a just, fair and humane immigration policy. Through the power of our faith and in the compassion of Jesus Christ we ask that all human life be respected and that children seeking refuge be no longer detained, left alone and afraid, but rather that they feel the love, warmth and welcome of our great nation.

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 15-year-old from El Salvador at a border patrol facility describes the conditions:

“A Border Patrol agent came in our room with a two-year-old boy and asked us, ‘Who wants to take care of this little boy?’ Another girl said she would take care of him, but she lost interest after a few hours so I started taking care of him yesterday. His bracelet says he is two years old.

I feed the 2-year-old boy, change his diaper, and play with him. He is sick. He has a cough and a runny nose and scabs on his lips. He was coughing last night so I asked to take him to see the doctor and they told me that the doctor would come to our room, but the doctor never came. The little boy that I am taking care of never speaks. He likes for me to hold him as much as possible.”

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 about putting the last in first place. Jesus Christ asks us not to yield to the logic of the world, which justifies injustice to others for my own gain or that of my group. ‘Me first, and then the others!’ Instead, the true motto of the Christian is, ‘The last shall be first!’ An individualistic spirit is fertile soil for the growth of that kind of indifference towards our neighbours which leads to viewing them in purely economic terms, to a lack of concern for their humanity, and ultimately to feelings of fear and cynicism. Are these not the attitudes we often adopt towards the poor, the marginalized and the ‘least’ of society? And how many of these ‘least’ do we have in our societies! Among them I think primarily of migrants, with their burden of hardship and suffering, as they seek daily, often in desperation, a place to live in peace and dignity. In the logic of the Gospel, the last come first, and we must put ourselves at their service.”

Christ have mercy.

Response: Christ Have Mercy

The Book of Leviticus says:

“When a stranger resides with you in your land, do not mistreat such a one. You shall treat the stranger who resides with you no differently than the natives born among you; you shall love the stranger as yourself; for you too were once strangers in the land of Egypt. I, the Lord, am your God.”

Lord have mercy

Response: Lord Have Mercy

Participants may wish to pray one decade of the Rosary

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

