

LIGHT THREE PURPLE CANDLES AND ONE PINK CANDLE.

"I will fix a place for my people Israel; I will plant them so that they may dwell in their place without further disturbance." — 2 Sm. 7:10

The first reading speaks of the promise to all God's people. Pope Francis said in Sept 2023, "joint efforts are needed by individual countries and the international community to ensure that all enjoy the right not to be forced to emigrate, in other words, the chance to live in peace and with dignity in one's own country." And yet, this often does not happen. Learn about the **situation in Venezuela** that **forces** migrants to search for safety elsewhere. Advocate for policies that honor the dignity of all people so they do not have to emigrate. Support groups that honor God's promise to them: **NIJC, CLINIC, SBI, and Catholic Charities.**

"Hail, full of grace! The Lord is with you." — Luke 1:28

Emmanuel – God is with her! Soon she will share the gift of God with all of us. Luke proclaims that God's promise is made *real*. It will come to fruition in a *woman* (a scorned gender then and now) of *color* (middle eastern descent, judged still) who will be *migrating* (labeled unjustly as they search for what was promised) with her family for safety. God among us has chosen to come to our world through a **humble, wandering displaced family**. How many humble migrants have opened your eyes to the world as it should be? Are you preparing the world for the gifts that they bring? Pray to Our Mother, Mary, for strength for the journey of immigrants and refugees every Friday, 7:15 a.m. on video. Email: mgoebel@archchicago.org to sign up for a link each week.

LET US PRAY

Lord Jesus, you are God's promise, fulfilled for the faithful. May all who wait for your coming be open to the different ways you enter our lives. Surprise us with Joy, strengthen us with Hope, and lead us in Love to be your messengers of Peace to our country and world. Amen.



Office of Human Dignity and Solidarity
Immigration Ministry
Cardinal Meyer Center
3525 South Lake Park Avenue
Chicago, IL 60653

We have been seeking compassionate, comprehensive immigration reform since 2005. In this 18th year of the journey, may we accompany and welcome our immigrant and refugee sisters and brothers through prayer, reflection, and action. Learn more about policies and how to take legislative action at **Sisters and Brothers of Immigrants.**

FIRST WEEK OF ADVENT

Pray for migrants and refugees that we may open our hearts to welcome them and that we may work for compassionate immigration reform. Read a **migrant story here** as you pray.

SECOND WEEK OF ADVENT

Our Lady of Guadalupe is honored in many ways this week. Learn her story **here** which immigrants have brought to us. Reflect on the story and tradition of this mother of all humanity. Pray for all her children, especially immigrants and refugees.

THIRD WEEK OF ADVENT

A Posada is a custom that recalls the journey of Mary and Joseph to find shelter and refuge, searching for welcome, like our immigrants today. Learn how **Pope Francis tells us** to make the road safer and welcoming.

FOURTH WEEK OF ADVENT

This 'week' of Advent is actually only one day. It will be a busy day for us as we scramble to prepare for God, for family, for immigrants. As you enter the Christmas season, make time to explore films about our migrant families. **Click here** and then go to the 'education tab'. Invite friends or family to join you as well.

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National Pastoral Migratoria

ADVENT REFLECTIONS 2023



December 3 – 9, 2023 | Hope
FIRST WEEK OF ADVENT

LIGHT ONE PURPLE CANDLE.

“We are the clay and you the potter: we are all the work of your hands.” — Is. 64:7

Advent is a time of waiting. It's a time of surrendering over the perceived need to control our lives in every detail. Think about the waiting and the surrendering that asylum seekers experience. Many of them have traveled for months or years to find safety, jobs, and food, only to be lured on a bus and sent to other cities not yet ready to help them. They have surrendered their lives by being in an area so different from home, not knowing the language. Yet, they have HOPE that they will be welcomed. Use this time to wait for God, to surrender your time to prepare. Be inspired by **migrant stories** as they keep searching with HOPE.

Pope Francis says, “the phenomenon of migration is not so much a short-term urgency, always good for fueling alarmist propaganda, but a reality of our times.” (Sept 23, 2023) This reality has awakened our cities to the needs of the poor and the homeless as we scramble to welcome and assist the migrants. We can respond with compassion and work together for all in need. *“You do not know when the time will come.”* (Mk 13:33) For when that time comes, are we ready?

Just as the clay surrenders to the potter, not knowing the outcome, yet has HOPE because it trusts the creator, we too must surrender our time, our life and trust to our creator. Is God forming us before our eyes to be a people of faith *and action*? What kind of clay do we want to be? What do we need to surrender in our life to allow the potter to work? This Advent let us be formed by God's hands as we wait, surrender, and prepare for God's coming.

LET US PRAY

Creator God, shape us into your image. Mold us to be all welcoming during this time of waiting. Help us to recognize your handiwork in all creation, especially in immigrants, and refugees. May we be formed by the events around us, learning how to be your loving embrace and feet of action. Amen.

December 10 – 16, 2023 | Peace
SECOND WEEK OF ADVENT

LIGHT TWO PURPLE CANDLES.

“Behold, I am sending my messenger ahead of you; he will prepare your way.” — Mk 1:2

We imagine the *world as it should be*, how God dreams it would be. We pray “...on earth as it is in heaven.” But is it? We live in a *world as it is* and know it is not as God intended. People migrate all over the world to escape poverty and violence. Multiple wars are happening with innocent lives being destroyed. Where is the PEACE we pray for this week?

We must be messengers of the *world as it should be*. Are we preparing a place where immigrants are welcomed and valued? Asylum seekers and refugees keep arriving and searching for help. Are they embraced and trusted, or are they used as alarmist propaganda? Read about John the Baptist in Mark's Gospel. In the end ‘preparing the way’ cost John his life. How will we prepare the way for those in need? If we work together, organizing our response of compassion, can we make it on earth as it is in heaven?

The following links will get you to donation and volunteer opportunities in **Chicago, Chicago Catholic Charities**, or **New York City, NY Catholic Charities**. Reach out to your local parish too. Then speak out: **TAKE ACTION: Tell Congress to Support Policies that Welcome Asylum Seekers and Reject the Further Militarization of the Border | CWS (cwsglobal.org)**.

“But according to his promise we await new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.” (2 Pt 3:13) Prepare the way for a new earth...for the world as it should be, on earth as it is in heaven.

LET US PRAY

Loving God, as John the Baptist proclaimed your coming, may we be the messengers of our time, calling for justice and righteousness. Strengthen us to not be indifferent, but to surrender our time for action and compassion. Guide us as we work to make it on earth as it is in heaven. Amen

December 17 – 23, 2023 | Joy
THIRD WEEK OF ADVENT

LIGHT TWO PURPLE CANDLES AND ONE PINK CANDLE.

“I rejoice heartily in the LORD, in my God is the joy of my soul” — Is 61:10

Today is Gaudete Sunday – the day of JOY. We are halfway through Advent and can almost see the end – *God among us*. For immigrants and refugees, rejoicing at the end of their journey depends on our welcome and support, on whether we have prepared a place for them. In the same sense, our rejoicing at the end of our life journey depends on how God has prepared a place for *us*. We trust that God will be there to welcome us. We must work as hard on preparing for our immigrant family as God does for us. We prepare for God among us by welcoming God's family – immigrants and refugees.

“He has sent me to bring glad tidings to the poor, to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and release to the prisoners...” (Is 61:1)

This reading focuses our eyes on another JOYful goal: God's justice is promised and close. As the prophet proclaims this to a blind and deaf nation, we too must proclaim to our leaders. With the extension of TPS for Venezuelans they can get work authorization and begin contributing to our society, which is all they want to do. **Tell our leaders to fast track these authorizations**. Ask your representatives to work for more funding to support the organizations scrambling to do what our government has not done: provide food, security, homes, and jobs. Use these talking points **here** when you call.

Be filled with JOY that God is near and work with joyful hearts to prepare for God in the migrants.

LET US PRAY

Oh God of Joy, we listen for your voice which promises your justice. We hear your voice in the migrants who remind us to prepare for you as we prepare for them. Guide our actions of welcome and love so that we may be people of your Joy. Amen.