

SCM's Migrant Justice Devotional



Migrant Justice Devotional

As disciples of Christ, himself once a refugee fleeing with his family from King Herod, we are to ask ourselves how hospitable have we been to those who cross our borders?

In Canada and North America, we often believe that we welcome a huge number of migrants to this land, but Canada hosts a negligible amount of migrants. Compared to Pakistan, a country that hosts approximately 1.6 million refugees and Jordan which hosts more 600,000 refugees (with a population of 6 million), Canada hosts around 160,000 refugees (UNHCR Global Trends Report 2013). And the borders are tightening every year with more immigration and refugee policies that deny people from staying permanently. Temporary work programs are being expanded and avenues for permanent stay are narrowing.

We in the Christian community also tend to advocate for the rights of refugees, but often ignore

the rights of all migrants, refugee claimants or otherwise. People are on the move all over the world looking for better opportunities and fleeing from poverty. In the UN's Refugee Convention, 'economic injustice' is not enough of a reason to claim refuge. Yet, many people all over the world are desperately trying to move away from poverty and economic injustice which is often linked to our over-consumption, materialism, and to the West's unfair trade agreements.

We pray that we can share our abundance with others as the Lord has shown us abundance and blessing. We pray that we welcome all in our midst and throw away our list of criteria for entry.

This devotional is meant to be a meditation on migrant justice. We've also included some prayer methods below to help you find ways to reflect on the content of the devotional. Consider getting involved in migrant justice work. We've provided a few links below to help you find ways to get involved.

Sunday // Challenging Oppression

The Lord is a shelter for the oppressed, a refuge in times of trouble. Those who know your name trust in you, for you, O Lord, do not abandon those who search for you.

(Psalm 9:9-10, NLT)

**He has put down the mighty from their thrones,
and exalted the lowly. (Luke 1:52)**

“Truth is on the side of the oppressed.”

— Malcolm X

"When the church hears the cry of the oppressed it cannot but denounce the social structures that give rise to and perpetuate the misery from which the cry arises."

— Oscar Romero

“Black and Third World people are expected to educate white people as to our humanity. Women are expected to educate men. Lesbians and gay men are expected to educate the heterosexual

world. The oppressors maintain their position and evade their responsibility for their own actions. There is a constant drain of energy which might be better used in redefining ourselves and devising realistic scenarios for altering the present and constructing the future.”

— Audre Lorde, *Sister Outsider: Essays and Speeches*

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Monday // Neither Jew nor Greek

*There is neither Jew nor Greek,
there is neither slave nor free,
there is no male and female,
for you are all one in Christ Jesus.*
(Galatians 3:28)

**Let me go further than just imagining ‘the other,’
but also let me muster enough courage to do
something about it.**

“No one today is purely one thing. Labels like Indian, or woman, or Muslim, or American are not more than starting-points, which if followed into actual experience for only a moment are quickly left behind. Imperialism consolidated the mixture of cultures and identities on a global scale. But its worst and most paradoxical gift was to allow people to believe that they were only, mainly, exclusively, white, or Black, or Western, or Oriental. Yet just as human beings make their own history, they also make their cultures and ethnic identities. No one can deny the persisting continuities of long traditions, sustained habitations, national languages, and cultural geographies, but there seems no reason except fear and prejudice to keep insisting on their separation and distinctiveness, as if that was all human life was about.

— Edward W. Said

Tuesday // Welcoming All in our Midst

You shall allot it as an inheritance for yourselves and for the sojourners who reside among you and have had children among you. They shall be to you as native-born children of Israel. With you they shall be allotted an inheritance among the tribes of Israel.

(Ezekiel 47:22)

**All the hearts of the people are my identity
So take away my passport!**

— From Palestinian poet Mahmoud Darwish- Passport

The gate of gates
No key in our hand. But we entered.
Refugees to our birth from the strange death
And refugees to our homes that were our homes
and we came.

In our joys there were scratches Unseen by tears
until they're about to flow

— From Palestinian poet Mourid Barghouti

Wednesday // No Borders No Fences

"For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, a stranger and you welcomed me" (Matthew 25:35)

No borders, boundaries, no limits. No boundaries of the body, or writing, of states. We didn't cross the border, the borders crossed us.

Here on the slopes of hills, facing the dusk and the
cannon of time
Close to the gardens of broken shadows,
We do what prisoners do,
And what the jobless do:
We cultivate hope.

— Mahmoud Darwish

"Institutionalized rejection of difference is an absolute necessity in a profit economy which needs outsiders as surplus people."

— Audre Lorde

Thursday // Diversity in Community

We are all parts of one body, we have the same Spirit, and we have all been called to the same glorious future. For us there is only one Lord, one faith, one baptism, and we all have the same God and Father who is over us all and in us all, and living through every part of us.

(Ephesians 4:4-6, TLB)

"If my sister or brother is not at the table, we are not the flesh of Christ. If my sister's mark of sexuality must be obscured, if my brother's mark of race must be disguised, if my sister's mark of culture must be repressed, then we are not the flesh of Christ. For, it is through and in Christ's own flesh that the 'other' is my sister, is my brother; indeed, the 'other' is me..."

— M. Shawn Copeland

Friday // Community in Diversity

“Which of these three do you think was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of robbers?” The expert in the law replied, “The one who had mercy on him.” Jesus told him, “Go and do likewise.”
(Luke 10:36-37, NIV)

May I learn to love my neighbour as I love myself.

“Without community, there is no liberation.”

— Audre Lorde

Saturday // Practicing Radical Hospitality

Don't neglect to open up your homes to guests, because by doing this some have been hosts to angels without knowing it. Remember prisoners as if you were in prison with them, and people who are mistreated as if you were in their place. (Hebrews 13:2-3, CEB)

How should one live? Live welcoming to all.

— Mechthild of Magdeburg

"As for ourselves, yes, we must be meek, bear injustice, malice, rash judgment. We must turn the other cheek, give up our cloak, go a second mile. "

— Dorothy Day

I am deliberate and afraid of nothing."

— Audre Lorde

Prayers

Lectio Divina

Lectio Divina, or sacred reading, is method of prayer based in listening and contemplation. To practice, select a passage from scripture and read through it slowly, listening both to the words on the page and for God's still, small voice. Notice the word or short phrase that is speaking to you. Read slowly through the passage perhaps twice more, reflecting on that word and praying/meditating on its message for you. Reflect your thoughts in a journal.

The Jesus Prayer

Tracing ancient roots, the Jesus prayer unites biblical text with breathing in order to cultivate communion with God. As you take a breath in, say audibly or inaudibly, "Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God." Upon your exhale, say "Have mercy on me, a sinner." As you begin to practice this, allow your mind to ruminate on the words, but eventually move into a spiritual place of its broader meanings. In Orthodox traditions, this prayer is said using prayer beads or a

prayer rope, dozens or hundreds of times over.

Night Wilderness Meditation

Find yourself a nice chunk of wild land to commune with. Scout out a good spot to meditate for when night falls. Make a fire with a few good companions and wait for the darkness to set in. Once it's dark, find your way from the fire to the spot you scouted out and settle in to commune with G-d in the complete darkness of the wilderness evening. Notice what comes up. Feel your emotions or thoughts manifest and gently return to G-d in this dark night. After awhile return to the fire and let your companion do the same. An added option is to do this meditation completely naked so there is nothing between you and Creator. -Jesse Gardner

The Examen

St. Ignatius taught this 5-step method of prayer to help us reflect on our days in a way that is spiritually constructive. Take time to be intentional as you go through these five steps: 1. Recall that you are in the presence of God. Worship. 2. Spend a moment

looking over your day with gratitude for this day's gifts and thank God for them. 3. Ask God to send you His Holy Spirit to help you look at your actions, attitudes, and motives with honesty and patience. 4. Review your day. This is not a time to dwell on your shortcomings; rather, it is a gentle look with the Lord at how you have responded to God's gifts. It is an opportunity for growth of self and deepening your relationship with God. 5. Talk heart-to-heart with Jesus.

Resources

Websites

No One Is Illegal — www.nooneisillegal.org

Sanctuary Network — www.sanctuarycanada.ca

Migrante Canada — <http://www.migrante.ca>

Justicia for Migrant Workers —
www.justicia4migrantworkers.org

Canadian Council for Refugees — ccrweb.ca

Health 4 All — www.health4all.ca

Books

Harsha Walia — *Undoing Border Imperialism*

HyeRan Kim Cragg and **EunYoung Choi** — *The Encounters: Retelling the Bible from Migration and Intercultural Perspectives*

Edward Said — *Orientalism*

What IS SCM?

Founded in 1921, the Student Christian Movement is a national youth-led movement passionate about justice, community & spirituality. We engage the prophetic teachings of the revolutionary Jesus of Nazareth. As an ecumenical movement, we include people of many beliefs and faiths seeking to explore and challenge the Christian tradition.



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