



Current Issues in Prayer

June 2015

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

That immigrants and refugees may find welcome and respect in the countries to which they come.



Getting started:

I find a comfortable position and I breathe in and out slowly. I become aware of God's presence and of God's loving gaze upon me. God loves me regardless of my colour, language, religion, race, culture or nationality. His love is unconditional. I stay for some moments in the presence of His love....



Short story:

Ali, a middle-class citizen from Sudan, was a 27 year-old soldier, with this job providing him with relatively good income to sustain his family. He had relatives belonging to another ethnic group since tribal inter-marriage is frequent there. One day his regime ordered him and a few others to shoot at this ethnic group, to kill his own people. Ali disobeyed these orders and fled from his country leaving his family behind. He crossed the desert and then Mediterranean until he got to Malta. He spent eighteen months in detention before being granted political asylum. Then he succeeded to find work in the construction industry, happy to be able to send money home. Although settled in his work and respected as a Moslem, Ali is always brooding over his wife and two children: will they be heavily punished for deserting his country? His only desire is to be united again with them in Malta or in another European country. Will it ever materialize?



Time to reflect:

Would I have been so bold as to leave everything behind, including my loved ones, for the sake of abiding to my values?

Did I ever experience the need to escape from an unbearable situation? Did I find help and understanding?

How would have Ali felt had he not found a job and had his religious beliefs not been respected?



Let us pray:

Lord we pray for those who are refugees/ immigrants. Help them to find people who accept and support them. Let us not see refugees as a threat but rather as an enrichment to our lives. Make us all aware of those things which make us refugees in our own lives and help us to provide refuge to each other.



Inspiration:

"To be free is not merely to cast off one's chains but to live in a way that respects and enhances the freedom of others"
Nelson Mandela



Hands on:

Throughout this month try to put yourself in the situation of refugees/ immigrants and the reasons which could have caused them to leave their countries. Try to refrain from passing judgements and encourage others to do the same.

Also try to think of things which might be making you a refugee in your life, thus decreasing your freedom and ask for God's help to overcome them.