

SECOND SUNDAY OF EASTER:

IMMIGRATION

HAVE MERCY ON THE IMMIGRANT

~~Video URL~~ What does it mean to be resurrected people? It means to have mercy, divine mercy for all God's creation, including the immigrant.

Now, for Divine Mercy Sunday, we hear Br. John Paul Peterson, O.P. preaching on Divine Mercy on the Immigrant. To the right is a video by Pope Francis, "Migrant and Refugees."

Video URL

TEXT OF THE PREACHING:

Second Sunday of Easter (or Divine Mercy Sunday)

Reading from the Gospel of John, Chapter 20:19-31

Theme: Mercy, a means of conversion.

Today we celebrate the Second Sunday of Easter or Mercy Sunday, in which the Lord after his resurrection showed himself to his disciples. Getting into the gospel reading allows us to see how the word of God can inform our attitude of Faith, Hope and Mercy for others and ourselves.

When Jesus appeared to the disciples, He said to them, "Peace be with you." When he had said this, he showed them his hands and his side. The disciples were terrified when they saw the Lord. Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. The Father has sent me, so I send you." Thomas, one of the Twelve, was not with them when Jesus came.

When Thomas did arrive, the other disciples said to him, "We have seen the Lord." But he said to them, "Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands and put my finger into the nail marks and put my hand into his side, I will not believe." At this news, Thomas did not have an attitude of openness to the possibility that the Christ had risen. When Jesus came the second time, he stood in their midst and said, "Peace be with you." Looking to Thomas, Jesus said, "Put your finger here and see my hands, and bring your hand and put it into my side, and do not be unbelieving, but believe." Thomas was discovering the mercy of God in flesh and blood before him.

The story of Thomas is intriguing in that Christ did not abandon Thomas for his lack of faith and hope. Instead, Jesus showed Thomas mercy. This merciful love Jesus invited Thomas to a deeper conversion, which is the most concrete expression of the presence of mercy. The measure of God's mercy, it seems, is only limited by our unwillingness to show mercy to others. This brings us to the

the mercy values of our Christian Catholic faith which I like to identify as dignity, respect, integrity, justice, compassion, accompaniment.

Today we celebrate Divine Mercy Sunday, a day in which we remember the mercy of God to all of us. How do we show mercy to the immigrant? When it comes to immigration mercy matters: It matters because we all need compassion. Mercy also matters because it is what can join us together despite our differences so that we can share equally so that each has enough.

Many in this country today are two, three or perhaps six generations removed from those of our ancestors. We are the heirs of their trials and risks and sacrifices. We are obligated to give thoughtful discernment to today's challenges. The laws of our nation must be respected. Yet we are a country like no other and we have the opportunities and freedoms granted to us by God, who only asks for our love in return.

And so we ask, how do we experience and show mercy to the stranger in our midst, especially the immigrant? The USCCB text on immigration, "Welcome the Stranger among Us," challenges us to look at the common good of all persons, with their inherent dignity as Children of God. There are different reasons why people come to the US. I voluntarily came to the US, not to seek a better life but to explore religious life. However, some came seeking a better life due to challenges in their homeland.

Nevertheless, in the call for us, perhaps most significantly for Christians, Jesus shows us what it means to be merciful: to the sick, the orphan, the widow and the stranger.

Unity in diversity is firmly grounded in the Church's social teaching, particularly Justice and Peace. Understanding Catholic social teaching helps us to put our faith into action, giving us the opportunities to better understand and practice what our faith teaches.

Christ ceaselessly calls us, through the work of the Church, to help those who have been forced out of their homeland due to war, civil unrest, and natural disaster. As you see immigrants today, what core mercy values draw you or me to work and minister to the immigrant, is it the dignity of the person, respect for the personhood, justice, service, compassion, and accompaniment? Although I am a non-immigrant, as a religious missionary to the US, in the service of a religious vocation, and working with immigrants from other countries, I saw first-hand the suffering immigrants' experience, from the lack of food, adequate shelter and resources needed to live adequately. Immigrants always face the challenges of cultural differences of language, food customs, and behaviors. They feel unwelcome, and an attitude and behavior of indifference makes it difficult for immigrants to share their experiences. This forces me to work harder for their well-being and a successful outcome.

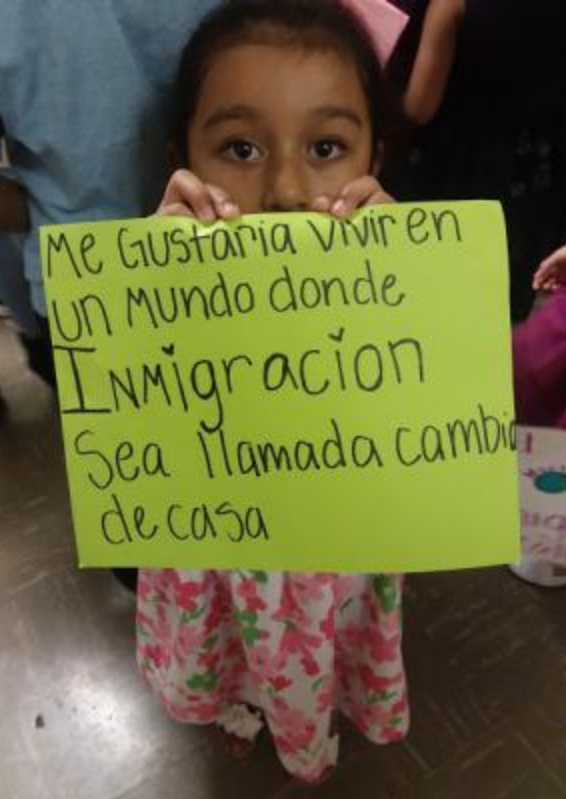
For consideration, we can ask what are our Mercy Value(s) when working with immigrants? When I take the time to learn and understand the stories of the immigrants and refugees that I work with, I am practicing compassion. When I advocate for the rights of all people to live in this country regardless of origin, race and socioeconomic status just like the many European immigrants who came before, I am practicing compassion and service to others. I acknowledge that just because my ancestors were shown compassion, I need to do the same. I am understanding personal responsibility.

Encourage others to take the time to learn more about immigration by talking to immigrants themselves and accompanying them on their journey to wholeness and wellness. Get involved, volunteer, ask questions, be compassionate, and most of all, put a human face to the debate. Be merciful by walking in the shoes of immigrants and try to understand their struggles and challenges. Mercy values give me to walk with the stranger. "If you want peace, work for justice."

TERMS:

"Immigrant" is not a term used universally: though common in North America to refer to those living in a country other than their birth country, other terms frequently used include "international migrant," the "foreign-born," and "migrant." International statistical agencies base their counts of migrant populations on the number of people who say they were born in another country and/or who hold the citizenship of another country.

In casual usage, "immigrant" can refer to any foreign-born person, but in the United States, some are technically considered "nonimmigrants." While immigrants intend to stay in a new country permanently, nonimmigrants remain only temporarily, whether that's for a few days on a business trip, a few months as a seasonal worker, or a few years as a student, missionary, or religious worker. Those considered immigrants also include a range of people with different legal statuses. These statuses are not identical, but are often comparable, across different receiving countries.



Me Gustaria vivir en
un mundo donde
Inmigracion
sea llamada cambio
de casa

FIVE PRINCIPLES FROM

1. Persons have the right
2. Persons have the right
3. Sovereign nations have
of migrants.
4. Refugees and asylum s
5. The human dignity and
respected.

*(From Paragraphs 33-38, Str
Hope: A Pastoral Letter Con
Mexico and the United States*

SCRIPTURE APPLICATION

Leviticus 19:33-34

If a stranger lives with you in
as one of your own countrym
strangers yourselves in Egypt

Isaiah 10: 1-2

Woe to the legislators of infa
who refuse justice to the unf
rights, who make widows the

Jeremiah 22: 3

Yahweh says this: Practice h
wronged from the hands of h
the widow; do not violence, s
Matthew 25: 35-40

For I was hungry and you gav
was stranger and you made m
visited me; in prison and you
you did this to one of the leas
Galatians 3:28

...there are no more distincti
female, but all of you are one

CHURCH STATEMENT

Pacem in Terris (Pope John X
Every human being has the ri
the confines of his own state.
permitted to emigrate to other

that he is a citizen of a particular country, nor the citizen of a particular human family, nor the citizen of a particular wide fellowship of men. [2] It is not irrelevant to draw attention to the fact that all men are persons and all their rights are derived from the fact that they are persons and not from the fact that they are citizens of a particular state. [105]

Among man's personal rights is the right to work, which he hopes to be able to exercise for himself and his dependents. It is therefore the duty of the state, in so far as the good of their own country is concerned, to pursue the aims of those who may be called the "honest workers." *Gaudium et Spes* (Second Vatican Council, 1963). When workers come from another country in search of economic advancement of their own country, the state regards wages and working conditions as a matter of justice, moreover, above all the purpose of their work is not production but as persons, to support their families, to educate their children and to provide themselves with a means of life. It is therefore just that these workers are incorporated into the social order that receives them. [66.1]

Laborem Exercens (Pope John Paul II, 1981). The person working away from his home, whether a migrant or a seasonal worker, should be treated like the other workers in that society. The search for work should not be a search for exploitation. As regards the wages applied to immigrant workers, the value of work should be measured by the difference in nationality, rather than by the difference in the value of the work. A statement of the U.S. Commission on the Hispanic American, *Mexicano*.

Strangers No Longer: Together We Build Our Future. We stand in solidarity with you and we will continue to advocate on your behalf. We will commit ourselves to animating you at the border to accompany you on your journey of hope, not of despair, and so that you are strangers no longer. We are here, that, wherever you go, you

ings and of your call to bring the Good News of Jesus Christ, who came that v
might have life and have it more abundantly" (Jn 10:10). We invite you who ar
ced to emigrate to maintain contact with your homes and, especially, to
maintain fidelity to your families so that you treasure your cultural values and th
ft of faith and so that you bring these treasures to whatever place you go. [106]

Address to the Participants in the Plenary of the Pontifical Council for the Pasto
re of Migrants and Itinerant People (Pope Francis, May 24, 2013)

"The Church is Mother, and her motherly attention is expressed with special
tenderness and closeness to those who are obliged to flee their own country and
tension between rootlessness and integration. This tension destroys people. Christia
compassion—this 'suffering with' compassion—is expressed first of all in the
commitment to obtain knowledge of the events that force people to leave their
homeland, and where necessary, to give voice to those who cannot manage to
make their cry of distress and oppression heard. They are all elements that
humanize and must push every Christian and the whole community to concret
attention."

Address to Joint Session of Congress, Washington, D.C. (Pope Francis,
September 24, 2015)

"Let us remember the golden rule: do unto others as you would have them do un
to you."

"Let us treat other with the same passion and compassion with which we want to
be treated."

"We, the people of this continent, are not fearful of foreigners, because most of u
were once foreigners."

"If we want security, let us give security. If we want life, let us give life. If we
want opportunity, let us provide these opportunities."

Interview at the U.S./Mexico border (Pope Francis, Feb 18, 2016)

"A person who thinks only about building walls, wherever they may be, and not
about building bridges, is not Christian. This is not the gospel," the Pope told journalis
who asked his opinion on Trump's proposals to halt illegal immigration.