

SUBSIDY

112th World Day of Migrants and Refugees (2026)

“EVEN ONE OF THESE LITTLE ONES” (cf. Mt 18:5)

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I. PRAYER AND MEDITATION GUIDE

1. Introduction

The plight of migrant children and adolescents tears at the heart of the world and, in a special way, of Latin America and the Caribbean. This is not a matter of statistical flows or macroeconomic variables; we are speaking of the incarnate face of Jesus who today walks barefoot through the Darien Gap, who crosses borders under a merciless sun that burns the skin during the day and freezing temperatures at night, and who sleeps in makeshift shelters. As we look upon these children on the move, consecrated life cannot remain a mere spectator: it is called to be a refuge, a shelter that welcomes, an embrace, and a prophecy that protects.

Inspired by the motto adopted by the Holy Father, “Even one of these little ones,” we remember that for God, there are no anonymous masses. Every girl, boy, and adolescent is forced to leave their homeland in search of a better future. The suffering of even a single vulnerable child on the migration route is an urgent call that shakes the very foundations of our mission and demands that we transform the culture of indifference into a mystique of incarnate hospitality. As Consecrated Life, we are invited to embrace this resource not only as a liturgical aid, but as a commitment to care for and defend life.

May this World Day of Migrants and Refugees inspire us to open the doors of our communities, fraternities, schools, apostolic works, and hearts, so that no “little one” will ever have to walk alone again, and so that their hope may find in us a firm foundation, an open home where they can flourish, prosper, and be happy.

2. Praying for Life with the Little Ones (Lectio Divina)

Contemplating the Face / Prayer

We hear the Word made flesh today in the cry of migrant children. As we see Jesus placing a child at the center, we break free from our logic of power and recognize that the greatness of the Kingdom is born of vulnerability. We do not contemplate statistics; we contemplate Christ who comes out to meet us on the roads. Welcoming the Word today means being willing to let ourselves be challenged by the truth of the most vulnerable.

From the Holy Gospel according to Matthew 18:1-5, 10:

On one occasion, the disciples came to Jesus and asked him, “Who is the greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven?” Jesus called a child, placed the child in their midst, and said to them, “I assure you that unless you change and become like children, you will not enter the Kingdom of Heaven. Therefore, whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven. And whoever welcomes a child like this in my name welcomes me. See that you do not despise one of these little ones, for I tell you that their angels in heaven continually see the face of my Father in heaven.”
The Word of the Lord.

Discerning the Cry / Reflection (We ask ourselves and share)

We allow the Gospel to shake up our structures. We turn our gaze and our hearts toward the borders, jungles, and roads of our Latin America and the Caribbean, where the rights, dignity, and future of children and adolescents on the move are being violated.

We ask ourselves honestly whether the children and adolescents forced to flee their homelands are at the center of our congregations, communities, and pastoral projects today, or whether they continue to be marginalized from our agendas and pastoral structures:

- **Who are those who have left? Why have they done so? (Let us think of the specific faces of entire families, young people with empty backpacks, older siblings caring for younger ones... What family heartbreak lies behind each departure?)**
- **What are they fleeing from? What are they seeking? (Are they fleeing fear, hunger, bullets, a lack of future? Are they seeking a land that will welcome them, a guaranteed meal, the basic right to live in peace and to smile?)**
- **Why do some return? (Do they return because of the pain of deportation, because of the invisible walls of xenophobia, because their dream turned into a nightmare, or because they'd rather die in their homeland than be humiliated on foreign soil?)**
- **Where are the children in the midst of this arduous journey? (Are they hidden in trucks, crying silently in shelters, walking alone and losing their childhood in the jungle, at the border, on a railroad track, in the treacherous waters of the Rio Grande, on a terrifying trek through the desert filled with sensors, dogs, patrols, drones... or waiting for an open hand to embrace them, welcome them, protect them, accompany them, and care for them?)**

Committing Ourselves to Network / Action

We transform pain into supplication and prayer into prophetic hospitality, weaving bonds of protection so that hope may find in us solid ground on which to flourish. In our congregations and communities, we discern:

1. **Which specific “little ones” is Jesus asking us to place at the center of our discernment and our solidarity today?**
2. **Do we embrace the care, accompaniment, and defense of migrant children as a non-negotiable commitment of consecrated life on this continent?**
3. **Do we commit ourselves, as the united congregations of CLAR, to be a safe haven, a defense, and an embrace so that the hope of “even one of these little ones” is not shattered at the borders of our continent?**

3. Reflection on the Pope's Message

In his message for the World Day of Migrants and Refugees, Pope Leo XIV stirs our consciences with a stark truth: “Human dignity does not

“A person does not have a passport, nor does their worth diminish when they cross a border.” The Holy Father calls on us to radically change our perspective, moving from the cold management of migration flows to the full and immediate protection of human rights. Drawing from this teaching, Consecrated Life must embody three essential priorities:

- 1) Moving Beyond Statistics:** Behind the percentages lie concrete stories, fears, and dreams. Recognizing each child in their infinite dignity rather than in their status as a “migrant” is an act of humanity and faith.
- 2) Healing the trauma of fragmentation:** The Pope denounces with sorrow the “industries of death” (trafficking, exploitation, and violence) that harm the children in transit. He urges us to demand effective legal instruments and to promote family reunification to prevent the trauma of separation. As Pope Leo says: *“...deaths along migration routes, trafficking and exploitation, the recruitment of minors to participate in armed conflicts, sexual violence, forced marriages, and the atrocities suffered or witnessed along the way. Their dignity is trampled upon in too many ways.”*
- 3) Safeguarding the Divine Image:** For the Holy Father, protecting a child is, ultimately, safeguarding the image of God imprinted within them. Hospitality cannot be an abstract concept; it must be our constant pastoral practice on the continent. In his message, he emphasizes *“recognizing the child in his or her dignity, even before considering their status as a ‘migrant,’ and protecting their fundamental rights: to life, to education, and to a standard of living that allows them to grow and develop fully from a physical, mental, spiritual, moral, and social standpoint.”*
- 4) The Way of the Cross for Children on Our Continent**
Pope Leo XIV’s call to protect “even one of these little ones” takes on a dramatic urgency when we look at the maps and stories of our region. The papal message does not remain on paper; it takes on concrete names and faces in the most dangerous corridors of Latin America and the Caribbean, which are already part of our daily lives:
 - In the Darien Gap, the inhospitable jungle becomes an ordeal where children and adolescents face the trauma of extreme malnutrition, abandonment, and death.
 - Along the Central American borders, criminal networks lurk in the shadows, imposing the terror of forced recruitment, kidnappings, disappearances, and even sexual violence, abruptly cutting short their life plans.
 - On Mexico’s southern and northern borders, the migration bottleneck exposes minors to ruthless human trafficking networks and the human heartbreak of family separation during detention processes.

It is there, in those “industries of death” denounced by the Holy Father, that the dignity of children is trampled underfoot amid global silence. Linking the papal document to these geographies of suffering demands that we, as CLAR and CLAMOR, move beyond abstract discourse to a Samaritan presence: to be living networks of civil and ecclesial protection capable of wresting every young life from the grip of violence and indifference.

II. CELEBRATION: “KINDLE HOSPITALITY”

(Can be held at border gatherings)

Opening Remarks

Sisters and brothers, we come together as the Religious Life of the continent to celebrate the World Day of Migrants and Refugees. This year, Pope Leo XIV calls us to fix our gaze on the little ones along the way. In every boy and girl who crosses our borders, wounded by violence, poverty, or family separation, Christ Jesus himself is hidden. May this celebration move us to be communities of prophetic welcome—consecrated life with hearts open to solidarity and hope.

Symbolic Gesture: “Light on the Path” (The Altar of Dreams)

A large map of Latin America and the Caribbean is placed in the center of the space. Next to it are arranged backpacks, toys, children’s clothing, and shoes, accompanied by photographs of children that reflect the reality of our daily missions. At the beginning of the service, a main candle is lit to illuminate these symbols.

Intentions / Prayer of the Faithful

Leader: Let us lift up our prayers to God the Father, who in his Son Jesus experienced the fragility of exile and borders, and let us say to him with a trusting heart:

All: *Lord of life, hear the cry of the little ones.*

- 1. For the universal Church and our continent:** That bishops, priests, and all the clergy, moved by the suffering of Christ on the journey, may resolutely join—as shepherds who “smell like sheep”—in this pastoral work with migrants. May their leadership inspire local churches to become welcoming communities, where displaced children and adolescents cease to be invisible statistics and become the center of our preferential option for the poor. Let us pray to the Lord.
- 2. For unaccompanied minors traveling across the continent:** That, amid the danger, loneliness, and uncertainty of Latin American routes, they may feel your protective hand. Deliver them from the networks of trafficking, exploitation, and violence. We ask that their rights and stories not be rendered invisible, but that they may find paths to safety, a dignified welcome, and prompt reunification with their families. Let us pray to the Lord.
- 3. For the pastoral workers who heal their invisible wounds:** That they may continue to be channels of your grace and comfort in the shelters, at the borders, and on the peripheries of the continent. Grant them the wisdom, patience, and love necessary to heal the traumas of uprooting, the anxiety of fear, and the scars on the hearts of every migrant child and adolescent. Renew their strength so that they may not falter in their daily dedication to making every corner a safe haven and a welcoming home. Let us pray to the Lord.

4. **For international institutions and organizations:** That they may carry out their mission with courage and transparency at all borders in Latin America and the Caribbean. Grant them the strength to denounce human rights abuses, the ability to build global protection networks, and the commitment to demand that governments adopt policies that safeguard the lives, dreams, and integrity of every child and adolescent in a situation of social mobility. Let us pray to the Lord.
5. **For the leaders of our nations:** That, moved by the suffering of the most vulnerable, they may set aside indifference and legislate with true compassion and justice. May they prioritize the dignity and human rights of migrant children over economic interests or exclusionary policies, promoting laws that safeguard the best interests of the child. Let us pray to the Lord.
6. **For Consecrated Life in Latin America and the Caribbean (CLAR):** That, faithful to the call of Pope Leo XIV, it may always be an open hand that shares, an embrace that accompanies in the open, a balm that comforts those who weep, and a heart that welcomes and loves unconditionally. May our religious communities expand their tents to become safe havens where the little ones on the journey may regain hope and joy. Let us pray to the Lord.

Leader: God of love, who identifies with the stranger and the helpless, hear these prayers that spring from the heart of the continent's religious life. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Prophetic Commitment and Sending Forth: "Hands in Network"

Leader: As consecrated persons, we cannot limit ourselves to reflection alone. We are called to weave community and border networks that sustain the lives of the least among us. We begin our prophetic commitment, "Hands in Network."

The Commitment (Silence and Action): In a moment of profound silence, each participant is invited to take a piece of paper.

Guide: We invite you to enter into the silence of the heart. Let us think of a face, a story, or the reality of refugee children on our continent. Each participant will write on their piece of paper the name of a migrant child whom they will not only keep in their daily prayers but whom they will defend and help at all times. *(A moment of silence is observed while soft music plays in the background.)*

The Prophetic Sending: *Participants stand, holding the piece of paper with the name close to their hearts.*

Monitor: With the names of these children in our hands and their lives in our hearts, we make a public commitment today to be vigilant against injustices, to denounce abuses, and to welcome them with tenderness, ensuring that in our religious communities, migrant children will always find solid ground, a safe home, and a space to flourish.

All: *May this celebration inspire us to be communities of prophetic welcome, consecrated life with hearts open to solidarity and hope! Amen.*

Closing Prayer for the Day *(Inspired by the teachings of Leo XIV)*

Lord of History and of the Journey,
You who experienced in the flesh of your Son the drama of exile and the flight to Egypt, we pray to you today for all the girls, boys, and adolescents who travel the paths of our long-suffering Latin America.
Free them from the snares of indifference and the industries of death. Grant us, women and men of Religious Life,
watchful eyes to recognize Your face in “even one of these little ones.” May our communities not turn their backs on the suffering of others,
but rather heal the visible and invisible wounds of the children who are on the move. We entrust their lives and their dreams to the maternal protection of Mary, Consolation of Migrants and Safe Refuge of the Helpless.
Amen.

III. LITURGICAL GUIDE

Eucharist for the 112th World Day of Migrants and Refugees

Opening Remarks

Leader: Sisters and brothers, let us all be welcome to this great Christian feast, the Eucharist. Today the universal Church celebrates the 112th World Day of Migrants and Refugees, under the theme proposed by Pope Leo XIV: *“Even one of these little ones”* (cf. Mt 18:5).

In his Message for this Day, Pope Leo reminds us that *“minors are the most vulnerable among global migration flows... they are real faces and unique stories that appeal to our conscience.”* The Holy Father invites us to overcome the culture of discarding and indifference, challenging us with the Word of God: *“Whoever welcomes a child like this in my name welcomes me,”* because *“every human being possesses infinite dignity that must be respected.”*

As the late Pope Francis urged us, we must be a Church that goes forth on a mission, without borders, welcoming, protecting, promoting, and integrating people in forced mobility. We want to tear down the walls that divide us, overcome the borders that prevent us from recognizing one another as brothers and sisters with the same dignity, and build bridges of love, justice, and peace. With hearts open to love and our arms outstretched to embrace one another regardless of nationality, let us joyfully begin this Eucharist by singing the entrance hymn.

Liturgy of the Word

First Reading: Exodus 22:20–26 (*“You shall not mistreat a stranger or oppress him, for you yourselves were strangers in the land of Egypt”*).

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 145 (*“The Lord protects the sojourner and sustains the orphan and the widow”*).

Second Reading: St. Paul’s Letter to the Ephesians 2:17–22 (*“You are no longer strangers or foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of God’s household”*).

Gospel: Matthew 18:1–5, 10 (*“Whoever welcomes one of these little ones in my name welcomes me... See that you do not despise one of these little ones”*).

General Intercessions

Celebrant: Let us present our petitions to the Father, the God of all comfort, who hears the cry of the helpless and walks with his pilgrim people.

After each petition, we respond: Lord, hear your pilgrim people.

1. **For Pope Leo XIV, the Church, and all her shepherds, that they may keep the doors of welcome and charity open, bearing living witness to Christ’s compassion toward those who must leave their homes. Let us pray to the Lord.**

2. **For migrant children, that God may protect their innocence and heal their emotional wounds after their arduous journeys, and grant them the right to a future filled with hope, education, and safety. Let us pray to the Lord.**
3. **For unaccompanied migrant children, that they may find refuge and welcoming arms to protect them from trafficking networks, exploitation, or abandonment, and that Divine Providence may facilitate their prompt reunion with their families. Let us pray to the Lord.**
4. **For government leaders and legislators, that they may promote and implement humanitarian public policies that prioritize the common good, guarantee safe and free passage, and fully respect the inalienable dignity and fundamental human rights of every migrant and refugee. Let us pray to the Lord.**
5. **For peace in the world, that every form of violence, war, persecution, and misery—which forces millions of human beings to flee their homelands—may cease. Let us pray to the Lord.**
6. **For our communities, that we may overcome prejudice and indifference, building bridges of fraternity and a culture of encounter with our displaced brothers and sisters. Let us pray to the Lord.**

Celebrant: Accept, Holy Father, the prayers of your children and grant us a heart like yours, capable of embracing everyone without distinction. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Procession of Offerings

Leader: We present at the altar the gifts of bread and wine along with some symbols that express the reality of our sisters and brothers on the move:

This backpack (or Travel Sandals): These represent the effort, exhaustion, and faith of millions of women, men, and children who walk long distances in search of a place to live with dignity.

To your altar, God of life, we bring a toy (or school notebook) that symbolizes the childhood of so many migrant children and adolescents, asking the Lord that their right to play, to study, and to a happy childhood not be taken from them.

This Map (or Globe): It symbolizes a world without borders, where the earth belongs to all of God's children as one human family.

The white tablecloth on the altar announces that the banquet of love is about to begin; therefore, we present to you the Bread and Wine, the fruit of the earth and of human labor, which will become the Body and Blood of Christ, the food of eternal life for the traveler.

Prayer of Thanksgiving to Mary, Migrant Woman

Priest / All:

**O Holy Mary, Mother of God and our Mother, we
turn to you as Virgin and Migrant Woman,
you who knew in your own flesh the uncertainty of the journey.**

**Today we remember with devotion the Holy Family of Nazareth:
you were a family of migrants and exiles,
when you had to flee hastily to Egypt
to protect the life of the Child Jesus from persecution;
and you were also a family of returnees,
who, with faith, began a new chapter in Nazareth upon returning to their homeland.**

**Our Lady of the Way,
we ask you to spread your protective mantle and maternal help
over all the migrants, refugees, and displaced people of the world,
especially the girls and boys.**

**Be with separated families,
strengthen the journey of unaccompanied children and young people,
be a refuge for those who suffer rejection, abuse, or indifference,
and open our hearts so that we may recognize in every traveling brother and sister
the living face of your Son, Jesus Christ.
Amen.**

IV. TO EXPLORE THE MESSAGE OF POPE LEO XIV

25 Quotes from Pope Leo XVI in His Message for the 112th World Day of Migrants and Refugees (2026)

1. **"Year after year, the World Day of Migrants and Refugees invites us to focus our attention on different aspects of the complex phenomenon of migration."**
2. **"Even just one of these little ones reminds us that the Gospel calls us not to keep score."**
3. **"It is not a matter of numbers or statistics."**
4. **"Every child, every human being, possesses infinite dignity."**
5. **"Minors are the most vulnerable group within global migration flows."**
6. **"They are not numbers: they are real faces, unique stories, that appeal to our conscience."**
7. **"Every year, millions of children and adolescents are forced to flee their homelands because of wars, poverty, violence, and environmental disasters."**
8. **"The economic, political, and military responsibilities for this disaster are immense."**
9. **"In the face of every migrant child, we are called to perform an act of humanity and faith."**
10. **"Whoever welcomes one of these little ones in my name welcomes me."**
11. **"In the migrant child, we can welcome and encounter the Lord."**
12. **"The cry of displaced children rises today to God, who hears and knows their suffering."**
13. **"We cannot remain indifferent, nor can we grow accustomed to so much suffering."**
14. **"Even just one of these little ones calls us to overcome the detachment that reduces the human person to a statistic."**
15. **"We must recognize the dignity of every child before considering their status as a 'migrant.'"**
16. **"It is urgent to safeguard their fundamental rights: the right to life, to education, and to full development."**
17. **"In the life of the Church, welcoming must be transformed from an abstract concept into a consistent pastoral practice."**

18. **“We cannot simply delegate this task to institutions or organizations.”**
19. **“The entire Christian community is called to regard these children as their own sons and daughters.”**
20. **“We must move beyond a mindset of mere assistance to promote true integration.”**
21. **“It is essential to prevent the loneliness, isolation, and rejection that the children of migrants often suffer.”**
22. **“Public and private institutions are obligated to prioritize the best interests of the child and their protection.”**
23. **“An urgent shift in perspective is needed: the debate must move from the mere management of migration to the full protection of human rights.”**
24. **“I thank those who heal the invisible wounds of these little ones and show that love can overcome indifference.”**
25. **“May the Holy Family of Nazareth, who experienced exile in Egypt, accompany the journey of displaced children.”**

V.DIGITAL TOOLS

- **Message from Pope Leo XIV for the 112th World Day of Migrants and Refugees**
Available at: <https://www.vatican.va/content/leo-xiv/es/messages/migration/documents/20260811-world-migrants-day-2026.html>
- **Message from Pope Leo XIV to the Members of the Spanish Parliament during his 2026 Apostolic Journey**
Available at: <https://www.instagram.com/reel/DZWAhoTpU1K/?igsi=Z2todzA2Y3lzOGI=>
- **Video Clip: Welcome, Protect, Promote, and Integrate. Lyrics and music by a Venezuelan migrant.**
Available at: <https://youtu.be/Wn37L2sFUqs?si=x6p6PuncCFY4q7QL>
- **Social media post from the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development.**
Available at: <https://youtu.be/Wn37L2sFUqs?si=x6p6PuncCFY4q7QL>