

Lent.

a season of spiritual preparation

PALM SUNDAY

Hosanna to the King

Stories of Jesus' loving journey to the cross, partnered with scriptural reflections, and linked as devotions with the suffering steps of refugees & immigrants.

Scripture: "Jesus proceeded on his journey up to Jerusalem." (Lk 19:28). "Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me; weep instead for yourselves and for your children. (Lk 23:28)

Reflection: "Up to Jerusalem" has become synonymous with a journey of suffering. Jesus journeys up to the Holy City, seat of religious and civic power, ruled over by the oppressor Rome. His journey begins with palm-waving and Hosannas, and ends with crucifixion. On the road to Calvary he pauses to give a message to women who weep for him, a message that speaks to us today. Migrants and refugees around the world are on their painful way "up to Jerusalem," to what they hope will be a place of safety from violence, a place of welcome. Instead they are met with closed borders, dashed hopes, dying dreams. Jesus might say to us: "In your Holy Week remembrances and enactments of my passion and death, don't weep for me. Weep for immigrant and refugee families at your borders, deported back to violence or stranded in makeshift refugee camps. But don't just weep; act. My story is their story. You have a role to play in their resurrection, in reviving their hopes for new life."



Story: Pablo Crocida-Conte, a 54 year old Mexican immigrant died of cardiomyopathy in a Tucson hospital after being transferred from Elroy Detention Center because medical staff took too long in calling 911. The Elroy Center reported 14 deaths since 2004. (from a recent report produced by ACLU, Detention Watch Network, and National Immigrant Justice Center, which documents egregious violations of ICE medical care standards resulting in deaths in detention, 155 between 2003-January 2016.)

In cold, drizzling rain Aziza Hussein, a 30 year old Syrian widow with 4 children, stood trembling in the midst of a surge of migrants trapped at the northern Greek border, blocked by Macedonian troops from proceeding further. "What are we going to do? she asked with tears. "We crossed the sea, but they won't let us through. You don't understand. I don't have any money left. I have four children. I don't have any other plan." (Story in *The Washington Post*, March 1, 2016. A new Human Rights First report finds worsening conditions for Syrian refugees due to lack of support with backlogs hampering U.S. in meeting its commitment to resettle 10,000 Syrian refugees by Sept. 30, 2016; to date only 841 resettled.)

Action/Resources: Read the Human Rights First Report: www.humanrightsfirst.org/press-release/new-report.

Continue to press the Administration to stop deportation of Central American immigrants and offer Temporary Protected Status (TPS) to refugees from Central America's Northern Triangle.

White House Comment line: 1-888-907-2053.

Call DHS Secretary Johnson's office urging return of Iowa City Mennonite Pastor Max to his family. After 20 years in the U.S. Pastor Max was deported to Honduras nearly a year ago for a 15 year old DUI conviction. The Mennonite community and many others have been pleading for his return to his wife and four children. Call 202-282-8203.

Read the report on deaths in detention ignored by ICE, *Fatal Neglect* on the National Immigrant Justice Center website: www.immigrantjustice.org.

See www.fightforfamilies.org for updates on United States v Texas DACA/DAPA case before the Supreme Court.

Check the IIC website for alerts and update: www.interfaithimmigration.org.



Prayer: Jesus, as you again make your way up to Jerusalem in the pain and struggles of migrants and refugees today, strengthen and encourage them. Give us the grace we need to continue

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