

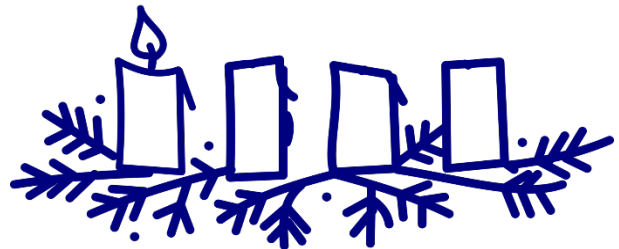


## First Sunday of Advent Reflection: Migrant Children (Justice for Immigrants)

AMSSND JPIC

Emmanuel, God with us, comes as a child, born to young parents who want only what is good for their child, doing what they can to offer him protection. Soon after his birth, his parents are forced to flee to another country in order to seek such protection, told only by a dream that they must escape or face certain death. Parents

throughout the world face this same situation today, and how foolish it seems to so many that they follow only a dream that they must escape, that they might find safety and hope and a future for their children. Vulnerable children in Haiti, at the borders, refugee children all seek such safety and hope. [According to the United Nations Children's Fund](#) (UNICEF) almost one-third (30%) of all migrants and asylum-seekers in Central America and Mexico are children. Half of those children (15% of all migrants and asylum seekers in the region) are unaccompanied by family members or other adults. According to UNICEF and the UN refugee agency (UNHCR) two thirds (66%) of unaccompanied children interviewed in transit in the region would try to flee their country again if detained and deported to their countries of origin. One-quarter (25%) of them were already on their second or third attempt to reach the USA or Mexico. The Christ Child waits at the border, God with us, Emmanuel.



### Laudato Si Quote:

25. Climate change is a global problem with grave implications: environmental, social, economic, political and for the distribution of goods. It represents one of the principal challenges facing humanity in our day. Its worst impact will probably be felt by developing countries in coming decades. Many of the poor live in areas particularly affected by phenomena related to warming, and their means of subsistence are largely dependent on natural reserves and ecosystemic services such as agriculture, fishing and forestry. They have no other financial activities or resources which can enable them to adapt to climate change or to face natural disasters, and their access to social services and protection is very limited. For example, changes in climate, to which animals and plants cannot adapt, lead them to migrate; this in turn affects the livelihood of the poor, who are then forced to leave their homes, with great

uncertainty for their future and that of their children. There has been a tragic rise in the number of migrants seeking to flee from the growing poverty caused by environmental degradation. They are not recognized by international conventions as refugees; they bear the loss of the lives they have left behind, without enjoying any legal protection whatsoever. Sadly, there is widespread indifference to such suffering, which is even now taking place throughout our world. Our lack of response to these tragedies involving our brothers and sisters points to the loss of that sense of responsibility for our fellow men and women upon which all civil society is founded.

### For Reflection:

How am I called to see the Christ Child at the borders? What do I need to better advocate for justice for immigrants, especially women and children? In what ways do I connect the degradation of the earth and its resources with the present and future of migrants? How might I be called to act during this season of Advent?

### Prayer:

*A Prayer for Migrant Children* ([adapted from LIRS](#))

*God of all goodness,*

*Tenderly bless all vulnerable children who are journeying alone in this world. Comfort orphaned children whose parents have been taken from them by violence. Provide for refugee children who are far from home and don't know where their families may be. Guide migrant children who take dangerous journeys to find family or opportunity. Rescue trafficked children whose freedom and innocence have been betrayed. Protect all children who need your care, bringing them justice, safety and home. We pray in your Holy Name. Amen.*

Video Prayer: [For Migrant Children](#)

### Advocacy:

To learn more about Migrant Children and how you can make a difference, click [here](#).

