

Decade of Days: 2020

January 20

(Feast of Blessed Basil Moreau) —

January 29

(Anniversary of Death: Mother Mary of Seven Dolors)

**AUTHENTIC, INTEGRAL,
HUMAN DEVELOPMENT:**

Our Challenge! Our Joy!

Welcome

As we begin to celebrate this Decade of Days, we turn our thoughts to the theme set forth by our Holy Cross International Justice Office for 2020: Authentic, Integral, Human Development. In *Populorum Progressio* (1967) Pope Paul VI reinterpreted and redefined the term clarifying that the Christian vision of development places human beings at the center of development, not economics.

Integral human development promotes the good of every person and the whole person; it is cultural, economic, political, social and spiritual. (A User's Guide to IHD, Part 1, section 1)

We go to God together; that's why we are focusing on the continuing formation of each of us and how we respond to the development of the lives of neighbors just next door as well as neighbors across the globe.

Authentic, integral, human development certainly brings us challenges, but how does it bring us joy?

Let us open ourselves to God's calls that result from prayerful participation in our Decade of Days.

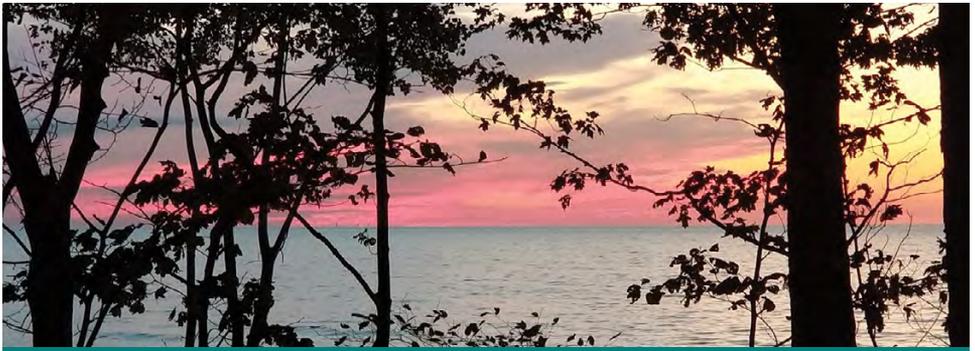
To enhance praying with a group, please . . .

- spend in advance some time in personal reflection on the ideas presented.
- Pray with the videos and images as well.
- If you wish, please incorporate throughout the Decade any songs that your group knows.
- The questions provided are simply seeds for thought. Use them as your group chooses.

Prelude to Prayer:

You may want to claim a special prayer space, one that even as you approach it calls you to quiet and one that is able to receive one or two special symbols of your desire to pray during these 10 days: a candle, a plant or flower, a Bible, a crucifix, an image of a Holy Cross hero, a photo that draws you into union with our natural world.

Declare your prayer spaces No-Cell-Phone Zones.



DAY 1 – JANUARY 20: Deepening Contemplation and Prayer

Opening Prayer: All

We pray for all who are participating in our Decade of Days that we may be united during these times of special graces. May we make time during these days to pray alone and to share with others how we are being challenged to bring joy to all our sisters and brothers. Enlighten us to discover and embrace integral, human, development within the spiritual, social, cultural, and political situations of our time.

God of yesterday, today and forever—free us to embrace our emerging future.

**Blessed Basil Moreau,
pray for us!**

Reader: [Prayer] should awake with you and take its place at your bedside. It should accompany you even in your leisure and give fragrance to all your occupations as with a divine balm.”

“... without prayer even the most charming solitude is as a land without water, producing only briars and thorns. But a desert watered by prayer grows and flourishes . . . From Blessed Basil Moreau’s Circular Letter 96 (1858)

Reader: “I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in his holy people.”
Ephesians 1:18

Quiet yourself.

Spend 5 minutes or more in silence and stillness, in awareness of God’s presence.

(You may wish to set a clock with a soft alarm to count down the amount of time you choose.)

View the short film: [*Integral Human Development. That’s Our Joy.*](#)
(2:30 minutes)

The script is provided but it is best to view the film on YouTube. The images are powerful.

**Speaking: Peter K.A. Cardinal Turkson, Prefect
Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development**

“It’s interesting that we are doing this interview here in Rome, because some historians have suggested that the word dignity came from ancient

Roman culture. This Latin *dignitas* was what Roman emperors and Roman military commanders returning victoriously from battle were supposed to have proven.

And it took Christian thinkers like Cyprian, like Ambrose and Augustine to say that the real *dignitas* we have doesn't come from a government or a decision of court or anything. It's from the fact that we are created in the image and likeness of God.

It is so very easy then to relate dignity therefore to development—development becoming the way that all of this that we are and we have begins to flourish like facilitating and making a flower blossom.

There's no way that one talks about development without first considering health care, without considering poverty issues, without considering justice issues, human rights issues and all of those. So we recognize that we're not alone.

The point of religion is to invite humanity first and foremost to recognize that there is a transcendental character to its existence. That our life is not just here below. Our life is related also to the one who created us.

The mission of the Church is towards the world, it's towards humanity. Humanity is our concern. The well-being of the human family is why we exist and what we work for. What brings me joy is seeing other people happy. It's recognizing that from our simple gestures we've succeeded in making people happy realizing that they have become what they were created to be. And that's our joy."

[The film is short. You may wish to view it again.]

Reflection and Sharing

—What are you feeling after you viewed this film? What images do you remember?

—Consider your part in our Holy Cross mission. Consider the people you have served. What special joys have you received and are receiving as a result of your ministry to help others flourish and blossom like flowers?

—What "growing global issues" confront you? How do you respond?

—What can you do through simple actions to bring true

well-being, quality of life and happiness especially to the poor and disenfranchised that you rub elbows with on a daily basis?

—What can you do to bring true well-being, quality of life, and happiness to our wider-world through simple, profound actions?

Return to silence.

Spend 5 minutes or more in silence and stillness, in awareness of God's presence.

Intercessory Prayer

Response: May we always have the mind and heart of Jesus.

Closing Prayer Together:

God of yesterday, today and forever—free us to embrace our emerging future.

**Blessed Basil Moreau,
pray for us!**



DAY 2 – JANUARY 21: Growing in Knowing [Thyself]



Photos: Sr. Gayle Williams, MSC

Opening Prayer: All

We pray for all who are participating in our Decade of Days that we may be united during these times of special graces. May we make time during these days to pray alone and to share with others how we are being challenged to bring joy to all our sisters and brothers. Enlighten us to discover and embrace integral, human, development within the spiritual, social, cultural, and political situations of our time.

God of yesterday, today and forever—free us to embrace our emerging future.

**Holy Jacques Dujarié,
pray for us.**

Quiet yourself.

Spend 5 minutes or more in silence and stillness, in awareness of God's presence.

Reader: You do not just wake up and become the butterfly. Growth is a process. (Meme from Facebook.)

Faith Panda: Meme from Facebook

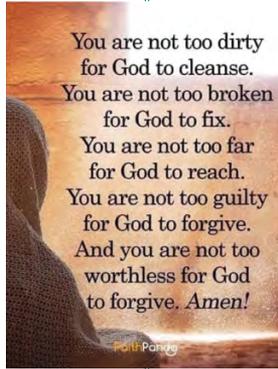
Reader: A Holy Cross Brother once said, “The most difficult thing about apostolic spirituality is to know yourself.”

Reader: “I am a priest to be the consolation of the widow, the father of

the orphan, the support of the poor, and the friend to those who suffer.” *The Life and Times of Jacques François Dujarié*, Brother Joseph Santo, CSC

Reflection and Sharing

- Did any one quote touch you the most?
- What Scripture comes to mind as you strive to know yourself?
- Any thoughts about the comment from the Holy Cross Brother?
- How do you come to know yourself? Spiritual direction? Daily Examen? Reconciliation? Days of quiet reflection? Annual retreat? Other? Please share whatever has been most helpful to you in your formation to be a Holy Cross person for others.
- Can you admit in your quiet mo-



ments, that some of the ideas you cling to aren't based on the life of Jesus and current prophetic challenges from the Church? — Perhaps you are moved to create a personal mission manifesto modeled on the one articulated by Fr. Dujarié?

Return to silence. Spend 5 minutes in silence and stillness, in awareness of God's presence.

Intercessory Prayer

Response: The Lord has done marvels for me; holy is God's name.

Closing Prayer Together:

God of yesterday, today and forever— free us to embrace our emerging future.

Holy Jacques Dujarié, pray for us.

DAY 3 – JANUARY 22: Cultivating Peace!

Opening Prayer: All

We pray for all who are participating in our Decade of Days that we may be united during these times of special graces. May we make time during these days to pray alone and to share with others how we are being challenged to bring joy to all our sisters and brothers. Enlighten us to discover and embrace integral, human, development within the spiritual, social, cultural, and political situations of our time.

God of yesterday, today and forever—free us to embrace our emerging future.

Zealous Fr. Sorin, pray for us.

Quiet yourself.

Spend 5 minutes or more in silence and stillness, in awareness of God’s presence.

Calejjd’art Meme from Facebook

Reader: “It is a question, rather, of building a world where every human person, no matter what race, religion or nationality, can live a fully human life, freed from servitude imposed by others or by natural forces over which he/she has not sufficient control, a world where freedom is not an empty word and where the poor man Lazarus can sit down at the same table with the rich man.” *Populorum Progressio*, #47

Reader: “Peace cannot be a mere word or a vain aspiration. Peace is



a commitment and a manner of life which demands that the legitimate aspirations of all should be satisfied, such as access to food, water and energy, to medicine and technology, or indeed the monitoring of climate change. Only in this way can we build the future of humanity; only in this way can we facilitate an integral development valid for today and tomorrow.”

Pope Benedict XVI, 2008,
Address to the diplomatic
corps at the Vatican.

Reader: “It is foreseeable that, once certain resources have been depleted, the scene will be set for new wars, albeit under the guise of noble claims. War always does grave harm to the environment and to the cultural riches

of peoples, risks which are magnified when one considers nuclear arms and biological weapons.”

Laudato Sí, On the Care of Our Common Home, Pope Francis, paragraph 57.

Reflection and Sharing

—Consider some of the human devastation caused by war to combatants and civilians on all sides of the conflict.

—Consider some of the environmental devastation produced by war.

—Consider some of the cultural devastation produced by war.

—Consider some of the moral devastation produced by war.

—Consider some of the spiritual devastation produced by war.

—Have you ever cultivated a garden? What are a few preparations that must be taken for the garden to come to fruition?

—How do you cultivate peace? What are some basic ground-breaking attitudes that might help peace grow and flower? In your neighborhood or town? On the national and international level?

Return to silence.

Spend 5 minutes or more in silence and stillness, in awareness of God’s presence.

Intercessory Prayer

Response: Shepherd us, O God, beyond our needs, beyond our fears.

Closing Prayer Together:

God of yesterday, today and forever—free us to embrace our emerging future.

**Zealous Fr. Sorin,
pray for us.**





DAY 4 – JANUARY 23: Engaging the *Status Quo*

Opening Prayer: All

We pray for all who are participating in our Decade of Days that we may be united during these times of special graces. May we make time during these days to pray alone and to share with others how we are being challenged to bring joy to all our sisters and brothers. Enlighten us to discover and embrace integral, human, development within the spiritual, social, cultural, and political situations of our time.

God of yesterday, today and forever—free us to embrace our emerging future.

**St. Brother André,
pray for us.**

Quiet yourself.

Spend 5 minutes or more in silence and stillness in awareness of God's presence.

Reader: “In line with the criteria of the Gospel and the pastoral directives of the Church, the Marianites individually and corporately work to implement the principles of justice even when they meet with opposition.” Norm 2, “Mission and Ministry”

Reader: “. . . no one can demand that religion should be relegated to the inner sanctum of personal life, without influence on societal and national life, without concern for the soundness of civil institutions, without a right to offer an opinion on events affecting

society. . . . An authentic faith—which is never comfortable or completely personal—always involves a deep desire to change the world, to transmit values, to leave this earth somehow better than we found it.”

Pope Francis, *The Joy of the Gospel*, p. 143

Reader: “I prefer a church that is bruised, hurting and dirty because it has been out on the streets, rather than a church that is unhealthy from being confined and from clinging to its own security.”

Pope Francis,
Go Forth—Toward a Community of Missionary Disciples, page 34.

Reader: Think of what the Book of Revelation says as well. It says something beautiful: that Jesus stands at the door and knocks, knocks to be let into our heart. (cf. Rev. 3:20) . . . But ask yourselves this question: how often is Jesus inside and knocking at the door to be let out . . . ?

Pope Francis, *Go Forth—Toward a Community of Missionary Disciples*, page 25.

Reflection and Sharing

—What values have changed for you and why?

—Have you ever met opposition because of a value you held? Share the story.

—As you reflect on Christ-like values, for which ones do you have a special calling?

—What Scriptural stories come to mind as you consider what Jesus valued?

Stop being offended

by a Facebook post,
by a piece of art,
by people displaying affection. or
by what someone said to you.

Be offended

by war, poverty, greed and injustice.

Sue Fitzmaurice Meme from Facebook

Return to silence. Spend 5 minutes or more in silence and stillness in awareness of God’s presence.

Intercessory Prayer

Response: Gracious God, you are the center of our lives.

Closing Prayer Together:

God of yesterday, today and forever—free us to embrace our emerging future.

**St. Brother André,
pray for us.**



DAY 5 – JANUARY 24: Proclaiming the Common Good

Opening Prayer: All

We pray for all who are participating in our Decade of Days that we may be united during these times of special graces. May we make time during these days to pray alone and to share with others how we are being challenged to bring joy to all our sisters and brothers. Enlighten us to discover and embrace integral, human, development within the spiritual, social, cultural, and political situations of our time.

God of yesterday, today and forever—free us to embrace our emerging future.

pray for us.

[Petition Holy Cross “saints” whose assistance you seek.]

**Quiet yourself.
Spend 5 minutes or more
in silence and stillness, in
awareness of God’s presence.**

Reader: For the Church today, three areas of dialogue stand out where she needs to be present in order to promote full human development and to pursue the common good: dialogue with states, dialogue with society – including dialogue with cultures and the sciences – and dialogue with other believers who are not part of the Catholic Church.

Pope Francis, *The Joy of the Gospel*, # 238

Reader: In this context we can understand Jesus’ command to his disciples: “You yourselves give them something to eat!” (Mk 6:37): it means working to eliminate the structural causes of poverty and to promote the integral development of the poor, as well as small daily acts of solidarity in meeting the real needs which we encounter. The word “solidarity” is a little worn and at times poorly understood, but it refers to something more than a few sporadic

acts of generosity. It presumes the creation of a new mindset which thinks in terms of community and the priority of the life of all over the appropriation of goods by a few.

Pope Francis, *The Joy of the Gospel*, #188

Reader: “. . . Every person is immensely holy and deserves our love.”
Pope Francis, *Go Forth—Toward a Community of Missionary Disciples*, p. 32.

Reader: “Diversity must always be reconciled by the help of the Holy Spirit; he alone can raise up diversity, plurality and multiplicity while at the same time bringing about unity.”

Pope Francis, *The Joy of the Gospel*. #131

Reader: “By the strength of the love of God that you have encountered and come to know, you are capable of sympathy and tenderness. Thus, you can be close enough to touch the other, his wounds and his expectations, his questions and his needs . . .”

Pope Francis, *Go Forth—Toward a Community of Missionary Disciples*, p.13.

Reflection and Sharing

—How can a person develop “the creation of a new mindset?”

—What Scriptural passages come to mind when speaking of unity amid diversity?

—What can you do to offer encouragement in the “three areas of dialogue?”

—Uncover an incident from your own life that called you to act in the name of the common good rather than respond to a personal good.

—How have nations acted to benefit the common good?

—How does one come to recognize that God must love diversity?

Quiet yourself.

Spend 5 minutes or more in silence and stillness, in awareness of God’s presence.

Intercessory Prayer

Response: Holy Spirit, fill our hearts and minds.

Closing Prayer:

God of yesterday, today and forever—
free us to embrace our emerging future.

pray for us.

[Petition Holy Cross “saints” whose assistance you seek.



Photo: Sr. Gayle Williams, MSC

DAY 6 – JANUARY 25: Embracing Earth: the Ultimate Relationship

Opening Prayer: All

We pray for all who are participating in our Decade of Days that we may be united during these times of special graces. May we make time during these days to pray alone and to share with others how we are being challenged to bring joy to all our sisters and brothers. Enlighten us to discover and embrace integral, human, development within the spiritual, social, cultural, and political situations of our time.

God of yesterday, today and forever—free me to embrace my emerging future.

Indigenous ancestors, you who lived relationship with nature, clarify our vision and pray for us.

Quiet yourself.

Spend 5 minutes or more in silence and stillness in awareness of God's presence. ■

Reader: Humankind has not woven the web of life. We are but one thread within it. Whatever we do to the web, we do to ourselves. All things are bound together. All things connect.

Attributed to Chief Seattle, 1854

Reader: “Love people even in their sin, for that is the semblance of Divine Love and is the highest love on earth. Love all God’s creation, the whole and every grain of sand of it. Love every leaf, every ray of God’s light. Love the animals, love the plants, love everything. If you love everything, you will perceive the divine mystery in things. Once you perceive it, you will begin to comprehend it better every day. And you will come at last to love the whole world with an all-embracing love.”

From *The Brothers Karamazov*
by Fyodor Dostoyevsky.

Reader: “Like every other group, the Church as a community is called to conversion around this [continued existence of earth], the ultimate pro-life issue.”

“What Is Happening to Our Beautiful Land,” Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines, 1988.

Reader: “Glance at the sun. See the moon and the stars. Gaze at the beauty of earth’s greenings. Now, think. What delight God gives to humankind with all these things. All nature is at the disposal of humankind. We are to work with it. For without it we cannot survive.”

Hildegard of Bingen, 1078-1159

Reader: “. . . we have to realize that a true ecological approach always becomes a social approach; it must integrate questions of justice in debates on the environment, so as to hear both the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor.

Pope Francis, *Laudato Si*, On the Care of Our Common Home, #49.

Reader: “Some people, some companies, some decision-makers in particular, have known exactly what priceless values they have been sacrificing to continue making unimaginable amounts of money.”

Greta Thunberg, World Economic Forum, Davos Switzerland, January, 2019.

Reflection and Sharing

—You are just one thread in the web of life. Does the image of the web of life hold meaning for you? What makes your thread strong?

—How are cultures being affected because of climate change?

—Have you had direct contact or read about the sorrows of climate refugees? Share the story.

—How can we diffuse the anger between opposing sides in the environmental crises?

—A new chemical/industrial plant is coming to town and will be placed very close to neighborhoods whose residents are poor. The plant will provide many jobs. How do you stand firm with the poor without demonizing the plant’s builders?

—Who is Greta Thunberg? What does her life mean to you?

Quiet yourself.

Spend 5 minutes or more in silence and stillness, in awareness of God’s presence.

Intercessory Prayer

Response: Praise God from whom all blessings flow.

Closing Prayer:

God of yesterday, today and forever—free us to embrace our emerging future.

Indigenous ancestors, you who lived relationship with our Earth, clarify our vision and pray for us.

DAY 7 – JANUARY 26: Witnessing to the World!



Opening Prayer: All

We pray for all who are participating in our Decade of Days that we may be united during these times of special graces. May we make time during these days to pray alone and to share with others how we are being challenged to bring joy to all our sisters and brothers. Enlighten us to discover and embrace integral, human, development within the spiritual, social, cultural, and political situations of our time.

God of yesterday, today and forever—free us to embrace our emerging future.

St. Joseph, pray for us.

**Quiet yourself.
Spend 5 minutes or more in
silence and stillness, in aware-
ness of God’s presence.**

Reader: “. . . you must study in detail the circumstances of the Savior’s life

and the sentiments that put Him into action.”

Basil Moreau, Exercises of 1855

Reader:

“I hold my heart as a gourd ready to pour upon all those who live. . . . God inhabits what He loves and what His love sustains, and hence I see each soul that may brush against my soul, God Who looks out at me.”

Selected Poetry of Jessica Powers, editors Regina Siegfried and Robert Morneau.
“I Hold My Heart as a Gourd,”
p.46

Reader: “The world is in truth a holy place.” Teilhard de Chardin

Reader: “The Lord will not ask us how many houses we founded, nor what we taught nor how much we know. What will interest Him is whether

we have founded a treasure house of grace and if we are its living stones.”

Mother Mary of the Seven Dol-
lors, Circular Letter 27, 1873.



Meme from Facebook: Mary Anne Rapmacher

Reader: “A credible proclamation is not made with beautiful words, but by an exemplary life: a life of service that is capable of rejecting all those material things that shrink the heart and make people indifferent and inward-looking; a life that renounces the useless things that entangle the heart in order to find time for God and others.”

Pope Francis, World Mission
Day, Oct. 20, 2018

Reflections and Sharing

—What Scripture comes to mind as you reflect on Fr. Moreau’s insight about what put Jesus into action?

—How does one continue to grow as a “living stone” in Mother Mary’s “treasure house of grace.”

—So you’re watching the evening news or reading your Facebook feed. What issues of injustice do you recognize that call you to witness to the values of Jesus? How do you channel your inspiration into positive actions?

—What are some situations that seeing with Jesus’ “kind of eyes” can reveal to us?

—When I am dedicated to a certain action and the outcomes aren’t what I wanted, how do I deal with the disappointment and anger?

Quiet yourself.

Spend 5 minutes or more in silence and stillness, in awareness of God’s presence.

Intercessory Prayer

Response: God, call us to act in response to the concerns we carry before you.

Closing Prayer:

God of yesterday, today and forever—
free us to embrace our emerging future.

**St. Joseph,
pray for us.**



DAY 8 – JANUARY 27: Respecting All Who Suffer

Opening Prayer: ALL

We pray for all who are participating in our Decade of Days that we may be united during these times of special graces. May we make time during these days to pray alone and to share with others how we are being challenged to bring joy to all our sisters and brothers. Enlighten us to discover and embrace integral, human, development within the spiritual, social, cultural, and political situations of our time.

God of yesterday, today and forever—free us to embrace our emerging future.

**Our Lady of Seven Sorrows,
pray for us!**

**Quiet yourself.
Spend 5 minutes or more**

**in silence and stillness, in
awareness of God's presence.**

Reader: “In following the example of Mother Mary of the Seven Dolors, our first superior general, we unite with Mary who stood at the foot of the cross and we imitate her in her union with her crucified Son. We participate in the redemptive mission of Christ by accepting the crosses in our own lives and by demonstrating a true spirit of compassion for all those who suffer.”

Constitution 3, Marianites of
Holy Cross

Reader: “In love and justice we recognize the dignity of all persons and encourage each to develop his/her potential for goodness and growth.”

We share our values and do not seek to impose them while at the same time we are open to developing new values within ourselves. In our commitment to the advancement of people and the creation of a worthy society, we strive to promote the justice of Christ.

Constitution 6, Marianites of Holy Cross

Reader:

Vote as if your skin is not white or black or brown or . . .

Vote as if your parents need medical care.

Your spouse is an immigrant.

Your land is on fire.

Your child is transgender.

Your house is flooded.

Your sister is a victim of gun violence.

Your brother is gay.

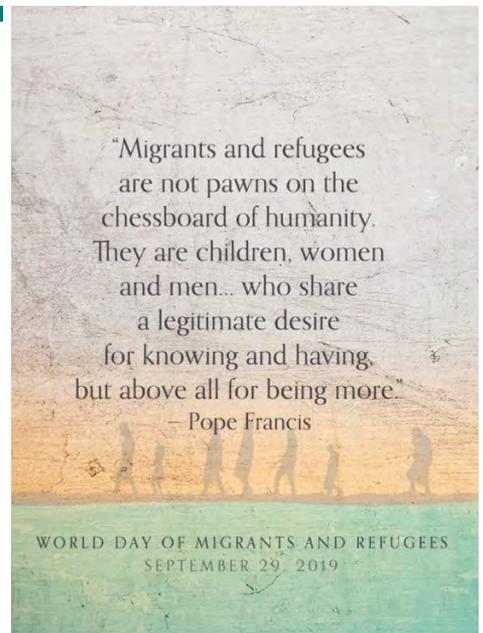
Your water is unsafe.

Because privilege has no place in an election, but empathy does. (Meme adapted from Facebook)

Reflection and Sharing

—Who are some of the people in our societies today that are suffering simply because of who they are or where they were born? How do you reach out to those of them you see daily: people who are homeless; people who wear religious garb; people who speak other languages and eat other food.

—What new is growing in you as you are exposed to the diversity and pluralism of the individuals and cultures in our world?



Meme from Facebook

—How can I through integral, human development, “promote the good of every person and of the whole of humanity” by respecting all who suffer? *Populorum Progressio*, #14

Quiet yourself.

Spend 5 minutes or more in silence and stillness, in awareness of God’s presence.

Intercessory Prayer

Response: May we carry all God’s people in our hearts.

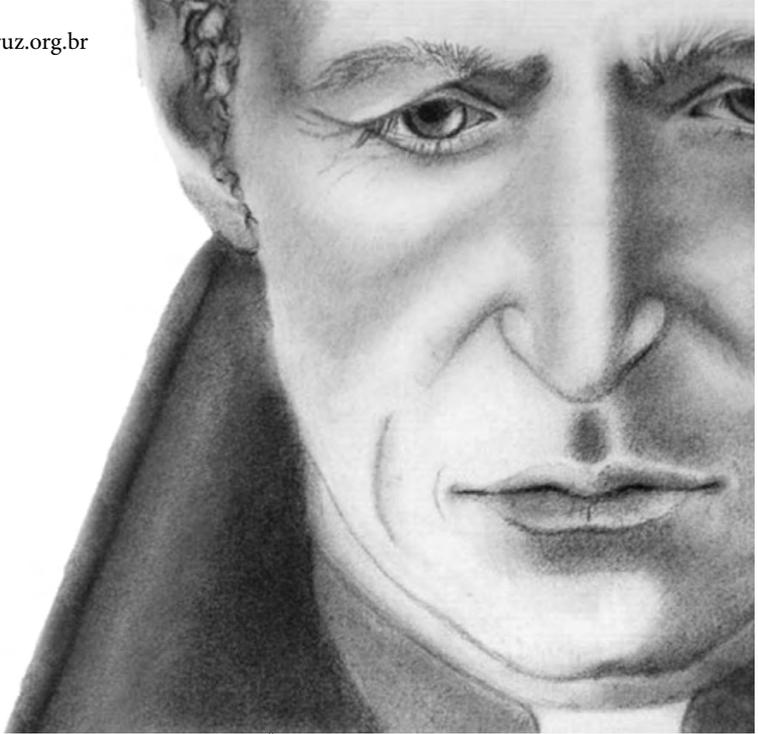
Closing Prayer:

God of yesterday, today and forever—free us to embrace our emerging future.

**Our Lady of Seven Sorrows,
pray for us.**

DAY 9 – JANUARY 28: Living Mercy!

Photo:
congregacaodesantacruz.org.br



Opening Prayer: ALL

We pray for all who are participating in our Decade of Days that we may be united during these times of special graces. May we make time during these days to pray alone and to share with others how we are being challenged to bring joy to all our sisters and brothers. Enlighten us to discover and embrace integral, human, development within the spiritual, social, cultural, and political situations of our time.

God of yesterday, today and forever—free us to embrace our emerging future.

**Sacred Heart of Jesus,
have mercy on us.**

Quiet yourself.

Spend 5 minutes or more in silence and stillness, in awareness of God's presence.

“O Jesus, remove from me this heart of stone that knows not how to be softened, animated and compassionate. . . Give me a heart more worthy of you, or rather, make mine gentle, humble, zealous and loving like yours.”

Basil Moreau, *Exercises of 1855*

Reader: “When Christ calls himself the ‘Light of the World’ (John 8:12), he is not telling us to look just at him, but to look out at life with his all-merciful eyes. We see him so we can

see like him, and with the same infinite compassion.”

The Universal Christ,
Richard Rohr, p. 37.

Reader: “The practice of premeditated mercy invites us to set the table for a new creation as we seek to live no longer by the rule of thumb that returns hatred for hatred, vengeance for vengeance. For if, as Jesus says, we love only those who love us, only do good to those who do good to us, only lend to those from whom we hope to receive, then “what credit is that to you?” (Matthew 5:46) Premeditated mercy involves replacing the rule of the thumb with the golden rule.”

Premeditated Mercy
by Joseph Nassal, p. 81

Reader: Prayer from Ravensbrook (found in the concentration camp)
Lord,
Remember not only the men and women of good will but all those of ill will. Do not only remember all the sufferings they have subjected us to. Remember the fruits we brought forth thanks to this suffering –
Our comradeship, our loyalty, our humility, our courage and generosity, the greatness of heart that all of this inspired. And when they come to judgment, let all those fruits we have borne

be their reward and their forgiveness.
Amen

Reflection and Sharing

—Daily life as well as watching television or using social media can bring provocative images into our private spaces. Recall some images you’ve seen especially of the poor and disenfranchised from around the world that soften your heart.

—How do I see each of them as Jesus does, “with the same infinite compassion?”

—Am I growing in mercy? Can I admit my shortcomings first of all to myself?

—Share an example of how you grew in mercy by getting to know someone quite different from yourself: from another culture, religion, neighborhood.

Quiet yourself.

Spend 5 minutes or more in silence and stillness, in awareness of God’s presence.

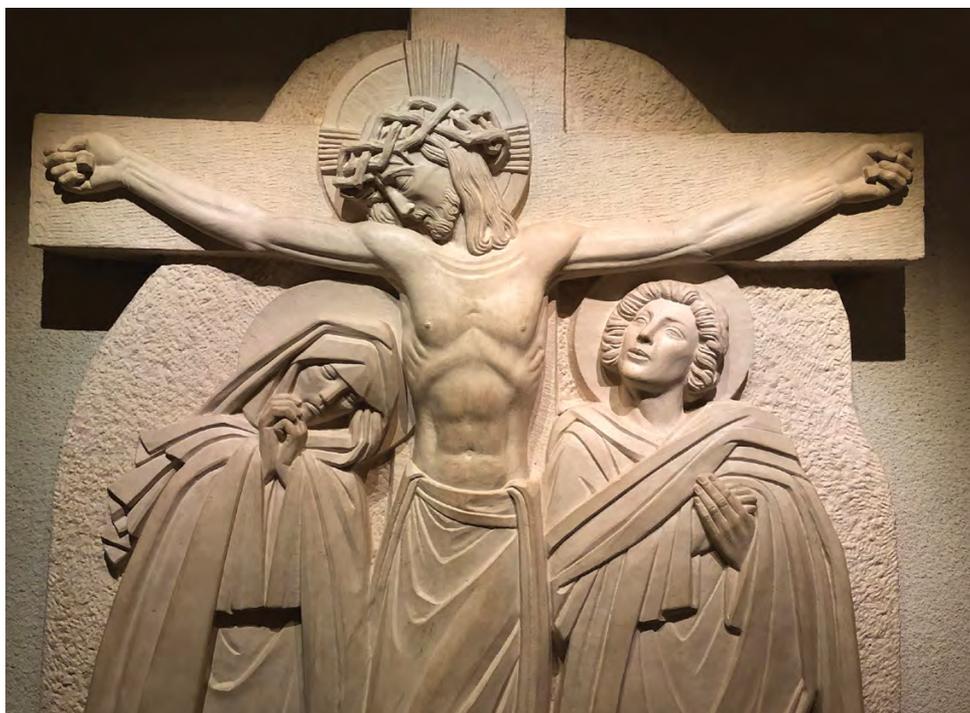
Intercessory Prayer

Response: Sacred Heart of Jesus, have mercy on us.

Closing Prayer:

God of yesterday, today and forever—
free us to embrace our emerging future.

Sacred Heart of Jesus, have mercy on us!



DAY 10 – JANUARY 29: Being Gratitude

Opening Prayer: ALL

We pray for all who are participating in our Decade of Days that we may be united during these times of special graces. May we make time during these days to pray alone and to share with others how we are being challenged to bring joy to all our sisters and brothers. Enlighten us to discover and embrace integral, human, development within the spiritual, social, cultural, and political situations of our time.

God of yesterday, today and forever—free me to embrace my emerging future

Mother Mary of the Seven Dolors, pray for us!

Quiet yourself.

5 minutes or more in silence and stillness in awareness of God's presence.

View the Film: Gratitude

5:55 YouTube: Louie Schwartzberg/
Benedictine Monk Brother David
Steindl-Rast

Transcript: Brother David Steindl-Rast
narrates.

The script is provided but it is best to view the film on YouTube. The images are powerful.

Do you think this is just another day in your life? It's not just another day, it's the one day that is given to you:

today. It's given to you; it's a gift; it's the only gift that you have right now. And the only appropriate response is gratefulness. If you do nothing else but to cultivate that response to the great gift that this unique day is. And if you learn to respond as if it were the first day of your life and the very last day then you will have spent this day very well.

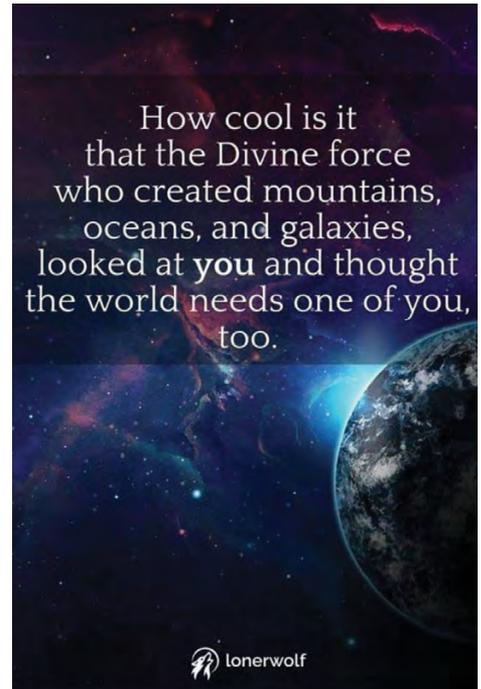
Begin by opening your eyes and be surprised that you have eyes you can open. That incredible array of colors that is constantly offered to us for pure enjoyment. Look at the sky. We so rarely look at the sky. We so rarely note how different it is from moment to moment with clouds coming and going. We just think of the weather and even with the weather we don't think of all the many nuances of weather. We just think of good weather and bad weather. This day right now is unique weather, maybe the kind that will never exactly in that form come again. The formation of clouds in the sky will never be the same as it is right now. Open your eyes, look at that.

Look at the faces of people you meet. Each one has an incredible story behind their face, a story that you could never fully fathom. Not only their own story but the story of their ancestors. We all go back so far. And in this present moment on this day all the people you meet, all that life from generations and from so many places all over the world flows together and meets you here like a life-giving water if you only open your heart and drink.

Open your heart to the incredible gifts that civilization gives to us. You flip a switch and there's electric light; you turn a faucet and cold water and drinkable water. It's a gift that millions and millions in the world will never

experience. So these are just a few of the enormous number of gifts to which we can open your heart. And so I wish you that you will open your heart to all these blessings and let them flow through you.

Then everyone whom you will meet on this day will be blessed by you. Just by your eyes, by your smile, by your touch. Just by your presence. Let the gratefulness overflow into blessing all around you. Then it will really be a good day.



Silent Pause

Meme from Facebook: Lonerwolf

[And need the people you least respect or understand? Hmmmmm.]

Reader: "The great favor of Approbation brings with it an obligation of gratitude making our lives a continuous act of thanksgiving. Please understand me, I do not mean a prayer of thanksgiving,

but an act.”

Mother Mary of the Seven Dolors, Circular Letter 69, 1886.

Reader: “In our needs, dangers, and sufferings we turn to prayer. Yet of all those among us who prayed and have been heard, how many have thanked God as fervently as they petitioned him? Shall it be said of us that the abundance of God’s gifts lessens our gratitude, and that in the end we regard his gifts as ours by right and are no longer moved by them?”

Basil Moreau, Circular Letter 136—1860

Reader: “. . . our Holy Father calls us to begin again—if we’ve fallen away from it—the simple practice of blessing our food before we eat it and offering thanks for it when we’ve finished our meal. This, he writes, helps us develop an attitude of the heart which can help us see every created thing in a new light. Gratitude builds respect. Respecting the corn we eat can help us remember those who grew it, those who picked it, those who transported it to market, those who sold it, those who cooked it. Perhaps we’ll remember all of them in prayer as they struggle with the conundrum of using chemical fertilizers and pesticides or organic methods to grow it; as they make decisions about their workers and the wages they are paid; the kind of fuel they purchase to deliver crops to market.”

Pope Francis, [*Laudato Sí*, 227]

Reflection and Sharing

—What images do you remember from the film? What thoughts?

—How did the film impact you? Do you ever express gratefulness for the

generations in your family that have come before you? And those that will follow you?

—How does one welcome those from another culture or religion?

—How does our world-wide Holy Cross family impact our welcome?

—What responses do you have to some of the seeds of thought from Mother Mary, Fr. Moreau, etc.

—In your own words, after praying these ten days, how do you define authentic human development in the spiritual, social, cultural and political situations of our time?

Quiet yourself.

Spend 5 minutes or more in silence and stillness, in awareness of God’s presence.

Intercessory Prayer

Response: This is the day the Lord has made. Let us be glad and rejoice!

Closing Prayer:

Good and Gracious God, we thank you for the family of Holy Cross, its Associates, ministry partners, benefactors and all those we serve. We thank you for the many ways our sisters and brothers keep us aware of the challenges of our times by challenging us. We pray for each other as we are called daily to shape and reshape ourselves in your image so that when people see us, they see you. We offer this prayer with great joy as we face the challenges of our mission to help others throughout the world flourish and blossom even as we strive to do the same.

God of yesterday, today and forever—free us to embrace our emerging future.

Mother Mary of the Seven Dolors, pray for us.



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