

Greetings of peace, dear Franciscan Family!

I pray this finds you well and filled with the Lord's peace.

As of this email, we still do not know who the President-elect is in the United States. We still do not know how long this pandemic will ravage our world. We still do not know when we can return to a semblance of normalcy. There are so many things we still do not know; yet, there are some things we do know for certain. We know there are still migrant children separated from their families. We know there are brothers and sisters at the borders of our country who are in desperate need of medical attention because of COVID.

I know two things for certain: I know we serve a great and mighty God who hears our prayers, and I know prayer changes hearts and can move us to action. As the Animator of Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation in the United States, I am humbly asking that you join me and the National Immigration Focus Group to pray the attached 9-day novena in solidarity and support of our migrant brothers and sisters. I once heard where there is a need, there is a Franciscan. When we Franciscans join together in prayer, amazing things happen.

Praying this novena for the 9 days, we will be in solidarity with our brothers and sisters who, like the Holy Family, sought a distant land for safety, security and solace. Meditating on the prayers, the reflections and the Scripture passage of the Holy Family fleeing into Egypt will focus us on the plight of the migrants and refugees in our country and in our world.

Please begin the 9-day novena on **November 13th**, the feast day of Mother Frances Xavier Cabrini, the patron saint of immigrants, to end on the 21st of November, the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

And, if you feel called to pray the novena again in December, we suggest you begin on **December 12th**, the feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe, Patroness of the Americas, ending on December 20th, the 4th Sunday of Advent.

The National Immigration Focus Group thanks you for your prayers.

Wishing you blessings of peace and all good!

Carolyn D. Townes, OFS

National Animator,

Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation

U.S. Secular Franciscan Order

"Live a Life Worthy of Your Call."

(OFS-USA 2021 Theme)