

Prayer of Pope Francis

(during recent visit to the island of Lesbos with the Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew)

Merciful God, we pray to you for all the men, women and children who have died after leaving their homelands in search of a better life. Though many of their graves bear no name, to you each one is known, loved and cherished. May we never forget them, but honour their sacrifice with deeds more than words.

We entrust to you all those who have made this journey, enduring fear, uncertainty and humiliation, in order to reach a place of safety and hope. Just as you never abandoned your Son as he was brought to a safe place by Mary and Joseph, so now be close to these, your sons and daughters, through our tenderness and protection.

In caring for them may we seek a world where none are forced to leave their home and where all can live in freedom, dignity and peace.

Merciful God and Father of all, wake us from the slumber of indifference, open our eyes to their suffering, and free us from the insensitivity born of worldly comfort and self-centredness. Inspire us, as nations, communities and individuals, to see that those who come to our shores are our brothers and sisters. May we share with them the blessings we have received from your hand, and recognize that together, as one human family, we are all migrants, journeying in hope to you, our true home, where every tear will be wiped away, where we will be at peace and safe in your embrace.

Prayer of the Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew

Lord of mercy, compassion and all comfort, we pray to You for our brothers in difficult circumstances and we offer to Your Goodness:

Nurture the infants; instruct the youth; strengthen the aged; give courage to the faint hearted; reunite those separated; sail with those who sail; travel with those who travel; defend the widows; protect the orphans; liberate the captives; heal the sick. Remember, O God, those who are in mines, in exile, in harsh labor, and those in every kind of affliction, necessity, or distress; and all those who entreat Your loving kindness; those who love us and those who hate us; and pour out upon all Your rich mercy, granting them their petitions for salvation

Again we pray, Lord of life and of death, grant eternal repose to the souls of Your departed servants, those who lost their lives during their exodus from war-torn regions and during their journeys to places of safety, peace and prosperity.

For You, Lord, are the helper of the helpless, the hope of the hopeless, the savior of the afflicted, the haven of the voyager, and the physician of the sick. Be all things to all, You who know each person, his requests, his household, and his need. Deliver this island, O Lord, and every city and country, from famine, plague, earthquake, flood, fire, sword, invasion of foreign enemies, and civil war. Amen