

Prayerful Reading in the Claretian Family for the IX WORLD DAY OF THE POOR



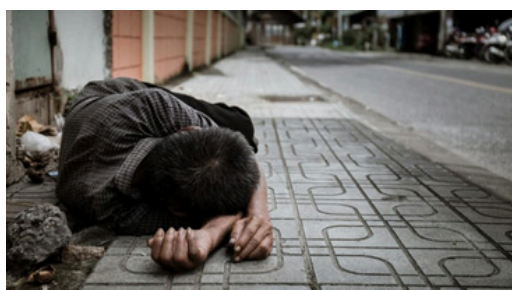
“You, Lord, are my hope” (cf. Ps 71:5)

1. Opening Prayer

(Let us set up a prayer space, with some images of the missions of the Claretian Family and sister Ecclesial Communities serving and accompanying impoverished groups, a lit candle, and the Bible. If we share this prayer in mission spaces, so much the better)



Gathered as a Family, we join the Universal Church on this World Day of the Poor in contemplative and active prayer, opening ourselves to the passage of God and his Spirit.



Together, let us pray with Psalm 71 and respond:

R.- You, Lord, are my hope.

In you, God, I have taken refuge; I will never be put to shame. In your righteousness, rescue me and deliver me; Open your ear to me, and save me. Be my rock of refuge, to which I may always flee; command me to save me, for you are my rock, my fortress.

R. You, Lord, are my hope

You, Lord, have been my hope; I have trusted in you from my youth. I have relied on you from my birth; you brought me forth from my mother's womb. I will praise you forever!

R. You, Lord, are my hope

Many are astonished, but you are my refuge, which cannot be shaken. My mouth rejoices in your name, and proclaims your greatness all day long. Do not cast me off when I am old; do not forsake me when my strength fails.

R. You, Lord, are my hope

I will always have hope, and I will praise you more and more. All day long my mouth will proclaim your justice and your salvation, though it is something I cannot fathom. I will recount your mighty deeds and remember your justice, your justice alone. You, O God, have taught me from my youth, and even today I declare all your wonders.

R. You, O God, are my hope.

O God, you have done great things; your justice is on high. Who is like you, O God? You have caused me to suffer many calamities, yet you will revive me; you will raise me up from the depths of the earth. You will increase my glory and comfort me again.

R. You, O God, are my hope.

Because of your faithfulness, my God, I will give you thanks with stringed instruments; I will sing to you, O God. My lips will shout for joy when I sing to you, for you have saved my life. All day long my tongue will tell of your righteous deeds.

R.- You, Lord, are my hope.

Let us listen, let us sing with hope: (The options are to choose one or another that best suits our reality)

-Songs in Spanish: Madre de los Pobres by Cesáreo Gabaráin // <https://youtu.be/LMjSHwz0yHA?si=utsTWfR9MvkWLvY2O>

América Despierta by Cardenal Pironio // <https://youtu.be/b4eQuzxW9fQ?si=GhEPOhnCXGkmabC4>

-Songs to choose from in English: God of the Poor (Beauty for Brokenness) by Graham Kendrick <https://youtu.be/MO1G-o7Yj-c?si=YO3aR4rd7AF3dHncO>

"The Cry of the Poor" by John Foley. https://youtu.be/w_Q0FjuAUZY?si=E1c6zZGZp7ARNvwf



2. Introduction to the Day

In the eight years since the World Day of the Poor has been celebrated, more people around the world have experienced it with creative initiatives that bear fruits of charity and commitment to faith. This year, the invitation to live Christian hope as a concrete response to poverty in all its forms resonates strongly.



At the closing of the Jubilee for the Excluded in 2016, Pope Francis announced that this Day would be celebrated the following year. He said, “Today, in the cathedrals and shrines of the whole world, the Doors of Mercy are closed. Let us ask for the grace not to take our eyes off God who looks at us and on our neighbor who questions us... especially on our forgotten and excluded brother, on Lazarus who lies before our door. It is towards this that the lens of the Church is directed... In light of these reflections, I would like today to be the “Day of the Poor.” (Pope Francis, November 13, 2016).

The intention, as Francis explained a few days later, was the desire to genuinely evangelize with a renewed ecclesial face and constant pastoral conversion that would bear witness to mercy; he hoped that the Days would help communities and each person to reflect on the poverty that “is at the heart of the Gospel,” which urges us to justice and peace. Social as a preparation for living the solemnity of Jesus Christ, King of the universe, who identifies with the little and impoverished people and who “will judge us by our works of mercy” (November 20, 2016). On that occasion, it was established that every 33rd Sunday of Ordinary Time would be celebrated as the World Day of the Poor.

This year, Pope Leo XIV wrote in his message for this 9th Day that “The poor are creative individuals who challenge us to always find new ways of living the Gospel today,” which can become a testimony of a strong and reliable hope.

In the framework of this Day, the Pope also released his first Apostolic Exhortation *DILEXI TE* On Love for the Poor, in which he expresses, among other things, that: “...we must feel the urgency to encourage everyone to choose a life that is born from the recognition of Christ's presence in the face of those who suffer and live in need. For us, as Christians, the question of the poor goes back to the essence of our faith, because the poor do not represent a sociological category, but rather constitute the very flesh of Christ.”

3.- Congregational Experience

In this Claretian heritage and in the experience of the Cordimarian Charism, we recall the very life of our founder, Carmen Serrano MCM, who lived in poverty and found the true value of her life in that precariousness: following Jesus; as well as the expression of her mission: the loving care of the littlest ones in the Kingdom of God, girls and boys ignorant of God's Love and illiterate in the basic knowledge that gives them the tools to occupy their dignified place in this society.



Our founder, Julián Collell (CMF), also embodies in our Constitutions the call to follow this Jesus through the most needy, in what we would call the profile of the Cordimarian Missionary, which expresses in a couple of paragraphs: "And where there is greater hunger and ignorance of God, there you must go with preference, and where the work of evangelization is most fraught with difficulties, labor, and deprivation, there you must launch yourselves with greater ardor, with the faith, trust, grace, and love of Christ Jesus and the Immaculate Heart of Our Mother. 'Go and teach all people.' And to reach the goal of such an ideal, even if it is only through the evangelization of a single person, there must be no human power of tribulation, humiliation, fatigue, hunger, thirst, poverty, persecution, the cross, etc., that can make you give up on a single point of God's Plan."

Our Directory states that "The community, gathered in an attitude of discernment, openness, and dialogue, seeks new ways of living poverty and is consistent in practice, according to the specific circumstances where it carries out its ministries" (D 38.1) or that "When we lack something we consider necessary, we accept it with joy and fidelity, like Christ who had nowhere to lay his head (cf. Luke 9:58)" (D 38.2). It also states that "We joyfully place at the service of others: what we are, our time, what we have or what we freely receive" (D 40.1).

We have seen this reflected throughout our missionary commitment in communities when, among other actions, we have served the migrant population, providing immigration counseling and basic medical care and sharing goods; we have provided low-income families and homeless children with food supplies and scholarships for their comprehensive education; and we have also seen it reflected in digital media. and on the radio, raising awareness in the search for justice and equity; or showing solidarity within the Claretian and Ecclesial Family in response to SOS calls for natural disasters... Currently, there is the experience of sharing time, hands, life, and heart to contribute to the uprising of the Kaqchikel people in Santa María de Jesús Sacatepéquez, Guatemala, due to the consequences of the recent earthquake. In this context, lay men and women, Claretians, and Cordimarians have been providing aid both for the initial emergency and in the urgent need to collaborate with food and supplies to resume daily life with a bit of peace and tranquility.

Where do you find the option for the poor reflected in your documents, charismatic history, and missionary life? In this context, as Pope Leo XIV says, there is an emphasis on "underlining the action of God who takes pity on the poverty and weakness of all humanity and, wishing to inaugurate a Kingdom of justice, fraternity, and solidarity, is particularly concerned for those who are discriminated against and oppressed, asking us, his Church, for a firm and radical option in favor of the weakest." (DILEXI TE no. 16)

4. Biblical Text:

Let us reflect together on the Gospel of Matthew, chapter 6:19-20, reading slowly and using the Lectio Divina we practice as a community:

"Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust consume, and thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consumes, nor thieves break in and steal."

5. Reflection

Let us be silent to allow the Word and what we have shared to rest in our hearts, and let us help each other ruminate on it by returning to part of Leo XIV's Message for this Day. Then let us share freely as a community.

(If you don't have the Message printed yet, you can find it at the following link: <https://www.vatican.va/content/leo-xiv/es/messages/poor/documents/20250613-messaggio-giornata-poveri.html>)

6- Commitments

Heeding the Pope's invitation to see the poor not as objects of our pastoral care, "but as creative subjects who stimulate us to always find new ways of living the Gospel today"; as well as his exhortation to "promote the development of policies to combat old and new forms of poverty, as well as new initiatives to support and assist the poorest of the poor."



- Let us dialogue so that every gesture and word of our life, as a consecrated community, may arise from listening to the voice of the smallest and most impoverished people, and let us agree on a commitment to be carried out within the scope of our communal and personal reality.
- If we haven't already, let's agree on a community time to resume, reflect, and act on the Apostolic Exhortation DILEXI TE.

(The full text can be found at the following link: https://www.vatican.va/content/leo-xiv/es/apost_exhortations/documents/20251004-dilexi-te.html)

7. Closing Prayer

“Good God, you who hear the cry of those who suffer, make us instruments of your compassion in the world. Open our eyes to see the faces of those who live experiences of discarding; open our ears to hear their silenced cry, and open our hearts to welcome them as sisters and brothers. Do not allow us to grow accustomed to their pain or justify indifference. Give us courage to act, tenderness to accompany, and faith to sow hope in the midst of suffering. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.” (Taken from the prayer guide of Caritas Mexico)

Let us conclude our prayer by singing: (The options are to choose one or another that best suits our reality)

Songs in Spanish a Choose: Give us a big heart to love <https://youtu.be/8eI4kWwrF7w?si=pDk6AQ3WERESBcg4>

Or Be your heart today | Cristóbal Fones, SJ <https://youtu.be/D72IP8eKMCU?si=6d9rAYi6hzgx3nA7>

English song: When I Needed a Neighbor (Were You There) <https://youtu.be/ym8yOdCFGPc?si=zaTsSKCfPBqROT8I&t=4>

Or the Jubilee Hymn: https://youtu.be/q6w6tHpwI_o?si=nP_SYjXw6Tswq5IQ

or in other languages: <https://www.iubilaecum2025.va/en/giubileo-2025/inno-giubileo-2025.html>