



Lenten Calendar 2023



This Lent, we invite you to join JRS in building a future where no one is excluded. Follow our Lenten calendar to reflect, pray, and take action to build a world where no one is excluded.

22 February

"Lent is a humble descent both inwards and towards others. It is about realising that salvation is not an ascent to glory, but a descent in love." (Pope Francis)

As Lent begins, let us reflect: how can we journey towards others and descend – together – in love?

Ash Wednesday

23 February

As of 2022, over 100 million people have been forced to flee their homes: 1 in 78 people worldwide is currently displaced. While numbers can be daunting, remember that those affected are people with hopes and talents.

Let us keep these men, women, and children in our prayers.

24 February

"It's very difficult, especially for Ukrainians, to plan something. Because we planned our lives before, and everything was destroyed."
(Olena Zinkevych, JRS Romania)

One year after the beginning of the crisis in Ukraine, we pray for those whose lives have been forever altered.

25 February

"Interreligious dialogue is no longer merely something expedient, it is an urgently needed and incomparable service to humanity, to the praise and glory of the Creator of all."
(Pope Francis)

How can we foster interfaith dialogue within our communities?

26 February

In 2021, the number of displaced children was a staggering 36.5 million. Of these, 1.5 million were born in displacement, they never saw their families' home.

We must protect refugee children, so that they may heal, learn, and determine their own future.

Let us not forget them.

27 February

Humans are designed to seek out companionship. Regardless of social, economic, or cultural backgrounds we desire accompaniment.

For many, companionship is the sole method of coping, even in the most adverse scenarios.

What has been the value of companionship in your own life?

28 February

"God of all people, we pray that we may accompany those on the road, walking in solidarity with those forced from their homes. May we serve them humbly, recognizing not the cost, but freely giving from what we have."

Download the Examen inspired by St Ignatius of Loyola:
<http://bit.ly/3SaLWDK>

1 March

"We all have a duty to do good. And this commandment for everyone to do good, I think, is a beautiful path towards peace."
(Pope Francis)

Take a moment to reflect: what are the ways we can 'do good'? Can you think of one good deed you could do this week?

2 March

An Internally Displaced Person (IDP) is unlike a refugee in that they haven't crossed a border to find safety. At the end of 2021, there were 53.2 million IDPs. Even though they share many of refugees' difficulties, they are often forgotten.

Learn more: <https://bit.ly/3x6aHHr>

3 March

When displaced, there are even fewer opportunities for adults to participate in education programs, yet literacy is key to gain confidence and self-reliance.

Watch the video (<http://bit.ly/3ls97gw>) to learn more and reflect: how has literacy shaped your life?

4 March

“Accompaniment is giving your presence, your time and the opportunity for people to feel that they are special and to regain their feeling of humanity and dignity.”
(Fr Jun Perez SVD)

When have you felt accompanied in your life? When did you have the chance to accompany others?

5 March

We all seek independence to navigate our life journey. For people in displacement, regaining confidence through self-reliance can be especially pivotal in the process of crafting a new life.

In your experience, what helped you feel independent and confident?

6 March

People may be forced to flee their homes due to conflict, violence, human rights violations, persecution, or natural disasters. No matter the circumstances, they all deserve protection and support.

Ask yourself, what misconceptions do I hold against displaced people?

7 March

In conflict settings, 1 in 5 people is living with a mental health condition ranging from mild anxiety to psychosis. Most people can cope and become more resilient, if they receive support.

Learn more about the importance of mental health and psychosocial support in displacement: <https://bit.ly/3JRcxn2>

8 March

Many displaced girls stop going to school due to economic, cultural, or family reasons – including early marriage and pregnancy. If we can invert this trend and invest in secondary education for girls, we will create more equitable communities.

Let us keep girls in school: <https://bit.ly/3YDXHEX>

9 March

“Any person who walks looking for a future is a human being that we must embrace with our heart.”
(P. Jose Fernando Posada SJ)

Every day, people cross the Venezuelan/Colombian border in search of a better life.

Watch this video (<http://bit.ly/3YjDfsW>) to know more about the 'Caminantes'.

10 March

"A single individual is enough for hope to exist. And that individual can be you."

(Pope Francis)

Pope Francis encourages each one of us to act to bring hope to refugees. Learn how you can support our brothers and sisters:

<http://bit.ly/3Ec4GN1>

11 March

The education gap between refugees and host peers is wide. Only 6% of refugees have access to post-secondary education and training, yet these opportunities are essential to their success.

Have you had the chance to further your education? What has the impact on your life been?

12 March

Social cohesion has a direct correlation to improved well-being. To achieve it, we need to re-establish trust between individuals and the state, especially in case of human rights abuses.

Ask yourself, do you feel safe where you live? Do people around you feel the same?

13 March

In the past ten years, Pope Francis has advocated for refugees and migrants, reminding us that we are all brothers and sisters and part of a single, human family.

Let us celebrate his papacy's tenth anniversary by making sure that no one is excluded.

14 March

Women in displacement are disproportionately exposed to violence, discrimination, and abuse. We need services that specifically ensure their protection and wellbeing - safe spaces where they may rebuild their lives.

Let us keep displaced women in our prayers.

15 March

As of today, the war in Syria has raged for twelve years. Children have been born in displacement and families have longed to go back home for more than a decade.

Let us call for the end of this conflict - and all wars everywhere.

16 March

Fr Pedro Arrupe SJ encouraged us to welcome our forcibly displaced brothers and sisters and reminded us that "only by being a man or woman for others does one become fully human."

What does it mean to you? How can we be men and women for others in our daily lives?

17 March

"Lord, we pray for vulnerable migrants that you may grant them strength and safety in their journeys, and we pray for open hearts to understand their desperate motivations."

Join the prayer for forcibly displaced people:

<http://bit.ly/3x7X7Dt>

18 March

In situations of displacement, teachers have the power to transform lives through education. Yet, to do their job well, teachers – who are often displaced themselves - need support, guidance, and continuous training.

Has a teacher positively impacted your life? How?

19 March

Those who are displaced by climate and weather events don't have formal protection – many will not be able to seek asylum, as the global infrastructure to support them does not yet exist.

Share the video (<https://bit.ly/3jNX8ta>) with anyone who wants to know more about climate displacement.

20 March

Everyone deserves to be happy, no matter where they come from or what their status is.

Why not try to share some happiness in your community today? Who among your neighbours might benefit from an extra kind word or gesture?

21 March

“Fraternity is one of the fundamental values that ought to undergird relationships between peoples, so that the suffering or disadvantaged do not feel excluded and forgotten, but accepted and supported as part of the one human family.” (Pope Francis)

Let us strive to build a single, human family.

22 March

Most people in displacement do not have the opportunity to acquire basic computer skills, which are key to learning, finding a job, and staying connected with loved ones. We must ensure everyone has access to digital literacy.

How does technology help you in your daily life?

23 March

"Every kind of help is important, but what refugees need and appreciate the most is friendship." With this quote, Sr Meri Muše shows us the importance of welcoming the stranger.

Listen to her testimony (<http://bit.ly/3jHSfSc>) and reflect, how can you welcome others through small actions every day?

24 March

We all have dreams and passions. Amro's are drawing and inventing. As a young Syrian refugee, however, he does not have many opportunities to nurture his talents. Luckily his family and teachers believe in him and support him.

Share Amro's story of hope: <https://bit.ly/40MuA3F>

25 March

“Lord, make us instruments of your justice, so that where there is exclusion, fraternity may flourish. Lord, make us builders of your Kingdom, together with migrants and refugees and with all who dwell on the peripheries.”

Download the booklet and share Pope Francis' prayer: <http://bit.ly/3DVvJMv>

26 March

Refugee children often experience enormous trauma. Access to sports and music activities can be lifesaving, as it improves their mental health and helps them to create positive relationships.

What activities did you enjoy as a child? How have they shaped you?

27 March

News related to refugee situations can quickly become overwhelming.

If you wish to learn more about forced displacement and its impact of people's lives, here you can browse stories from all over the world: <https://bit.ly/3ROcxWE>

28 March

"Love is shown more in deeds than in words." (St Ignatius of Loyola) Love can mean many things and take many forms.

Ask yourself, what is love for you? Do you show love to your family, community, and neighbours? How?

29 March

To build bridges among and between communities, we must acknowledge the personal and communal impacts of violence.

Reconciliation work must be rooted in justice and dialogue to rediscover our common humanity.

Are there bridges you wish to build in your life?

30 March

Displaced people have talents and gifts to offer to host communities. Yet they rarely get the opportunity to flourish. Through livelihoods programmes, jobs can be created, and communities can learn to work and prosper together.

Watch the video (<https://bit.ly/3YAFF5X>) to learn how.

31 March

After fleeing their homes, most people live in precarious situations for years, even decades. As soon as media and political attention drop, refugees are neglected.

Let us not forget our brothers and sisters in protracted displacement. Download the photo essay and learn more: <https://bit.ly/3DSE83e>

1 April

Even amidst crisis and conflict, there is still hope. It can be found in the strength of people forced to flee their homes and in the restlessness of those who walk with them.

Take a moment today and reflect, what gives you hope?

2 April

"Let us renew our faith, draw from the 'living water' of hope, and receive with open hearts the love of God, who makes us brothers and sisters in Christ."
(Pope Francis)

As the Holy week begins, let us open our hearts to God and His love for us all.

Palm Sunday

3 April

When war broke out in Ukraine, Lesya fled her home and moved to a safer city with her family. Now she dreams of going back as soon as possible.

Listen to her story and share the video (<https://bit.ly/3lbBM29>) with your network to amplify her words of hope and peace.

4 April

Mines destroy lives during conflict and remain a danger decades after peace has been reached.

Let us demand world leaders to stop the use of mines, speed up clearance, and ensure rights and meet needs of survivors.

5 April

Many children with disabilities live in conflict areas, with very few opportunities and support. Now, more than ever, advocating for their right to quality, inclusive education is crucial.

Share the video (<https://bit.ly/3RKOiJ4>) to support the rights of children with special needs.

6 April

“Jesus teaches us this, simply, that you must wash each other's feet...”

We serve one another, without expecting a return: how beautiful it would be if it were possible to do this every day and to all people.”

(Pope Francis)

Let us continue to love and serve one another, every day.

Holy Thursday