



Dear God,

There are so many people in need!

Like everyone in this world

refugees are in need of a place to live,

a warm bed, food, clothing, a decent wash...

Dear God, You know that we need all those things,

but most of all we need people who care,

to share our love, our hope and our future.

We need to be needed.

Dear God, You know that we are in need.

Come and give us a hand!

Amen

Psalm 69

Congregation:

Save me, O God, for the waters have come up to my neck.

We remember today the people who have had to leave their homelands because they can no longer lead a decent life there. Many of them hoped to find refuge and a new home in Europe. They made use of everything they had and risked their health and their lives. Too many have died. This tragedy and this scandal have many aspects. There are the stories of the victims and their families. It is not just a question of a few individuals, however, but of unimaginably huge numbers of people. Their deaths were not inevitable, but in many cases were the result of deliberate action or the failure to render assistance. And finally, it's about what these deaths mean to us, and how we avoid becoming mere spectators.



Congregation:

I sink in deep mire, where there is no foothold; I have come into deep waters, and the flood sweeps over me.

Thousands of people have died at the borders of Europe since 1993. Their deaths have been documented in press reports, and in reports from governmental and nongovernment agencies. What is not known is the number of deaths that have not been recorded or counted, the number of people who have disappeared without their names being known. They all sought a life in security and dignity, a life without fear and hunger. The doors of Europe remain closed to them forever.

Congregation:

I am weary with my crying; my throat is parched.



Most of the victims drowned in the sea or in the rivers that mark the borders. Others suffocated in containers, died of thirst in the deserts, were shredded to pieces by the mines on the border between Greece and Turkey, froze to death in the mountains, died in the undercarriages of planes, trains or trucks, or were shot by border guards.



Prayers

Lord,
you were once a refugee
as the small child from the manger
fleeing to Egypt.
We pray for all those
who are fleeing persecution,
adversity and hopelessness.

Lord,
you led your people through the desert
for forty years.
We pray for all those
who have been abandoned to the desert
who disappear
in the no man's land between the borders.

Lord,
you called our fathers and mothers
to seek a new beginning
in a new,
promised land.
We pray for all those
who have the courage
to seek a new beginning in a new land
where they hope to make their future.

Lord,
you rule over the raging of the sea;
you still the waves
when they rise up.
We pray for all those
drifting helplessly on the seas
and drowning in the waves.

Lord,
You divided the sea
to let your people pass through
and made the waters as solid as a wall.
We pray for all those
for whom the sea is a wall
because we do not let them pass through.

Lord,
You have enjoined us to see
refugees
As our neighbours.
We pray for us all

That we might take responsibility for them.



Blessing

May the Lord of the harvest bless us with goodness.

May the loving Teacher equip us with vision and compassion.

May the Holy Spirit empower us to proclaim the kingdom of God.

Amen.

