



# Current Issues in Prayer

February 2020

Welcome! The Pope invites people of good will to come together and pray **that the cries of our migrant brothers and sisters, victims of criminal trafficking, may be heard and considered.**



## Getting started:

Choose a comfortable place. Try to recollect yourself in the presence of God and thank Him for those people who tirelessly work to educate our younger generations.



## Short story:

The war in Syria drove Doaa's family away to Egypt. Aged 19 and without a work permit, it was hard to plan a future there. Against all odds, Doaa was hopeful as she was in love with another refugee, called Bassem. He promised her future in Europe. Bassem paid all his life savings to smugglers, who put them aboard an old fishing boat. It was so packed with people that Doaa's knees were bent to her chest. It was August 2014. After four days at sea, another boat approached the vessel. It was old and rusty and when the passengers were forcefully ordered to get on, everyone refused. The smugglers left angrily, and then returned to ram a hole in the side of the hull. "Let the fish eat your flesh!", they shouted. Within minutes, the boat capsized and sank, with 300 people trapped below deck. Miraculously, Bassem found a ring buoy. He held Doaa's hand and kept afloat with a few other survivors. Sensing his end was near, a Palestinian approached with his nine-month-old granddaughter. "Please take the baby," he said. "I am very tired." He let the sea swallow him in. Soon after, Bassem reached his limit. His last words were, "I am sorry my love. Please forgive me." Later that day, a mother struggled towards Doaa with an 18-month-old girl. "Save her," she said. On the fourth day at sea, Doaa saw a merchant ship. For two hours she shouted. The crew spotted her with search lights in the dark and extended a rope – astonished to find a young woman clutching two babies like she was their mother.



## Time to reflect:

Take time to imagine yourself in Doaa's situation: A 19-year old lady who has just seen her fiancé drown, tightly holding on to a ring buoy in the open Mediterranean sea, and now struggling to save yourself and two fledgling lives. What are your thoughts? Your fears? Your hopes?



## Let us pray:

Dear Lord, sometimes I do not seem to be able to hear the cries of refugees. We often tend to misjudge them, to view them as different or to consider them as a burden to European countries' economy. Help me realise that refugees are persons who risk their lives in the hope of saving it.



## Inspiration:

Remember, remember always, that all of us, and you and I especially, are descended from immigrants.

*Franklin D. Roosevelt*



## Hands on:

Think of ways of making contact with a local refugee support service. Your help need not be just material. Getting to know the story of a refugee might open your mind to embrace a whole new perspective about migrants and migration.