

JOURNEYS

URSULINE SISTERS

of the Roman Union † United States Provinces

December 2015

Dear Friends,

I was at the University of Missouri during November protests on campus and when serious threats appeared on social media. It was a critical, yet graced time to be present at the Newman Center. Questions overflowed about what was really happening and what was an appropriate Christian response. We prayed and we dialogued. Most of all, we supported one another in faith.



Terrorist attacks in Paris only weeks ago provide another challenge for us as people of faith. What is taking place in our world? How are we to understand such atrocities organized in the name of religion? How do we grow in respect for the diversity of cultures, societies and beliefs in our world when such fear is generated? In the wake of the violence, some people in our country are now calling for a closing of our borders to refugees.

As we begin another season of Advent, we must pray, “Come, Lord Jesus.” We need his peace, understanding and justice perhaps more than ever. The President of Caritas International, Cardinal Luis Tagle of the Philippines, has said, “I listen to the stories [of refugees] and I ask myself ‘where is humanity? Why are human beings making it difficult for other human beings just to move out of an unpleasant situation to look for a better future?’” As we remember Mary, Joseph and Jesus, themselves refugees and targeted by terrorists, let’s commit to respect and support one another in faith and hope.

Have a blessed Advent and a very happy Christmas!

St. Elisa Ryan

For Reflection

What persons do you know who are called “foreigners,” “refugees,” or simply “different”? How have you tried to show compassion and kindness to them? What else will you do?

How willing are you to share your faith? In conversations with others, does what you say show your trust and confidence in God? How would you like your faith to influence your everyday life?

Angela Merici

Scripture Helps

Psalm 39:3 Pray the words “*Listen to my prayer, Lord, hear my cry; do not be deaf to my weeping! For I am like a foreigner, a refugee.*” Recall times when you felt like a foreigner—perhaps in a new or strange situation. What was most difficult for you? Pray for those who have nowhere to call home.

Read **Luke 1: 26-38**, then imagine yourself today in Mary’s place. What might the Angel Gabriel tell you not to be afraid of? For what are you willing to say to God, “let it be done to me”?

Other Resources

Watch this exceptionally good [PowerPoint about the Syrian refugee crisis](#)-- prepared by Anna Crosslin, President and CEO of the International Institute in St. Louis, Missouri and a 2015 recipient of the White House Champions of Change award.

Go to [Praying Advent](#) and choose something to help make your Advent 2015 more meaningful.



The [Holy Year of Mercy](#) declared by Pope Francis will officially begin on December 8. Get involved in celebrations in your diocese or at your college Newman Center. Plan to do some real works of mercy. Do you know them? [Click here.](#)

A good resolution for the New Year might be a commitment to some service. We Ursulines have some nice summer opportunities as shown on the flier at right. Contact me elisaosu@gmail.com for more information.

SITES:		
New Orleans, LA June 5-11, 2016 "Hands On" Art Camp for children	San Antonio, Texas July 10-16, 2016 Service with persons who are homeless	Laredo, Texas July 20-27, 2016 Service with elderly persons

For more information or to sign up, contact:
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Completed applications due January 15, 2016.

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"With the courage of St. Angela, we dare to be the change we wish to see in our world."
—Ursuline Sisters' Call to Service

For more information, contact Sr. Elisa Ryan at elisaosu@gmail.com or Sr. Jean Hopman at sjeanosu@gmail.com. If you no longer wish to receive these e-letters, contact Sr. Elisa and she will remove your address.

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