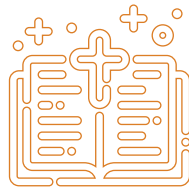


LISTEN TO HIM! LISTEN TO THEM!



Gospel extract

Jesus takes Peter, James and John with him, and leads them off on their own, on a high mountain.

And he was transfigured before them. [...]

Peter then spoke up and said to Jesus:

“Rabbi, it’s a good thing we’re here!

So let’s put up three tents: one for you, one for Moses and one for Elijah.”

In fact, he didn’t know what to say, such was their fright.

A cloud came and covered them with its shadow, and from the cloud a voice was heard:

“This is my beloved Son. Listen to Him.”

Mk 9:2-7

The Lord wants to take us with him. Does he not say to us today, to those of us who are so often preoccupied, threatened with turmoil: “Stop, step outside, God has something to say to you”?

From now on, the word that the Lord addresses to us is no longer a message, but a person: “This is my Son”.

And the invitation to follow him “uninstalls” us. It’s about letting ourselves be led, making a transition, experiencing the Paschal Mystery. For once, our friends in exile precede us on this steep descent down the mountain.

Listen to him! Listen to them! It’s by listening to our brothers and sisters who haven’t had time to “set up the pegs” and erect three tents, that we can learn how to stand at the foot of the Cross. For they carry within them an experience of humanity that is vulnerable, threatened and yet alive, from which we all can be enriched.

FOCUS ON UKRAINE



On February 24, 2022, Russia invaded Ukraine. By December 31, 2023, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) counted nearly 6 million Ukrainian refugees throughout Europe. The majority of Ukrainian refugees have gone to neighbouring countries. JRS is coordinating a global response to accompany them as they navigate life in these new countries.

The number of internally displaced people has also sharply increased. Between three and four million people have had to leave their homes that were destroyed by a drone or a rocket. Most of them are living a few kilometres from home, with family or friends. This situation changes rapidly as military offensives evolve. The most vulnerable are the elderly who have been unable to leave, the unemployed and children.

As the conflict continues, with devastating consequences for the population, JRS and the Jesuits continue to be present and mobilize resources to support those most affected. Together with the Xavier Network, we are coordinating the implementation of the One Proposal, a structured plan to welcome, protect, promote, and integrate Ukrainians forcibly displaced across Europe.



Arrivals at the Danube bank in Isaccea, Romania at the border with Ukraine (Marco Giarracca)

THE TESTIMONY OF YULIIA

Yuliia, a 31-year-old Ukrainian refugee from Donetsk, has been in Poland since March 2022.

She has had to cope with a certain level of conflict and displacement since 2014, when separatists seized power in her hometown. After moving to Crimea and then Kiev, Yuliia now finds herself living alone in Poland, having left her family behind.

“When I arrived in Warsaw, I had no job and only a few savings. JRS surrounded me with warmth and care and helped me in many ways. JRS assigned me a social worker, and I had the opportunity to talk about everything for the first time”.

She meets regularly with a psychologist who has helped her navigate her new reality and come to terms with her past.

“I didn’t even realize how hurt I was. It’s one thing to arrive in a new country as an immigrant: it’s another when you’re fleeing war. You can’t adapt quickly”.

Today, Yuliia holds down several jobs and is rebuilding her life, with courage and self-sacrifice.



Yuliia from Donetsk, Ukraine,
is now living in Poland.



PRAYER OF INTERCESSION

“What have you done with your brother?” We pray to you for all those trapped in hatred and violence. You believe in our capacity to love, convert our hearts! Push on the detonator of forgiveness, and processes of reconciliation and justice. Help us to overcome our fears, our refusal to open up to others, our desire for vengeance, our forgetfulness of our “brother’s face”.

Father, give our hearts the right tempo and true flexibility! Give us the strength to adapt to what we are given to live, and the courage to change what can be changed. May our quest be to reach out to others, to love more.

**Our forcibly displaced
friends teach us
to have:**

A heart that's uninstalled!

READINGS OF THE DAY

1ST READING: Gn 22, 1-2.9-13.15-18

PSALM: 115 (116 B), 10,15, 16ac-17, 18-19

2ND READING: Rm 8, 31b-34

GOSPEL: Mk 9, 2-10