International Women's Day



Wednesday

8 March 2017

INTERNATIONAL **WOMEN'S DAY**

Setting: Globe with photos of women who contributed to build a better world.

Procession: entering with the following symbols:

- ◊ A pitcher of water as a symbol of women who meet the essential needs of their families.
- ◊ A branch or a potted plant to symbolize militant women.
- ◊ A hard hat for work as a symbol of women laborers and trade workers.
- ◊ A ballot to symbolize women voters, the right to vote for women and women politicians.

Song: A Song to Mary giving us her son

Introduction:

What is happening in every country around the globe, also affects our country: street gangs, sex trade, illegal sale of narcotics and injustices to women like lower wages for the same work as men, clothes more expensive than those of the other sex, segregation and violence towards native women etc. Fortunately, these phenomena arouse volunteers and services in the struggle to establish justice in many areas.

Meditation:

Like Jesus, each day women carry their cross in our world. Women of courage denounce injustices, inequality, violence, abuse and contempt that oppress them. These women keep looking towards the future and continue to walk with hope. On the other hand, other women stand up and do what they can to improve the plight of women in need.

Time of silence and reflection:
In your heart, name a woman who helped other women to stand on their own feet by practicing justice, or another woman who inspired our history and our life. This woman may be known internationally, nationally or locally, in an organization nearby, even in your neighborhood, and even…one of your companions, a Daughter of Wisdom.





Time of Sharing

Word of God:
"I know the plans I have in mind for you - it is the Lord who speaks - plans for peace, not disaster, reserving a future full of hope for you." (Jer. 29:11)

Moment of silence

Parole du Pape François:
"I would like especially to mention you, the women, wives and mothers of many countries, who at great cost and sacrifice were able to lift up a country defeated, devastated and laid low by an abominable war." Pope Francis, Homely July 11, 2015.

Time of silence…..

Words of Marie-Louise: "If I were cloth, I would give myself to the poor." (Claude Besnard, Life of Marie-Louise of Jesus, 1st Superior of the DW …V11, no. 524- p. 386)

Prayer of intercession:
In his message on May 3, 2016, Pope Francis invited us to pray so that "in all the countries of the world, women be honored and respected, that their irreplaceable social contribution be appreciated." Let us pray together

- For the recognition and appreciation of the undeniable contribution of women in all the fields of human activity, we pray to you, Lord.

R/God of the universe, hear our prayer

- That sexual violence that afflicts women and girls from here and elsewhere be condemned, we pray to you, Lord. R/
- For the obstacles to the full insertion of women in the social, political and economic life be eliminated, we pray to you, Lord. R/
- So that women of all nations and cultures be honored and respected, we pray to you, Lord. R/
- For women of all nations to learn to work together on an equal footing with men, each valuing the irreplaceable contribution of the other, we pray to you, Lord. R/

Let us pray: God of tenderness, listen to the prayer of all persons who wish to be at the service of the life of their children, of their families and of our mother the Earth. Thank you for blessing all the small actions that lead to the fullness of life in your son Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Conclusion

"Hope is to continue to live in the midst of despair and to continue to hum in the dark. Hope is to know that love exists, to have confidence in tomorrow, to fall asleep and wake up when the sun rises. It is seeing the earth when one is in the open sea and the storm is raging. It is to feel understood in the other's gaze. As long as there is hope, there will also be prayer… and you shall be in the hands of God."
(Henri Nouwen, 'With Open Hands').

Chant: Woman of Yesterday and Today

Song for Marie Louise's Beatification…
Montfortian Family in prayer

Source and reference: Extracts from Development and Peace: Catholic organization founded by Canadian bishops and laypersons as a follow-up of the encyclical "Populorum Progressio" by Paul VI.