

International Solidarity Days-December 2021

December 1—World AIDS Day



December 1, 2021 marks the 33rd global World AIDS Day to raise awareness about the continued AIDS pandemic. This year's theme is "End Inequalities—End AIDS". Catholic Social Teaching calls us to recognize and celebrate the human dignity and worth of every person. Stigma, discrimination, and criminalization of key at risk populations must be addressed and eliminated if we are to end this AIDS pandemic. Gender inequalities have also contributed to the increase in HIV infections among women and girls. Every week, about 5000 young women aged 15-24 become infected with HIV. Worldwide, about

35% of women have experienced physical and/or sexual violence at some time in their lives, making them more vulnerable to HIV. Globally, approximately 37.7 million people are living with HIV and only 27.5 million are accessing anti-retroviral therapy. In many parts of the world, the Covid-19 pandemic has disrupted delivery and distribution of HIV treatment to many patients. Many nations have made significant strides in eliminating unequal access to AIDS prevention education, access to general medical care and access to anti-retroviral medications. Communities most affected by, living with, or most at risk of HIV infection must be provided with adequate resources to address inequalities that lead to higher infection and death rates due to AIDS.

Holy One, bless all those living with HIV. Strengthen our resolve to address the inequalities that prevent so many people from accessing life-saving treatments, prevention education, and social services. In this time of covid-19, bless all those who work to save lives and who render services and loving care to those affected by AIDS. We pray also for the over 36.3 million people who have died since AIDS was first recognized in 1981. May we never forget the high price of inaction, stigma and discrimination. Let us reach out in love to all in need.

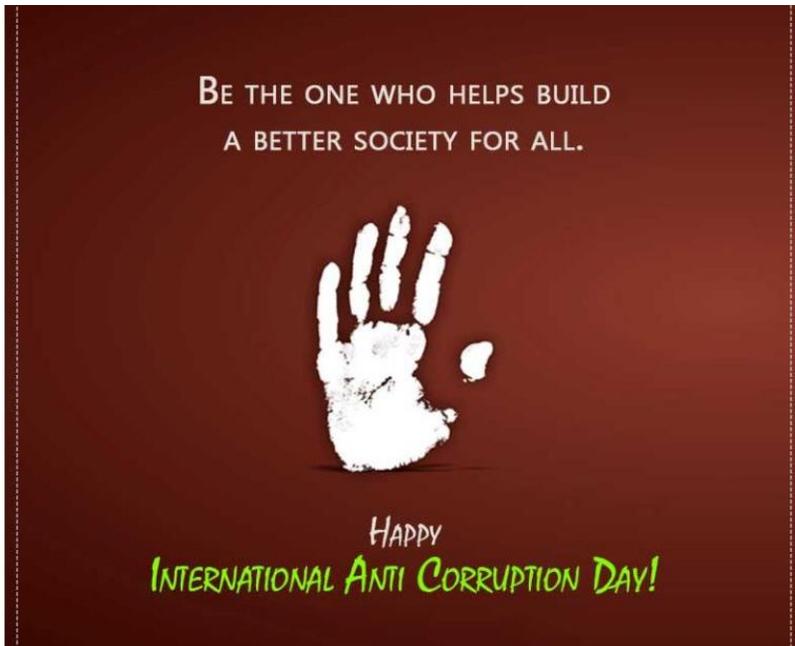
December 3—International Day of Persons with Disabilities



December 3rd is a day for raising awareness of, and helping to create real opportunities for, people with disabilities. This year's theme is "Building Back Better: toward a disability-inclusive, accessible and sustainable post COVID-19 world." It is estimated that about 15% of the world's population live with disability—about 1 billion people. Many of us will experience disability at some time in our lives. Lack of access can severely limit social and political participation, education, medical care and community building. As we begin to emerge from the COVID pandemic, let us create new inclusive systems that are open to all and that can accommodate disabilities so that we can all benefit from the gifts that each person brings.

God, we thank you for our health. Whatever limitations we experience, may we never be discouraged from participating in life and giving back in whatever ways we can. Whether disabilities are great or small, everyone deserves to be a participant in their own lives and in their communities. Help us to listen and respond to the needs of others so that everyone can share in building our common future for the good of all.

December 9—International Anti-corruption Day

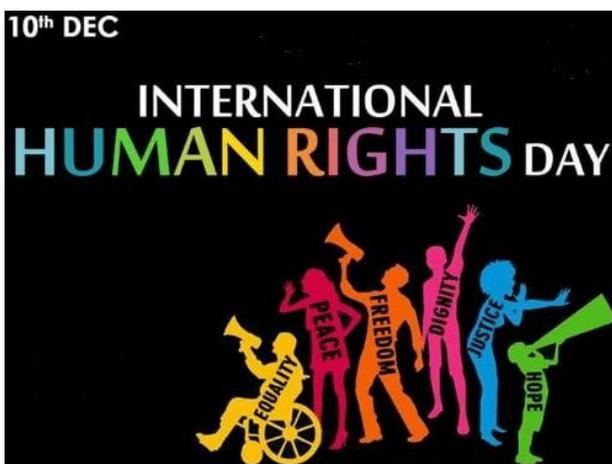


International Anti-corruption Day serves as a reminder to each of us to actively speak out and fight against corruption. Corruption is a global problem, affecting large and small communities, governments, public officials (including police officers, social workers, and other public servants), churches and even educational institutions. It is characterized by unethical behavior that involves an abuse of entrusted power for personal benefit. Socially entrusted power is meant to be used for the common good. When a person in such a position of trust abuses this precious responsibility, the security and wellbeing of everyone suffers. Trust is broken and is replaced by fear and loss of hope for a better future. It is up to each person to refuse to participate in corruption and to work to set up structures of transparency and accountability so that corruption can be brought to light and addressed safely.

God, as we gradually seek to build a more just world, help us to courageously address corruption in all its forms. As citizens of the world, help us to create transparent and accountable structures to ensure honesty from those called upon to serve the common good. Help us to expect and demand ethical behavior from all elected and religious leaders, employers, and civil servants. Keep each of us honest in our dealing with others and give us the courage to speak out against corruption and to refuse to participate in it.

December 10—World Human Rights Day

This day marks the beginning of a year-long celebration of the 73rd anniversary of the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights on December 10, 1948. This document proclaims that certain inalienable rights are inherent in every human being. This day is a time to promote awareness about human rights violations, and to call upon



all nations to address human rights conditions. It is also a time to celebrate laws and policies that serve to protect human rights and to hold violators accountable. Many such laws and policies to protect women, minorities, youth, the poor, disabled persons, indigenous people etc. have been put in place and have changed the lives of literally millions of people. So much more needs to be done. Torture, politically motivated arrests or disappearances, racial discrimination, and many other human rights violations continue to threaten lives and spread fear and distrust, to intimidate and silence. This year's theme is: Equality-Reducing inequalities, advancing human rights. All human beings have an innate dignity that deserves to be respected. Equality and nondiscrimination are at the heart of human rights.

We pray for all our brothers and sisters, who live in fear due to inequality, discrimination and intimidation. Protect them as they struggle to preserve their human dignity. Holy God, help us to stand in solidarity with the oppressed and to actively work to protect human rights for all, but particularly for those who are marginalized and in danger. Help us to create a world of peace and harmony.

December 18—International Migrants Day



wrenching. The global community is being called upon to welcome and assist newcomers in ways large and small to make their transition as hope filled as possible. This day reminds us to treat each person as we would want to be treated if we were in their situation.

God, we pray for migrants throughout the world. Grant them safe passage as they seek refuge and hope. Inspire us to reach out in support and love. Open our eyes, that we may see each person as our brother or sister. Open our ears to hear the stories of those displaced from their homes. Open our hearts to respond with compassion and understanding. Open our hands in generosity and kindness. Most of all, open our hearts in loving response.

December 20—International Human Solidarity Day

INTERNATIONAL
HUMAN
SOLIDARITY
DAY
20 December



Since 2005, International Human Solidarity Day is a day dedicated to celebrating global human solidarity that is centered on people & planet, underpinned by human rights, and supported through global partnerships. This is a day to celebrate each other as citizens of the world. We recognize that we are all brothers and sisters, living as members of one human family. We are not free until all are free. We are not safe until all are safe. We know that we cannot face the crisis of climate change in isolation, but that all of us must act together. We cannot face the COVID-19 pandemic alone but must act as one. Closing national borders will not protect us but reaching across borders and joining hands in action and solidarity can change the world!

God, we ask that you bless all your people throughout the world in their desire for justice, peace, freedom, and protection of the environment. Inspire us to reach out and act in solidarity for the common good of all. Open us as together we share our dreams for the future with one another. Let our diversity expand our understanding and solidarity empower our action, as we create a better world!

December 25
Merry Christmas!

*May the Infant of Bethlehem, whose birth we celebrate today,
Bless us all with peace, joy, love and compassion.*