

110 th World Day of Migrants and Refugees

29th September 2024

Activities for Children



World Day of
Migrants and
Refugees
29-IX-2024



"God walks with His People"

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Introduction

Today, we gather to celebrate a very special occasion: World Day of Migrants and Refugees. This day is dedicated to honouring and supporting those brave individuals who have left their homes in search of safety, better opportunities, or a new beginning in unfamiliar places. We call these courageous people migrants and refugees. Migrants are like explorers. They leave behind their familiar homes in pursuit of new lands where they hope to find good jobs, better schools, or a peaceful environment. Refugees are people who have been forced to leave their homes due to frightening circumstances like wars, natural disasters, or conflicts between different groups. Often, they must flee quickly, carrying only what they can.

The theme for today is “God walks with His people.” This means that wherever we go and whatever challenges we face, God is always with us, guiding and giving us strength. Just like how the people of Israel were guided and protected by a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night (Exodus 13: 20-22) in the Bible, God watches over all of us. Consider Joseph, Mary, and Baby Jesus. When they were in danger, an angel directed Joseph to take them to Egypt where they would be safe (Matthew 2:13-23). This story reminds us that God deeply cares for each of us, especially in times of fear or difficulty.



Now let's dive into an activity which will encourage children to express themselves creatively and empathize with each other's feelings in a playful way.

Participants: Mix group of Children

Age: 7 to 13 years

Duration: 15 min

Group size - 40 children

Requirement: Colourful Paper cutting, (Red-8, Green-8, Blue-8, White-8,Yellow-8) and Space for activity.

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Procedure of the Activity

- Make some good space in the room/hall for the children to have the activity
- Ask the children to form the circle (Volunteers can help the children to form a circle)
- The Animator narrates the activity to the children.



Way towards activity (Instructions)

Colourful Pick-Up: Spread out the colourful paper cuttings (forty paper cuttings with 5 colours) in a central area. Tell the children to pick one paper each, without revealing why just yet. Once everyone has one, explain that they need to form groups according to the colour of their paper. Watch the excitement as they gather into five colourful teams.

Introduction Round: In each group, have the children introduce themselves by saying their names and something they like (e.g., favourite animal, hobby).

Questions for Reflection

Now, it's time to dive into some questions to get to know each other better and explore their feelings about their chosen colours.

Question 1: "How did you feel when you picked up your paper cutting?"

Answers could be, Disturbed, Excited, Joyful, Sad, Confused, etc.

Question 2: "Why did you choose this particular colour?"

Answers could be, I liked it, my friend took it, I had no choice (explore exciting answers)

Question 3: "How do you feel now that you're in this colour team?"

Answers could be, Not Happy, Happy, Sad, Confused, Lonely, Without friends.



Goal of the Activity:

To make the children understand the concept of Migration by getting into colour teams of members not of their choice and learn about each other and share their lives. The main objective of this activity is to help the children get to know each other and build bonds, fostering a sense of belonging, inclusion and community. This also gives them the possibilities to explore their own confidence in the guiding presence of the Lord in the phase of unfamiliarity and uncertainty.





Reflection:

Just like the Israelites faced uncertainty and fear when leaving Egypt for the promised land, many refugees today experience similar feelings when they must leave their homes due to war and conflict. The Israelites were guided by Moses and assured by God's presence, even when they doubted and felt afraid. In our activity of forming colour teams, you experienced a small part of this uncertainty and fear. But, like Moses guiding the

Israelites, your volunteers and animators helped you through this process, turning initial fears into a sense of belonging and friendship.

Now, think of the wars, like those between Russia and Ukraine, Syria, and Palestine, as well as ethnic and communal conflicts, that create many refugees. The most affected by this violence are children. They are often orphaned, their education is halted, and they face poverty.



Climate change contributes significantly to migration patterns. Erratic rainfall and rising temperatures compel people to leave rural areas for urban centres, disrupting children's education, health, and overall childhood experiences.

Many good willed organizations and individuals offer helping hands and assure them the presence of God. This day helps us remember the less fortunate in the context of migration and refugees and encourages us to be more considerate towards them and pray for their protection and safety.



In our activity, at first, it was challenging, and you may have felt scared or unsure about being with new people. But as you shared your stories and got to know each other, those feelings of fear and uncertainty began to disappear. You started to feel more comfortable and included, realizing that making new friends and learning about each other can be a wonderful experience.

This activity helped you understand that, just like the Israelites, refugees face many challenges and uncertainties. They leave behind familiar places and people, not knowing what their future holds. However, with support and understanding from others, they can find a sense of belonging and build new communities. Your experience in the colour teams showed that even in the face of unfamiliarity, we can find friendship and support, much like the Israelites found their way with God's guidance.



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As you continue to learn and grow, remember the lessons from this activity. Embrace new experiences and people with an open heart, and be a source of support for those who may feel uncertain or scared. Just as Moses reassured the Israelites, and your volunteers and animators helped you, you can be a guiding presence for others, helping them feel included and valued in their new environments.

