

November 20

WORLD CHILDREN'S DAY

WITH THE RIGHT TO BE CHILDREN

1. HISTORICAL RESIGN

<https://www.unicef.org/world-childrens-day>

World Children's Day is celebrated on November 20, on this date in 1959 the United Nations General Assembly approved the "Declaration of the Rights of the Child"; however, this declaration was not sufficient to protect the rights of children as it was not legally binding. After ten years of negotiations with governments around the world, religious leaders, NGOs, and other institutions, it was possible to agree on the final text of the "**Convention on the Rights of the Child**", on November 20, 1989, its compliance is mandatory for all countries that have signed it.

The Convention on the Rights of the Child has 3 protocols that complement it:

- The protocol on the sale of children and child prostitution.
- The protocol on the participation of children in armed conflict.
- The protocol on a communications procedure for filing complaints with the Committee on the Rights of the Child.

What is celebrated?

The United Nations celebrates this International Children's Day in honor of the approval of the Declaration of the Rights of the Child in 1959 and the Convention on the Rights of the Child in 1989, the most ratified international treaty in history. The UN General Assembly recommended in 1954 to set aside **a day to foster brotherhood among the boys and girls of the world**, and promote their well-being with social and cultural activities.

The objective of World Children's Day:

- > **Remind** citizens that children are the most vulnerable group and, therefore, they are the ones who suffer the most from crises and problems in the world.
- > **Remind** that all children have the right to health, education and protection, regardless of the place of the world they were born.
- > **Make** a global call (a conscience) on necessity of the smallest.
- > **Recognize** the management and work of the people who work every day so that children have a better future.

2. CONTEXT: Current major problems

Migrations

- There are millions of children in transit. Some had to leave their homes due to conflict, poverty or climate change; others left in the hope of finding a better and safer life. Many of them face danger, arrest, hardship and discrimination on the way, at their destination, or when they return. The suffering and exclusion of migrant and displaced children is not only unacceptable, it is also preventable. By the end of 2018, 31 million children had been displaced worldwide.
- The United States is the country in the world with the most migrant children in detention centers: more than 103,000 according to a UN report, which emphasizes the situation of minors separated from their parents when crossing the border by decision of the Trump administration.
- Refugee children are 5 times more likely to be out of school than other children are.
- The spread of COVID-19 poses another threat to uprooted children. Even when there is no pandemic, migrant, refugee and internally displaced children routinely face numerous threats to their safety and well-being. However, the crowded conditions many of them live in - with limited access to safe water, sanitation and hygiene - make them especially vulnerable to the immediate and secondary effects of infectious diseases such as COVID-19.

Labor exploitation

- 151.6 million boys and girls between the ages of 5 and 17 in the world (approximately 1 in 10) are exploited at work, forced into the world of work due to poverty.

[UNICEF report on child labor](#)

Illiteracy and Unschooling

- 258 million children will not be in school in 2030;

[UNICEF report on child education](#)

Sexual abuse and Violence

- Around 120 million girls under the age of 20 worldwide (about 1 in 10) have experienced forcible sex or other forced sexual acts, according to the UNICEF report "Hidden in Full Light".
- According to this same report, a fifth of homicide victims worldwide are children and adolescents under 20 years of age and slightly more than 1 in 3 students between 13 and 15 years of age worldwide suffer acts of harassment school.

[UNICEF report on Violence Against Children](#)

Extreme poverty

- Almost 385 million children live in extreme poverty, according to a joint study by UNICEF and the World Bank Group.

[UNICEF report on child extreme poverty](#)

3. TIME FOR REFLECTION: Message from Pope Francis



1. Every marginalized child, every abused child, every abandoned child, every child without school, without medical attention is a cry that is raised to God.
2. In each one of them there is Christ, who came to our world as a helpless child, it is Christ, who is looking at us in every one of these children.
3. Let us pray that all countries decide to take the necessary measures to make the future of children a priority, especially the future of children who are suffering today.

4. THE LOOK OF CLARET: Claret and the promotion of Children

Claret with his deep human sense generated responses to the needs of his time, his creativity and his ingenuity supplied the grace of God in his evangelizing journey. Since he was a child he showed sensitivity and great docility to the Holy Spirit who filled and moved his apostolic mission. The reason for this is the promotion of farms in Cuba to welcome children and young people to form their faith and their capacities as an alternative of life, different from that offered in the streets. We verify his actions in these paragraphs of his autobiography:

- 564.** *My plan in starting this ranch was to gather together poor boys and girls, many of whom were wandering the streets begging. At the ranch they were fed, clothed, and taught their religion, as well as reading, writing, and whatever art or trade they wanted to learn. One hour-and only one hour –a day they had to work on the ranch. This provided enough food to make the ranch self-supporting. Whatever else they might earn had to be put in a savings account. In this way, when they left the ranch they had had some formal education, learned a trade, and earned some money for their efforts.*
- 565.** *The building itself was divided into two major sections, a boys' wing and a girls' wing, with a chapel between them. At church services the boys sat in the body of the chapel, while the girls had their own section in the upper galleries that connected with their wing, so that both sections were completely separated. The building had two stories; workshops and classrooms were on the first floor, dormitories on the second...*

5. . PRAYER

Before starting...

At the beginning and before the prayer, we watch these two videos:

- **Children's rights** _ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HCYLdtug8sk>
- **Migrant children in the US** _ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_W6S04IzCiw



Motivation

Boys and girls are the hope and represent the future of the nations in the world.

Song: "De Lluvia y de Sol (Of Rain and Sun)" - Álvaro Fraile

<https://youtu.be/OOT2lv5DzhY>

*The joys will come
surrounded by disasters.
New conquests
and some solitudes will come.
Each challenge will bring its fears...
new abysses.*

*Good news will come.
You will see how something gets in the way.
Some lights will come
casting new shadows
Each merit will bring vertigos...
new destinations.*

*and there we will be stronger
letting ourselves go
and there we will be stronger
letting ourselves get wet
we will have to keep
joy in tiredness
and patience in breakdown...*

**...We are of rain,
we are of sun...**

*New smells will come
along with bad tastes
New songs, tides,
temptations will come
New reliefs will bring
the debris of a dream.*

*Tranquility will come
running some risks
we will assume keys
that open with a price
Each fruit will bring trouble...
new dangers.*

*And there we will be stronger
letting ourselves rain
and there we will be stronger
letting ourselves fall.
Know how to recognize
colours in puddles
and humor like a miracle...*

**...we are of rain, we are of sun...
...we paint the sky a different colour...**

Invitation

We recite the psalm, feeling that we are the voice of the voiceless ... boys and girls who suffer from every condition, recognizing that God cares, giving protection to each one. We are reading each stanza spontaneously:

Psalm 91: *"Psalm of David _ God our protection"*

*He who dwells under the protection
of the Most High and spends the night
in the shadow of the Almighty, say to the Lord:
You are my refuge and my fortress,
my God in whom I trust*

*Only He will free you from the net
and defend you from the fatal plague;
he will cover you with his feathers,
and under his wings you will take refuge,
his arm will be a shield and breastplate.*

*You will not fear the terror of the night,
nor the arrow that flies by day,
neither the plague that creeps in the darkness,
nor the plague that stalks at noon.*

*A thousand will fall to your left,
ten thousand to your right,
they will not reach you.*

*Just open your eyes
to see the wages of the wicked
because you have made the Lord your refuge,
the Most High your dwelling place.*

*Misfortune will not overtake you,
nor will the plague approach your tent,
because he will order his angels to keep you in
your ways. They will carry you on their palms,
so that your foot does not trip on the stone.*

*You will walk among lions and vipers,
trample cubs and dragons.
Because he loves me, I will free him,
I will protect him because he recognizes me.*

*He will call me and I will answer him,
I will be with him in anguish, I will defend and
honor it. I will satisfy him with long life
and I will show him my salvation.*

Gospel reading

Let us allow ourselves to be touched by the words and gestures of Jesus (Mt 19: 14)

"Then some children brought him to put his hands on them and say a prayer. The disciples rebuked them. But Jesus said:

***—Leave the children and do not prevent them from approaching me,
because the kingdom of heaven belongs to those who are like them.***

Then he put his hands on them and left."

GOD'S WORD



Final prayer (from Pope Francis)

Father, you entrusted to St. Joseph the most valuable that you had, baby Jesus and his mother, to protect them from dangers and threats of the wicked.

Grant us, also to experience his protection and help. He who suffered the suffering of those who have fled because of the hatred of the powerful, help them to bring comfort and protection to all brothers and sisters who, due to wars, poverty and other necessities, had to abandon their homes and their countries and go as refugees to more secure places.

Help them, by his intercession, to have the strength to go on, the consolation in the sadness, the value in the test. Give those who welcome them a little of the tenderness of this just and wise father, who loved Jesus as a true son and sustained Mary along the way.

He, who earned the bread with the work of his hands to provide for the need of those whose life has taken everything from them and give them the dignity of work and serenity of a home.

I ask this to Jesus Christ, your son whom St. Joseph protected by fleeing to Egypt and by the intercession of the Virgin Mary whom he loved as a faithful husband according to your will.

Amén

6. COMMITMENT



- **Personal:** With our brothers and sisters the poorest, the most defenseless and vulnerable in their rights; learn to defend how God looks at his children with love, tenderness and compassion.
- **Community:** Specify our commitment in favor of children in each of the mission posts where we live.

How will I promote in my community the reality in which these children, the smallest, live, in order to have a more active role in their protection?