Keeping Advent
Saturday, December 11, 2021

Deuteronomy 26:10,11

"So now I bring the first of the fruit of the ground that you, O Lord, have given me." You shall set it down before the Lord your God and bow down before the Lord your God. Then you, together with the Levites and the aliens who reside among you, shall celebrate with all the bounty that the Lord your God has given to you and to your house.

Remember refugees.

Today we are invited to remember refugees, and to share our bounty with them. We are mistaken if we think this is only a problem of our own day. To remember refugees, and to respond to them, is a call from both the words of scripture we read today, and from Jesus himself.

I am reminded of a poem by a Baptist pastor from central New York, the Rev. Ted Conklin. For 48 consecutive years, he composed poems for the family's Christmas card.

For 1949, in the aftermath of World War II, he wrote of the refugees who were still struggling to find their way to new homes after the devastation of the war. They were often referred to as displaced persons, or "D.P.s" in the language of the day. Whether we speak of a D.P., a refugee, or a sibling in Christ, the words of his poem still resonate today:

Displaced Person

He was a D.P. too! The desert air
Must have been chill that night on Mary's face,
Waiting within the Sphinx's stone embrace
For the red dawn, shielding her baby fair.
I wonder what Egyptian had a care
When Joseph came to seek; and by whose grace
They first were fed and sheltered; in what place
Those aliens found, at length, a dwelling there?

And afterward – I wonder if He told
His friends to feed and clothe 'the least of these
His brothers', minding that Egyptian's part
In serving strangers? But how clear one sees
He's still a 'displaced person' till He hold
His proper dwelling – our surrendered hearts!

Ted Conklin

This verse was written in remembrance of the painting "Rest on the Flight Into Egypt" by Merson and in recognition of the need this present year, (1949).

Find the Calendar Here