

Human Rights Day ~ December 10, 2020 Day of Prayer

"Where, after all, do universal human rights begin? In small places, close to home -- so close and so small that they cannot be seen on any maps of the world. [...] Unless these rights have meaning there, they have little meaning anywhere. Without concerted citizen action to uphold them close to home, we shall look in vain for progress in the larger world."

Eleanor Roosevelt

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Human Rights Day is observed every year on 10 December — the day the United Nations General Assembly adopted, in 1948, the [Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#) (UDHR). The UDHR is a milestone document that proclaims the inalienable rights which everyone is entitled to as a human being - regardless of race, color, religion, sex, language, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status. Available in more than [500 languages](#), it is the most translated document in the world.

2020 Theme: Recover Better - Stand Up for Human Rights

This year's Human Rights Day theme relates to the COVID-19 pandemic and focuses on the need to build back better by ensuring Human Rights are central to recovery efforts. We will reach our common global goals only if we are able to create equal opportunities for all, address the failures exposed and exploited by COVID-19, and apply human rights standards to tackle entrenched, systematic, and intergenerational inequalities, exclusion and discrimination.



ALL HUMAN BEINGS
ARE BORN FREE AND EQUAL
IN DIGNITY AND RIGHTS.

10 December is an opportunity to reaffirm the importance of human rights in rebuilding the world we want, the need for global solidarity as well as our interconnectedness and shared humanity.

Under UN Human Rights' generic call to action "Stand Up for Human rights," we aim to engage the general public, our partners and the UN family to bolster transformative action and showcase practical and inspirational examples that can contribute to recovering better and fostering more resilient and just societies.

Human Rights and the Sustainable Development Goals

Human rights are at the heart of the [Sustainable Development Goals](#) (SDGs), as in the absence of human dignity we cannot hope to drive sustainable development. Human Rights are driven by progress on all SDGs, and the SDGs are driven by advancements on human rights. Find out how [UN agencies strive to put human rights at the centre of their work](#).



Human Rights must be at the center of the post COVID-19 world.

The COVID-19 crisis has been fueled by deepening poverty, rising inequalities, structural and entrenched discrimination, and other gaps in human rights protection. Only measures to close these gaps and advance human rights can ensure we fully recover and build back a world that is better, more resilient, just and sustainable.

End discrimination of any kind: Structural discrimination and racism have fuelled the COVID-19 crisis. Equality and non-discrimination are core requirements for a post COVID world.

Address inequalities: To recover from the crisis, we must also address the inequality pandemic. For that, we need to promote and protect economic, social, and cultural rights. We need a new social contract for a new era.

Encourage participation and solidarity: We are all in this together. From individuals to governments, from civil society and grass-roots communities to the private sector, everyone has a role in building a post COVID world that is better for present and future generations. We need to ensure the voices of the most affected and vulnerable inform the recovery efforts.

Promote sustainable development: We need sustainable development for people and planet. Human rights, the 2030 Agenda and the Paris Agreement are the cornerstone of a recovery that leaves no one behind.



PRAYER BY POPE FRANCIS

Lord, Father of our human family, you created all human beings equal in dignity: pour forth into our hearts a fraternal spirit and inspire in us a dream of renewed encounter, dialogue, justice and peace. Move us to create healthier societies and a more dignified world, a world without hunger, poverty, violence and war.

Pause

May our hearts be open to all the peoples and nations of the earth. May we recognize the goodness and beauty that you have sown in each of us, and thus forge bonds of unity, common projects, and shared dreams.

Pause

O God, Trinity of love, from the profound communion of your divine life, pour out upon us a torrent of fraternal love. Grant us the love reflected in the actions of Jesus, in his family of Nazareth, and in the early Christian community.

Pause

Grant that we Christians may live the Gospel, discovering Christ in each human being, recognizing him crucified in the sufferings of the abandoned and forgotten of our world, and risen in each brother or sister who makes a new start.

Pause

Come, Holy Spirit, show us your beauty, reflected in all the peoples of the earth, so that we may discover anew that all are important and all are necessary, different faces of the one humanity that God so loves. Amen.

Reflect on our individual role in bringing about a world that is better, more resilient, just and sustainable.

Close with the Our Father.



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