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"The Son of Man has nowhere to rest his head." (Luke 9:59).

[Job 9:1-12, 14-16](#); [Luke 9:57-62](#)

One of the most common and satisfying themes in all of literature is the homecoming. A character makes a long journey, by choice or by circumstance, and endures many hardships on their sojourn. That character longs for, and we long for with them, the moment they return home.

Life is more fact than fiction, and the term "homelessness" has entered our vocabulary as a permanent category of anonymous people we see on our streets daily or realize are hidden in plain sight in our modern cities. An estimated 11 million undocumented immigrants also live in the shadows in the United States, hoping for permanent status.

The UN reports that over 89 million refugees and displaced persons live in camps or roam the earth seeking entry into any country that will have them. Millions of Ukrainian refugees have been absorbed by surrounding countries. Millions of desperate migrants seek a welcome at the southern border of the United States, displaced by poverty and gang violence in their own countries. They seek a chance to restart their lives, hold jobs, reunite their families and have a safe place they can call home.

In today's Gospel, Jesus takes his place as a displaced person with all the other people who do not belong but cannot disappear. Jesus bears with history's outcasts

the same image of God that is everyone's birthright identity, entitling them to the same dignity and basic necessities every human being deserves.

As a wandering preacher, Jesus also embraced and reminded people that none of us have a permanent home in this world, but that our essential solitude is the natural sign that we ultimately belong to God, who alone can satisfy our restless hearts. At the same time, we are meant for community, so part of our sojourn is to comfort and welcome each other and to care for the most vulnerable. Companionship is the prize of life, and those who give it also receive it.

Someone once suggested that if each of us found one other person to share our life with, everyone on earth would be welcome somewhere, loved and provided for. Friendship is the remedy for homelessness, and each of us are therefore capable of saving the world in our own small way. Who knows if the stranger you welcome might be God?

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