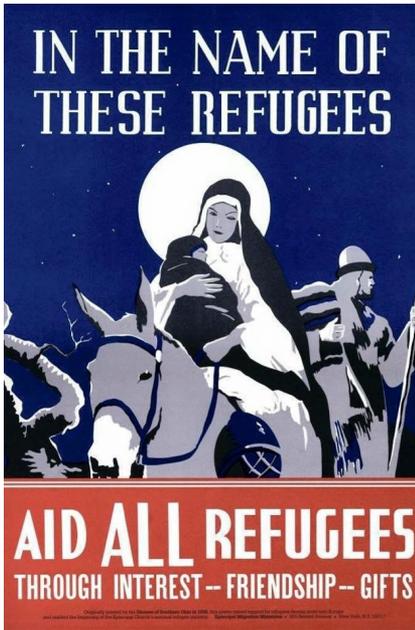


DISCERNING OUR CALL TO LOVE OUR NEIGHBOR



What is the average length of stay for families in a refugee camp?

17 to 23 days

17 to 23 months

17 to 23 years

Answer on page 2

God of protection, whose Son fled violence from his own home with Joseph and Mary and sought refuge in a foreign land, hear the cries of all who suffer because of hatred, war, violence, greed, and famine. Help us to peacefully mend our divisions, that all you have created in this world may be whole. *Amen*



We are committed to working with the people of Syria and all others who are finding it necessary to flee oppressive regimes in their homelands, that God will provide them with the help and solace they need as they seek out places of safety, peace, and welcome.

We seek the grace of God as the people of Christ Church while we discern our role in helping to provide assistance, shelter, and welcome to all refugee people, especially those fleeing the country of Syria.



“We had to do something...We had to do something. Why do people have to walk 3000 km? Is this the Europe we aspire to be?”

Swedish physician assisting the humanitarian effort

There are 4 million registered refugees

50.3% are women

51.3% are children under age 17

38.5% are children under age 12

UN High Commission for Refugees

The average length of stay in a refugee camp is 17 to 23 years.

Half of Syria's population have fled their homes and are living in camps with little more than the clothes on their backs. The crisis in Syria affects more than 12 million people...more than those affected by Hurricane Katrina, the Haiti earthquake and the Indian Ocean tsunami combined.

Worldvision.org

Can you visualize yourself leaving your once safe existence in Exeter and starting off on foot to get to the Canadian border on the back roads of NH or via Route 16? The weather is getting colder. You have your young children walking with you. What will you bring with you? You do not know if you will ever come home again, and if you do, will your house have been bombed or looted?

Have you ever hosted an exchange student? Where was he or she from? Where is Syria in relation to that country?

Daily threats of violence and limited economic opportunities are driving millions to leave Syria. Also there is aggressive conscription and recruitment factoring into the huge drain of young men leaving. They are fleeing recruitment by ISIS as well as the government and any number of insurgent groups.

Human Rights Watch

What if your son, your nephew, your friend's son was facing these threats? Can you speak to the feelings, perhaps fear, this might stir up in you? How would you deal with this in addition to all of the other insecurities you would be facing everyday?

ADVENT PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AT CHRIST CHURCH

For the people of Syria and all others who find it necessary to flee oppressive regimes and violence in their homelands, we pray that God will provide them with sustenance and solace as they seek new homes of safety, peace, and welcome.

Lord have mercy

For the people of Christ Church, we pray for discernment of our call to provide compassionate assistance, shelter, and welcome to our refugee brothers and sisters, especially those fleeing the country of Syria. We pray for the Holy Spirit to light the way.

Lord have mercy



Referencing Luke 16: 19-31 Mary Gordon says "The rich man's sin is not only a failure to share his wealth, but equally important, a failure of attention. *Reading Jesus: A Writer's Encounter with the Gospels.* (2009)

Updates on opportunities to support refugees can be found at Christchurchexeter.org, on the Christ Church Exeter facebook page, or receive emails by filling out the survey form found in the narthex.