

Stewardship as a Way of Life

Resources for Global Stewardship

With the beginning of Advent and a new liturgical year, we have a chance to reflect on our own lives, and on the journey and struggles of refugees around the world and on our own border with Mexico. Use these resources for yourself, your family, and small groups as a guide for prayer, reflection, and action.

Ways to use these resources:

1. Use the “Prayer for Refugees” found on the next page with your Basilica groups or personally.
2. Read a book or watch a film about the life of refugees.
3. Choose one suggested scripture passage to use in your Basilica groups for prayer, reflection, discussion.
4. Attend an event or activity to learn more about refugees. Explore how our Catholic faith calls us to respond in our thoughts, words, and actions.
5. Check out the resources on pages 11-12 to help increase your understanding of Global Stewardship and the issues faced by refugees. Decide on a plan of action to learn more.
6. Use the prayer intentions and closing prayer on page 15 in your Basilica groups or personally.

Prayer Intentions

(Response is Lord, Hear our Prayer)

For those fleeing violence and oppression.

We pray to the Lord.

For those who are homeless and seeking safe shelter and food for their families.

We pray to the Lord.

For children separated from their families by war and violence—for their safe keeping, and for the help and support by strangers in their path.

We pray to the Lord.

For all refugees, especially those who make new homes in Minnesota, for welcome and support from their new communities.

We pray to the Lord.

For peace in the world.

We pray to the Lord.

CLOSING PRAYER

Lord God, no one is a stranger to you and no one is ever far from your loving care.

In your kindness, watch over refugees and victims of war, those separated from their loved ones, young people who are lost, and those who have left home or who have run away from home.

Bring them back safely to the place where they long to be and help us always to show your kindness to strangers and to all in need.

Grant this through Christ our Lord.

Reflection and Discussion

Identify one fact that you learned about refugees. What was your reaction? What action might you take as a result of this discovered knowledge?

Reflect on what challenges you might face if you moved to another country. What steps would you take to get acclimated? What kind of support would you want and need?

Discuss ways you could help the refugees. What volunteer actions could you take to help them out?

Discuss times you have felt unwelcome in your community. How did you overcome it? Consider that refugees typically encounter an unwelcoming environment.

A Prayer for Refugees

*Almighty and merciful God,
whose Son became a refugee
and had no place to call his own;*

*look with mercy on those who today
are fleeing from danger, homeless and
hungry.*

*Bless those who work to bring them relief;
inspire generosity and compassion in all
our hearts;*

*and guide the nations of the world
towards that day when all will rejoice in
your Kingdom of justice and of peace;*

Through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen

Stewardship as a Way of Life *Global Stewardship*

What is “Global Stewardship”? – Reaching out to people around the world, promoting peace and social justice through education, medicine, food, housing, clean water, financial support and political action.

Why is *Global Stewardship* important to us as Catholics? Catholic social teaching states that all human beings are members of the ‘Body of Christ,’ created in the image and likeness of God (GN 1:26-27) and have an inherent value, worth and distinction. As Christians, we are obligated to help those whose dignity has been diminished, denied or discarded due to disease, poverty or war.

Who Are Our Neighbors?

The challenges refugees face are not just issues of international importance. As a nation, the US must make decisions about how to treat people crossing into our country from Mexico. Today thousands of women and children seeking asylum are being held in detention on the border. Others deemed illegal are being prosecuted and held in “for-profit” prisons, separated from their families.

Minnesota is home to many refugees from all over the world. Understanding the hardship faced by refugees is immensely important, and can strengthen the bonds within our Twin Cities community.

“While every refugee's story is different and their anguish personal, they all share a common thread of uncommon courage: the courage not only to survive, but to persevere and rebuild their shattered lives.”

António Guterres, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)

Suggested Scripture Readings

Micah 6:8 – “And what does the Lord require of you but to do justly, and to love kindness and mercy, and to humble yourself and walk humbly with your God?”

Leviticus 19:33-34 and 24:22 – “When the alien resides with you in your land, you shall not oppress the alien. The alien who resides with you shall be to you as the citizen among you; you shall love the alien as yourself, for you were aliens in the land of Egypt: I am the Lord your God.”

Mark 12:30-31 – “Which commandment is the first of all? . . . you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength. The second is this, ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no commandment greater than these.”

Hebrews 13:1-2 – “...show hospitality to strangers, for by doing that some have entertained angels...”

Malachi 3:5 – “The messenger will bear witness against those who thrust aside the alien.”

Matthew 25 :35-40 – “For I was hungry, and you gave me something to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave me drink; I was a stranger, and you invited me in; naked, and you clothed me; I was in prison, and you came to me” ... “Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did it to one of these brothers of mine, even the least of them, you did it to me.”

Groups that Make a Difference ... continued

International Institute of MN, www.iimn.org English as a Second Language, self-sufficiency classes (parenting, nutrition) for African refugee women. Day Care, transportation provided.

Lutheran Social Services, www.lssmn.org Offer hope and a helping hand to refugees as they start new lives in MN. Assist with housing, health insurance, enrolling in English as a second language courses.

Minnesota Council of Churches / Refugee Services, www.mnchurches.org/refugeeservices Involves church volunteers to help new refugees feel at home in MN. Provides donated welcome kits with warm clothes, necessities, help setting up new households.

Neighborhood House, www.neighb.org Adult education, English language learner, GED, college access, school readiness, arts access, health access, cultural competency, Operates a food shelf. Refugee resettlement support for Latino, Hmong, Karen, Somali, East African, and others.

Refugee, Immigrant, and Migrant Services of Southern MN Regional Legal Services, www.smrls.org High quality legal services to low income immigrants and refugees in the East metro and Southern MN.

Sisters of Loretto, www.lorettocommunity.org Work for justice, act for peace. Assist detainees, reunite families, build awareness of mistreatment, ethics with treatment by government on the US / Mexico border.

Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet, www.csjcarondelet.org Peru Missions. Teach trade skills to students in poverty, library and legal services, sacramental preparation, work with prisoners and also those addicted to drugs, alcohol and more.

United Nations High Commissioner on Refugees, www.unhcr.org Worldwide field operation from recruitment of new staff and ensuring their security in dangerous situations to procurement of medical supplies and bulk food shipments to aircraft charters.

United Nations High Commissioner on Refugees, www.unhcr.org Worldwide field operation. Ensures security for staff in dangerous situations, obtains medical supplies, bulk food shipments, aircraft charters.

World Relief Minnesota, www.worldreliefmn.org/ Works with churches to welcome and support new refugees with housing, furniture, food, and more.

Did You Know?

Refugees:

- Are legally defined as persons outside his or her country of nationality and unable to return due to a well-founded fear of persecution because of his or her race, religion, nationality, political opinion, or membership in a particular social group.
- Since 1975, the US has **welcomed** over 3 million refugees from all over the world. In Minnesota, there are currently 95,000 refugees.
- Minnesota has the largest Somali population in the US and the Twin Cities has the largest Hmong population outside of Laos.
- Annually, 25-30% of Minnesota immigrants are refugees vs. 8% nationally.
- 80% of refugees are women and children, and in 2012, 46% were under the age of 18.
- 895,000 individuals applied for asylum or refugee status to governments and UNHCR offices in 166 countries in 2011.



On Our Border

Facts about the U.S. border with Mexico

- **2771** Human remains recovered from 2000 to 2014 in the Arizona desert.
- **133** Official count of remains recovered this fiscal year. (Source: Derechos Humanos)
- **34,000** Detention beds; 62% of detainees in **for-profit** prisons.
- **8** Private prison corporations run by the Corrections Corporation of America, GEO Group (Source: Grassroots Leadership)
- **2,000** Central American mothers and children have been imprisoned in remote locations. (Source: Advocates for Human Rights, Minneapolis)
- **40,000** Central American children tried to cross into the U.S. in the year that ended on Sept. 30, 2015.
- **0** Children have been accepted through the Central American Minors program although 5,400 have applied to join their parents legally. (Source: NY Times)
- **218,265** Deportations in 2015; 41% have no criminal records. (Source: Immigration and Customs Enforcement)

Books

Immigration and American Democracy: Subverting the Rule of Law
by Robert Koulish

We Are All Suspects Now by Tram Nguyen

What is the What by Dave Eggers

Harvest of Empire—A History of Latinos in America by Juan Gonzalez

Enrique's Journey by Sonia Nazario - A Honduran mother journeys to the U.S. to provide for her starving family. Eleven years later her son makes a harrowing journey to join her.

Led by Faith: rising from the Ashes of the Rwandan Genocide and
Left to Tell: Discovering God Amidst the Rwandan Holocaust
by Imaculee Ilibagiza

Border Patrol Nation: Dispatches from the Front Lines of Homeland Security by Todd Miller

Groups that Make a Difference

AccessAbility, Inc., www.accessability.org Training, employment for individuals with disabilities and economic disadvantages.

American Refugee Committee, www.arcrelief.org Empowers refugees and displaced people internationally. Offers medical care, water and sanitation projects, skills training, and gender-based violence programs.

CAPI, www.capiusa.org Provides: MFIP, employment services, elder care programming, RES, RSS, social services referrals in Hindi, Spanish, Somali, Hmong, Nepali, English, Oromo, Karen, Burmese, Thai, and Kiswahili.

Greater Minneapolis Council of Churches (GMCC) Center for Families, www.mnchurches.org Helps African immigrant and refugee teens and families. Job training, housing, mental health, health screenings and referrals, and parent-child play groups for pre-schoolers

Hands Across the World. www.handsacrosstheworldmn.org
First contact for new immigrants and refugees who need language or living skills to thrive in our community. Child care provided.

Prayer and Reflection

Advent Vespers: 3:00pm Sundays, in the Basilica Choir Stalls with the Schola Cantorum

Morning Prayer: 9:15am Tuesdays and Thursdays in the St. Joseph Chapel

Vespers for Epiphany: 12:00pm, Sunday Jan. 3 in the Basilica Choir Stalls, with the Schola Cantorum and Cathedral Choristers.

Gregorian Vespers for the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord: 3:00pm, Sunday, Jan. 10 in the Basilica Choir Stalls with The Rose Ensemble.

Films

Which Way Home - Child migrants journey alone through Mexico, trying to reach the US. Meet Olga and Freddy, nine year old Hondurans, desperately trying to reach their parents in the US.; Jose, a ten year old El Salvadoran, abandoned by smugglers and alone in a Mexican detention center; and Kevin, a canny, streetwise fourteen-year old Honduran, whose mother hopes that he will reach the US and send money back to her.

El Norte - Mayan Indian peasants, tired of being thought of as "brazos fuertes" (manual laborers), organize efforts to improve their lives, but are discovered by the Guatemalan army. A teenage brother and sister barely escape massacre, and decide to flee to "El Norte" ("the North" or USA) to make a new life.

Rain in a Dry Land - Fleeing the horn of Africa, 2 Somali Bantu families spend 10 years in a Kenyan refugee camp and learn they will be resettled in the US. See the challenges and determination of their geographic and psychological journeys.

The Real Death Valley - Hundreds of migrants die each year attempting to get to America. Take a look into their journeys of hope as they cross the punishing terrain of Brooks County, Texas.

Journey of Refugees

To become a refugee, people must apply for consideration. Typically, they are recommended by refugee organizations or embassies. They must pass an interview process. If approved, they are referred by the US Department of Health and Human Services to a US non-profit located in the area where they will be resettled, helped to connect with health care, language instruction, and school registration.

Relocation Challenges

While many organizations help provide opportunities for jobs, the infrastructure is not strong for providing language assistance for people who need to learn English. Adequate health care is provided by the US for 8 months, but after that, it can be difficult for them to find support.



Refugees find homes in new countries, able to celebrate culture and religion. A Syrian family relocated to Egypt, shares an evening Ramadan meal together.

Refugees in Minnesota

Many refugees are assigned to relocate in Minnesota because of the strong governments and non-profit support. Agencies like Lutheran Social Services, Catholic Charities, and World Relief Minnesota provide help in many ways. They find housing, provide language assistance, and help refugees acclimate to the culture. Refugees who have moved to the area report on the living conditions, potentially leading to a further increase in certain populations such as Somali and Hmong people.



The United Nations High Commissioner of Refugees (UNHCR) Learning Circle program helps displaced children receive an education.

Education of children is another critical issue refugees face. Unless there is infrastructure in the relocation country to help children learn in their own language, it can be difficult for them to continue their education. Children must also learn about a very different school culture than they had experienced in their home country.

Events & Activities

Go to www.mary.org to see opportunities for prayer, reflection, and events.

Dec. 1—Jan. 12 “O Holy Night—Creches from Around the World”

Art Exhibit—nativity scenes from countries worldwide. Great for children of all ages. John XX111 Gallery, Basilica’s Lower Level.

Saturday / Sunday, Dec. 5 & 6 St. Vincent de Paul 2nd Collection

Funds raised will be dedicated to help refugee families. The Basilica will partner with Lutheran Social Services to sponsor a refugee family.

Sunday, Dec. 6 Celebrate the Vigil of Our Lady of Guadalupe

3:45 pm Aztec Dancers on the Basilica Plaza

4:30 pm Bi-lingual Eucharist with Mariachi Flor y Canto, The Banderas, and traditional Aztec Dancers. Fiesta follows.

Sundays, Dec. 13 & 20, 11am-12:30pm The Medicine of Mercy: Pope Francis in Context, presented by Dr. Massimo Faggioli

Wagner Room, Cowley Center

Explore Pope Francis’ focus on mercy. Dr. Faggioli is a U of St. Thomas professor and a writer for Italian and American news outlets.

Sunday, Jan. 3: 11am Lutheran Social Services / Refugee family Sponsorship

Sts. Ambrose / Terese Rooms, Basilica’s ground level.

LSS presents, learn about parish plans to sponsor a refugee family.

Saturday / Sunday Jan. 9 & 10 Mission Collection: Support the work of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet at their Peru Mission. Your gifts will help with housing, education, and food.

Sunday, Jan. 10 — Immigration & Refugee Sunday

After Mass Information Tables, Teresa of Calcutta, Basilica’s lower level

Sundays, Jan. 10, 24 & 31: 11am—12:30pm Hunger, Poverty, Charity and Justice: Putting Faith Into Action and Living Mercy by Dr. Jack Nelson-Pallmeyer

Wagner Room, Cowley Center
Explore causal factors of hunger and poverty and Pope Francis’ challenge to people of faith for action, political and economic change.

Sunday, Jan. 31: 1:00pm Mary Jean Friel—Life in the Shadows on the US Mexico Border

Basilica’s Lower Level
Learn about the difficult journeys of people who cross into the US seeking safety and freedom. Mary Jean Friel is a peace and justice activist, former assistant to Cesar Chavez.