



ORAT Office Changes

I wish to share with you an update regarding some staff changes at the Office for Refugees, Archdiocese of Toronto (ORAT).

We extend our deep gratitude to Dr. Martin Mark for his 15 years of faithful service, passionately advocating for refugees worldwide. Martin is leaving his leadership role in the Office for Refugees to pursue other opportunities outside of the Archdiocese of Toronto. He has built a strong team and has implemented systems that will position ORAT for continued success in the future.

There was an opportunity to publicly thank Dr. Mark after the World Day of Migrants and Refugees Mass that took place on Sunday, January 14 at the Good Shepherd Chaldean Cathedral in Thornhill.

Cardinal Collins has appointed Deacon Rudy Ovcjak to serve as Director of the Office for Refugees moving forward. He has managed the operations for the office since 2016, overseeing the day-to-day work of the department and its dedicated staff.

As we have marked the occasion of the 104th World Day of Migrants and Refugees, please join me in offering our prayers for the countless refugees throughout the world, for Dr. Martin, Deacon Rudy, and for the countless volunteers across our parish and community groups who are involved in the important work of addressing the plight of refugees.

In Christ,

Fr. Ivan Camilleri

Moderator of the Curia, Archdiocese of Toronto



Left to right: Rev. Dheeya Shammass, Bishop Bawai Soro and Bishop Wayne Kirkpatrick - Mass for World Day of Migrants and Refugees

104th World Day of Migrants and Refugees

The theme announced by His Holiness Pope Francis for the 2018 World Day of Migrants and Refugees is “Welcoming, Protecting, Promoting and Integrating Migrants and Refugees”.

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ORAT- Office for Refugees, Archdiocese of Toronto wishes you a Happy New Year. By the end of 2017, ORAT welcomed roughly 1,200 newcomers to Canada. We are very grateful to all parishes and other faith groups who sponsored refugees for a better live in Canada

104th World Day of Migrants and Refugees

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In his message, Pope Francis reminds us that “every stranger who knocks at our door is an opportunity for an encounter with Jesus Christ, who identifies with the welcomed and rejected strangers of every age.”

On Sunday, January 14, 2018 a special Mass commemorating the 104th World Day of Migrants and Refugees was celebrated at the Good Shepherd Chaldean Catholic Cathedral. Bishop Bawai Soro presided at the Mass with Bishop Wayne Kirkpatrick concelebrating and preaching the homily. The Mass was followed by a reception where a number of dignitaries spoke, including representatives from both the provincial and federal governments. They spoke of the importance of refugee sponsorship, and acknowledged the strong partnership that exists between government and private organizations in addressing the plight of refugees. In a particular way they acknowledged the important role played by the Catholic Church in refugee sponsorship. Bishop Soro opened the reception by warmly welcoming all those in attendance. He was then followed by Bishop Kirkpatrick who expressed his deep appreciation for the work of the ORAT (the Office for Refugees, Archdiocese of Toronto) and in a special way honoured the work of Dr. Martin Mark and his contribution to the work of refugee resettlement. He went on to announce the appointment of Deacon Rudy Ovcjak as Director of ORAT. The speakers also included two newcomers (Mr. Pervez and Ms. Audeesh) who shared their respective journey of resettlement and



integration.

The success of this event could not have been possible without the help and support of so many people. In a special way ORAT wishes to acknowledge and thank His Excellency, Bishop Soro for graciously opening the doors of this beautiful Cathedral to host this event, and to His Excellency, Bishop Kirkpatrick who brought us an excellent homily, which provided us with much food for thought. We also wish to thank our guest speakers, including Mr. Francesco Sorbara, Mr. Alex Nuttall, Mr. Patrick Brown who took time from their busy schedules to be speak at this event. A special thank you also to Fr. Niaz, Fr. Shammass and Mr. Rabea Allos for their hard work.

A success story from Our Lady of Sorrows Church

Our Lady of Sorrows Church is pleased to announce the arrival of their first newcomers, Edwar and Zaher, two young men from Syria. This is their story...

On November 1, 2017 our little band of volunteers went to the airport early in the evening to wait for our first arrival, Edwar, who flew to Toronto from Lebanon. We were all excited to meet our first newcomer with the same feelings as one would have waiting for a special friend or a relative. As we watched many passengers exit the arrival doors, much to our surprise it was Edwar who called out "hello Tim" to our RG leader! After lots of laughter and warm greetings, we all breathed a sigh of relief for the

safe arrival of Edwar who is a very tall and handsome young man with a beautiful smile.

One week later on November 7th we returned to the airport but this time with Edwar as well, to wait for the arrival of our second Newcomer, Zaher, who also came from Lebanon. Another handsome young man with a beautiful smile greeted us! We were all surprised by a group of young men who also came to the airport all the way from Scarborough to welcome Zaher. Edwar who has an uncle and cousin in Montreal and Zaher with his friends in Scarborough can only help to make these young men feel they have a connection already to their new country. At the Welcome Orientation,

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A success story from Our Lady of Sorrows Church

at ORAT, we noticed all the newcomers greeted each other as friends. One can only imagine the bonding that occurred while on that long flight to Toronto from Beirut.

Since the men's arrival, they have both been busy securing all their necessary government documents, opening their first bank accounts, finding a doctor, visiting an eye clinic, and even enjoying some private English tutoring until they are able to enrol in an ESL school. There have been many other activities to orient them to their new home in the City of Toronto. They continue to receive a warm welcome by many of the parishioners each Sunday.

One wonderful topic for conversation, which is also a favourite of most Canadians, is the weather. The first week Edwar was here, he experienced Toronto's first cold weather alert. Both Edwar and Zaher have already experienced strong winds, heavy rain, snow and even hail that we had yesterday just in time for the Santa Parade! A lot can happen in just 2 short weeks.

Today we received information about Faris, our third young man, who hopes to arrive to Toronto. Edwar

said, after receiving this e-mail, that their new family of friends will then be complete.

Please help us welcome Edwar and Zaher with your prayers for a successful integration, a good job, many new friends, and a happy life in their new country of Canada. We will continue our prayers for Faris' safe arrival very soon.



Names from right to left: Carolyn Murray, Vida Burton, Paulette Kuehn, Tim Murray, Edwar Tarzi and Pat McCarthy

ORAT Website

Please visit ORAT's website to find details about our mandate, goals, and policies, as well as to obtain immigration forms and info session materials.

<https://www.archtoronto.org/refugee/>

Join us on Facebook

Become a member of the ORAT Facebook Page to get the latest news and updates on resettlement issues. Please visit our [Facebook page](#)

Your input is welcome

If you would like to contribute an article to ORAT's newsletter, have any feedback on past articles, or have suggestions for future articles, please email us at: orateducator@archtoronto.org

Upcoming Sessions

Please note that you are required to register to book your seat for any session you wish to attend. You may register for the following sessions by clicking on the attached link:

<https://orat.eventbrite.ca/>

Pre-Arrival

Get ready and fully prepared to welcome your newcomer family, learn what legal documents newcomers must receive upon arrival at the airport, ask your questions and overcome any fears or concerns prior to their arrival.

Direct link: <https://prearrivaljan19.eventbrite.ca>

Date: Friday, 19 January 2018

Location: Our Lady of Lourdes Roman Catholic Church
520 Sherbourne St, | Toronto, Ontario M4X 1K8 |
Canada

Time: 6:00 PM to 7:30 PM

IRCC Processing Time

Has your case been submitted? Did you receive the application number (G number)? If so, register for this session to learn how to follow up on your application and avoid any unwanted delay.

Direct link: <https://irccjan24.eventbrite.ca>



Date: Wednesday, 24 January 2018

Location: ORAT office, 1220 Yonge Street | Suite 203
(2nd floor)

Time: from 6:00 PM to 8:00 PM

Job Readiness

This is where Resettlement Groups (RGs) and Cosponsors learn how to assist newcomers in finding jobs for a faster integration process. Also, they receive a list of great online job search websites.

Direct link: <https://jobfeb3.eventbrite.ca>

Date: Saturday, 3 February 2018

Location: ORAT office, 1220 Yonge Street | Suite 203
(2nd floor)

Time: 10:30 AM to 12:00 PM

Please note that all of the sessions that ORAT holds can be found directly on: <https://orat.eventbrite.ca/>



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