

# Refugee Resettlement Update



ORAT – Office for Refugees, Archdiocese of Toronto

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## Happy New Year!!!

On behalf of everyone at ORAT I wish to extend the greatest wishes to you and your loved ones. Thank you for continuing to keep up to date with ORAT by receiving the monthly newsletter. I hope that you had a great start to the year and continue to have a blessed one.

-Alexandra ORAT Resettlement Educator

## Pope Francis invites us to celebrate 2016 World Day of Migrants and Refugees

**What?** Special Eucharistic Celebration presided by **His Eminence Thomas Cardinal Collins** and clergy of Goan, Mangalorean, East Indian and Anglo Indian descent.

**When?** Sunday, January 17<sup>th</sup> 2016 at 2:00 p.m.

**Where?** St. Joseph's Catholic Church, 5440 Durie Rd. Mississauga

**And ...** You will be very welcome and there is a reception to follow. Please plan to celebrate this special occasion with us.

## Project Hope Campaign Tops \$3 million Goal

It is with a heart filled with gratitude and faith that we share the news that the Archdiocese of Toronto "Project Hope" reached \$3.1 million in just 100 days. A number of families have already arrived which happened before Christmas and more are expected in the coming weeks.

## Families and individuals in need of sponsoring groups

There are still families in need of sponsoring groups. If your parish wishes to initiate a sponsorship through ORAT please send an email to Luciano at: [oratoutreach@gmail.com](mailto:oratoutreach@gmail.com) to request a profile and information session.

## 2015 ORAT Highlights

**2306** Refugee resettlement submissions made - **323** Refugees arrived  
**64** Seminars conducted - **2178** Attendees - **53** Parishes

## An RG Member's perspective on Moral Sponsorship

Hundreds of readers, I am certain, have attended Session 1 information event and listened attentively to a staff member of ORAT outlining the steps a cosponsor must follow in order to apply for sponsorship through ORAT. (It is important that pastors and resettlement groups in our parishes understand what is meant by moral sponsorship).

Cosponsors wishing to initiate resettlement for their family member or friends must have the written consent of a pastor from a Catholic church in order to make application. It costs the parish nothing – just a few minutes of their time, to read and sign the application forms prepared by the cosponsor.

On three occasions in the last three months, I have had the privilege of sitting down in our parish meeting room and speaking with Muslims who arrived at our church door, seeking a signature from a parish. Two of these parties told me that they had visited 22 parishes – Catholic churches in this Archdiocese, and their request was refused.

**Why?** I am sure that the pastor or secretary did not know that meaning of ‘moral sponsorship’. It is an agreement for the parish community to be available as a moral resource to the refugees should they require support during their resettlement in Canada.

One of the families arrived just yesterday and the young man for whom I signed cannot put in words, his appreciation to ORAT for allowing his application to move forward. Please, take steps to ensure that your parish understands that this is a privilege to welcome these families into our country.

-Catherine VonZuben *Resettlement Group Member, Good Shepherd Parish*

### **Good Shepherd Parish, Thornhill Parish Resettlement Preparation Experience**

Good Shepherd Parish, Thornhill await the arrival of their family of six from Ghana, Africa. Four years ago before his retirement, Msg. John Weber set aside a generous amount of money to be utilized for the resettlement of a family seeking a home in Canada. After a number of disappointments, finally we have a family who have completed their medical checks and are all packed and waiting for their plane ticket. For two full years the co-chair has corresponded weekly if not daily with our family through email. She feels that this has given the family a great sense of being part of our parish family. Hearing the step by step progress we have made in preparing for their arrival must be an added incentive for high degree of anticipation in these final days of waiting. Below are answers to questions which you might have regarding our plan.

#### **What subcommittees does your Parish Refugee Cmt. have in place?**

We have 2 women as co-chairs along with chairs of the following: Finances, Housing, Education, Health, Community resources, Transportation, Language school, Spiritual, Job Opportunities.

#### **How did you find your home/apartment?**

We asked parishes in the area also involved with resettlement, about their accommodation and the availability of housing. The co-chair spoke to the congregation inquiring about available housing. A parishioner loaned us her mother's home in the area for a year.

#### **How did you prepare the home?**

A small group of people on the committee cleaned and painted the rooms that needed attention. The children's choir to raked 25 bags of leaves, the K of C assisted in delivering, preparing, and sorting out all of the items.

Cont'd

## Upcoming Sessions

### Info Session 1: Orientation (Civic Resettlement Program)

Date: Tue Jan 19  
Location: ORAT

### RG Seminar:

Date: Thu Jan 21  
Location: Archdiocese of Toronto Catholic Pastoral Centre

### Newcomer Meeting

Date: Fri Jan 22  
Location: ORAT

### Parish Information Session

Date: Tue Jan 26  
Location: Annunciation Parish

### Info Session 3: CIC Processing Time

Date: Fri Jan 29  
Location: ORAT

### Settlement Training Workshop

Date: Sat Jan 30  
Location: St. Mary's Parish (Barrie)

### **How did you stock the house?**

On 145 sheets of paper, we wrote an article required, donor name, phone #, and attached a reminder tab. After Mass one weekend, all were invited into the church hall, where these papers were laid out according to categories, to choose and sign the sheets for which they wished to be responsible, e.g. 6 toothbrushes and tooth paste, 1 backpack for ten year old, 1 set of flannelette sheets (6 similar papers), food items, crafts, puzzles, Canada books, etc. The person then lifted the reminder tab. The following weekend, ALL 145 itemized requests were brought to the hall, new and carefully wrapped, and additional donations. The cupboards/drawers and closets are full!

### **How did you furnish the whole house?**

People sent us pictures of furniture they wished to donate and we chose what we thought most suitable. Every room is fully furnished, including computers, printers and TVs.

### **What kinds of food have you stocked?**

All items were listed on the sign-up sheets and this included pasta, rice, coffee, tea, hot chocolate, marshmallows, sugar, spices, cereals, cookies, carbonated drinks (4 cases of Coke), cake and cookie mixes, soups, snacks, peanut butter, jam, etc.

### **What have we learned through this experience?**

Our parishes are full of generous people willing to help others. **They need only to be asked.**

-Catherine VonZuben

*Resettlement Group Member, Good Shepherd Parish*

**If you would like to share your parish experience, please send it to [orateducator@gmail.com](mailto:orateducator@gmail.com)**

Please follow these instructions to register for a session:

1. Go to [www.google.ca](http://www.google.ca)
2. In the search bar type in "Eventbrite ORAT"
3. Click on the link and you will find a list of ORAT's sessions on eventbrite, with all of the details of the session you are looking for.
4. Click on the session you want to attend
5. Click the green button that says register and fill out the questions asked
6. You will receive a confirmation email from eventbrite of your registration

**FREE SERVICES FOR NEWCOMERS!!**

We have an ever-growing number of newcomer settlement services in the Toronto community that are readily available to serve you! Many of these groups offer services that can find housing, and assist you with navigating Canadian life, politics, and finances. Please follow this link to view services and refugee centers in Ontario:

<http://bit.ly/1JKNoH6>

**A message from a volunteer at ORAT**

Over the past 4 months, I have had a fantastic time working alongside the team at ORAT. Every team member at ORAT were more than accommodating, and provided guidance with no hesitation whenever I needed help completing certain tasks. I joined ORAT to develop particular skills and experience in an environment that worked with vulnerable groups and government/settlement agencies. ORAT also plays an important role in charitable assistance to those who need humanitarian assistance in many countries across the globe.

-Senthoo *ORAT Volunteer*

**A message from a volunteer at ORAT**

Searching for a volunteer position where I could use organizational and analytical skills, and help refugees arrive and settle in Canada, I am glad I found ORAT. As well as doing basic office work such as shredding, scanning, printing and answering phones, I am able to help with the data collection and analysis for the various seminars. This year I hope to assist with delivering the seminars. It is a great feeling to be able to do this work and allow the staff to focus on the more detailed and challenging work related to specific cases, and to know I am making a difference in the lives of refugees and their sponsors.

- Dorothy *ORAT Volunteer*

**Want to become a volunteer at ORAT?**

Refugee resettlement work is not possible without our many dedicated volunteers who assist with administration, reception, event coordination, interpretation, translation, information sessions and case management. Volunteers at ORAT develop useful skills while contributing to our world in meaningful ways.

If you are interested in volunteering, please contact Alexandra at:

[orateducator@gmail.com](mailto:orateducator@gmail.com)

**ORAT Website**

Please visit ORAT's website to find details about ORAT's mandate, mandates, goals, policies, as well as tools regarding information session 1 and 3.

[www.bit.ly/refugeesTO](http://www.bit.ly/refugeesTO)

**JOIN US ON FACEBOOK!**

Become a member of the ORAT Volunteers Group and Canada Group on Facebook to get the latest news and updates on resettlement issues.

[facebook.com](http://facebook.com)

**TALK TO US!**

Join us on ORAT Forum to discuss new ideas, events, topics, news, resettlement issues and more! We look forward to your opinions and future input and discussions. Create an account and on: [oratformum.forumchitchat.com/](http://oratformum.forumchitchat.com/)



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