



24 September 2023

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

On September 24, 2023, the Catholic community worldwide recognizes the 109<sup>th</sup> World Day of Migrants and Refugees. In a world marked by divisions, suffering and the challenges faced by migrants and refugees, we are called to be instruments of Christ's love. Our faith invites us to broaden our understanding of community, to embrace the opportunities to care for others which in turn enriches us, and to concretely reach out with compassion to those who have been forced to flee their homes in search of safety and hope.

As members of the Body of Christ, we are called to be a place of refuge, a safe haven of welcome and love for all. The stories of migrants and refugees are stories of resilience, determination, and faith that inspire us. Let us be ever mindful that our faith is a powerful force for unity and transformation, reminding us of the inherent dignity of every person and urging us to create a world where all are welcomed in the name of Christ.

Our acts of kindness, welcoming and care, no matter how small, can make a difference. In addition to our ongoing prayers, we identify opportunities to advocate for the rights of migrants and refugees and to welcome the stranger in our midst as Jesus taught us. In this vein, I wish to express my gratitude for the work of the archdiocesan Office for Refugees and the many parishes with volunteer committees who have welcomed countless families to the Archdiocese of Toronto, supporting these newcomers with a spirit of generosity, hospitality and Christian love.

In his 2023 message for the World Day of Migrants and Refugees, Pope Francis reminds us: *“In whatever place we decide to build our future, in the country of our birth or elsewhere, the important thing is that there always be a community ready to welcome, protect, promote and integrate everyone, without distinctions and without excluding anyone.”*

May God bless each of you abundantly and strengthen your resolve to be a beacon of light in a world that is often beset with darkness and division. Let us together make a pledge to continue our journey in faith, with hearts docile and open to the call of Christ and the needs of His people.

Yours Sincerely in Jesus with Mary,

Most Rev. Francis Leo  
Archbishop of Toronto