

# About Parish Refugee Ministry

Office for Refugees Archdiocese of Toronto  
(ORAT)

# Overview

- Why Become Involved in Refugee Sponsorship
  - A Theological Perspective
  - The Size & Scope of Refugee Crisis
  - Christian Persecution & Marginalization
- Who is affected by the Global Refugee Crisis
- Who is coming to the aid of refugees (A Canadian Perspective)
- What does it mean to be a Constituent Group (CG)?
- Q&A
- Determine Next Steps



# Why become involved in refugee sponsorship?

## *A Theological Perspective*

- A response to the Commandment to “Love our Neighbour”
- Baptismal call of our faith in service of others, especially to those on the margins
- Refugee Resettlement is consistent with the Mission of the Archdiocese and its Pastoral Plan
  - Help to save the lives of innocent victims of war, violence and persecution
  - Resettlement opens doors and gives hope to refugees without a place to call home



# Why become involved in refugee sponsorship?

## *The Size of the Global Refugee Crisis*



About UNHCR   What we do   Emergencies   News and stories   Get involved

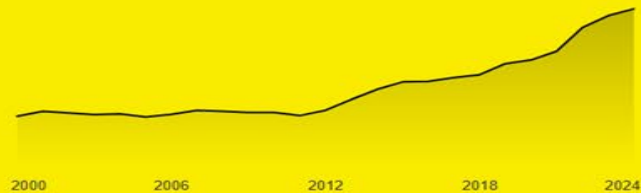
### Refugee Data Finder

Key Indicators   Data Summaries   Data Finder   Methodology   Data Insights

## 122.6 MILLION

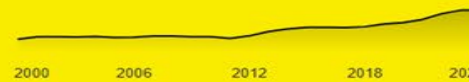
### Forcibly displaced people worldwide

at mid-2024 as a result of persecution, conflict, violence, human rights violations or events seriously disturbing public order.



## 68.3 MILLION

are internally displaced people (Source: IDMC, as of end-2023)



## 37.9 MILLION

are refugees



## 8 MILLION

are asylum-seekers



## 5.8 MILLION

are other people in need of international protection



Last update: 8 October 2024

The size of the current global migrant crisis is comparable to the crisis at the end of WWII



# Why become involved in refugee sponsorship?

## *Christian Persecution and Marginalization*

- The global refugee crisis has affected peoples of many different faiths
- But in a particular way, it has affected the Christian community
  - Christian Persecution
  - Under-representation of Christians in Government Resettlement Programs

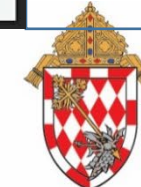


# Two Additional Dynamics at Play: Christian Persecution



## Key Facts

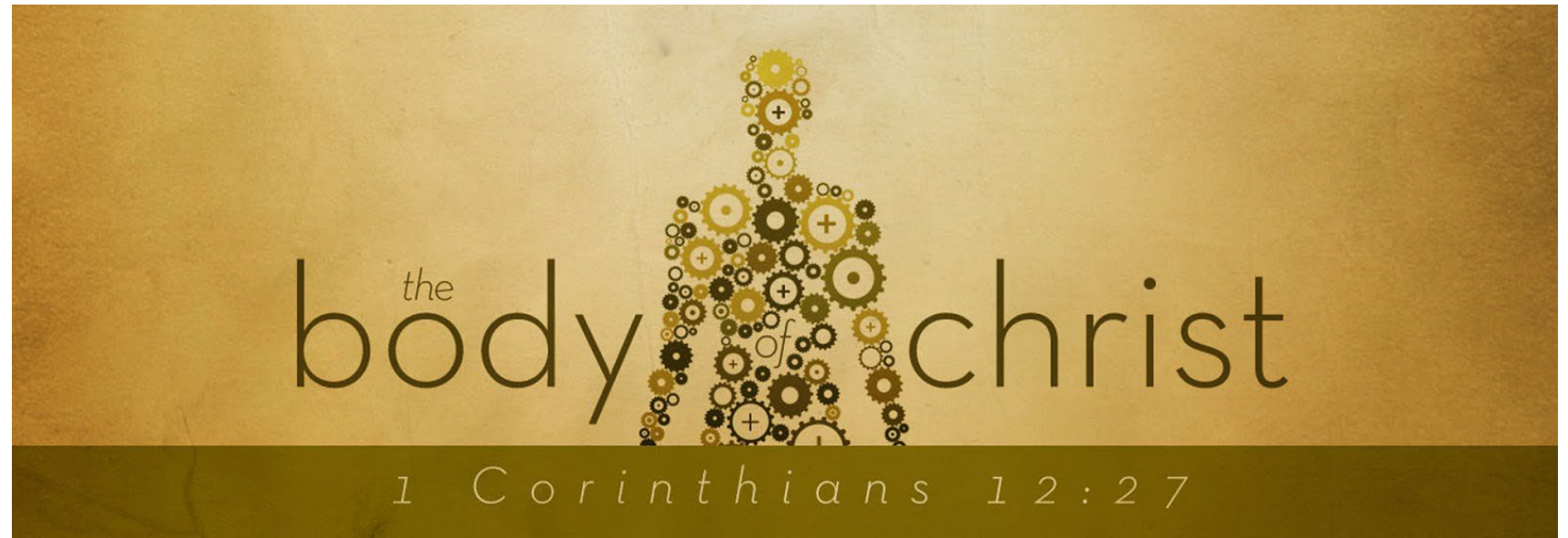
- 80% of people live in countries where there are serious restrictions on religious freedom (2018 US Religious Freedom Report).
- 80% of all religious persecution is being done to Christians worldwide (Open Doors).



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# “I was a stranger and you welcomed Me”



Our Office is guided by the words of St. Paul in his Letter to the Galatians, “Therefore, whenever we have opportunity, let us do good for all men, but especially to those who are of the household of faith.”

# Canada assists refugees from abroad through two key streams

## Inland/At Port Refugee Claimants


- Claimant initiates a refugee claim at port of entry (POE) or at an inland IRCC office;

## Overseas Refugee Resettlement

1. Government Sponsored Refugees
  - Government Assisted Refugees (GAR)
  - Joint Assistance Sponsorship (JAS)
  - Blended Visa Office Referral (BVOR)
2. Private Sponsorship of Refugees (PSR)
  - Sponsorship Agreement Holders (SAH)
  - Groups of 5 (G5)
  - Community Sponsorship (CS)



UNHCR  
Names  
Refugees



Sponsors  
Name  
Refugees





# In 2019, ORAT conducted a mission trip to Thailand, where we interviewed 65 Pakistani Christian families

## Religious Persecution

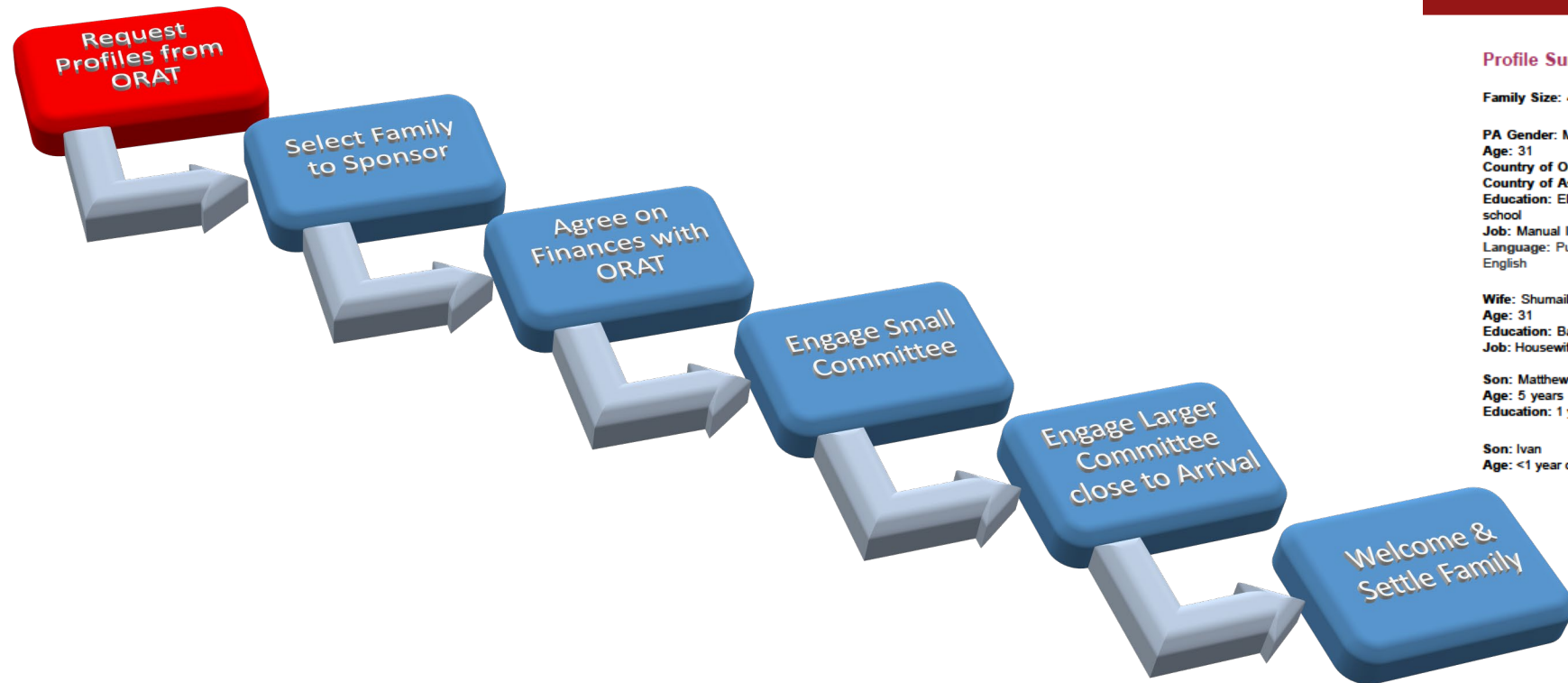
- Intense Persecution of Religious Minorities
- Use of the Blasphemy Law
- Little/no protection from civil authorities

## No Protection from Thai Authorities

- Thailand is not a signatory to the 1951 Geneva Convention. No protections afforded to refugees or asylum seekers
- Thai officials routinely conduct raids of illegal immigrants, who, if caught, are placed into overcrowded detention centers where they languish until they are resettled to western countries or return to Pakistan, where many will face an uncertain future.



# The Sponsorship Process



SUNNY Y.

## Profile Summary

**Family Size:** 4

**PA Gender:** Male  
**Age:** 31  
**Country of Origin:** Pakistan  
**Country of Asylum:** Thailand  
**Education:** Elementary/primary school  
**Job:** Manual labour, janitor  
**Language:** Punjabi, Urdu and English

**Wife:** Shumaila  
**Age:** 31  
**Education:** Bachelor's degree  
**Job:** Housewife

**Son:** Matthew  
**Age:** 5 years old  
**Education:** 1 year

**Son:** Ivan  
**Age:** <1 year old

## Background

Sunny worked as a janitor with a man who was highly sought after by extremists. These same men burned the entire Joseph colony, from which both Sunny and his colleague were from. Despite fleeing several times to different family houses, Sunny's affiliation led to attacks and threats to him and his family. Sunny married in 2013 and fled to Thailand where they have been in hiding since.

## Additional Information

**Religious affiliation:** Catholic  
**Medical needs:** Wife is a breast cancer survivor

*Please note that the information on this document is to be kept confidential and not to be published or widely announced due the refugees' safety and wellbeing*



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# CG Responsibilities

## Time & Talent

- Commitment to welcome & journey with the refugee;
- Assisting with their integration during their first year to Canada
- Responsibilities include:
  - Airport Welcome;
  - Arrange for Temporary and Permanent Accommodation;
  - Help register with a settlement agency (Language Assessment, Language Training, Employment Counseling);
  - Assist with required forms such as health insurance, social Insurance Card, Canada Child Benefits, etc.;
  - Help to open a bank account, register children in school; facilitate employment, find a family doctor & dentist.

## Treasure

- Consider fundraising when possible to support the settlement needs of the refugee.
- Consider collection of in-kind support to reduce the financial support required.



# Q&A, Next Steps and Thank You

- Questions & Answers
  - Determine Next Steps
  - Thank You!!
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- ORAT Outreach Contact Information
    - Email: [oratoutreach@archtoronto.org](mailto:oratoutreach@archtoronto.org)
    - Phone: (647) 494-5419

