

Malik's Journey of Faith and Freedom

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My name is Malik, and I come from Herat Province in Afghanistan—a place where the mere act of believing differently can put your life at risk.

In 2014, my life took a profound and unexpected turn when I came to know Jesus through Facebook. What began as curiosity quickly turned into deep conviction. I embraced Christianity with all my heart. But in Afghanistan, this decision came at a heavy price. My own family and relatives turned against me. They gave me an ultimatum: renounce my new faith or face the

authorities. They warned me that if I did not return to Islam, I would be charged with apostasy—a crime punishable by death.

Living under such pressure, fear, and isolation, I knew I had no choice. In 2015, I fled Afghanistan and sought refuge in India, hoping to find safety and the freedom to follow my faith. There, I found what I had longed for—a church community, the chance to get baptized, and the opportunity to begin studying in Bible college. It was the beginning of a new spiritual journey, but sadly, not the end of my struggles. Even in India, I was not safe.

As an Afghan Christian convert, I continued to face discrimination, hostility, and threats. The Afghan Christian community lived in constant fear. Despite being recognized as a refugee by the UNHCR, I was told bluntly by their office in India that my chances of resettlement were less than 1%. I was devastated. All I wanted was a place to live in peace and safety—was that too much to ask? But then came a miracle.



In April 2022, I was sponsored to come to Canada through the Private Sponsorship of Refugees (PSR) Program, supported by the Office for Refugees, Archdiocese of Toronto (ORAT), a Christian SAH and church. In July 2023, I landed in Canada—a moment I will never forget. I felt like I could finally breathe again.

This sponsorship didn't just change my life—it saved my life.

It gave me hope when I had none. It gave me a new beginning when I had lost everything. It gave me a new country to call home—a place where I am no longer a refugee, but a resident. A place where I am free to believe, to worship, and to live with dignity.

The Refugee Sponsorship Program is truly lifesaving and life-transforming. For refugees like me—whose lives are threatened because of their faith, and who continue to suffer in countries of asylum—this program is often the only light in the darkness. It is not just a program; it is a lifeline, a doorway to freedom, and a chance to start over.

I am forever thankful to ORAT and other SAHs who open their hearts to sponsor people like me. You are more than just sponsors. You are hope-givers. You are lifesavers. You are the hands and feet of compassion. You help us move from danger to safety, from fear to freedom, from despair to a future.

Today, I am doing my part to give back. I now help other refugees and newcomers in the same situation I once was in. I support them in small but meaningful ways—by filling out immigration forms, guiding them through the settlement process, and volunteering with organizations that help newcomers feel welcomed and supported. Canada is now my home, and I serve it with pride, love, and gratitude. I am committed to being a faithful, fruitful, and contributing member of this society.

To those who support the PSR Program—Thank You.

Thank you for blessing lives like mine in practical and powerful ways. Thank you for giving us not just a ticket to safety, but a path to purpose. You are the reason people like me now have a future to look forward to.

God bless you.

