

ST. MARY PARISH Refugee Welcome Ministry

Our Mission...

The mission of the Refugee Welcome Ministry is to provide refugee families a welcoming introduction to life in the United States of America by providing the most basic household goods necessary for daily life and offering friendship and support throughout the challenge of learning a new language, culture and way of life.

"The King will reply, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.'"

- Matthew 25:40

Contact Information

Send questions and suggestions to:

Name: Cecile Coté
Phone: 508.667.7854
Email: cecile.m.cote@gmail.com

Name: Jerry Coté
Phone: 508.736.1371
Email: cote.jerrold@gmail.com

For additional information about the Refugee Welcoming Ministry, please visit the St. Mary's web site at stmarysparish.org

*We are Stewards
of our Time, Talent &
Treasure*



Typical Activities

When a refugee family arrives, we visit their apartment with a carload of household goods, including dishes, pots and pans, pillows, blankets, sheets, towels, cleansers, toiletries, personal care items, books and toys.

To enable us to provide such things, we raise funds and collect new and gently-used standard items and maintain an inventory in the church basement.

We befriend the refugees and are quickly welcomed into their families. Over tea in their homes, we lend a hand with homework, English language skills and cultural assimilation.

We help with practical concerns such as phone company paperwork, driver's license applications and job searches.

Activities run the gamut from simply going grocery shopping together or playing in the park to attending a special event like a family wedding or accompanying a woman to the hospital for the birth of her baby.

When We Meet

We meet at the parish Social Justice Committee meetings which take place on a Tuesday evening approximately once every other month from 7:00 – 8:00 PM, as announced in the parish bulletin.

Why We Exist?

Over 14 million refugees worldwide have been forced from their countries of origin because of ethnic cleansing, violence, religious persecution and other upheavals. Tens of thousands arrive in the United States every year with nothing but the clothes on their backs, having lost their homes, possessions, jobs, and even family members.

In the spring of 2011, a group of parishioners from St. Mary's decided to get involved. We formed the Refugee Welcome Ministry and established a partnership with Catholic Charities to assist refugees resettling in Worcester. Catholic Charities provides the case management and secures apartments they equip with basic furniture. Because the needs are still great, our ministry exists to provide refugees with additional and ongoing support for a smooth transition to a new life.



Who We Are

We are stewards of our time, talent and treasure. We are parishioners of all ages who are extending a hand of friendship to newcomers to our society. We are interested in sharing our culture with others and learning about theirs in return. We have assisted 16 families through our partnership with Catholic Charities and another 7 families who independently requested our support. We have helped over 90 refugees settle into new apartments and new lives in America. Our lives have been enriched in countless ways by our new friends from Bhutan, Nepal, Iraq and the Central African Republic.

Ministry
Of the Month