



Jubilee Year of Hope June 2025

*For Ministers to Refugees
and Migrants*

Heroes of Hope is a monthly newsletter from the Diocese of Hamilton, shining a light on the extraordinary individuals and ministries who inspire hope and transform lives in our communities.

#HEROESOFHOPE

This month we pray for refugees and migrants and highlight the many people who give hope to those who accompany them, providing safe and secure places where they can live with dignity.

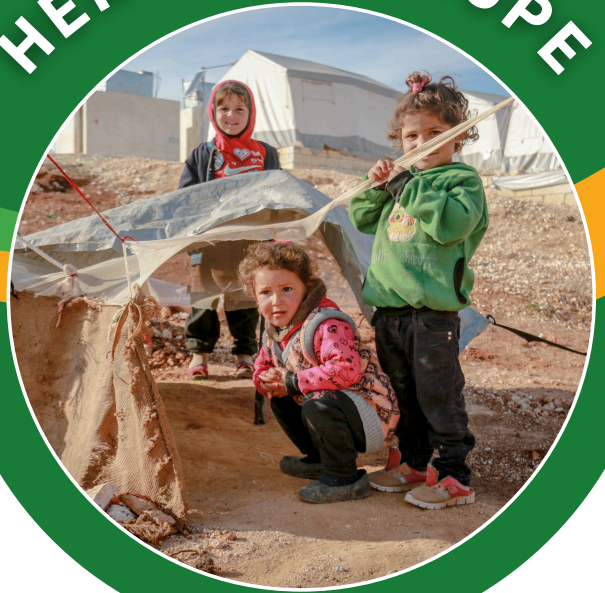
We never forget that when Jesus was still a baby, he, Mary and Joseph fled to Egypt to escape the horrors of King Herod. Our faith compels us to share with you (refugees) the blessings that we enjoy. We understand that Canada is a better place because you share the good things of your faith and your cultures with us. – *Bishop Douglas Crosby, O.M.I.*

The Office for Refugees

Through compassionate action, the Diocesan Office for Refugees coordinates sponsorship efforts, supporting parishes, religious communities and individuals in responding to the global refugee crisis. Working with the Government of Canada under the Private Sponsorship of Refugees (PSR) Program, the Office provides practical hope to those forced to flee war, persecution, and instability.

Rooted in the Church's mission to welcome the stranger, the Office guides parish communities (constituent groups) to sponsor refugees under the Diocese's Sponsorship Agreement Holder (SAH) status. The office staff supports co-sponsors, often family members of refugees already living in Canada, who assist them financially and emotionally. They accompany sponsors and newcomers through the entire process from application to arrival and integration, bringing together faith, compassion and community to extend a lifeline of hope.

HEROES OF HOPE



The Role of SAH

As a Sponsorship Agreement Holder, the Diocese of Hamilton serves as a trusted partner with the Government of Canada to facilitate refugee sponsorship.

This includes:

- ensuring all sponsorship applications meet Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada's (IRCC);
- training and approving constituent groups and co-sponsors;
- overseeing applications after submission and ensuring that newcomers receive appropriate support after arrival.

This model enables faith-based, community-driven responses where local parishes become instruments of welcome and transformation. **The relationship established between the Diocesan Office, parishioners and co-sponsors form a circle of care, offering not only a fresh start, but a warm welcome to refugees grounded in faith and compassion.**



"In Waterloo Region, there are many people who are so grateful to the Office of Refugees and St Michael Parish for transforming their lives. From the moment the local family's appeal for assistance is accepted the positive impact ripples through their lives. First there is hope - the refugees now see a way forward to lives free from war, persecution, and uncertainty. When the newcomers arrive, there is great joy at being reunited with their family members. They marvel at the opportunities for education, health care, and employment. Gradually they release the anxiety and stress of their previous life, their mental health improves, and they focus on their future for themselves and their children."

– Diane Jones, St. Michael Parish, Waterloo



A Ministry of Hope and Healing

In a world marked by displacement and despair, the Office for Refugees shines as a beacon of hope. It reminds us that every refugee is a person made in the image of God, longing for dignity and a place to call home.

During the past fourteen years, the Diocese has positively impacted the lives of over 725 individuals and families from Vietnam, Afghanistan, Syrian Iraq, Eritrea, Sudan, Myanmar (Burma), Democratic Republic of the Congo (DCR), and Somalia. The completion of the settlement process can often take between three and five years.

Click the link or use the QR code to read the stories of both struggle and success from refugees and their co-sponsoring family members in Canada.

hamiltondiocese.com/refugee-stories/



HEROES OF HOPE PRAYER FOR MINISTERS TO REFUGEES AND MIGRANTS

Lord God, by the grace of our baptism, you have given us new life in Christ and called us to serve as pilgrims of hope.

We pray in thanksgiving for those who have responded to your call to welcome the stranger and provide safe haven for those who have been displaced from their countries of origin, assisting newcomers to our country, to new find housing and employment and enrich our culture with their own.

Through their varied ministries, may they touch the hearts of all in our community who long for the hope, born of our Christian faith, that never disappoints.

We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

"It was very difficult. Everything was new. Everything was hard. I didn't know anything before. Now, I'm speaking English. I'm leading a team. I'm helping others." – Awet

Awet's story is a testament to the resilience of the human spirit. He feels fortunate and realizes how rare and precious this opportunity was. He says he feels lucky because there are so many still in these camps, still waiting, still hoping. Here is a reminder that the work of welcoming refugees is not charity, but it is justice, humanity and giving a renewed hope!

