

Refugee Resettlement - a Collaborative Response

Newsletter 1 February 2016



Meetings with Red Cross



In order to develop an ongoing collaborative response from the churches, to welcome new settlers from refugee backgrounds, the Catholic and Anglican Coordinators have met regularly with Red Cross over Inter-Faith breakfasts and Joint Planning Meetings. These meetings have enabled Red Cross to update us on what is happening and to identify how our parish communities will work together to welcome refugees who will make their home in the Wellington area. The Islamic community has become part of this planning group, and bring to the table both their hospitality and their knowledge of the faith and cultural traditions of many of the refugees. Immediate outcomes are:

- Commitment of the Catholic, Anglican and Islamic communities to set up the houses for our new settlers on behalf of Red Cross
- Donation of ongoing meeting space and hospitality for Red Cross Orientation and Training Programmes by the Anglican Cathedral Community



Meetings with Agencies

There are ongoing meetings with different agencies, who work with the refugee community, to identify how we can best work together, using each other's strength to provide a coherent response. It is a learning curve for everyone and we won't get it right first off. However people are open and willing.

To date, these include Catholic Social Services meeting with St Vincent de Paul Chapter Leaders and ChangeMakers, as well as email contact with English Language Partners in Hutt Valley, Porirua and Wellington and also with MCLaSS.

WHAT IS HAPPENING?



- Our first group of refugees to come in 2016 will arrive in Wellington at the end of February.
- There are 24 households of adults and children who come from Syria, Columbia and Afghanistan.
- At present they are based in Mangere, which is the first step in the process of resettlement.
- They will settle in the Lower Hutt, Porirua and Wellington communities.

WAYS YOU CAN HELP AS A VOLUNTEER OR AS A FAITH COMMUNITY

There are four different ways you can help with the initial welcome. Choose which way(s) you would like to help and register your choice(s) with Catholic Social Services.

If you are a member of an Anglican Parish contact your local parish to volunteer

Please respond by Wednesday 10th February

Option 1: House set-up teams

We need 40+ volunteers to work in 10 teams to set up the houses:

- Volunteer as an individual or as a team of four - get together with some of your friends or church community
- Attend a briefing on the evening of Tuesday 23rd February, 6pm - 8pm at the *Loaves and Fishes*, beside the Anglican Cathedral
- Set up the houses on the evening of Thursday 25th between 6pm - 8.30pm.



If you would like to help in this way, please fill in the attached House Preparation Volunteer Form and send it to: refugees@wn-catholicssocialservices.org.nz.

Option 2: Collection of household goods to set up 14 houses

Each house will need household goods either in new or excellent used condition. We will supply you with the list of household goods.

We will need Parishes or Groups to:

- commit to collecting the requested goods for one or two households
- deliver the completed household lots to the Anglican Cathedral on the afternoon of Sunday 21st February to be available for pick up by House Preparation teams.



If your Parish or Group would like to do this, please email refugees@wn-catholicssocialservices.org.nz with the name of your Parish or Group, a contact person and their contact number and how many household lots you can collect for.

Option 3: Organise household lots

- Be part of a small group of Volunteers on the afternoon 21st and/or all day on 22nd February to receive, check and organise household lots at the Anglican Cathedral.



If you would like to help in this way, email refugees@wn-catholicssocialservices.org.nz with your name and contact number and what days you are available.

Option 4: Housewarming or pantry packages (24 of each)

Each home will need a Housewarming and Pantry Package with those extra things that send a message of welcome or familiarity when moving into a new home.

We will need Parishes or Groups to:

- commit to collecting and preparing one Housewarming or pantry package for a house
- deliver the packages to the Anglican Cathedral on Sunday 21st Feb to be available for pick up by House Preparation teams.



If you would like to do this, please email refugees@wn-catholicssocialservices.org.nz with the name of the Group or Parish, a contact person and their contact number and whether you would like to do the housewarming and/or pantry.

REFUGEE WORKSHOPS

There was a wonderful response to the three Refugee Collaborative Workshops hosted by the Archdiocese. Over 250 participants, from different denominations, came together conveying a strong sense of generosity and desire to work together. We listened to the experiences of people from Afghanistan, Myanmar, and Columbia, who had come to New Zealand as refugees or asylum seekers; learnt about the Resettlement



journey and the role of existing services who work with refugees in New Zealand. In Porirua we learnt more about Islam which was well received. Participants then identified different ways we can work together to welcome refugees into our communities in New Zealand.

Some participants have gone on to train as volunteers for Red Cross or English Language Partners, or returned to parishes and organisations to identify how they will respond both to quota refugees and those who come to New Zealand as part of the resettlement programme.

Events and Training held so far

- Red Cross provided a training session at the Kilbirnie Mosque community in December.
- The NZ Anglican Church, represented by Reverend Stephen King attended the meeting re raising the quota.
- The Wellington City Council hosted a gathering with Gitta Rupp who has been part of the grassroots response to welcoming refugees in Austria
- Wellington Abrahamic Council hosted 'Challenges and Opportunities Facing Abrahamic Faiths' with Bishop David Gillet.

Next Month

Red Cross and the Islamic community in Kilbirnie will host a *Welcome to Wellington Meal* for all the newcomers on March 5th. They will host this with former refugees who are already settled in Wellington. In the next newsletter we will let you know if there are ways you can help with this event.

In the next newsletter we will let you know what volunteers may be needed for this event.

Other Donations

If you unable to contribute to the joint Parish response, you can donate household items to St Vincent de Paul. In return St Vincent de Paul will provide any items that are still required when the household lots are assembled.



Do you want to learn more? - useful links

- "My Life as a Refugee - Have you got what it takes to survive?"
<http://vimeo.com/43666084> (UN Refugee Agency)
- "Take a Walk in Refugee Shoes" Ian Munro's Article
<http://www.odt.co.nz/lifestyle/magazine/355408/take-walk-refugee-shoes>.

IDEAS FROM THE WORKSHOPS

Below are some of the ideas shared in the workshops of ways we can work together. Each newsletter will share more ideas.



Food

- Finding out what food is appropriate and putting together food parcels as parishes, family or cell groups
- Fruit, bread and vegetables delivery to families
- Recipes and information on food for an information night.

Sharing

- Putting on afternoon tea or a meal to welcome families to the area
- Friendship by inviting families for meals
- Sharing the success stories of refugees and positive attitudes.

Resources

- Providing low cost or free use of buildings for welcome events, language teaching, or training.

Ideas around Collaboration

- Churches plan links into: Refugee Action Plan, ChangeMakers, clear lines of accountability, professionals, volunteers, and relationships
- Have a link person between a group and a group of refugees
- Be prepared to go where you are needed (not stay together in your own small group)
- Help people see that helping refugees is achievable, and how to do it.

Ideas around Communication

- Communication Strategy, with media, and bringing wider communities with us to address fears and discrimination.

Housing and Accommodation

- Access to accommodation and providing support and on-going welcome and friendship
- Make rentals available from church housing.

Support Needed

- Provide training day to a church or church cluster to educate and overcome prejudice
- Raise profile of organisations involved in working with refugees.

Opportunities to

- Know and understand refugees' belief, faith and culture
- Learn about people's food and culture
- To access training.

Resettlement Support for Refugee Settlers

Organisations with opportunities to train as a Volunteer

MCLaSS classroom volunteer tutors

Multicultural Learning and Support Services (MCLaSS) is a non-profit organisation which helps refugees and migrants to learn English and gain employment. We are looking for tutors to help with our adult English classes in Wellington, Lower Hutt, and Porirua. Our volunteer tutors assist teachers in the classroom with preparing materials, facilitating activities, and assisting with one-to-one and group support. Training is on-the-job, with the teacher guiding you and working with you to develop the ways in which you can maximise your contribution to the learning experience of the students.

For more information, contact us at office@mclass.org.nz, or phone 04 384 3693.

RED CROSS

Refugee Support Volunteers

Volunteering is a fun and rewarding experience. Our refugee support volunteers help families start again, while learning about new cultures, meeting new people and changing lives (including their own!).

The current training for volunteers is now in process and thanks to a generous response all places have been taken up.

There are further opportunities to train as a volunteer, particularly in Porirua and the Hutt Valley and the next training will begin in March.

SIGN UP TO HELP

Or email wellington@redcross.org.nz

Or phone 04 805 0304

ENGLISH LANGUAGE PARTNERS

Home Tutor Training:

Porirua

16th February - 10th March
Tuesdays & Thursdays 6.30-9.00pm

For more information and to enrol please phone 04 238 9400 or 027 348 2131 or email jacquiline@englishlanguage.org.nz

Hutt Valley

16th February and runs for three Tuesdays & two Saturdays.

For more information and to enrol please phone 04 570 1335 or email hutt@englishlanguage.org.nz

Wellington City

February Training is full

Next Training:

April 28, 29, and 30

June 7-28 (Tuesday evenings & Saturday mornings for four weeks)

September 22, 23, and 24 TBA

For more information and to enrol please phone Emma Stein 04 384 1992 or email wellington@englishlanguage.org.nz

Or

Donate \$40.00 to English Language Partners to cover the cost of a Training Manual.

ChangeMakers Refugee Forum

New Zealanders from refugee backgrounds participating fully in New Zealand life.

Volunteer to be a Community Leader Mentor or a Business Plan Advisor or a Driving Practice Volunteer.

Contact: 04 801 5812 or info@crf.org.nz