



STEWARDS OF OUR EARTH All of God's Creation

Social Justice Committee, Holy Cross Parish, Mt. Airy, July 9, 2023

Building A Culture of Solidarity

The truth is that we are all in the same boat and called to work together so that there will be no more walls that separate us, no longer others, but only a single “we,” encompassing all of humanity. Thus, I would like to use this World Day to address a twofold appeal, first to the Catholic faithful and then all the men and women of our world, to **advance together towards an ever wider “we.”**
—Pope Francis, 2021 message for World Day of Migrants and Refugees, 26 September 2021

The United Nations has designated June 20 each year as World Refugee Day. In honor of this day, we can [reach out to Congressional legislators](#) exhorting them to **publicly express solidarity with refugees and to invest in our ability to become a unified, diverse, national community of welcome.** In doing so, we honor the resilience of people forced to flee their homes and meet their courage with our ability to meet their specific resettlement needs through needed oversight, positive legislation, and robust funding. (*Immigration Action Alert*, Sisters of Mercy, June 19, 2023)

The United States has a history of opening its doors to people fleeing crisis, although the cap on refugees has varied widely over the years. In 1980, the refugee cap was set at 231,700. In 2016, it was 110,000, and in 2021, it was 15,000. Today that cap is 125,000, to be achieved by October 2023. But we're just past the halfway point, and the United States has only resettled 18,429 refugees — a fraction of where we should be. [Act now to urge the Biden administration to make good on our commitment.](#) (*HIAS Newsletter*, June 14, 2023)

Our country “has a long history of leading the world in a humanitarian way. That history is steeped in stories of refugees who fled to our shores and found not only safe haven but a chance to start a new life. As these refugees became integral parts of our existing communities, they brought with them rich cultures, diverse perspectives, and a strong drive to contribute to the country that welcomed them.

Refugees are more than just numbers and statistics. They are mothers and fathers, sons, and daughters. They are engineers, teachers, entrepreneurs, and artists. **When we welcome refugees, we welcome individuals who have the potential to make significant contributions to our society.** Studies have consistently shown that refugees contribute positively to the U.S. economy, often paying more in taxes than they receive in benefits.” (Amanda Ford, Director, *Democracy for America Advocacy Fund*, June 14, 2023)

“... Yet this contribution could be all the greater were it optimized and supported by carefully developed programs and initiatives. Enormous potential exists, ready to be harnessed, if only it is given a chance.” — Pope Francis, World Day of Migrants and Refugees, Sept. 25, 2022

“Accepting refugees isn't just about upholding the values of liberty, equality, and justice for all. **It is also a strategic imperative for global stability and diplomacy.** Offering a home to refugees promotes peace by providing a safety valve for regions destabilized by conflict, persecution, and disaster.... Just last year alone, 19 million people left their homes to seek refuge from violent conflicts, climate change, and political persecution....” (Annika London, *Win Without War*, June 18, 2023)

You sent your Son to live among the people of Bethlehem, Egypt, and Nazareth: accompany all refugee families in their displacements and keep them united with one another. (*Magnificat*, December 2022)