

REVEAL Christ's LOVE



After years of tension between Ukraine and the Russian Federation, Russian forces began a devastating war in February 2022 by invading Ukraine. In addition to killing and wounding many, the conflict has forced millions of Ukrainians to flee the country. Many refugees went to neighboring countries in Europe, but many others came to the United States. For decades, the Migration and Refugee Services (MRS) department of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) has assisted refugees fleeing wars and persecution, and in 2022 it responded to the Ukrainian refugee crisis with two initiatives to help local communities welcome refugees.

The first initiative, Welcome Circles, is a community-led program that helps local groups work together to provide financial support and connect refugees to services such as health care and education. Although Welcome Circles are locally led, they are certified, vetted, and given ongoing guidance by MRS staff or local affiliate experts. MRS's support and guidance help each Welcome Circle accompany refugees effectively during the resettlement process. As of early 2023, the Welcome Circles program already had 25 circles engaging more than 200 volunteers and had expanded to welcome refugees from Haiti, Cuba, Nicaragua, and Venezuela in addition to Ukraine.

Since 2010, MRS has led the second initiative, Parishes Organized to Welcome Immigrants and Refugees (POWIR), a program that works with select diocesan resettlement programs to empower parishes and local Catholic institutions so they can welcome and assist immigrants and refugees at the diocesan level. From May 2021 to January 2023, this diocesan support helped nearly 10,000 local volunteers, working in Catholic communities in 23 active POWIR

programs nationwide, to spend more than 100,000 volunteer hours working with and on behalf of about 24,000 clients.

Funds received through The Catholic Relief Services Collection allow MRS to help victims of war and oppression begin new lives in welcoming, supportive communities through innovative initiatives like Welcome Circles and POWIR. In addition to MRS, the collection supports other Catholic organizations that aid victims of persecution and natural disasters, provide legal services to poor immigrants, and advocate for the powerless.

Your Donations Help Our Brothers and Sisters . . .

In the United States

Feed Jesus' hunger in suffering refugees . . . through the **USCCB Department of Migration and Refugee Services (MRS)**.

Offer legal assistance to Jesus in struggling immigrants . . . through the **Catholic Legal Immigration Network, Inc. (CLINIC)**.

Reach out to comfort Jesus' loneliness in isolated workers . . . through the pastoral work of the **USCCB Secretariat of Cultural Diversity in the Church**.

And Around the World

Give water to quench Jesus' thirst in the people of Kenya and Zambia . . . through the humanitarian work of **Catholic Relief Services (CRS)**.

Advocate on behalf of Jesus in the poor and marginalized . . . through the public policy work of the **USCCB Department of Justice, Peace and Human Development**.

Send aid to Jesus in the victims of natural disaster . . . through the **Holy Father's Relief Fund**.



The Catholic Relief Services Collection

OFFICE OF NATIONAL COLLECTIONS • 3211 FOURTH STREET NE • WASHINGTON, DC 20017-1194 • 202-541-3400 • FAX 202-541-3460 • WWW.USCCB.ORG/NATIONALCOLLECTIONS

Copyright © 2023, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, Washington, DC. All rights reserved. Photos: Michael Stulman/CRS, Arny Djahova/CRS, Rebekah Lemke/CRS.

70200424