



Archdiocese of Vancouver
ARCHBISHOP'S OFFICE
September 11, 2015

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

As we witness the overwhelming refugee crisis in Europe, Canadians are responding to this desperate need with a sincere desire to help. I welcome this generous spirit and encourage all people of good will across Canada to help by their financial support, volunteer action and prayer.

The Archdiocese of Vancouver has an ongoing refugee sponsorship program that has settled hundreds of refugees a year from Syria, Iraq and neighbouring countries. Local parishes have already submitted several dozen sponsorship applications to bring in refugee families. In addition, we are encouraging benefactors to provide monetary support for those now living in refugee camps.

The Archdiocese has extended its sponsorship agreement to include the Catholic Dioceses of Victoria, Nelson and Prince George. Both Victoria and Prince George have welcomed refugees from Syria this past year, and Nelson is now approved for its own private agreement. This past week we have entered into discussions with the Dioceses of Kamloops and Whitehorse to create similar arrangements.

To help immediately, I recommend the following Catholic organizations with active programs:

- Development and Peace supports Caritas partners providing humanitarian relief to Syrian refugees. To donate, visit: <http://www.devpc.org/en/donate>, call toll-free: 1-888-234-8533, or email: info@devpc.org.
- Catholic Near East Welfare Association Canada supplies food, shelter, water, medical supplies and other essentials to impoverished families in the Middle East. To donate, visit: www.cnewa.ca, call toll-free: 1-866-322-4441, or mail your cheque, marked "Refugee Crisis" to CNEWA Canada, 1247 Kilborn Place, Ottawa, ON K1H 6K9.

4885 Saint John Paul II Way | Vancouver, BC | V5Z 0G3
Telephone: 604 443-3203 | Facsimile: 604 681-8355

rcavbishop@rcav.org

- [Aid to the Church in Need Canada](http://www.acn-aed-ca.org) helps with basic needs and pastoral care in refugee camps, displaced persons camps and various dioceses. To donate, visit: www.acn-aed-ca.org or call: 1-800-585-6333.

The Archdiocese of Vancouver will hold a special collection at all Masses the weekend of October 4, 2015. Proceeds will be divided among D&P, CNEWA, and ACN.

It is vital that we continue to urge the Canadian government to do everything it can to improve the situation in these countries, as well as to streamline its often inefficient and cumbersome refugee sponsorship application process. If our nation's doors are opened, we know we can unite many refugees with the numerous Canadians standing ready to assist these families in resettling in supportive communities.

Above all, I encourage you to pray for the Syrian people and faithful, placing their care and safety in God's merciful hands.

With gratitude for your generosity toward those suffering and with my prayers for you and your family, I remain

Sincerely yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "+ J. Michael Miller CSB". The signature is written in a cursive style.

✠ J. Michael Miller, CSB
Archbishop of Vancouver