

Info Alert 200

December 13, 2022

...in the midst of migrants in search of a better life there are people in need of protection: refugees and asylum-seekers, women and children, victims of trafficking...Many move simply to avoid dying of hunger. When leaving is not an option but a necessity, this is more than poverty. Antonio Guterres

Welcome the Newcomer

During our November Social Justice Committee Meeting I was amazed to learn about the efforts of the Philadelphia Archdiocese as it welcomes our newest arrivals from Ukraine, Afghanistan and Latin America. Through the Catholic Coalition for Immigrants and Refugees which was founded in 2017, Catholics from all walks of life in this Archdiocese come together to welcome and accompany those who come to our country seeking a better way of life for themselves and for their families.

- S4U (Support for Ukraine) has welcomed and helped to resettle 41 Ukrainian refugees with 12 more families recently arriving.
- Through Catholic Social Services Afghan evacuees are helped with pre arrival and reception services, basic needs support, cultural orientation, language services, housing, healthcare and employment. To date 119 have been helped.
- Philadelphia Archdiocese has a long history of working with our Latinx populations who have come here as immigrants, refugees and now asylum seekers.

Check out the Archdiocesan Website: Welcome the Newcomer to learn more! <https://welcomethenewcomer.org/>

Shut Down Berks

On November 30th, the Biden Administration announced it will be ending the ICE Contract with Berks County on January 31st, 2023. This means, once again, the Berks Detention Center which recently has been used to house immigrant women will be shut down. The Coalition for Shutting Down Berks County detention Center is asking that the women who are still being detained there will be released to their families and communities and not just transferred to other facilities. The Coalition is also asking that this site be repurposed as a place to provide services to the surrounding communities.

You can call DHS Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas [202-282-8495](tel:202-282-8495) and leave this message:

The closing of the Berks County Detention Center is a victory for immigrants, the Berks community and Pennsylvania. This is wonderful news, but we need to ensure those currently detained are released. Do not transfer these women to other prisons, make sure they are freed. Repurpose this space to provide services to the surrounding community.

Biden Administration Expands Protections for Haitian Migrants- Haiti Report

"The conditions in Haiti including socioeconomic challenges, political instability, and gang violence and crime – aggravated by environmental disaster – compelled the humanitarian relief we are providing," the homeland security secretary, Alejandro Mayorkas, said in a statement to the New York Times. With the announcement, 110, 000 Haitians in the United States could gain permission to stay at least 18 months, and others who already have protections will see them extended.

Excerpt from Strangers in a Foreign Land– Xavier University

Lord God, help us to remember those who tonight will go to sleep unfed and unwelcome, strangers in foreign lands, people who have fled for their lives and are far from their homes. We lift up to you those who are escaping persecution and conflict, having fled death, torture or ruthless exploitation...Lord Jesus, give us more of your compassion for their plight, soften our hearts to their situation, and help us follow your lead in seeking justice and mercy on their behalf.

We pray for an end to the wars, poverty and human rights abuses that drive desperate people to become refugees in the first place... Amen.

Action

1. Keep updated on the asylum seekers who are arriving in Philadelphia on buses sent from Texas.
2. Read CRS Global Emergency Update to learn about poverty throughout the world and how CRS is making a difference.