OVERVIEW OF OBLIGATIONS FOR REFUGEE SPONSORSHIP

As Christians, we are called to care for the poor and vulnerable and have a rich and long tradition of doing so. Serving others, especially those in the most desperate need, is one of our defining evangelizing tools. In the words of Jesus, "Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me" (Matt 24:40).

WHAT ARE THE OBLIGATIONS?

MONEY: IRCC has put together a chart to help determine a base cost for sponsoring refugee(s). Deductions can be made for "gifts in kind" such as furniture, household items, clothes, etc. We will walk you through this process and help you to know how and what to calculate for the overall cost.

ALL money received as a private donation will require the payee to provide either last year's Notice of Assessment and to sign on as a Co-Sponsor and be held legally responsible for the settlement of the refugee(s).

Fundraised money must be accompanied by all receipts, event posters, and photographic evidence (where applicable, i.e. bake sale, carwash, etc.). Please send as a digital copy when possible, this will save us hours of admin work. ☺

Tax receipts will be issued based on the CRA guidelines. Please refer to the "Gift and Donations" page for more information.

The sponsorship is 12 months, starting when they arrive in Regina. Work needs to be done in preparation before they come which can reasonably take 2-5 years. Once the family arrives there are several appointments that you are responsible for making with the refugees.

TIME:

You need to ensure their transportation to and from these appointments as well. Some of these include: setting up school registration, doctors, banking, driving appointments, teaching them how to bank, pay bills, get a phone, use the transit system, and many other things. You may need to coordinate a translator for these as well. Open Door can help with this.

The first few months after their arrival are the most time-consuming. Many organizations can help with this all and being well organized and prepared will help to make this less hectic.

MENTAL: Many refugees are fleeing from violent places and have experienced trauma. Special attention needs to be given to mental health. No sponsor is expected to be a psychologist, but if there is a good relationship between the sponsors and refugees, then, there is a greater holistic level of care that can be provided to them. There are also many counselling services available to newcomers. Please see the Archdiocesan website for lists of service providers.

SPIRITUAL: This is a two-fold commitment. One is to the refugees, to make sure that they are connected with their faith and cultural communities here in Canada. The second commitment is to yourselves as a committee. One of the main reasons that the Catholic Church is so involved with the sponsorship of refugees is because of the Catholic Social Teachings (CST). These include the universal dignity of every person, regardless of any categorical divisions. We also are called to give the poor and vulnerable our preferential support, and love, and to always consider them in our decision-making.

CITIZENSHIP OR PR STATUS: You as the Co-Sponsor or CG representative will need to provide this to us. This includes any of the following, Birth Certificate (Canadian), Treaty Status Card, Canadian Passport, or Valid Permanent Residency Card. If your PR Card has expired and you have applied for your citizenship, you are not able to sponsor until you receive your approved citizenship. A scanned copy is best. These files are kept confidential.

CRIMINAL RECORD: All members of a CG and the Co-Sponsor(s) have up-to-date (i.e. no more than 6 months old) criminal record checks.