

# 24-7 PRAYER CANADA

## Prayer Walk for Refuge Prayer Guide August 2020

### Instructions

This guide is provided to help you focus on the realities facing displaced people, as well as some theological reflections about refugees, as you walk your 10K. Feel free to use this guide however is most effective for you. It is designed with a short reading for before each new kilometer. However, if you are experiencing God's presence and voice already through one reading, do not feel the need to move to another topic just because you have passed another thousand metres. Use this guide in whatever way will help you to pray most effectively on your journey. For more information about 24-7 Prayer Canada, go to [www.24-7prayercanada.com](http://www.24-7prayercanada.com).

### K1: The Refugee Highway



A combined 24-7 Prayer Canada and International Association for Refugees Canada prayer team on a prayer pilgrimage to Chiapas Mexico, praying along the "Beast" railway, a dangerous and infamous route along the Refugee Highway

According to the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR), there are currently more than 79.5 million people in the world who have been forced to flee their homes because of persecution, conflict and/or human

rights violations. This is the highest number of refugees ever recorded.

Picture Earth. Now imagine the well-worn paths refugees have traveled, from country to country, through seas, oceans, jungles, deserts and cities, trying to find refuge and safety. We call this the refugee highway. As you begin your walk, ask God for the holy imagination to see your steps beside the very steps of people fleeing persecution and war. Ask the Holy Spirit for eyes to see and a heart to respond as you pray for those who are journeying along the refugee highway right now. Many are unsure of where they will sleep tonight, where they will find food, when their journey will end, or from where the danger may come.

During your walk, pray for God's provision, presence and help for the millions of people journeying along the refugee highway.

## K2: Praying for Refugee Producing Countries

According to the UNHCR, these are some of the countries who have produced the most refugees in recent years

- 13 million Syria
- 8 million Colombia
- 5.4 million DR Congo
- 5.1 million Afghanistan
- 4.2 million South Sudan
- 3.7 million Somalia
- 2.8 million Ethiopia
- 2.7 million Sudan
- 2.5 million Nigeria
- 2.4 million Iraq
- 2.2 million Yemen

As you walk this second stretch of the journey, focus on just a few of these countries, or even just one, and pray for the conflicts and realities within the countries that are causing people to have to flee. Pray for peace in these nations and regions. Pray for peace on earth.

## K3: Refugees in the Bible

Many of the Bible's most beloved figures experienced forced displacement, including Adam and Eve, Noah, Abraham and Sarah, Hagar and Ishmael, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, Naomi, Ruth, David, Elijah, Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, the nation of Israel, the early Christians, Mary and Joseph, and Jesus.

As you walk this next part of the journey, choose one of these characters, or another whom you know of, and picture yourself walking alongside them in their displacement. Perhaps you are with Joseph in the pit, in slavery, and in prison until his deliverance and reunification with his family. Perhaps you are with Moses and the Israelites, fleeing from the great Egyptian Army and their slave owners, through God's miraculous parting of the sea. Or perhaps you are with Joseph, Mary and the child Jesus:

"An angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream. 'Get up,' he said, 'take the child and his mother and escape to Egypt. Stay there until I tell you, for Herod is going to search for the child to kill him.' So he got up, took the child and his mother during the night and left for Egypt..." Matthew 2:13-14

Choose a character and journey with them for the next kilometer.

#### K4: Refugees Close to Home



A young child artistically interceding for refugees during an Open Homes Hamilton IAFR Canada event

On this 4<sup>th</sup> leg of the journey, pray for refugees and refugee claimants (otherwise known as asylum seekers) in your own city, town or community. If you know some personally, pray

for them by name. If you don't have relationship with any displaced people, pray generally for God's help in their lives. Some practical things you can pray for are:

- Language for those who don't speak English or French
- Relationship and connection
- Reunification with families for those who have been separated from loved ones
- God's help with practical needs such as food, bills, and especially housing
- For their necessary dealings with the government and bureaucracy
- For connection with God through loving Christians

#### K5: Praying for Host countries

According to the UNHCR, these are the countries that are hosting the greatest number of refugees:

- Turkey (3.7m)
- Pakistan (1.4m)
- Uganda (1.2m)
- Sudan (1m)
- Germany (1m)
- Iran (979,400)
- Lebanon (949,700)
- Bangladesh (906,600)
- Ethiopia (903,200)
- Jordan (715,300)

Only 3% of the world's refugees are hosted in the Americas, whereas 31% are hosted in sub-Saharan Africa. Pray for countries who are caring for far more than their share of the need – for their economic and political stability, for their continued generosity and openness, and that the refugees and national residents will be a source of blessing to each other, and not of fear or distrust.

Pray for all the governments of the world to have a spirit of compassion, wisdom, cooperation and openness to care for forcibly displaced people.

Pray for the Church to have a spirit of hospitality, generosity and love towards refugees, as God has instructed us.

## K6: Praying a Psalm

During this 6<sup>th</sup> kilometer, read and allow Psalm 46 to guide your prayers...

For the director of music. Of the Sons of Korah. According to alamothe. A song.

<sup>1</sup> God is our refuge and strength,  
    an ever-present help in trouble.  
<sup>2</sup> Therefore we will not fear, though the earth  
give way  
    and the mountains fall into the heart of the  
sea,  
<sup>3</sup> though its waters roar and foam  
    and the mountains quake with their surging.  
<sup>4</sup> There is a river whose streams make glad the  
city of God,  
    the holy place where the Most High dwells.

<sup>5</sup> God is within her, she will not fall;  
    God will help her at break of day.  
<sup>6</sup> Nations are in uproar, kingdoms fall;  
    he lifts his voice, the earth melts.  
<sup>7</sup> The LORD Almighty is with us;  
    the God of Jacob is our fortress.  
<sup>8</sup> Come and see what the LORD has done,  
    the desolations he has brought on the earth.  
<sup>9</sup> He makes wars cease  
    to the ends of the earth.  
He breaks the bow and shatters the spear;  
    he burns the shields with fire.  
<sup>10</sup> He says, "Be still, and know that I am God;  
    I will be exalted among the nations,  
    I will be exalted in the earth."  
<sup>11</sup> The LORD Almighty is with us;  
    the God of Jacob is our fortress.

## K7: "Stuck People"



Sharing soap and food with residents of Dzaleka Refugee Camp in Malawi during the Covid19 Crisis

The vast majority of refugees find themselves "stuck" in a neighbouring country, often a country that itself has many social or economic challenges. Only a tiny fraction of the world's refugee population (in 2018, it was less than 1%) is ever resettled into a country like

Canada. Among countries who resettle refugees, Canada currently resettles the greatest number (28,100 in 2018). Compare this number to the millions of refugees living in Turkey, Pakistan, Lebanon and Sub-Saharan Africa.

As you walk kilometer 7, pray for Canada's resettled refugees, and for Refugee Claimants or Asylum seekers who find themselves trying to start life afresh in Canada. Also pray for the over 99% of refugees living in refugee camps or urban centres around the world who will never have the opportunity to be resettled elsewhere. This includes many children and teenagers who have spent their entire lives in settings of displacement such as refugee camps. Pray for God's hope, provision, and plans for their future in their lives.

## K8: Holy Imagination

For this part of the journey, ask the Holy Spirit to again ignite your holy imagination. Ask God to show you one person or one family who is currently struggling somewhere along the refugee highway. Perhaps they have been living for many years in a refugee camp with little hope for a future, perhaps they are waiting at a border praying desperately for someone to let them in for safety, perhaps they are on an unsafe boat in perilous seas, perhaps they are desperately hungry, perhaps they have lost people they love and are suffering from trauma. Ask God to show you someone, a man, woman, child, or a family along the highway, and pray for them specifically right now. Join your prayers with theirs for the miracle they need right now in this exact moment. Stand with them. Walk with them. Pray with them.

## K9: The Good News

Hebrews 13:1-3:

“Keep on loving one another as brothers and sisters. Do not forget to show hospitality to strangers, for by so doing some people have shown hospitality to angels without knowing it. Continue to remember those in prison as if you were together with them in prison, and those who are mistreated as if you yourselves were suffering.”

Acts 11:19-21:

Now those who had been scattered by the persecution that broke out when Stephen was killed traveled as far as Phoenicia, Cyprus and Antioch, spreading the word only among Jews. Some of them, however, men from Cyprus and Cyrene, went to Antioch and began to speak to Greeks also, telling them the good news about the Lord Jesus. The Lord’s hand was with them, and a great number of people believed and turned to the Lord.

As refugees have been forced to flee for safety, countless numbers of displaced people have entered into relationship with Jesus and have received his message of hope and salvation. They have heard about him through his Church and through acts of compassion along the highway. There are also many stories of miracles and of Jesus appearing to people in their dreams, just like in the book of Acts.

Let us also remember that many of those fleeing for their lives are already followers of Jesus, and as in Acts 11, when the disciples were forced to flee as refugees because of persecution, they themselves were the messengers of Jesus’ love to the nations.

Let us pray that God’s message continues to be revealed to people along the highway in personal and powerful ways. Let us also pray that God’s dispersed people – his missionaries - would share his love around the world, including in Canada, or wherever their journey takes them along the refugee highway.

## K10: Praise and Thanksgiving



Students from the STEP program – a school for refugee children in Beirut Lebanon operated by the Beirut Nazarene Church

As you walk this final kilometer, take time to praise God and give him thanks for all he has done in your life, and for all he is doing along the refugee highway. Give thanks for all the ways he will, and already is, answering the prayers you prayed today. Allow Psalm 146 to be your guide:

Praise the LORD.

Praise the LORD, my soul.

<sup>2</sup> I will praise the LORD all my life;

I will sing praise to my God as long as I live.

<sup>3</sup> Do not put your trust in princes,

in human beings, who cannot save.

<sup>4</sup> When their spirit departs, they return to the ground;

on that very day their plans come to nothing.

<sup>5</sup> Blessed are those whose help is the God of Jacob,

whose hope is in the LORD their God.

<sup>6</sup> He is the Maker of heaven and earth,  
the sea, and everything in them—

he remains faithful forever.

<sup>7</sup> He upholds the cause of the oppressed  
and gives food to the hungry.

The LORD sets prisoners free,

<sup>8</sup> the LORD gives sight to the blind,  
the LORD lifts up those who are bowed down,  
the LORD loves the righteous.

<sup>9</sup> The LORD watches over the foreigner  
and sustains the fatherless and the widow,  
but he frustrates the ways of the wicked.

<sup>10</sup> The LORD reigns forever,  
your God, O Zion, for all generations.

Praise the LORD.