

## Some people say.....



**A lot of refugee claimants are cheaters that are trying to jump the line...**

### *But the reality is...*

Refugees must meet very strict criteria to reach and remain in Canada. Whether they apply outside Canada or arrive at the border, they are subject to a screening and interview process in order to determine the legitimacy of their claim.



**We have too many immigrants coming to this country.....**

### *But the reality is...*

Each year the government sets a target for newcomers to maintain and grow the economy. Since 2010, 250-300 thousand newcomers arrive per year. On average, refugees account for around 10% of this total. We don't always even meet our quota!



**Newcomers to Canada get too many handouts.....**

### *But the reality is...*

Refugees are entitled to a one time household start-up allowance. Beyond that, they are entitled to the same social assistance as any other citizen. Around 50% of all refugees are privately sponsored, with charitable groups picking up the cost of their first year in Canada.

***"I was hungry and you fed me;  
I was thirsty and you gave me drink;  
I was a stranger and you welcomed me."***

Matthew 25: 35

***" You shall love the stranger,  
for you were once strangers  
in the land of Egypt."***

Deuteronomy 10:19



***".. we must move from considering others as threats to our comfort to valuing them as persons whose life experience and values can contribute greatly to the enrichment of our society."***

Conference on International Migration, 2018

Pope Francis

### **Society of Saint Vincent de Paul**

Serving the poor in Canada since 1846 through home visits, systemic change, and advocacy.

For further participation and information please contact us by email  
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# NEWCOMERS



## *Aren't You?*



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Vincent de Paul**

**Ontario Regional Council**

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## **“Who is my Neighbour?”**

When Arya’s husband went out for a loaf of bread he never returned. He was gunned down in the street, a victim of crossfire between two warring factions in their country.

Destitute and afraid, Arya and her children sought refuge in a neighbouring country. Conditions in the refugee camp were deplorable and she had lost all hope until her application for relocation to Canada was accepted.

Raj and Serina realized that opportunities were scarce for their children in their home country. Reluctantly, for the sake of their children’s future, they decided to leave the comfort and familiarity of their home and immigrate to Canada.

Both families are now working to improve their language skills, find meaningful employment, adapt to a new culture and make new friends in Canada.

When Jesus was asked “Who is my neighbor?” he pointed to the marginalized outsiders, the Samaritans.

Today, he would point to refugees and immigrants such as the families of Arya, Raj and Serina. Often isolated, marginalized and looked down upon, these newcomers face many challenges and hardships.

**They are our neighbours.**

## **Newcomers...New Neighbours...New Canadians**

### **Why newcomers are good for Canada.....**

- Canada’s birthrate is less than the replacement rate – newcomers are essential to maintain the population and spur economic growth.
- Canada’s immigration policy is designed to attract highly qualified workers to fill identified labour shortages.
- 52% of recent immigrants hold a Bachelor’s degree or higher, versus 24% of the Canadian born population. (Stats Can 2016)
- Canada’s social fabric is enriched through the diversity and dedication of the people who have chosen to relocate here.

### **Challenges newcomers face.....**

- Finding employment commensurate with their education and qualifications. The Conference Board of Canada estimates that the under-utilization of the skills newcomers bring to Canada costs the economy \$5 billion per year.
- In spite of high levels of education and qualifications, recent immigrants are over represented in low wage employment and poverty statistics. This is especially true for visible minorities.
- Most newcomers have left family, friends and supports behind. They need to adapt to a new culture and way of life.
- Unlike temporary residents, refugee claimants are not entitled to federal child benefits while they wait for their hearing, which could take months or years.

### **How we can help.....**

- Support government programs that assist victims of war and exploitation by offering them relocation to Canada.
- Support policies that extend basic benefits to refugee families and break down the barriers to family reunification.
- Consider having your parish sponsor a refugee family and invite newcomers to join parish groups. Help them feel as a welcome member of the community.
- Don’t tolerate or spread negative stereotypes and derogatory statements in conversation or through social media. Treat everyone with respect.