

First Met/St. John the Divine Refugee Support Group

Background

The program approved by Parish Council and First Met's Church Council in 2015 provided for four refugee sponsorships. One of these was for Najat, her husband and their three young sons who were in Jarmana Camp just outside of Damascus. Najat is the daughter of Moustaffa Rashid who St. John's sponsored in 2010. The family are Palestinians and had fled there from Iraq in 2003 when the US and UK invaded.

Canada failed to process their application in time, and when Australia offered a home and passage Najat and their family went there.

To replace Najat's family the Refugee Support Group asked Rebecca Siebert from the Diocese to recommend another family based on need and without reference to nationality. She did that and when we met to consider it there was a strong consensus to recommend to our respective church councils a Syrian single Mom and her two children, a son aged 17 and a daughter aged 14.

Discussion

The sponsorship for Najat and her family was budgeted and fully funded. Those monies can be applied to this new sponsorship. A new detailed budget and settlement plan will be worked out if:

- both church councils approve and
- Canada provides enough spots to accommodate this family in the announcement due on 1 March.

The mom in our sponsorship has a brother in Victoria, newly arrived with his wife and their two children. We would like to work with them on the settlement plan and apply together as co-sponsors. Because the brother and his family are themselves newcomers we do not expect they will be able to contribute financially, but their assistance with the settlement will be invaluable.

Recommendation

That Parish Council approve the sponsorship of the Syrian single Mom and her two children.

Chris Eve
13 February 2017