

The Truth about Persecution of Iraqi Christians

The following is an excerpt from an article by Sandro Magniser on the ongoing persecutions of Iraqi Christians. For the full English article, see <http://chiesa.espresso.repubblica.it/articolo/1345870?eng=y>

The October 31 attack on the Syriac Catholic cathedral in Baghdad, with 58 dead and many dozens wounded, attacked while they were celebrating the Mass, has been seen in the Vatican as a revealing event.

The dynamics of the massacre leave no doubt. The attackers were wearing explosive belts. They opened fire and threw grenades shouting, "You will all go to hell, but we to paradise. Allah is most great."

During the five hour attack, the terrorists prayed twice and recited the Qur'an as in a mosque. They devastated the altar, used the crucifix for target practice, and terrorized the children simply because they were "infidels."

What happened over those five terrible hours became known days later, little by little, thanks to the testimonies of the many wounded who were taken for treatment to Rome and other European cities.

Another concern of the pope and of other churchmen concerns the scarce interest that Western governments and public opinion are showing toward these anti-Christian attacks.

If one then looks within the Muslim world, the indifference with which such acts are allowed free rein appears even greater. Voices of condemnation are raised rarely, and feebly. Islamist terrorism seems to be – in common opinion – a simple excess instead of an unacceptable crime.

Did you know?

Leading by example: Archbishop Thomas Collins has personally sponsored a refugee family on his own.

Parish Sponsorship Iraqi Refugee Family

The Archdiocesan *Office for Refugees* has been working diligently to welcome those suffering in foreign lands as they seek a new beginning in Canada. Last year, this office co-hosted a national conference in Toronto to bring together experts in the field to determine how the church can respond pastorally just as so many Catholics were engaged in the effort thirty years ago to welcome thousands of displaced Vietnamese families.

The fruits of that discussion led to the formation of a National Initiative, spearheaded by the Archdiocese of Toronto entitled, One Parish-One Family, to assist Iraqi refugees most in need.

The Canadian Government has responded by making 3,000 additional spaces available through private sponsorship. In response to the invitation of Bishop Thomas Collins to all parish communities to consider sponsoring at least one Iraqi family, our parish of St. Benedict has initiated the process to do so.

A parish settlement committee is in place to tend to the various areas of preparation for the arrival of the family.

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The family selected consists of a mother, father and three daughters aged 12, 18 and 29. At this time, official documents are being worked on by a member of the committee in collaboration with a case worker at the Office of Refugees for the Archdiocese of Toronto (ORAT) and the Iraqi family now residing in Syria. The exact date of arrival of the family will be determined once the paperwork is submitted. Usually, it takes approximately 3-4 months after submission of documents. The committee will keep the parish updated. Our parish sponsorship of the family is for a 12-month period beginning on the day of their arrival.

In the meantime, there's lots we need to do NOW to prepare for their coming! Below are some details about how you could get involved. Consider these suggestions for yourself and share them with others who would join us in embracing the gospel message to welcome the stranger in our midst.

1. DONATE MONEY

A one-time collection will be taken during the **2ND COLLECTION AT ALL THE WEEKEND MASSES ON FEBRUARY 19 & 20.**

Cheques payable to:

ST. BENEDICT CHURCH~REFUGEE SPONSORSHIP

Post-dated cheques accepted. Tax receipts issued.

2. DONATE LIVING SPACE

Do you have a house / basement apartment / apartment / to make available for a family of 5 for 12 months? See contact below.

3. DONATE STORAGE SPACE

If you have a basement / a room / a garage that may be used as a storage space where household items may be stored until a living space for the family is found, see contact below.

4. DONATE SERVICE

These services are needed now and in the near future:

- people to find housing – *needed immediately!*
- people to prep the house
- cultural support: interpretation, understanding of refugee situations and issues
- drivers with cars to assist with transportation to shopping, dentist, doctor, government agencies, employment possibilities
See contact below.

5. DONATE HOME FURNISHINGS, APPLIANCES & HOUSEHOLD ITEMS

In the coming weeks, a list of items required will be provided. Until further notice, kindly CONSIDER WHAT YOU HAVE TO DONATE AND **STORE IT IN YOUR HOME.** *Please do not bring items to the church as there is no storage space here. Also, kindly do not call the parish office with your donations.*

CONTACT PERSON

Kay: kselecky@rogers.com / 416-674-1064

Kindly contact Kay AFTER March 6

Salesian Winter Semi-formal

A warm thank you
to all the youth and young adults
who participated in our

Salesian Semi-formal Reunion Dinner and Dance

Special thanks to

~ **Melissa Tramontozzi and Matthew Trevisan**

for all their hard work in coordinating the event and making
it such a success!

~ Our speakers: **Patrick Marcolla &
Veronica D'Amico**

~ The generous donors of door prizes: The Knights of
Columbus, Loreta and Domenico Tramontozzi, The
Trevisan Family, Lillian Quon, Katherine Newman, Rita
Stefanic, Foster Kwon, Veronica Ljubicic, Michael Carrera,
Cassian Joseph (Williams Fresh Café (Brampton), and
Tim Horton's.

**\$1,451.20 was raised for our
Capital Campaign Drive**

Our youth care about our parish!
We are grateful and proud of them for their efforts!



ST. DOMINIC SAVIO SQUIRES CIRCLE SUNDAY FEBRUARY 20TH

EXECUTIVE MEETING 6:00 TO 7:00 PM

CIRCLE MEETING 7:00 TO 9:00 PM

PARISH HALL

Thanks to all who participated
in our PIZZA LUNCHEON!

In total we raised \$1,231.67
in support of our Capital Campaign Drive.

LAST WEEK'S COLLECTION CAPITAL FUND TARGET: \$760,000

SUNDAY OFFERING \$7,817 SECOND COLLECTION \$762.00
Average Env. Donation \$14.26 as of February 6th \$210,778.46

Thank you for your ongoing generous support!

MASS INTENTIONS

Monday, February 14

8:00am Georgina & John McRae by Kathleen Zorzi & family

Tuesday, February 15

7:30pm Vincenzo De Gasperis by D'Andrea family

Wednesday, February 16

8:00am Michael O'Neill by O'Neill family

Thursday, February 17

8:00am Personal Intention for Filomena, by Filomena

Friday, February 18

8:00am Bernadette Hartley by Ruberto family

Saturday, February 19

8:00am Lou Colucci by Ruth & family

5:00pm Theresa & Marshall Fernandes, by Anne Fernandes

Sunday, February 20

8:00am Tom Popit by wife

9:30am Cleto & Maria Capretta by Carmelina & family

9:30am For the People

11:00am Giovanni Dal Bello by family

12:45am Manuel Verar Sr. by son & family



**PLEASE PRAY FOR
THE DEAD, ESPECIALLY:
George Kerr**

MEI MEETING on TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 15TH
after 7:30 p.m. mass until 9:00 p.m. in the Red
Room. All are welcome.

Bible Study Every Wednesday, church hall 7:30 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

February 16 ~ Making sense of Islam

March 2 ~ Jihad and the Crusades

March 16 ~ The Inquisition-The Black
Legend

March 30 ~ Catholics and Protestants-
What Happened?

CATHOLIC FAMILY SERVICES OF TORONTO ~ NEW BEGINNINGS FOR THOSE WHO ARE SEPARATED, DIVORCED OR WIDOWED

Looking for hope and guidance after the death
of a spouse? Searching to lighten this burden
of loneliness and sadness? In an informal
setting we meet for seven weeks, where we
share and learn from each other. You are
most welcome to join us as we seek answers
to help prepare us for our new journey. **Friday
Evenings at 7:30, March 4th to April 15,**
Facilitator: Mary Muir, Location: St. Louis-de-
France Church, 1415 Don Mills Road, North
York (Don Mills South of York Mills) Call to
register: 416-921-1163 ext 2246.