



# Current Issues in Prayer

June 2024

Welcome! The Pope invites people of good will to come together and pray **that migrants fleeing from war or hunger, forced to undertake journeys fraught with danger and violence, may find welcome and new living opportunities in their host countries.**



## Getting started:

I recollect myself in the presence of God. I ask that my prayer will lead me to understand better the pain, the anxiety and the turmoil that refugees are experiencing every day.



## Short story:

Shafaq fled her home in Dera'a, Syria. She shared her story with us through the Middle East Children's Alliance, which provides support to refugees in Lebanon. "I used to have a peaceful life and live in my amazing home in Dera'a. I enjoyed the nature around my house and the food coming from the land. I woke up every morning to the sound of birds singing. The brutality of the civil war forced my family to leave this house and to start the journey as refugees.



Since the start of our journey, we moved a lot in Lebanon, and I attended different schools. In the end, my family decided to go close to the border with Syria. We came to this area only because we want to survive. My father is working as an electrician, and this is the only income for our family. All my family is living in a tiny house with one bedroom, a small kitchen, and a bathroom. We are considered illegal because we don't have official documents.

I have fallen behind by two years in school. I am still doing very well, and I will continue to do that. I want to finish my education to help my family, and to help other people who want to learn. I consider myself lucky because I have received lots of educational, emotional, and psychological support. I am also really sad because of the unknown future that awaits me. Every day I wonder where I will be tomorrow. Yes, it's an unknown future."



## Time to reflect:

What are your plans for tomorrow? Now imagine yourself as a member of the Shafaq's family ... you cannot make plans ... what do you hope for?



## Let us pray:

Father, I recommend the lives of so many of our brothers and sisters who are forced to flee their home-country. May they reach a safe place. May we be filled with your Spirit, that we may show generous kindness to refugees in our country.



## Inspiration:

Your enemy is not the refugee. Your enemy is the one who made him a refugee."

*Tariq Ramadan*



## Hands on:

Next time I discuss illegal migrants with family and friends, I will keep in mind Shafaq's story before expressing my opinion. I will think of the pain of separation from home, the trauma of war and I will bear in mind the refugees' anxiety about their future.