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Dear Pastors of Jesuit Parishes in Canada,

Peace!

You are aware of the tragedy that is taking place in Syria, and of the thousands of refugees fleeing for their lives. I urge your parish to sponsor or help sponsor a refugee or refugee family. As you know, concern for migration is one of the five international priorities of the Society of Jesus as identified by the 35th General Congregation.

The French Canadian Provincial, Jean-Marc Biron, S.J., and I have written a letter to the Prime Minister of Canada stating our dismay at the current situation and at the government's response. You can read it at: <http://www.jesuits.ca/> Furthermore, the President of the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops, Archbishop Paul-André Durocher, has written an open letter to the Catholics of Canada asking for our solidarity with refugees :

[http://www.cccb.ca/site/images/stories/pdf/Responding to the refugee crisis - EN.pdf](http://www.cccb.ca/site/images/stories/pdf/Responding_to_the_refugee_crisis_-_EN.pdf)

Here are some sources of aid for you:

1. If you or your delegate can organize a team to sponsor a Syrian family as the Pope suggested to all European parishes, then you can turn to your diocese for help:

In Toronto: <https://www.archtoronto.org/refugee>

In Vancouver: <http://rcav.org/refugee-sponsorship-program-guidelines-and-faq/>

In Guelph: <http://hamiltondiocese.com/offices/immigration-refugees/>

In Winnipeg: sjustice@archwinnipeg.ca

In St. John: awalsh@rcsj.org

In Halifax: <http://www.halifaxyarmouth.org/index.php/services-and-outreach/refugee-sponsorship>

In Thunder Bay: <http://www.dotb.ca/index.php/services/refugee-office>

In Sault Ste. Marie: <https://catholicrefugeesponsors.wordpress.com/>

2. The new Director of the Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS) in Canada, Norbert Piché, can also direct you to sources of advice and support, or advise you about other ways to help refugees. He is at npiche@jesuites.org, or 514-387-2541 ext. 265.
3. JRS teams inside Syria and in neighbouring countries (some of whose Jesuits have studied in Canada) are providing humanitarian assistance as well as educational and psychosocial support. Canadian Jesuits International (CJI) has already channeled the generous support of Canadians to the JRS teams since this crisis began. People wanting to donate to JRS teams in the area can follow this link to Canadian Jesuits International: <http://www.canadianjesuitsinternational.ca/to-donate/donate-online/>

And of course, in your Masses please pray for refugees in Syria and throughout the world! The massive numbers of people on the move seeking safety is a symptom of the injustices that have displaced them.

« You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled underfoot. You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. ¹⁵ Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. ¹⁶ In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven. » Matthew 5 : 13-16

Your brother,



Peter Bisson, SJ
Provincial superior
Jesuits in English Canada