



WISCONSIN CATHOLIC CONFERENCE

September 17, 2021

STATEMENT OF WISCONSIN BISHOPS ON WELCOMING AFGHAN REFUGEES

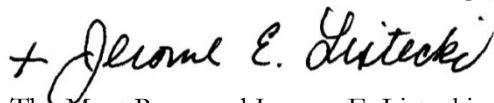
Dear Sisters and Brothers,

As the Catholic bishops of Wisconsin, we welcome the thousands of Afghan refugees who have arrived at Fort McCoy. After a harrowing departure from their homeland, they need the most basic necessities. To this end, we are directing our Catholic Charities agencies and parishes to do the utmost to assist them. Of the five Catholic Charities agencies that serve our state, the Catholic Charities of the Diocese of La Crosse, where Fort McCoy is located, is serving those who reside on base. Therefore, we are making an initial donation of \$30,000 to the agency. Catholics are strongly encouraged make their own donations on the La Crosse Catholic Charities Afghanistan Refugee Assistance website, <https://cclse.org/Afghanistan-refugee-assistance/>, or to local diocesan or parish collections designed to serve the Afghan refugees. At this time, monetary donations are preferable to donations of material goods.

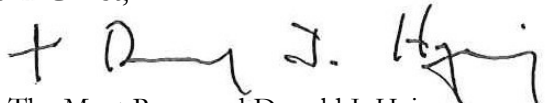
As Catholics, we are called to welcome the stranger. The over 12,500 guests at Fort McCoy will continue to need assistance in the coming months, especially legal assistance, social interaction, and warm clothing for winter. It has been reported that, after careful vetting, close to 400 of these guests will be resettled in Wisconsin. Therefore, the needs of this community will continue for months and years to come.

We urge all Catholics to open their hearts to those who have lost so much. Even more than material goods, these men, women, and children need to find friendship and security. They need to be shown that there is great hope for their futures and that their presence is welcome in our beautiful state. Having endured enormous trauma, they need time and support to heal. May God bless them and keep them in His care.

Sincerely Yours in Christ,



The Most Reverend Jerome E. Listecki
Archbishop of Milwaukee



The Most Reverend Donald J. Hying
Bishop of Madison



The Most Reverend David L. Ricken
Bishop of Green Bay



The Most Reverend William P. Callahan, OFM Conv.
Bishop of La Crosse



The Most Reverend James P. Powers
Bishop of Superior