

Europe Refugee Crisis

Prayer Pointers

Please pray and share these prayer pointers across social media, as well as considering how you can respond practically and financially. Visit sar.my/europerefugees for up-to-date information on The Salvation Army's response to the ongoing developments across Europe.

Salvationists and friends are encouraged to set aside time for focused prayer for refugees – and those who seek to support them – in this week's Worldwide Prayer Meeting, during Sunday and midweek meetings and in personal devotional times.

Content is provided by the international Centre for Spiritual Life Development, and Communications team at International Headquarters in collaboration with the Europe Zone office and International Emergency Services team.

The context

- 'Europe is facing the worst #refugeecrisis since the Second World War' (Dimitris Avramopoulos, EU official in charge of migration)
- The Salvation Army is responding to the needs of #refugees right across Europe. Get informed: <http://sar.my/europerefugees>
- #RefugeeCrisis: At least 350,000 migrants have arrived in Europe by sea so far this year [source: UN]
- #Greece alone has had 234,000 people land on its shores in 2015 to date, compared with 35,000 last year.
- More than 2,600 migrants have died or gone missing this year while crossing the Mediterranean Sea [source: IOM]
- The UN says that one in every 122 people in the world is currently either a refugee, internally displaced or seeking asylum

The biblical basis for support

- Consider these words from Psalm 146:9 - 'The Lord watches over the strangers'. What is your response?
- 'Look, the tears of the oppressed with no one to comfort them' (Ecclesiastes 4:1). Pray for those who have no way out.
- God's heart is with the foreigner and fugitive. Jesus became a refugee, fleeing with his parents to Egypt escaping Herod's death threats
- May these words give comfort: 'You are no longer strangers and aliens ... you are citizens and members of the household of God.' (Eph 2:11-22)
- Thank God that EVERYONE is accepted in his sight and loved by him
- Bring good news to the poor...release to the captives...sight to the blind...let the oppressed go free.' (Luke 4:16-21)

The reality

- Pray for an end to the conflicts in Syria, Afghanistan, Iraq, Somalia, Pakistan, Eritrea, Libya and so many other countries
- Pray for families in the heartbreaking position of having to flee their homes
- Pray for asylum seekers and refugees who have experienced trauma and persecution
- Pray for asylum seekers and refugees who have left loved ones in their country of origin and who are at risk of harm
- Pray that world leaders will make compassionate and wise decisions to provide refuge for those in need
- Pray that governments will act with humanity and in accordance with their international obligations
- Pray for families who have been bereaved in the process of leaving their country of origin.
- Pray for asylum seekers waiting for decisions to be made on their applications for asylum
- Pray for asylum seekers who have been evicted from their accommodation

Our response

- Pray and act! Donate to The Salvation Army's refugee response across Europe: <http://sar.my/europerefugees>
- Pray that we may love our neighbours with compassion, generosity and without discrimination
- Pray that the Church will continue to be a refuge for the outcasts
- Pray for asylum seekers and refugees to receive all the help they need, so that they can live the life of freedom and fullness God intends
- Pray that more individuals and families will step forward and offer space in their homes to those in need of help and healing
- May God continue to call us to step outside our comfort zone and worldview, for the sake of his mission and for others
- Pray for The Salvation Army's work in **Greece** as it provides food parcels and a safe environment for migrant and refugee families
- At the port of Piraeus in Athens, The Salvation Army is providing essential supplies to refugees from Syria and north African countries arriving via Kos and Lesbos
- A Salvation Army centre in Rome, **Italy**, is caring for 21 Eritrean asylum seekers. Ask for God's blessing upon them.
- The Salvation Army in **France** is providing space for 275 migrants in various centres and is offering meals to 60-80 migrants in Marseille
- In **Brussels**, The Salvation Army is accommodating 100+ refugees, including some very young children. Pray for them.
- A Salvation Army hostel in Jönköping, **Sweden**, has increased its capacity and is providing support through the asylum process

- In **The Netherlands** The Salvation Army has doubled its capacity for hosting refugees from 75 to 150 beds, with additional beds in crisis centres for the most marginalised. Refugees living in other shelters are being provided with clothing.
- In Copenhagen, **Denmark**, 20 beds are provided for migrants by The Salvation Army.
- The Salvation Army in **Switzerland** is currently hosting 2,500 people arriving from war-torn regions, providing food, healthcare, childcare, assistance with access to language courses
- In **Hungary** The Salvation Army is handing out clothes, shoes, hygiene articles, sleeping bags, blankets, water and food to refugees who have gathered at rail stations.
- In **Russia** The Salvation Army is providing asylum seekers with blankets, food and clothing.
- Salvation Army team members in **Romania** report that several migrants have needed assistance through ongoing homeless support, especially during colder weather
- In several places in **Finland** The Salvation Army has started communications with the Red Cross and other organisations who are running reception centres for asylum seekers to discuss possible coordination and support.
- In several centres in **Germany** The Salvation Army is working together with other organisations and local authorities to provide shelter and other support, including language lessons and clothing. Plans to scale up the response and support are currently being put in place.