December 30, 2019

Dear Bishops of Minnesota,

We Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet, Consociates, Partners and Friends thank you profoundly for the open letter you titled “Resettlement Policy: Create a Welcoming Society, not More Barriers, for Refugees.”

We wholeheartedly support your point in asking for changes to the order requiring consent from state and local governments to resettle refugees in their area. We especially note your timing for the letter when, as you state, we “celebrate the birth of Christ - who himself experienced life as a refugee.”

In acknowledging that “resettlement can bring new challenges for our communities,” you offer all of us permission to feel uneasy, while simultaneously challenging us to “create a welcoming society for those most in need.” We have for 25 years supported Sarah’s...an Oasis for Women as a home dedicated to safety and dignity for a diverse community of women where they can begin new and productive lives. All of the 30 women housed there are refugees or asylum seekers. Our ministries also include Learning In Style – education for adult new immigrants, St. Mary’s Health Clinics – which provides free medical care, outreach and education to low-income, uninsured families and individuals who are not eligible for government programs. We stand with you spiritually and practically in supporting refugees and in asking that we as a nation do better.

Thank you for the specific suggestions:
To our refugee sisters and brothers
To our elected officials
To those who support refugee resettlement
To our congregations and those of good will
To those who are challenged by the influx of refugees.

You, Catholic and Lutheran bishops, have given all of Minnesota’s people a superb example of working together for the common good. THANK YOU. THANK YOU.

Sincerely,

Susan Hames, CSJ
Suzanne Herder, CSJ
Cathy Steffens, CSJ
St. Paul Province Leadership Team