



## Merry Christmas & Happy New Year!



We would like to extend our warmest wishes to you and your loved ones for a Blessed and Holy Christmas, and a joyful New Year. We are deeply grateful to the many volunteers who have generously shared their time, talent, and treasure to

support refugees in need. May the Lord richly bless them for their kindness and generosity.

As we celebrate the birth of Christ, let us open wide our hearts to the Lord, embracing the grace of this sacred season. Christ, the radiant light has dawned upon us, revealing the mercy and tender love of God to the world. This is a time when light overcomes the darkness of sin, ushering in a time of peace and reconciliation. It is a season of profound joy, illuminating the hearts of all who have encountered Christ.

May the hope and love of this holy season fill your hearts and homes.

## What We've Accomplished Together

Together, with the support of numerous CG partner organizations, parishes and cosponsors, we have welcomed 556 refugees to Canada in 2024, where they have begun to live a life with hope and renewed optimism. We have also initiated resettlement applications to sponsor 752 refugees, setting the stage for their eventual arrival in Canada. This achievement stands as a testament to what we can accomplish together, fulfilling the Lord's call: "I was a stranger, and you welcomed Me."

*Continued on page 4*

## EMPP: New Talent for Employers

The Archdiocese of Toronto's Office for Refugees (ORAT) invites all Canadian employers in need of skilled labour to explore an innovative opportunity through Canada's Economic Mobility Pathways Pilot (EMPP). As a Trusted Partner of Immigration Canada, ORAT facilitates this unique program, providing businesses with access to a remarkable pool of skilled refugee talent.

### What is the EMPP?

The Economic Mobility Pathways Pilot (EMPP) is a groundbreaking initiative by Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) aimed at facilitating the immigration of skilled refugees and displaced individuals to Canada. This program not only offers these individuals a chance to rebuild their lives but also provides Canadian businesses with access to a unique pool of talent eager to contribute to Canada's economy.

### Benefits for Canadian Employers:

- Access to Skilled Labour: Through ORAT, employers can connect with candidates who possess skills in critical sectors like healthcare, skilled trades, IT, and more, helping to fill job vacancies that are challenging to address locally.

*Continued on page 3*

## Table of Contents

Christmas & New Year Greeting.....	Page 1
EMPP: New Talent for Employers.....	Page 1
What We've Accomplished Together.....	Page 1
Thanks to our Refugee Committees.....	Page 2
Work Underway on 2025 Applications.....	Page 2
Immigration Levels Plan 2025–2027.....	Page 3
Correcting Names on Key Documents.....	Page 4
Refugee Story.....	Page 5

## Work Underway on 2025 Applications

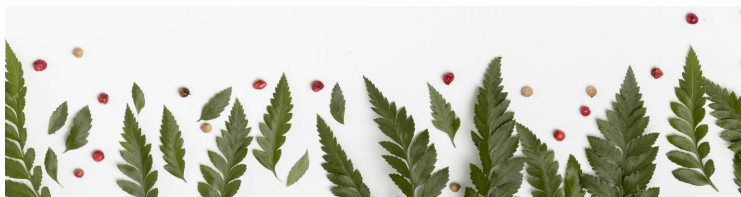


ORAT has successfully met its 2024 allocation from Immigration Canada and is now gearing up for 2025. Registrations for most of our Constituent Group Partner Organizations (CGPOs) have been completed, and cosponsors are being provided with deadlines for submitting their application to our office.

This proactive approach ensures we are prepared to submit cases to Immigration Canada as soon as they provide us with the go-ahead, which we anticipate will be in March, following the release of our 2025 allocation.

We have already received a substantial number of completed refugee sponsorship applications, with more expected in early 2025. **Cosponsors are urged to be patient**, as we process cases on a first-come, first-served basis. A Case Processing Coordinator will contact cosponsors when they are ready to process their case. It is important for cosponsors to meet the specified deadlines to maintain their position in the submission queue.

Cosponsors are directed to email their completed forms to [oratcases@archtoronto.org](mailto:oratcases@archtoronto.org). They will receive an automated response, confirming receipt of their email. Note that **only the first email** from each sender will generate this acknowledgement; subsequent emails from the same address will not trigger additional notifications.



## Thank You to Our Refugee Committees

Resettling refugees is a community-wide effort that extends far beyond our office, involving countless parishes and community groups, who come together to form refugee committees, and whose volunteer members generously donate their time, talent, and treasure. Their unwavering support is crucial to the success of our Project Hope mission, and we are deeply grateful for their dedication and commitment to transforming lives.

We would like to extend special recognition to the following groups who have completed their work to resettle a refugee family this past year:

- Corpus Christi Parish, Toronto
- Guardian Angels Parish, Orillia
- Holy Rosary Parish, Toronto
- Our Lady of Lourdes Parish, Toronto
- St. Benedict's Parish, Etobicoke
- St. Justin Martyr Parish, Unionville
- Sudbury Project Hope, Sudbury

A special Mass is being offered for the intentions of these refugee committee volunteers. The Mass will be celebrated at 12:10 PM on Saturday, February 8, 2025, at St. Michael's Cathedral Basilica.



The Archdiocese of Toronto's Office for Refugees (ORAT) is deeply grateful to the parish communities that settled a refugee family in 2024

Corpus Christi, Toronto	Our Lady of Lourdes, Toronto
Guardian Angels, Orillia	St. Benedict's, Etobicoke
Holy Rosary, Toronto	St. Justin Martyr, Unionville
Sudbury Project Hope, Sudbury	

To respond to the Lord's call,  
"I was a stranger and you welcomed Me", and help settle a refugee  
please e-mail us at [orateducator@archtoronto.org](mailto:orateducator@archtoronto.org) or call 437.290.9333

## EMPP: New Talent for Employers

*Continued from page 1*

- **Diversity and Innovation:** By hiring through the EMPP, employers can enhance workplace diversity, which studies show can lead to increased innovation and problem-solving capabilities within teams.
- **Social Responsibility:** Engaging with the EMPP allows businesses to play a direct role in humanitarian efforts, offering refugees not just jobs but a new beginning in a safe environment.
- **Cost-Effective Recruitment:** The program streamlines the hiring process, potentially reducing recruitment costs and time, as ORAT and other trusted partners assist in identifying and preparing candidates.

### How It Works:

Employers interested in accessing the EMPP can do so through ORAT, which acts as a bridge between Canadian businesses and skilled refugees abroad. ORAT assists in matching employers with suitable candidates, ensuring that all immigration related matters are well-managed, making the process smoother and more efficient.

### Call to Action:

Canadian employers, particularly those facing labour shortages, are encouraged to learn more about the EMPP through ORAT. By participating, you're not only solving recruitment challenges but also contributing to a more compassionate society.

For more information or to get involved, contact ORAT directly. Together, let's build a stronger, more diverse workforce while giving skilled refugees a chance to thrive in Canada.

### Contact ORAT at:

- Email: [empp-orat@archtoronto.org](mailto:empp-orat@archtoronto.org)
- Phone: (437) 290-9195
- Website: [Archdiocese of Toronto - Economic Mobility Pathways Pilot \(EMPP\)](#)

Let's turn opportunity into action. Access the Economic Mobility Pathways Pilot through ORAT today and help shape a future where everyone can contribute and belong.

## Immigration Levels Plan 2025–2027



On October 24, 2024, Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) unveiled the 2025-2027 Immigration Levels Plan, which sets out targets for both permanent and temporary residents. This plan categorizes immigration into Economic, Family, Refugees and Protected Persons, and Humanitarian & Compassionate streams. A notable change this year is the inclusion of specific targets for international students and temporary foreign workers, marking a new, holistic approach to managing migration in Canada.

**Refugee Sponsorship Challenges:** The Levels Plan also determines the annual quota for sponsored refugees. IRCC has highlighted a persistent issue where the demand for private sponsorship significantly outstrips the available slots, leading to an ever-growing application backlog and extended processing times.

### Measures to Manage Sponsorship Backlog:

1. **Pause on New G5 & CS Applications:** On November 29, 2024, IRCC introduced a temporary halt on new sponsorship applications from Groups of Five (G5) and Community Sponsors (CS), effective until December 31, 2025. This action aims to curb the expansion of the application backlog, working towards more predictable processing timelines. Despite this pause, IRCC will continue processing existing applications to meet the target of resettling 23,000 privately sponsored refugees in 2025, in accordance with the Private Sponsorship of Refugees (PSR) program objectives.
2. **Reduction to the Global Cap:** IRCC also announced adjustments to the Global Cap for 2025,

*Continued on page 5*

## What We've Accomplished Together

*Continued from page 1*

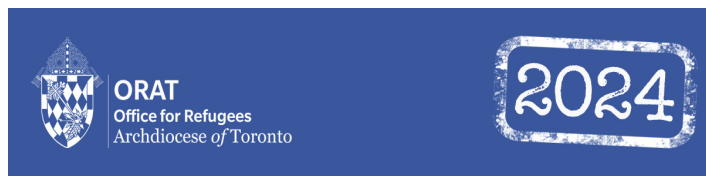
We are deeply grateful for the generosity of the faithful across the Archdiocese of Toronto, who have donated \$4.3 million to the Project Hope Initiative, a fund that was launched in 2015 to resettle 100 refugee families. We are happy to report that we have more than exceeded that target. To date, using these funds, we have welcomed 193 families (514 individual refugees) to Canada, with another 49 families on their way. In total, 860 refugees have benefited from the generosity of many who have given their time, talent, and treasure to address this critical need of our time. This is indeed a profound demonstration of God's people's love for suffering humanity.

While numbers give us a measure of our impact, the true story lies in the lives transformed by this vital work of the Archdiocese to Toronto.

With the Project Hope fund almost exhausted, we urge the faithful to consider supporting this work to help Christian refugees find safety in Canada. Donations can be made by cheque or online at [Archdiocese of Toronto - Donate to Office for Refugees](#). Cheques can be made out to ORAT and mailed to our office, which is located at 830 Bathurst St., Toronto, ON., M5R 3G1.

While we recognize that Canadians have genuine concerns regarding the impact that high immigration levels and poor integration have had on the Canadian economy and society, it's important to note that our efforts are predominantly focused on resettling Christian refugees who quickly become self-sufficient and who share values akin to those held by many Canadians.

The infographic, which is available on our website, summarizes the many successes of 2024 that we can collectively celebrate.



## Correcting Names on Key Documents



The Confirmation of Permanent Residence (COPR) is a crucial document for newcomers, especially during the first few months of arrival in Canada. It is needed to create a Permanent Residence (PR) card, to open bank accounts, and as identification.

Occasionally, Immigration Canada may misspell or mis-order the newcomer's name on the COPR. It is important for newcomers to verify their names on the COPR upon receipt. If there are any errors, they should flag it and inform the Immigration Officer at the airport.

The following will guide the newcomer if the error is noticed after leaving the airport.

1. Complete the Application Package: Click the following link to access the application form: [Request to Amend Valid Temporary Resident Documents or Information Contained in the Confirmation of Permanent Residence - Canada.ca](#).
2. Send the completed application to the [Operations Support Centre \(OSC\)](#) in Ottawa. The mailing address for OSC is as follows:  
Operations Support Centre (OSC)  
P.O. Box 8784 STN T CSC  
Ottawa, Ontario K1G 5J3
3. Apply for the re-issue of the PR Card: Once the error on the COPR has been corrected, the newcomer can apply to have their PR card reissued. Click the following link for further information on this process: [Request to Reissue a Permanent Resident Card \(PR Card\) - Canada.ca](#).

If the error in the newcomer's name was not made by IRCC, the options are:

1. Go through the legal name change process: Click the following link [Change name | ontario.ca](#).
2. Apply for a new PR card: Note that supporting documents, such as a legal change of name document issued in Canada, a foreign-issued passport, or official documents linking the names, may be required for a new PR card. However, these documents might not be readily available to sponsored newcomers, especially if they were issued in or by their country of nationality.

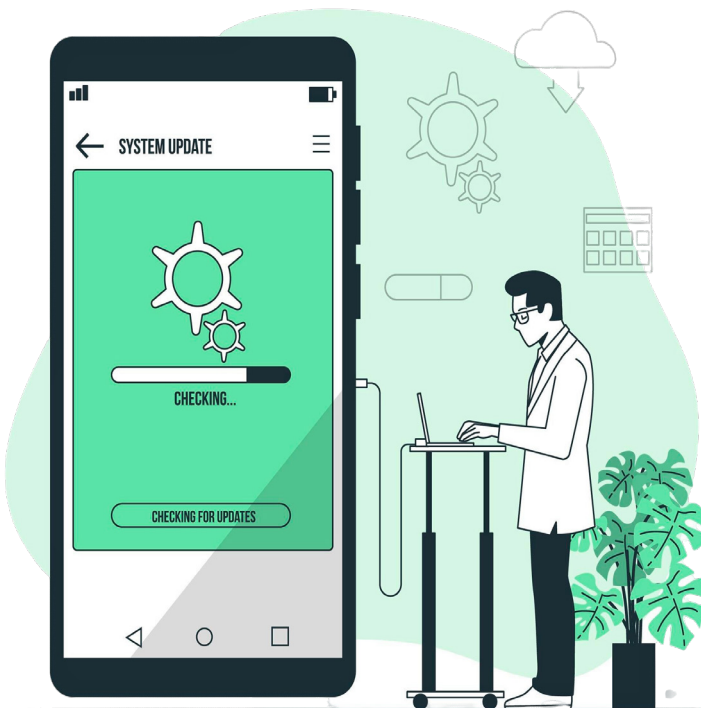
## Immigration Levels Plan 2025–2027

*Continued from page 3*

which caps the number of refugees Sponsorship Agreement Holders (SAHs) can sponsor annually. This cap reflects a reduction in line with the overall decrease in the Immigration Levels Plan, potentially leading to a 20% reduction in allocations for private sponsors. However, the impact might be softened if IRCC decides to reduce the number of reserve spaces. SAHs will receive their 2025 allocations in March, and in the meantime, organizations like ORAT are adapting to support Parish Refugee Committees, and refugee needs.

**Conclusion:** These strategic measures by IRCC are designed to streamline the refugee sponsorship process, aiming for efficiency and fairness in managing Canada's immigration system amidst high demand. For more detailed insights:

- [Notice – Supplementary Information for the 2025-2027 Immigration Levels Plan - Canada.ca](#)
- [Temporary pause on intake of refugee sponsorship applications from groups of five and community sponsors - Canada.ca](#)



## Refugee Journey Across Africa Ends



My name is Haile. I share this account of my journey as a refugee, which saw me traverse much of the continent of Africa, in search of safety.

The regime in my country, Eritrea, is known for its oppressive rule against its citizens. Forced conscription, disappearances, and indefinite national service are but some of the main push factors that continue to force young Eritreans to risk their lives to flee the country.

My own plight was no different. I became a victim of the regime's policy on forced conscription for national service. I was exploited under the guise of national service. My dissent to the government's policy resulted in my detention for six months where I experienced inhuman treatment and torture. In 2017, I fled my country Eritrea, to Sudan.

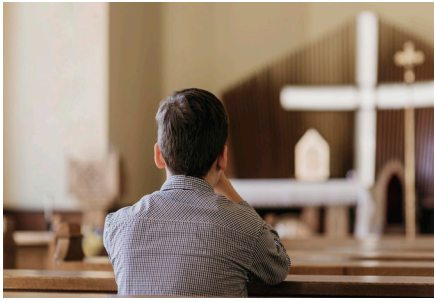
While in Sudan, it soon became apparent that it was not a safe place for refugees. This was during the time when the government of Omar al-Bashir was overthrown in 2019 plunging the country into a political and social crisis. The question of safety and security became so concerning, especially for us refugees. We lived in constant fear and anxiety. It was common for refugees to be detained or taken hostage from the streets and residential areas of Khartoum by various armed groups, trafficked in exchange for ransom money. Many refugees were smuggled to Libya in this manner. The Sudanese police frequently rounded-up foreign nationals for deportation to their home countries, increasing our fears and creating nightly uncertainties.



*Continued on page 6*

# Refugee Journey Across Africa Ends

Continued from page 4



I strongly believed that God had a plan for my life despite our experiences and difficulties. I prayed continuously to God to make a way for me to escape that country and lead a peaceful life. One day, God answered my prayers. My brother explained my situation to his friend, Father Ivo, a Salesian Priest. Father Ivo sought the help of his Salesian missionary counterparts in Toronto at St. Benedict's Parish to sponsor me. The parish was touched by my situation and generously decided to sponsor me to Canada. This was wonderful news. My sponsorship application process began in June 2020.

Hoping for a better life, I was overjoyed by this development. After a long delay, my refugee application was finalized by Immigration Canada in March 2023. I was scheduled to travel to Canada in July 2023 from Khartoum, Sudan. Unfortunately, a civil war erupted in April 2023, and my scheduled travel was disrupted and cancelled. Khartoum quickly turned into a battleground, and residents began to flee to neighboring countries. Fearing for my life, I decided to escape again, this time to Ethiopia. I was relocated to a newly formed refugee camp. However, due to frequent conflicts between the Ethiopian army and local Amhara militants around the refugee camp, the registration processes were hampered. Additionally, the lack of basic protections and necessities of life led me to make another difficult decision to leave Ethiopia and flee to Uganda in November 2023. I traveled through the desert and forests of Kenya on foot for six weeks. After the treacherous journey through Kenya, I arrived in Kampala, Uganda, enduring immense physical and psychological scars.

My resettlement was paused again as I needed to update my application to reflect my new country of asylum, resulting in my travel to Canada being delayed by another year and two months.

I finally arrived in Canada in September 2024. Throughout this treacherous journey, with all its challenges, God's plan was perfect and in place. This led me to my new community at St. Benedict's Parish in Etobicoke, which has welcomed and embraced me as one of their own. The future in Canada for me is promising and only beginning to unfold. I am grateful to the Office for Refugees (ORAT) and the Salesian community that ensured my safe resettlement to Canada to begin a new life.

*"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and future."* Jeremiah 29:11

## ORAT's Benefactors



# Archdiocese of Toronto

# ShareLife

## Fellow Collaborators

