

## Help us to help a refugee family begin a new life in the Reading area



A community-wide effort is underway in Reading to help resettle a refugee family in our area. Reading POWR (*People Organized to Welcome Refugees*) has signed on with Catholic Charities, a federally approved social service agency, to provide essential financial and social support to a refugee family that wants to create a new life in the United States.

The family will have undergone multiple background checks over a period of years and will be legally admitted into the country, eligible to work and to pursue U.S. citizenship.

The refugee family could come from any ethnic or religious group: half of all refugees admitted into the U.S. today are from Afghanistan, Syria, Somalia, or Sudan.

Reading POWR's role will be to locate and furnish a modest apartment for the family, stock their kitchen cupboard with food, welcome them at the airport, and then provide both a rental subsidy and community support for a period of six months as they adjust to life in America.

The first and most critical need is to locate affordable housing, which is a huge challenge in the Boston area. Do you know someone who might rent a 2-bedroom apartment here or in a nearby community to a deserving family for \$1700/month or less? The second pressing need is money to subsidize that rent for six months until family members are employed and able to pay that on their own.

Later, there will be a need for people to assist with English language conversation, occasional driving, and general orientation to the area, including a knowledge of local markets, services, and public transportation. Catholic Charities and other social service agencies will be involved throughout this process to help the family in adjusting to life in their new home country.

Reading POWR was spearheaded by parishioners at St. Agnes Church in Reading, but has since expanded to include a growing array of individuals and representatives from other area churches, including Church of the Good Shepherd, First Congregational, Korean Church of the Nazarene, Old South United Methodist, and Unitarian Universalist Church of Reading.

If you are troubled by ongoing news reports of refugees in crisis and want to do more, here is an opportunity to help real people. Reach out via e-mail at [ReadingPOWR@gmail.com](mailto:ReadingPOWR@gmail.com) and see how you can be of service. To make a financial contribution to the effort, checks payable to "St. Agnes Parish," with a "Refugee Support" note on the memo line, can be sent to Reading POWR, P.O. Box 38, Reading, MA 01867. Or visit [www.gofundme.com/readingpowr](http://www.gofundme.com/readingpowr). Learn more at our website: <http://readingpower.weebly.com>, or on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/RefugeesReadingMA/](http://www.facebook.com/RefugeesReadingMA/)