North American Dominican Promoters of Justice, Peace and Care of Creation

SILENT VOICES BIG TRUTHS

Fostering Gospel Justice and One Human Family

Silent Voices, Big Truths lifts up often unheard voices from immigrant communities through short reflections that invite us to encounter truth through the lived experiences of our neighbors.

A Place To Belong

We Hold These Truths to be Self-Evident…

…That the dignity and rights we celebrate as a nation belong to every person, including those seeking refuge and a place to belong.

As we mark World Refugee Day during the 250th anniversary of the United States, we offer this issue of Silent Voices, Big Truths. Many families carry stories of migration, displacement, or of seeking new beginnings. Through the Dominican lens of Veritas- Truth- we are invited to reflect on what these stories reveal about our values right now.

Today, the voices of refugees call out to our conscience. Refugees are people whose legal claims for protection have been fully evaluated and approved by authorities; in the United States, they are typically granted this status while still outside the country, often in refugee camps, before resettlement. As Dominicans, we recognize refugees not as strangers, but as neighbors, sisters and brothers whose dignity is God-given and inviolable.

Robert Sebatware survived a massacre in the Democratic Republic of Congo at age four and spent more than twenty years as a refugee in Uganda before resettling in the United States, where he has built a new life for his family. His story reflects both the resilience of refugees and what becomes possible when people are welcomed and supported.

Source: https://www.rescue.org/article/refugees-dream-home-comes-true-after-20-years

BIG TRUTHS

Refugees are often reduced to statistics or policy debates, yet each number represents a human story: a parent seeking safety for a child, a family separated by conflict, a person carrying grief, hope, and courage across borders. In listening to these often-silent voices, we encounter profound truths about human dignity, solidarity, and our shared responsibility to welcome the stranger. Their stories invite us to ask not only what kind of nation we wish to be, but what kind of disciples we are called to become.

"Who am I? Where do I belong?"

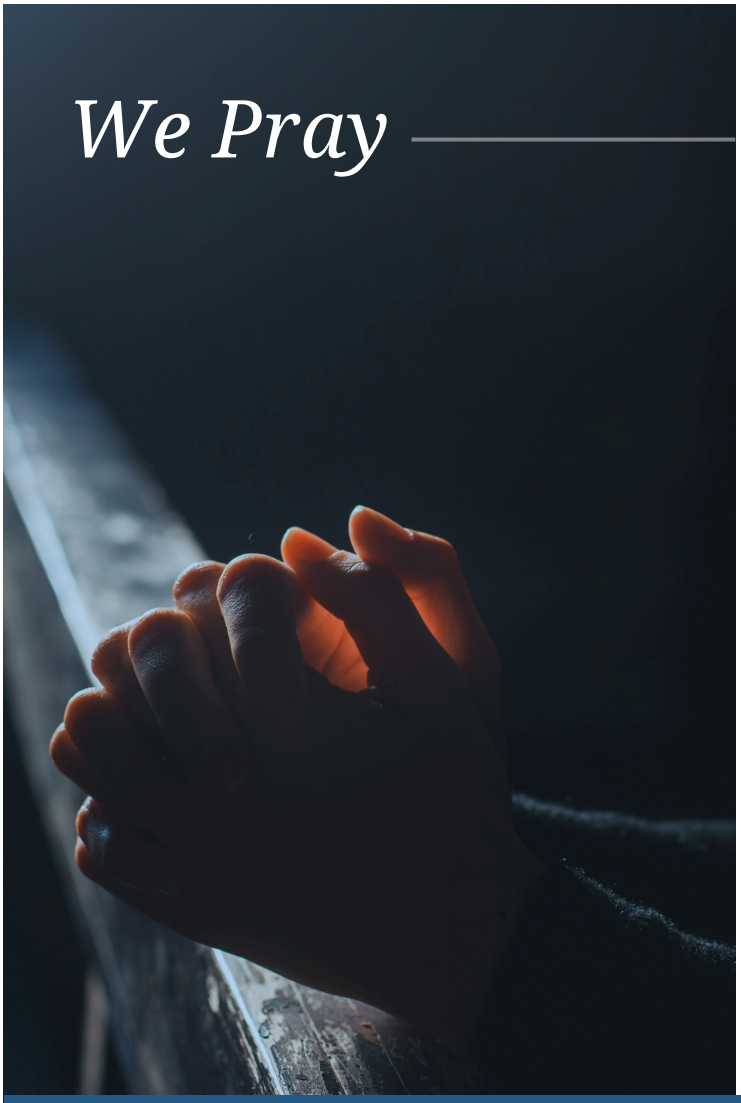
Mulu Bahre, refugee from Eritrea

"I'd lost more than my house and all my possessions. I'd lost my nationality, my identity, my name."

Yusra Mardini, Syrian refugee and Olympic swimmer

"We are human beings looking for hope."

Robert Sebatware, who spent more than twenty years in a refugee camp before resettling in the United States



We Pray

God of mercy,

Be near to refugees and all who have been forced from their homes.

Give them safety when they are in danger,

comfort when they are afraid,

food when they are hungry,

and hope when the future feels uncertain.

Strengthen families, protect children,

and guide those seeking shelter and peace.

Move the hearts of nations and communities

toward compassion, justice, and welcome.

May every displaced person find

dignity, rest, and a place to belong.

Amen.

Around the world, millions have fled violence, persecution, environmental devastation, and poverty in search of safety and a new life. Yet as displacement reaches historic levels, pathways to refuge are narrowing. Since October 2025, only a few thousand refugees have been admitted to the United States, a sharp decline from recent years and a reminder that policy decisions can determine whether vulnerable families find safety or remain in limbo. *(Source: BBC)*

Call to Action

Contact your members of Congress. Urge them to oppose President Trump's proposal to increase refugee admissions by 10,000 slots reserved primarily for White South Africans. At a time when refugee families fleeing war, religious persecution, political violence, and humanitarian crises around the world continue to face long delays and restricted access to protection, this proposal raises serious concerns about fairness, equity, and the integrity of the U.S. refugee program. The U.S. refugee system should be guided by humanitarian need and international protection standards—not race or political favoritism.