

The Refugee Crisis in Europe and the Middle East

Mothers' Union today affirmed its commitment to support refugees fleeing conflict and persecution and seeking sanctuary in Europe.

“Mothers' Union has the potential to help churches and communities right at the grassroots level maximise the support they can give – through prayer, through advocacy and through practical support” said Worldwide President, Lynne Tembey. “We recognise the complexity of the situations faced by governments across Europe in dealing effectively with this crisis both in the short and longer term, and they are much in our prayers. However, regardless of current government and EU policy, this is a situation which requires a heartfelt response from each one of us. We welcome the leadership and encouragement of the Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby today, affirming that whilst our individual efforts may seem trivial, by working together we can resolve crises and make a difference.”

“Today I am calling on our membership across the world to make that heartfelt response. We have a long history of helping those fleeing persecution, conflict or violence. Whilst across many parts of the world: Africa, Oceania, and Asia, we are experienced in dealing with large-scale crises of this nature, it is many years since we have been faced by such a crisis in Europe. But our membership here, as across the globe, will, I know, have a heart to meet the humanitarian needs of families – both physical and spiritual. We are committed to playing our part in both the prayerful and the practical outreach of the Church.”

Mothers' Union has over 72,000 members in Europe, predominantly in Britain & Ireland, but including small branches within Europe of members who were themselves asylum seekers who fled conflict. Every year Mothers' Union across the world, most recently in developing countries, brings emergency relief to around 25,000 people through the provision of food, basic household provisions of blankets and sleeping bags, cooking utensils, water sanitation kits and soap.

Mothers' Union's prayers can be found following.

Lord Jesus, as a child, you fled from persecution;
you have lived the fear, desperation, hunger, cold, and isolation
that being a refugee brings.

Bring comfort and peace of heart Lord,
to all those risking their lives to seek safety,
Protect and guide their journeys, Lord.

“Faith, hope and charity, but the greatest of these is charity.”

Father, bless those who see the plight of refugees,
and who are meeting those needs.

For those who are exhausted, give them renewed strength;
For those who feel overwhelmed, give them courage;
For those who feel fearful, we pray for peace and compassion.

Lord, we want to hear your voice again,
Guide us as we, as Mothers’ Union, reach out in your name
to refugees both in Europe and the Middle East
and those affected by conflict in South Sudan and Burundi,
in Thailand and many other areas across the world.
Bless the work of Mothers’ Union,
And lead us, Lord, to fully play our part.

We thank God that our countries are blessed with resources.
We uphold in prayer the governments across Europe and the Middle East,
asking for wisdom for leaders to meet the needs
of the most vulnerable.

Father God, you are our place of refuge and safety,
We pray for you to help us at this time of need.
Give us compassion combined with wisdom
to meet need with the right resources.
May our practical action be rooted in your love as
we reach out as the hands of Christ.