

**ENCOURAGEMENT & SUPPORT
TOOLKIT**

**WELCOME
CIRCLES**
for Refugees

Start the journey at Archseattle.org/WelcomeCircles
ARCHDIOCESE OF SEATTLE | Immigrant & Refugee Ministry



ARCHDIOCESE
OF SEATTLE



DEAR WELCOME CIRCLE LEADER,

Thank you for your yes to Welcome Circles! We are so grateful for your willingness to participate in this ministry, and are so excited to see what God does through your journey.

Our toolkits are designed to help you every step of the way. In them, you will find information about refugees, getting started as a Welcome Circle, group roles, fundraising, housing, health care, and much more!

That being said, every Welcome Circle is different, just as every family is different. You will most likely come across unique circumstances in your circle. Rest assured, our team in the Immigration and Refugee Ministry of the Seattle Archdiocese is prepared to walk with you, giving you the encouragement and support you need, pointing you to helpful resources, and praying for you daily.

Jesus promises us in the Gospel of Matthew that when we feed the hungry, clothe the naked, and shelter the homeless, we are doing it for Him. This is a beautiful miracle! As you serve newcomers to the United States, you will actually be serving Jesus and drawing closer to His Sacred Heart! This is a transformative experience and an enormous blessing!

As you begin this journey, please always feel free to reach out to us at any time with any questions, concerns, or suggestions you may have. We look forward to hearing from you and walking with you in this journey!

In Christ,

The Welcome Circles Team

Then the King will say to those at his right hand, ‘Come, O blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me.’ Then the righteous will answer him, ‘Lord, when did we see thee hungry and feed thee, or thirsty and give thee drink? And when did we see thee a stranger and welcome thee, or naked and clothe thee? And when did we see thee sick or in prison and visit thee?’ And the King will answer them, ‘Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brethren,

You did it for me.



WELCOME CIRCLES

Seattle Archdiocese
Immigrant and Refugee
Ministry

For help with your journey as a Welcome Circle, you can reach out to the Welcome Circle Coordinator, Amy Nash, at amy.nash@seattlearch.org or the Welcome Circle Associate, Rebecca Burdullis, at rebecca.burdullis@seattlearch.org.

Also, make sure to join our email list at www.archseattle.com/welcomecircles.



WELCOME CIRCLES WITH YOUR PARISH

There are many ways to include your parish in this ministry!



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www.archseattle.org/welcomecircles

PULPIT TALK

If possible, give a brief announcement at your parish to let your community know what you are doing. This is part of how you can act as a missionary disciple! Those who have participated in Welcome Circles have expressed how much it has blessed their own journey in faith. You have the chance to share that blessing with others.

On the following page, you will find an example of a pulpit talk. Feel free to use it, edit it, and make it your own.

Remember that sharing personally is powerful. If possible, share about your experience personally and why you have said yes to Welcome Circles.

WELCOME CIRCLE TABLE

After you have given your pulpit talk at Mass, consider hosting a table in the vestibule or at social hour after Mass. This gives people the chance to come, ask questions, and get more details about how they can be involved.

Be sure to have some **concrete ways that people can help**, such as donating furniture, home goods, or grocery gift cards. If your parish participates in Raise Right (formerly Scrip), perhaps suggest that parishioners purchase gift cards for your newcomers through that program.

This is your opportunity to get to know your community and find out what resources are available in your parish. Perhaps someone is a real estate agent, owns a rental property, is available to drive newcomers to appointments, or would like to organize a meal train for the new family.

ASK FOR PRAYER

There are many ways to invite parishioners to pray for your Welcome Circle.

Perhaps ask to have a prayer request published in your parish bulletin. An example could be:

Our parish Welcome Circle ministry invites you to pray for the new refugee family that we are preparing to welcome! Please pray for the (family name here) family, for their safe travels to the United States, for their smooth transition into our culture, and that they may experience the love of God through our community. For more information about Welcome Circles, visit:

www.archseattle.org/welcomecircles



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PULPIT TALK EXAMPLE

Introduce yourself.

I am excited to share today about a wonderful opportunity. As we come together each Sunday to hear God's Word and receive His very Presence, we are then commissioned to go out and spread the Good News as we live out the rest of our week.

I must confess that I don't always know how to do this. At times I feel small and inadequate in the face of the many difficult problems of today's world. Though I would like to be of some help, I am often just left wondering, **what can I do?**

I was recently invited into a ministry where our efforts make a real difference; we share our blessings with others; build community; and we are able to be the face of Christ on earth for a family in need.

Some of our parishioners are forming a "Welcome Circle" to assist a refugee family in adapting to their new lives in the United States. These refugees have gone through all of the legal pathways to be here in the US. Each has a different story, but each has been forced to flee their homeland.

Welcome Circles have been forming in the Seattle Archdiocese for a over year, and there are currently 25 active circles.

Each Welcome Circle assists its own refugee family in 5 main areas:

1. Housing;
2. Employment;
3. Health Care;
4. Education; and
5. Public Benefits.

Refugees typically have few resources available, and need assistance to settle, adapt, and thrive in a new culture.

No particular qualifications are needed – just a desire to assist your fellow brothers and sisters and to grow in charity.

While this is a big responsibility, it becomes very manageable with more people to take on small tasks. We need your help!

Please come see us after Mass at our table where you can ask questions and find out more information.

Thank you!





MISSIONARY DISCIPLESHIP

As Welcome Circles, you are naturally growing in your gifts as missionary discipleship. Here are some more ways to continue to grow.

www.archseattle.org/welcomecircles



THE CALL

In *Evangelii Gaudium*, Pope Francis encourages us, "In virtue of their baptism, all the members of the People of God have become missionary disciples."

You can read more of what Pope Francis says about immigrants and refugees in [his message for the 107th World Day of Migrants and Refugees](#).

Website:
https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/messages/migratio_n/documents/papa-francesco_20210503_world-migrants-day-2021.html

You may not have realized this, but as you take steps towards becoming a Welcome Circle, you are also more fully living out the call to missionary discipleship!

ST. FRANCES CABRINI

St. Frances Cabrini is the patron saint of immigrants; a saint whose compassion greatly influenced the Catholic Church in Seattle.

In 1903, St. Frances Cabrini came to Seattle after Pope Leo XIII asked her to "go West" to continue her mission to care for the poor. Cabrini ministered to orphans in Seattle's own Villa Academy, then the Sacred Heart Orphanage, in which God worked his miracles through her!

St. Frances Cabrini's Feast Day is on November 13th, a day for our ministry to ask for her intercession and to remember her example of missionary discipleship.

MARYKNOLL

We are delighted to collaborate with Maryknoll to further our faith journey and to grow in our walk with Jesus to serve others.

<https://maryknoll.org/>

**ST. FRANCES
CABRINI -
PRAY FOR US!**



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