



Living the  
**Gospel**

## ShareLife **Schools Newsletter**

### **Supporting immigrants and refugees**

Imagine arriving in a foreign country, not knowing the local language, and not knowing who can help you find housing and employment. Now, imagine how this hardship has completely magnified in this time of pandemic, when it is even more difficult to find the necessities in life. It is your gift to ShareLife that is helping immigrants and refugees establish a new life in Canada amidst uncertainty.

### **You helped the Dia Desso family through the Schools Campaign**

The Dia Desso family – father, mother and their four daughters – were forced to flee the Cote d'Ivoire due to the civil war. They sought safety in neighbouring Ghana, where they met a team from the Office of Refugees of the Archdiocese of Toronto (ORAT). ORAT facilitated the family's private refugee sponsorship by Good Shepherd Parish in Thornhill.

A year and a half later, the family boarded a plane to Toronto. It was a joyous day for the newcomers and their parish sponsors.

The parents began ESL classes immediately, while the girls were enrolled in nearby Catholic schools. Adjusting to winter weather and learning English proved to be very difficult, but they were blessed with good health and plenty of support from the parish.

Three years later, they are totally independent. The father loves his job driving a forklift, while the mother is at home with their one-year-old son. The eldest daughter began courses at Seneca College and the other daughters continue to thrive at school.

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# Living the Gospel



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On Holy Saturday last year, the whole Dia Desso family was received into the Catholic Church. They are proud to be living in Canada and are grateful to ORAT and their sponsors for the opportunities they have been given.

## **Your support makes a difference**

At least 528 newcomers were welcomed to Canada by ORAT in 2019, while nearly 4,000 people received services from Catholic Crosscultural Services last year.

Thanks to schools across the Archdiocese, agencies are able to identify refugee families abroad and match them with parish sponsors. The agencies that ShareLife supports guide newcomers through the resettlement process, help them find a job and a place to live, and provide counselling to refugees suffering from trauma.

Since many people are unable to support ShareLife financially at this time, it is a great blessing to have the prayers and encouragement of the Catholic schools of the Archdiocese. Thank you for supporting the work ShareLife does for those in need.

# Immigrants and refugees

The ShareLife Schools Campaign directly helps these families who have gone through the great hardship of sacrificing all they own and relocating to a foreign land.

## Catholic Crosscultural Services

Catholic Crosscultural Services (CCS) provides immigrants and refugees with services to facilitate their transition to life in Canada. Programs include settlement counselling, English language instruction, employment assistance, and private refugee sponsorship.

## Catholic Community Services of York Region

CCSYR is a Family Service Agency offering counselling and group services to help people cope with mental health needs, parenting issues and relationship challenges. CCSYR is also a Settlement Agency, assisting immigrants and refugees in over 30 languages.

## Office of Refugees of the Archdiocese of Toronto (ORAT)

ORAT helps resettle refugees from overseas to Canada facilitates the Private Sponsorship of Refugees Program of the Archdiocese of Toronto, by. The office works with parishes and religious orders to help newcomers settle and integrate into Canadian society.

"Without you, ShareLife could not fulfill its mission to Live the Gospel by providing for those in need. Together we are making a real difference!"

– **Cardinal Thomas Collins**

Your gift to ShareLife is helping immigrants and refugees establish a new life in Canada.

Visit **[sharelife.org](https://sharelife.org)** to see exactly who your donations are helping!