



 Lutheran Immigration
and Refugee Service

REFUGEE SUNDAY

Claudette's Story

“Resettlement in the U.S. is a second chance at life.”

On April 12th, 1994, a grenade hit my home in Kigali, Rwanda and that was the end of life as I knew it. Everyone has heard of the Rwandan Genocide, but nothing you hear can compare to the experience of living through it as a child. My father was taken from our house and shot four times. As we fled, I noticed that the children were the most important things to the parents. No one was running back to take papers, or jewelry, or televisions. No. They were running back to find their children and keep them safe. Many people died on the way to the refugee camps from illness, violence, and sheer exhaustion. Even in the camps, people were dying and grief was a luxury no one could afford.

After 12 years in refugee camps we were resettled in Rhode Island. We had to figure out a lot by ourselves, and sometimes didn't know how we would pay rent or buy groceries. Despite being thrown into a new world, we knew our one goal was to continue our education. This drove my sister and me to start an afterschool tutoring program for refugee children in Providence, RI.

Resettlement in the U.S. is a second chance at life. Hopes are renewed and opportunities for success are opened that lead to living a dignified life.

Unlike Claudette, not all refugees receive protection, embrace, and empowerment. Today, more than 4.8 million Syrian refugees urgently need protection.

**Visit [LIRS.org/RefugeeSunday](https://www.lirs.org/RefugeeSunday)
to learn more about how you can help refugees.**



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LITANY FOR REFUGEES

Leader: Mighty Lord, as you guided the Israelites, through the wilderness,

People: be a pillar of fire by night and a pillar of cloud by day for refugees in search of new hope and new life.

Leader: As you brought the Israelites out of bondage to freedom,

People: bring refugees out of persecution to safety.

Leader: As you protected the Israelites through 40 years in the desert,

People: protect those who languish for years in refugee camps.

Leaders: Wipe away their tears of sorrow,

People: that their mourning may give way to joyous hope.

Leader: Put an end to warfare and tyranny,

People: that some may return home without fear of violence.

Leader: Open the doors of safer nations,

People: that some may find new homes in new lands.

Leader: Rebuild their lives,

People: that they might enjoy the fruit of labors in peace.

Leader: Restore their material goods,

People: that they might sustain their families in prosperity.

Leader: Revive their hope,

People: that they might face a future with promise.

Leader: Shine your grace upon them,

People: that they might know your love

Leader: Strengthen their bonds of friendship and family,

People: that they might serve one another with encouraging love.

Leader: And inspire your churches to welcome the stranger,

People: that together we might build communities of hope where strangers become neighbors and friends, and brothers and sisters.

Amen.

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