



Dear Parishioner/Friend,

Last September we held a public meeting in the Stillorgan Park Hotel. The purpose of that meeting was to discuss the possibility of housing a refugee family from Syria in our area. The response was positive and encouraging.

I am glad to say that we are now in a position of ensuring that the hope expressed at that meeting may become a reality. Yesterday, with members of the action group set up after the meeting, I met Marwan and Rodina and their three daughters. (Their story that was published in the Irish Times is also attached here) They are refugees from Syria looking for a family home and stability after a long time in a direct provision centre. Both Arwan and Rodina are civil engineers and had a comfortable life before ISIS took hold of their country and as Christians they had to flee. Now they have nothing except as they said, over and over again, each other.

Currently we are looking for a house to rent for two years in the area. They will partly pay the rent and we hope, through the generosity of people, to pay the rest. Do you know anywhere where we could start the process? Could you or anyone you know meet them and perhaps offer them employment?

When my experience is so different from another's I ask myself, what would I feel like if this happened to me? What would it feel like if my family was torn apart and they were refugees? What would I want for them?

As we come close to Christmas we hear about the refugees Mary and Joseph far from home looking for a place to give birth to a child. One person was kind to them and gave them somewhere to stay. This Christmas the story we hear year after year could be brought to life by giving a home to this family.

Thank you for reading the letter.

FR Tony Coote

November 2015