Christmas Reflection

**Allison Duvall** 00:10

Why do you support refugees?

00:12

I support refugees because my family were refugees.

00:15

I support refugees because we are all God's children and we all deserve a safe place to grow in God's love.

00:21

I support refugees because God made us all in God's image.

00:25

I support refugees because I'm a legal guardian of a minor asylee named Carol from Burundi.

00:32

I support refugees because my Lord was a refugee.

00:36

Because I welcome and I love my neighbor.

**Allison Duvall** 00:41

Hi, and welcome to Hometown, a podcast for Episcopal Migration Ministries, the refugee and immigration ministry of the Episcopal Church. I'm Allison Duvall.

**Kendall Martin** 00:50

And I'm Kendall Martin. Thank you for joining us during the season of Advent. Today's reflection comes from Presiding Bishop Michael Curry, the 27th and current Presiding Bishop and Primate of the Episcopal Church.

**Allison Duvall** 01:03

We hope you enjoy today's reflection.

**Presiding Bishop Curry** 01:09

Hello, I'm Michael Curry, Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church. Just one year ago, who could possibly have imagined how very different and difficult would be the time in which we find ourselves this Christmas in the year 2020. Where are the Christmas carolers now? The obligatory office parties, the long lines at the airport. The neighbors dropping by for some good cheer and a little egg nog. crowded Christmas Eve services when you have to arrive early. Make sure you get a seat. Many and varied voices belting out Oh Come All Ye Faithful, Joy to the World The Lord Has Come, Silent Night, Holy Night. Where the many hugs, handshakes, back 1000 other little things that many of us took for granted just one year ago. But of course not everyone among us may have those fond memories of Christmas Past. For some, perhaps they found themselves in a new land, having left behind all that they had ever known, driven partly by fear and partly by hope from a homeland that was no longer home to a new world that may or may not accept them. Whether refugees or immigrants, or asylum seekers or displaced persons, just one year ago. These were and are beloved children of God around us among us, not yet with us for whom Christmas was simply another day on a journey in search of a life, free of fear, full of hope. They, just like another family 2000 years ago, this family too, was displaced, fleeing for their lives to another land, protecting their child, their baby. This baby who would go on to bring peace and promise to countless people throughout the ages. Just one year ago we gathered together in our homes and places of worship, to remember that child, Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. We gathered to remember that child born in a manger, we gathered to remember that child of whom angels sang Gloria In Excelsis Deo. We gathered to remember that child for whom wise men came from afar, bearing gifts, seeking to worship the presence of God among us. We gather to remember even now, that child who was born, who grew up, gave his life for others, for us, who showed us the way of love in the way of life. That child who taught us in these words, "Then the righteous will answer him, Lord, when was a way that we saw you hungry and gave you food or thirsty and gave you something to drink? When was it that we saw you a stranger and welcome you? Or naked and gave you clothing? When was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you. On that day the king will answer them truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you have done it to me." This year, this Christmas, may we sing our praises still, even if only in our hearts. This year, this Christmas, may we who just one year ago enjoyed a Christmas will have joyful conditions not possible to have now, remember the many around us among us, and not yet with us who knew more fear than hope just one year ago This Christmas, this year may we rededicate, reconsecrate our lives to sheltering the homeless, welcoming the stranger, feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, to be the welcome outstretched arms of Jesus, even in our times, even in our world, even in our own hardships. This year, this Christmas, may we celebrate this silent, holy night with a new awareness of our common humanity. Born of the common one God, who is the God and Creator of us all. God bless you. May God hold you. God remind you of his never failing love. May God teach us and show us the way to love one another as he loves us. Blessed Christmas.

**Kendall Martin** 07:05

Thank you so much for joining us today listeners. Stay tuned for the next season of the Hometown podcast.

**Allison Duvall** 07:12

Follow us on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram where we are emmrefugees.

**Kendall Martin** 07:16

In the season of giving we invite you to make a gift to support the refugee and immigration ministries of the Episcopal Church through the work of Episcopal Migration Ministries. Visit episcopalmigrationministries.org/give or text Hometown to 91999.

**Allison Duvall** 07:33

Our theme song composer is Abraham Mwinda Ikando. Find his music at abrahammwinda.bandcamp.com.

**Kendall Martin** 07:41

Until next time, peace be with you and all those you consider home.