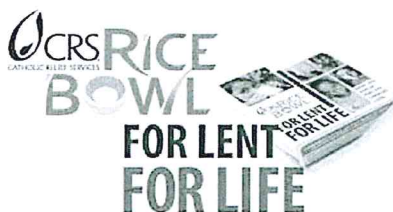


Life Notes



AN UNLIKELY REFUGEE

Ahmed Fares never expected to be a refugee. A civil engineer fluent in three languages, including English, Fares and his wife were raising their three young children in the Syrian city of Aleppo when civil war broke out. Three years ago, when escalating violence closed city schools, the resourceful father put his graduate degree to work to homeschool his children. But 18 months ago, their home was destroyed, and after moving three times, the family ended up in a small room on the edge of their devastated town. Neither electricity nor water was available. That is when they paid smugglers to get them into neighboring Turkey where they could catch a small boat bound for Greece, part of a river of refugees fleeing the war-torn Middle East to safe havens in Europe.

A FACT-FINDING MISSION

Ahmed Fares' story was recounted by Atlanta deacon Steve Swope, who met the family on a recent fact-finding trip to the Balkans with the Global Fellows Program of Catholic Relief Services. CRS supports and assists local Catholic charities and other humanitarian partners that provide direct aid to refugees like the Fares family.

In Greece and Serbia, Deacon Steve and his colleagues saw Europe's refugee crisis firsthand. Last year, he notes, almost a million migrants arrived in Greece, and 1,500 more come daily. Some are economic migrants, primarily north Africans seeking work and better lives for their families, but only a few of them are granted asylum. The majority are refugees fleeing Syria, Afghanistan and other war-torn lands, largely families with children who may travel on to Germany and other European countries. The young single men among them, says Deacon Steve, are typically "advance men" staking out a place for families they have left behind in war zones or refugee camps.

LENT FOR LIFE

Like the Fares family, most refugees want temporary asylum in the hope they can one day return to peaceful homelands. Of the many people he met, Deacon Steve says, "None were looking to be supported by governmental social services, and in fact most expressed surprise that they were even getting help from charitable organizations."

But they do need help, he notes. First of all, they need our prayers. They also need advocates willing to speak up for people whose suffering stems in part from American intervention in the Middle East. And they need the food, warm clothing, shelter and medical care provided by Catholic Relief Services and other charities. Let's keep them in mind this Lenten season as we make small sacrifices to fill our CRS rice bowls.

You can read Deacon Steve's blog at <http://deaconsview.com> and find further information about CRS's "Lent for Life" rice bowls on the CRS website, <http://www.csricebowl.org>.

Our Lady of Lourdes Monthly Calendar

MARCH 2016

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
<p>6 Girl Scout Cookie Day RCIA 8:30A Women's Council 9:30A Sunday School 10A Teen Ministry 10:00A Parenting Ministry 10A Social Action 11:30A St. Vincent De Paul 11:30A</p>	<p>7 Zumba Class 7:15P</p>	<p>1 Lourdes Lunch 11:30A Zumba Class 6:15P Lector Prep 7P Baptismal Class 7P</p>	<p>2 Zumba Class 6:15P <i>AGLD</i> Rehearsal 7:15P Bible Study 7:00P Starbucks 650 Ponce De Leon Ave Atlanta G.A. 30308</p>	<p>3 Feast of St. Katharine Drexel Lourdes Lunch 11:30A AGLD Rehearsal 7:00P Choir Rehearsal 7:00P Just Faith 7P Zumba Class 7:15P</p>	<p>4 "Lenten Fish Fry 6P" Stations of the Cross 7P YAAG Meeting 7:30P</p>	<p>5 AG Youth Class 10A Lector Prep 10:30A Dance by Kenya 12N Sankofa Youth 2:00P 1st Reconciliation 2:30P Confirmation Class 2:30P Rosary 4:30PM 5:00PM Eucharist</p>
<p>13 Daylight Savings Begin RCIA 8:30A Sunday School 10:00A Teen Ministry 10:00A Parenting Ministry 10A KPC/KPCLA Meetings 1:30P "Dancer's Afternoon of Praise 3:00P"</p>	<p>14 Stephens Ministry 6:30PM Pastoral Council Meeting 6:30P Zumba Class 7:15P</p>	<p>15 Lourdes Lunch 11:30A Zumba Class 6:15P</p>	<p>16 Zumba Class 6:15P <i>AGLD</i> Rehearsal 7:15P Bible Study 7:00P Starbucks 650 Ponce De Leon Ave Atlanta G.A. 30308</p>	<p>17 Lourdes Lunch 11:30A JustFaith 7:00P AGLD Rehearsal 7:00P Choir Rehearsal 7:00P Zumba Class 7:15P</p>	<p>18 "Lenten Fish Fry 6P" Stations of the Cross 7P Men's Ministry Move Night for Edgewood 7:30P</p>	<p>19 AG Youth Class 10A Dance by Kenya 10A Confirmation Class 2:30P Teen Ministry Lock In 4P Rosary 4:30PM 5:00PM Eucharist Bookstore Open</p>
<p>20 Palm Sunday First Day of Spring Bookstore RCIA 8:30A Sunday School 10:00A Teen Ministry 10:00A Parenting Ministry 10A Haiti Ministry 11:30A SVDP Meeting 12N Alumni Meeting 2P</p>	<p>21 Taize Prayer Group 8:00PM Zumba Class 7:15P</p>	<p>22 Lourdes Lunch 11:30A Zumba Class 6:15P</p>	<p>23 Zumba Class 6:15P <i>AGLD</i> Rehearsal 7:15P Bible Study 7:00P Starbucks 650 Ponce De Leon Ave Atlanta G.A. 30308</p>	<p>24 Holy Thursday Lourdes Lunch 11:30A Holy Thursday Service 7P Zumba Class 7:15P</p>	<p>25 Good Friday Church Office Closed Good Friday Service 7P</p>	<p>26 Holy Saturday AG Youth Class 10A Eucharist 11A Dance by Kenya 1:30P 8:30PM Vigil</p>
<p>27 Easter Sunday 8:30A & 11:30A Services Symphony Hall 1280 Peachtree Street Atlanta, GA 30309</p>	<p>28 Church Office Closed</p>	<p>29 Lourdes Lunch 11:30A Zumba Class 6:15P</p>	<p>30 Zumba Class 6:15P <i>AGLD</i> Rehearsal 7:15P Bible Study 7:00P Starbucks 650 Ponce De Leon Ave Atlanta G.A. 30308</p>	<p>31 Lourdes Lunch 11:30A AGLD Rehearsal 7:00P Choir Rehearsal 7:00P Zumba Class 7:15P</p>		

Save the Dates

Lenten Reconciliation ~ Saturday, March 12 ~ 2:00P

Holy Thursday & Good Friday Services ~ Thursday & Friday, March 24 & 25 ~ 7P

Holy Saturday Easter Vigil ~ Saturday, March 26 ~ 8:30P

Easter Sunday Services, Sunday, March 27 ~ 8:30A & 11:30A ~ Symphony Hall, 1280 Peachtree Street