



Sanctuary

West Coast Refugee Sanctuary Group

A PROJECT OF ALL SAINTS CATHOLIC PARISH, GREENWOOD
WESTERN AUSTRALIA

SUMMER 2005/06

Vol I. No. 2

Our message . . .

Recently I had the pleasure of being at Perth Airport for the arrival of a refugee family from Sierra Leone. I should explain that I've done this many times in the past - 2pm in the afternoon or 2am in the morning - meeting refugee families on arrival at Perth airport. The fact is, it's a real pleasure to be there and see the faces, the excitement, and if you look deep enough, I'm sure you can see the relief in the eyes of people as they walk through the arrivals door at the Perth international terminal. It's a relief that you and I will probably never know. Many of these people have lived in the squalor of refugee camps for many years, some have known no other life. The camps are basic to say the least. There are the problems with getting enough food and water, tribal conflict and outsiders are continually causing serious problems.

Now they're walking through the arrivals door at Perth Airport. How different can this be? No more shooting, no more aggression, food and water, a safe place for them and their family to sleep. A future. This is what lies on this side of the arrivals door at the Perth international airport.

Dennis from Sierra Leone arrived as a refugee almost three years back. I had the pleasure of meeting Dennis the day he arrived in Perth. He was 24, excellent English, tired but eternally grateful to be here. We spoke about his past and about his hopes for the future. As time went by Dennis needed a job as 'working for the dole' didn't suit his current situation. We spoke of jobs in the north in the mining industry and shortly after, on his own initiative, he purchased a train ticket to Kalgoorlie and spent a week door knocking for employment. By now Dennis was established and confident so my part as a volunteer assisting his settlement was over.

I lost track of Dennis until mid 2005 when a request arrived for assistance to help reunite his family. You see, many of those who arrive as refugees are forced to leave their mothers, fathers, brothers, sisters, sons and daughters behind. What I didn't know about Dennis is that the whole time he was here getting established - he could never forget his sister and two brothers in Africa. He applied as a proposer, to



have them come to Australia. Although he has a job at Woodie Woodie in the north, he couldn't raise the entire airfare. We, with the help of our donors at WCRSG were happy to provide the funds needed to pay the airfare. We do this as an interest free loan which is repaid over time so that others can also be helped.

At 2pm on a November afternoon, those doors in the arrival terminal opened once again, this time to welcome Dennis's sister Salome and brothers Jonathon and Desmond. I looked into their faces and again saw the signs of jubilation mixed with relief and thanks giving. I will never tire of this as I too feel a similar sense of relief now that they have finally arrived.

As you can imagine, Dennis was wild with excitement. There were handshakes, hugs, kisses, shouting and he couldn't be happier - his family had arrived.

At WCRSG we have helped eight families pass through the arrivals doors at the Perth international terminal in 2005. In 2006 I hope to be at the doors again as they open and welcome another family that so desperately need to be here with their loved ones.

Stan Kilpin

WEST COAST REFUGEE SANCTUARY GROUP (Inc.)

PO Box 217, Greenwood, Western Australia 6924.

Contact: Stan Kilpin (08) 9440 5800.

It's a long journey from Sudan

The journey to peace and freedom has been long and treacherous for Michael and Engelina Nogor and their six children. The family arrived in Perth last month and have settled in Ballajura. Michael and Engelina fled their home in southern Sudan after Government troops from the north killed his parents and two brothers in 1986. They settled in the capital Khartoum where they raised five children with hunger, deprivation and persecution a constant presence in their lives. At times Michael was fortunate to gain employment with the Save The Children (UK) where he was able to use his building skills.

Government policy and intimidation against the southern Sudanese was an everyday occurrence. After many years of this treatment the Nogor family

escaped via a steamboat up the Nile to Cairo in 2003. It was in Cairo that the youngest member of the family, Garang, was born. The Egyptian Government is not welcoming of refugees from Sudan so life for the Nogor family continued to be extremely difficult. An extended family member who had settled in Perth two years ago proposed the family for settlement in Perth. On gaining the Visa 202 from the Australia Government it was then necessary to find the airfares



Michael and Engelina Nogor and their six children have recently settled in Ballajura

for the family of eight. Funds came from a number of sources including the proposer and a no interest loan from the West Coast Sanctuary Group. Settling into Perth has been somewhat overwhelming. The family are now keen to learn English and are excited with the prospect of attending school next year. However, there is still sadness and regret for those extended family members who they have left behind.

Your support is vital to our work

If you would like to join the group as an active member and attend meetings, you would be most welcome.

However, you may not have the time but are interested in the valuable work being done to assist others. We invite you to become an Associate Member - no meetings to attend, but you are involved and kept informed of our activities. With you, we can continue - without you, many may be lost.

FUNDRAISING

Sanctuary relies solely on the generosity of our Australian community to directly assist suffering refugees. If you can assist with a bequest, donation, grant or with fundraising and would like to discuss this, please contact Stan Kilpin on 9440 5800.

DONATION and MEMBERSHIP FORM

Name:.....

Address:State:.....Postcode:.....

Phone:.....Email:

- I wish to become an associate member. \$50
- I wish to donate to WCRSG:
- I would like a tax receipt for the above donations.

EVERY DOLLAR DONATED IS USED FOR LOANS.
NO DONATIONS ARE USED FOR ADMINISTRATION.
ALL DONATIONS ARE TAX DEDUCTIBLE.

Kindly return the completed form to: **West Coast Refugee Sanctuary Group, PO Box 217, Greenwood, WA 6924**

