



West Coast Refugee Sanctuary Group

A project of All Saints Catholic Parish Greenwood WA

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You Just Need a Little Faith

When Faith Duku was no more than a few weeks pregnant with her third son, her husband was taken away into the army. That was the last time she ever saw him. Six months into her pregnancy the rebels came to her village in southern Sudan. Faith and her two little boys fled across the border into Uganda.

Not long after she arrived at the Refugee camp in Uganda, Red Cross workers asked Faith if she had any family or friends overseas that they could try and contact on her behalf. Faith remembered her husband's cousin George, who had come to Australia as a refugee some years before. Faith wrote him a letter for the Red Cross to pass on if they could find him. The Red Cross workers warned Faith that they might not be able to find George, but they would try to do their best.

The Red Cross Family tracing service did find George – in Perth. After exchanging letters and phone calls for two years, George was able to sponsor Faith and her children to come to Perth.

It was very difficult for George to find all of the money needed to transport Faith's small family to Australia. George is a young dad himself, with a wife and two little ones of his own. He works two jobs to support his young family.

George approached our group through Brother Geoff and we were able to loan him the additional money for Faith and her boys, George 10, Samson 7, and Salvatore 3, to come to Australia.

After a thirty two hour journey starting in Kampala and ending in Perth via London and Singapore, Faith and her little family arrived to a beautiful Perth morning on March this year.

A couple of days after Faith got here, I took her to Centrelink. While we were waiting for her appointment, I asked Faith what she wanted to do. Faith told me that she wanted to study to be a nurse. She said that she felt inspired by the nurses who had come around to the immunisation clinics in the Refugee Camp.

After the appointment, we went over to the shopping centre for a coffee. This was the first time that Faith had ever been out for coffee. Something that many of us take for granted was something that she had never done. I'm no Barista, and I had great fun explaining the choices available to her. Faith finally decided on a hot chocolate, when it arrived I then found myself trying to explain what a marshmallow is!

I have caught up with Faith a few times since she has been here. She and her boys have settled well. Faith is well on the way to realising her ambition to become a Nurse. She is progressing well in her English studies and in the last lot of school holidays she got her Learner's permit and a Senior First Aid Certificate. Little Salvatore goes to child care a Central TAFE when his Mum is studying and young George and Salvatore currently attend the Highgate Intensive Language Centre. They are progressing well and next year they will move into mainstream schooling at St Peter's school in Bedford. I look forward to catching up with Faith again soon to see how close she is to her next goal of getting her driver's license & getting a car.

Since our inception the group has supported 160 family members reunite under the special humanitarian visa program of UNHCR. The joy of watching family reunions will never dim. The support of fellow West Australians in our endeavours to help people often in dire need is paramount. To continue to provide interest free loans to families we need your continuing support. If you can assist financially in this humanitarian effort please print the donation form on our web site at www.sanctuarywa.com.au or send a cheque or money order to our postal address P.O. Box 217 Greenwood 6024.

Pictured below are members of WCRSG at our inaugural annual general meeting in November 2006. (From the left) Trevor, Flavianna, Fr. Vin, Angela, Paul, Jen, Stan, Jim & Fred.

