

Get Involved: Pray



EMBRACE Prayer Group
January 2013

Every culture's values, norms and lifestyles are different; however, there's one aspect of every society that does not differ greatly, the importance of family. The role of family is important in every society because it is the main foundation and structure of society itself. Here is a story of one boy living in Ireland who was separated from his mother and brother.

"John" grew up in Mogadishu, Somalia. He arrived in Ireland alone at the age of 16 as a separated child. He was placed with a foster family in Cork but found it difficult to integrate with another family when all he could think about was his own mother and brother who he had been forced to leave behind in Somalia. He was granted refugee status in 2010 and last year applied for permission for his mother and brother to join him in Ireland. Although refugees have a right to apply for "family reunification", the process can be long and arduous – often taking two years or more. In the interim, refugees and their families face extended periods of desperate worry and insecurity, never knowing if they will be able to bring their loved ones to safety in time.

When I think of my own family, both of my brothers have emigrated and live abroad. They are lucky because they have their children and wives living with them to support each other. I pray that those who make this island their home are given the same opportunity to allow their families to join them.

Contributed by Dr. Helen Young, Immigration Officer for the Council of Immigrants, Columba Centre

This month we give thanks for...

- The joy that comes with family reunification for both migrants and the society they live in.
- The contribution that people make to our land, especially those who are here without their families.
- All the people who made the island of Ireland feel like home for those who are here on their own.

We pray for...

- Men and women who have made Ireland and Northern Ireland their home but whose families are not living with them.
- Organisations across the country and the EU that work to support and advocate on behalf of migrants to help guarantee family reunification.
- Those families who are currently separated from each other – that they may be reunited safely and as swiftly as possible.

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter and to pray with us throughout the month. Do you have a topic and/or an item of concern or joy that you would like to share with the EMBRACE Prayer Group? If so, please contact jenna@embraceni.org.