

The Refugee Situation in Europe: An Opportunity to Grow in Grace?

In 2015 more than 1 million people fled a crisis in their homelands to seek a safe haven in Europe. These men, women, and children, Christians, Muslims, people of other faiths or no faiths crossed borders and seas to seek a better life, freedom, security, hope, and peace in Europe. The crisis from which the refugees fled caused a social crisis in Europe. Governments of EU states seek to spread the refugees evenly among states and work hard to place the refugees in temporary housing while their asylum applications are processed. Meanwhile, while many European citizens are welcoming the strangers and providing them with help in every way possible, others point out that ‘the stranger is danger.’ They fear a loss of jobs, values, or safety. What are the challenges the Church in Europe faces when they come to grips with all of this? What opportunities are there for the Church to respond to the crises of refugees and societies? What are the opportunities to be examples of hope and grace, to welcome the strangers, and to be peacemakers to the society at large?

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1. Background

2. Refugee crisis: an opportunity to grow in Grace

A. What is grace?

a. Some characteristics of grace

B. Vertical grace should be expressed in horizontal grace

3. How does this look in light of the refugee crisis?

A. Growing our awareness of the sovereignty of God

B. Respond with the grace you've received from God

C. Accept that Islam is what a Muslim says it is

D. Contact real Muslims

E. Enter into their lives

4. Conclusion