

WELCOME THE STRANGER

This month we want to focus on one of our projects. This is a project which has been running for about 8 years, providing food parcels to asylum seekers who are awaiting the outcome of their appeal and to those who are denied asylum and are awaiting return to their own country. Those who are denied asylum would have their lives threatened by immediate return. They come from countries such as Iraq, Iran, Cameroon, Libya, Czech Republic, Russia, Zimbabwe, Somalia, Uganda, and Ethiopia. The age range of those receiving our help is from a few months to about 70.

A. and N. are a coloured couple from South Africa. They had a small but successful mobile phone business built up through several years of hard work.

They speak of the dangers of living in "their" city where gangs of young black men roam the streets by day and night, attacking people with guns and knives. No one is safe, whether going to work, coming home or seeing to their daily business. A. was subject to an attack by a gang: she was raped and stabbed with knives. A. and N. lived in fear. To prevent attack in their home they had to pile furniture against the door and were afraid to go out. They decided to leave South Africa and come to the U.K. where they have applied for asylum and are awaiting results from the Home Office. Recently, they were given a flat in Cardiff and approximately £ 20 a week for food, clothes and necessities. They have virtually what they stand up in and have many needs re food, clothes and furnishings.

They are Muslim by faith though A.'s parents in South Africa are Christian. They describe life in this country as "heaven" by contrast with South Africa and are determined with God's help to "come through" and work to make a better life.

By now it has been seven long years since P. fled the war zones of the Ivory Coast and the rebel troops of the MPC (Milice Populaire de Cote d'Ivoire). Like many others, he finds himself in Cardiff, far from the wife and children he was forced to leave behind. In 2005, a decision was made for the official support he was receiving through the Home Office to be withdrawn. His dilemma is a common one. If he returns to his homeland his life is in danger. If he stays in Wales, he is unable to obtain legitimate employment.

This has left him, to all intents and purposes, destitute. But he is a believer. P.'s gratitude to the Lord for the support he's received in recent times from the City Temple's Church is very deep. "In times of great depression, God is there for us".

The point has come when a proper answer to P.'s problems needs to be found. A new approach has been made to the Refugee Council. We trust that the help of friends and the prayer of the Lord's people will soon bear fruit. We made contact with P at the Thursday drop-in session at Minster Church. His tears, along with his thanks for the food parcel he was given, speak more eloquently than words can tell.



Ready to go home with a food parcel... African style!



An asylum seeker working as one of our volunteers.



Thursday morning
At Minster Christian Centre

I would like to take this opportunity to show you my appreciation for all the help and support you have given to my family. I really enjoy coming to see you every Thursday and spending time with you all. A special "Thank you" to you for teaching me the Bible, for all the food and clothes you have given us. We have also thoroughly enjoyed all the teas and coffees we have had with you.

Faduma (from Somalia)

Thank you to all who supported our fundraising Soiree at the Hippodrome Musical on November 2nd. We raised over £1800 and are grateful for your generous gifts. We hope to be able to build up a fund in order to purchase a centrally located building which we can use for all our various ministries. Please pray for the people mentioned in this letter and for others traumatized by their past experiences.

He defends the cause of the fatherless and the widow, and loves the alien, giving him food and clothing. Deuteronomy 10:18

www.rainbowofhope.co.uk
rainbowliz@btinternet.com

Charity No 1088856
Tel 20764243