



Memo

Date: August 30, 2021
To: Priests, deacons, brothers, sisters, principals and chancery staff
From: Vanessa Russell, CEO Catholic Charities Atlanta
Re: Response to resettle refugees from Afghanistan

The events unfolding in Afghanistan are tragic. Catholic Charities Atlanta (CCA) stands ready to welcome those families being resettled to the U.S. who sacrificed so much to aid American efforts over the past 20 years. In cooperation with our partners in the community, we are helping families directed to Atlanta restart their lives.

We are reminded of the work we did with Cuban refugees in the 60s and in the mid 70s when the first wave of Vietnamese refugees came to Atlanta. We supported those families who needed us then, and we are here for these newest refugees from Afghanistan who need us now.

Answering the call to serve

Catholic Charities Atlanta is the resettlement agency designated by the US Conference of Catholic Bishops to resettle refugees in Georgia. We have welcomed three Special Immigrant Visa (SIV) families from the processing center at Ft. Lee Virginia who have been evacuated from Afghanistan so far. We expect to embrace many more in the coming weeks. These families will need our guidance and support to start over in a new country and be successful. Our case managers and support staff have been working overtime to prepare to receive these families who have gone through so much for the chance of a more secure life. Our website features more information about what is needed to support them. You can access that [here](#). Please continue to check our website for the latest developments and ways you can join us in ensuring the success of these new families in Atlanta. The website also features resources for those trying to help others leave Afghanistan.

We expect to receive five-six families that will come as evacuees without Special Immigrant Visa (SIV) status and will therefore need more assistance and support to become independent. Please contact me at vrussell@ccatlanta.org if your parish or ministry would like to explore an opportunity to sponsor one of these families for up to six months.

Please join us in praying for those who lost their lives carrying out the mission in Afghanistan and for peace and safety for those still in harm's way.