



August Membership Resource

This document is for members of the JustFaith Network.

Do not copy, share, or forward without permission.



www.justfaith.org
(502) 429-0865

In partnership with:





Exile and Wandering



Zaatari in Jordan, currently the largest camp for Syrian refugees.

About This Resource:

June 20, 2019 marked **World Refugee Day**. In 2000, the United Nations made the decision to dedicate June 20 of each year as a day to raise awareness of the situation of refugees throughout the world. The United Nation High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) published the latest numbers of refugees worldwide:

- 41.3 million internally displaced people
- 25.9 million refugees
- 3.5 million asylum seekers

The number of asylum seekers waiting at the **U.S.-Mexico border** has gone up over the past few months and is now at about 19,000 people.

The reality of displacement and exile may be far from our own daily reality; however, this is one of the most pressing humanitarian crises today. This resource invites you and your community to listen to the story of Shafi, an Afghan refugee who landed on the Greek island of Lesbos after a long journey. JustFaith Ministries commissioned an exclusive interview with Shafi that is included in this resource. It was conducted by Yann Larrieu, who has worked with refugees in Greece for the past three years in Athens and on the island of Lesbos.

Take time to listen to Shafi's story. We suggest you listen to it in two parts and reflect on what he shares in between listening sessions. Feel free to use this resource for yourself or gather a group from your community. Activities are organized for a 90-minute session.

Resource Links:

UN Page on World Refugee Day: <https://www.un.org/en/events/refugeeday/>



UN High Commissioner for Refugees: <https://www.unhcr.org/refugeeday/>

UN High Commissioner for Refugees statistics: <https://www.unhcr.org/ph/figures-at-a-glance>

Christian Peacemaker Teams in Lesvos: <https://cptmediterranean.wordpress.com/>

Oxfam reports on Moria Camp in Lesvos: <https://www.oxfam.org/en/tags/lesvos>

Article in The Guardian on Moria Camp & Oxfam:

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/jan/09/oxfam-criticises-eu-inhumane-lesbos-refugee-camp-moria>

Map and data on asylum seekers at the U.S.-Mexico border: <https://www.pri.org/stories/2019-06-17/thousands-asylum-seekers-left-waiting-us-mexico-border>

Welcoming refugees on Lesvos by Oxfam: <https://blogs.oxfam.org/en/blogs/19-06-19-face-kindness-welcoming-refugees-lesbos-greece/>

Wikipedia article on current Syrian refugee camps:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Syrian_refugee_camps#Greece



Exile and Wandering

What you need:

- A pillar candle & matches
- Copies of Attachments A & B
- Laptop and speakers
- A bible open to Psalm 105:13

Welcome and Opening Prayer (10 minutes)

First invite everyone to take some time to breathe slowly and deeply; allow for everyone to center and gather.

Then welcome everyone with the following or similar words:

On June 20 each year, World Refugee Day, we are invited to pause and remember the plight of the 70 million refugees scattered across the world. We may or may not have paused on June 20 to hold refugees in our prayers, but today we have the opportunity to do so through prayer, reflection, and hearing their stories.

Light the candle.

Read the following verse from Psalm 105:13:

They wandered from nation to nation, from one kingdom to another.

Invite everyone to recite together the beginning of the traditional prayer from the 18th century, *Hail Queen of Heaven* (see Attachment A):

Hail, Queen of Heaven, the Ocean Star,
Guide of the wanderer here below,
Thrown on life's surge, we claim thy care,
Save us from peril and from woe.
Mother of Christ, Star of the sea
Pray for the wanderer, pray for me.

—Prayer written by Father John Lingard (1771-1851)

Pause.

Repeat slowly the verse from Psalm 105:13:

They wandered from nation to nation, from one kingdom to another.



A Refugee's Journey-Part 1 (25 minutes)

Set up your computer and listen to the first half of Shafi's interview using the following link:
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/11zlMcVjZs4e9kXulAl5dM1DQDzIYhDK7/view?usp=sharing>

Invite participants to look at **Attachment B** for more information about this interview. The first segment of the interview is about Shafi's journey from Afghanistan to Greece.

After listening to the first part of the interview (**up to 13 minutes 12 seconds**), start the conversation with one or two of the following questions:

1. What struck you so far in Shafi's story?
2. Shafi mentions that this trip was the first time he left his family and country. Have you left your family or country for an extended period of time? How did it feel to come back? Can you imagine not being allowed to return home?
3. Were you able to keep track of Shafi's journey? Where does his journey lead him?
4. What is your sense of trauma? How do you think refugees can deal with trauma? How can we help them?

Invite the group to repeat together the beginning of *Hail Queen of Heaven* (see **Attachment A**):

Hail, Queen of Heaven, the Ocean Star,
Guide of the wanderer here below,
Thrown on life's surge, we claim thy care,
Save us from peril and from woe.
Mother of Christ, Star of the sea
Pray for the wanderer, pray for me.

—Prayer written by Father John Lingard (1771-1851)

A Refugee's Journey-Part 2 (25 minutes)

Listen to the end of Shafi's interview using the same link:
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/11zlMcVjZs4e9kXulAl5dM1DQDzIYhDK7/view?usp=sharing>

The second segment of the interview is about Shafi's arrival in Greece and his adjustment to the harsh reality of living in a refugee camp.

After listening to the second part of the interview (**up to 26 minutes 12 seconds**), start the conversation with one or two of the following questions or similar ones:

1. What struck you in this next portion of Shafi's story?
2. At the end of his journey, Shafi arrives at the refugee camp of Moria on the Greek island of Lesbos. Which images from the descriptions of the camps have stuck in your mind?



3. Which of Shafi's skills helped him adjust to his new environment? Can you think of groups of people for whom this adjustment might be even more difficult?

Invite the group to again repeat the beginning of *Hail Queen of Heaven* (see **Attachment A**):

Hail, Queen of Heaven, the Ocean Star,
Guide of the wanderer here below,
Thrown on life's surge, we claim thy care,
Save us from peril and from woe.
Mother of Christ, Star of the sea
Pray for the wanderer, pray for me.

—Prayer written by Father John Lingard (1771-1851)

A Refugee's Journey-Part 3 (25 minutes)

Listen to the end of Shafi's interview using the same link:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/11zLMcVjZs4e9kXulAl5dM1DQDzIYhDK7/view?usp=sharing>

The third and last segment of the interview is about cultural differences, as well as Shafi's request for asylum and his learning about Christian groups helping refugees.

After listening to the third part of the interview (**to the end**), start the conversation with one or two of the following questions:

1. What struck you from this part of Shafi's story?
2. Shafi doesn't know immediately what "asylum" means. How would you define asylum? Putting aside the legalities, what does asylum represent?
3. Shafi becomes a translator in the Moria camp when he receives his refugee status. He explains how important it is to be a "messenger" between people. How can you be a translator for Shafi's story? How can you become a messenger for refugees?
4. The camp is extremely overcrowded and the living conditions are strenuous, yet Shafi speaks of the joy of the people in the camp. How do you think that people in situations of suffering are able to find joy?
5. At the end of the interview Shafi shares his dreams. What is your dream?

Again, invite the group to repeat together the beginning of *Hail Queen of Heaven* (see **Attachment A**):

Hail, Queen of Heaven, the Ocean Star,
Guide of the wanderer here below,
Thrown on life's surge, we claim thy care,
Save us from peril and from woe.
Mother of Christ, Star of the sea
Pray for the wanderer, pray for me.



—Prayer written by Father John Lingard (1771-1851)

Closing Prayer (15 minutes)

To conclude, start with these or similar words:

As we are bringing this time together to a close, I invite you to take some time to sit in silence, recollecting Shafi's story and the stories of all refugees who, like Shafi, have been on a long and arduous journey.

Pause.

As you reflect in silence, ponder the following questions (read slowly, allowing time between each question for participants to reflect):

- *What does the word "safety" mean for you personally?
- *Have you experienced trauma? What has helped you heal?
- *Who has welcome you in times of hardship?

Repeat slowly the verse from Psalm 105:13:

They wandered from nation to nation, from one kingdom to another.

Invite the group to repeat together the beginning of *Hail Queen of Heaven* (see Attachment A):

Hail, Queen of Heaven, the Ocean Star,
Guide of the wanderer here below,
Thrown on life's surge, we claim thy care,
Save us from peril and from woe.
Mother of Christ, Star of the sea
Pray for the wanderer, pray for me.

—Prayer written by Father John Lingard (1771-1851)

Followed by *Our Father*.

Amen.

Extinguish the candle.

If you are interested in furthering the conversation about refugees and Christian responsibility, consider signing up for [Exploring Migration: A Faith Journey](#), our 8-week program on the issue of migration. Visit our [page](#) and to learn more and enroll your community for the journey!



Prayer Refrain Attachment A

Traditional prayer from the 18th century, *Hail Queen of Heaven* (first stanza):

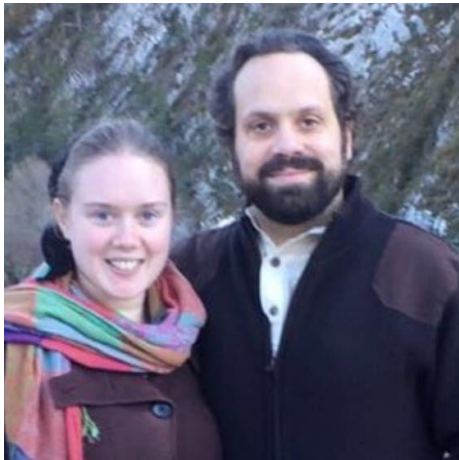
Hail, Queen of Heaven, the Ocean Star,
Guide of the wanderer here below,
Thrown on life's surge, we claim thy care,
Save us from peril and from woe.
Mother of Christ, Star of the sea
Pray for the wanderer, pray for me.

—Prayer written by Father John Lingard (1771-1851)

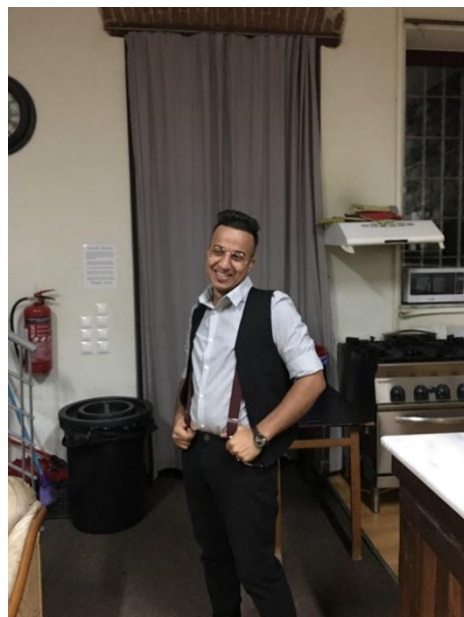


Shafi's Journey Attachment B

The interview used in this resource was conducted by Yann Larrieu. Yann is French and Egyptian and Hannah (Yoder) is Irish and American. Both are Mennonite and married since February 2016, they moved to Lesvos later that year. They did art therapy with trafficked women, hospitality to all and service to the inmates who await deportation in the Moria camp prison. Together they share a life informed by the gospels. Having moved to Athens September 2018, they are interested in fostering urban Sermon on the Mount communities. The Catholic Worker Movement, The Simple Way, the early Anabaptists, the Old Order Amish, the Spanish Communes of the 1930s, L'Arche, and the theologian Mark van Steenwyk are great inspirations.



Yann and his wife, Hannah

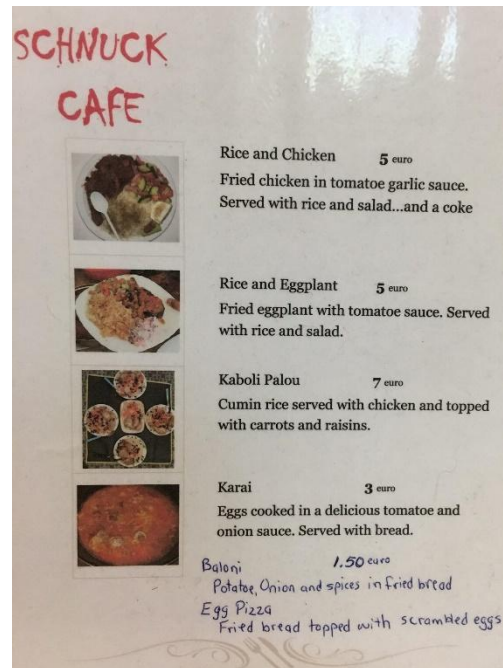


Shafi

Shafi is currently cooking Afghan cuisine for refugees and he is hoping to be able to open his own Afghan restaurant in the future. Shafi left his country on January 2016 and landed in the Moria refugee camp on the Greek Island of Lesbos in March of that year. He received asylum status in Greece in 2017.



One of Shafi's **dishes**



Shafi's current menu at the Schnuck Café

Note:

March Agreement (mentioned in the interview): In March 2016, the European Union and Turkey signed an agreement that stipulated that all new irregular migrants crossing from Turkey to the Greek islands would be returned to Turkey (see: <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2016/03/18/eu-turkey-statement/>)