

# A Tale of Two Families

*Paul Lee*

The two refugee families sponsored by our parish have already arrived in Vancouver and have settled in well in our community. They were assisted by the members of the Refugee Supporting Group in finding suitable accommodation, furnishing homes, applying for identification and medical cards, and registering schools for their children. What lies ahead is the new page of their lives in a far distant land from their war-shattered home country, Syria.

The Sayegh and the Karaji family are very much thankful to our parish, especially to those parishioners who have donated money to the Sponsorship Program to support their basic living for a year, and those who have donated a variety of household items and adequate pieces of furniture to give them a sense of home.

Albert, the father of the Sayegh family, has found a job in April and started his work from basic, though he got a degree in Mechanical

Engineering in Syria. He aims to gain Canadian experience and to have the chance to use his expertise in his future job. His wife Nahla, is learning ESL in a language centre and is willing to communicate with others in English. Their elder daughter, Lilian, studies in Grade 10 this year and she got 6 A s in her academic subjects in her last semester. Jack, the second son, who always wears a smile, is fond of playing soccer and boxing. He is so smart that he acts as a translator for his mother and the members of the Karaji family. Emile, the youngest son, has improved a lot in his English ability and he is bold enough to express his ideas and feelings in English.

The Karaji family members have no English background and they have difficulties in verbally communicating with others. George, the father of Maria and Michel, was an electrician, and the mother, Roba, was an accounting clerk in Syria. They are eager to look for jobs to secure a stable living in



Canada. They express their gratitude to many of our parishioners who have been tutoring them in learning English for the past few months.

By the help of our generous and caring parishioners, they have traveled around the Greater Vancouver by bus and sky train, visited educational venues like Science World and the Heritage Museum at Deer Lake, watched the shows in PNE, joined the church picnic to Mission and volunteered in Summer Sale and Summer Faith Camp. They are enthusiastic and ready to be a part of our community and to know the culture of Canada. They don't mind going to the Food Bank to collect groceries. They also understand that the goods in the Value Village are more affordable for them. However, they try to wear whatever few elegant clothes they have when attending Sunday mass as a way of respecting the house of the Lord to pray and worship.

They re-establish their homes in Vancouver and their children are able to receive normal education here after their long suffering as refugees in Jordan and Lebanon. Though besieged by uncertainty, they will live with faith and move forward to their future with optimism.



## 煉靈

小種子

我們相信永生，期望完結塵世的勞苦後，可享天國的福樂，瞻仰天主的聖容。但若有未完補贖的可原諒的罪，或因沒有充分悔罪的心情，暫時就不能接近的天主，靈魂就必須先接受淨煉。這些需被淨化的亡者靈魂，就是「煉靈」。

煉靈這種暫時遠離天主的狀況，和切願接近天主的渴望，都能被煉淨，如火煉純金；是有希望的，接受淨煉後，我們會與天主結合。不過，煉靈不像我們在世的信徒，不能再以自己的功德來補贖生前的過犯；唯有我們在世的人，以祈禱、感恩聖祭、克己、奉獻與善功，來幫助在煉獄的靈魂早日獲享在天主的永生。

天主是愛的標記，祂願意我們彼此相愛，互相幫助，我們應該幫助煉靈早登天鄉與主相聚，做天主喜悅的事。

十一月為煉靈月，請大家為煉靈祈禱，祈求仁慈的天父，藉著我們的祈禱、奉獻彌撒、勤唸玫瑰經等善功，拯救在煉獄的兄弟姊妹的靈魂，讓他們早日到天父台前獲享永遠的福樂。我們既為已亡的親友祈禱，亦請為那些被遺忘的煉靈魂們祈禱。

*凡諸信者靈魂，賴天主仁慈，息止安所。亞孟*

