

## 35.1 Time To Flee - Refugee

If you have refugee children in your school, please read through and consider the appropriateness of this assembly. For many, it may bring welcome attention, helping other children understand their situation. For others, it may bring back unwanted memories. Please use your discretion.

Good morning, this week we are going to think about refugees. We will hear what it is like to be a refugee, how people become refugees and the sort of places refugees may come from. Does anyone know what a refugee is? A refugee is a person that has to leave their home, their town or their country for safety. They may need to flee their homes because of war and persecution or because the region they live in has been affected by severe weather or a natural disaster like floods, droughts or an earthquake. The word refugee comes from two older French words. 'Refugier' which means to put in a place of safety, and 'refugere' which means "to run away from, flee or escape". Many refugees will travel to another country hoping that they will be allowed to live there safely until they can go back home to live peacefully after war or rebuild their homes after severe weather or natural disasters.

In the UK we experience relative peace. Most of us have a safe home, we have food to eat, fresh water to drink, toys to play with, books to read, schools in which to learn and people that care for us. In 2015 the United Nations refugee agency reported that 65 million men, women and children were forced from their homes by war, persecution, severe weather or natural disasters. That's roughly the population of the UK. In 2015 22 million people became refugees.



Everyday people make the difficult decision to leave their homes and country because they have no other choice. They fear for their own lives and the lives of their families. They leave their home and seek the protection of another country because they have been forced to leave their own.

This morning we are going to hear from a girl who had to flee her home and become a refugee because of war. In 2015, half of all refugees came from three countries. South Sudan, Afghanistan and Syria. We are going to hear an account from a Syrian girl that had to leave her country because of war. Between 2011 and 2015 it is estimated that five million Syrians fled to other countries as refugees.

### UDIA

*Hello, I am Udia, I am 11 years old. I was born in eastern Aleppo which is in the country of Syria. In 2011, fighting with guns began in Syria. I have learnt that it began when some school children were put into prison for writing bad things about the government on a wall. People started protesting, asking the authorities to release the children from prison. They also started to protest about the way the country was being run. The protests started to turn violent and four demonstrators were killed. At the funerals, there were more violent*



*protests and another person was killed. The protesting and the fighting got worse and worse.*

The people fighting against the government's army are often called rebel fighters. The rebel fighters are groups of people that all disagree with the President's way of ruling the country. After four years of fighting another group of people calling themselves 'Islamic State' – IS started fighting. The IS are very violent and are trying to take over the land, and so, Syria's army and the rebel fighters are having to fight the IS as well as each other. It has all become very complicated.

*We stayed in our home as long as we could, but one day in 2015, after we had eaten our dinner and were getting ready for bed, we heard a 'boom'. We started looking at each other. There was a crashing noise around me and then it went dark. I was shouting 'dad', but no one was answering. People eventually came in with flashlights and rescued us. The bombing had started in our town, my parents sent my younger sister, Rana, and I to live with relatives, but the fighting started there as well. Eventually my sister and I were sent to a refugee camp in a country called Turkey. In 2015 there were 1.4 million Syrian refugees living in Turkey. My auntie, sister and I lived in a tent on one of the big refugee camps. There we were taught by other refugees that were teachers. One of the subjects was English. Charities were very kind, providing us with food and water, and even toys, clothes and medicines when we got sick.*

*My auntie got a message that the UK's Syrian Vulnerable Person Resettlement Programme (VHPR) were going to allow*

*us to live in the UK. We were excited. We were allowed to fly by aeroplane. I'm in a proper house with my own room, running water and a proper bathroom. I have carried on learning to speak English since I arrived. People have been so kind, but things are very different here than the way I lived in Syria. I still miss my family and my home so much.*

Udia's story gives us just a little insight into how someone may become a refugee, but sadly, it is not an uncommon story.

## Time to reflect

- How do you think Udia felt when she heard the bombs? How would you have felt?
- Why did Udia leave Syria?
- If you are a refugee in a UK school, how have people made you feel?
- How should you treat a refugee in your school?

## Reflection (Prayer)

*(Dear God)*

We are thankful for the relative peace we experience in this country. We are thankful for our school, our friends and teachers that all help to create a community where we can learn and grow. Please help us to consider those who have had to leave their homes due to war. May we be kind to refugees. *(Amen)*



## 35.2 Time To Flee From War and Persecution

### Preparation

Consider showing Save the Children's video 'Most Shocking Second a Day' which is 1 minute 34 seconds. It was created to help children and adults understand the trauma of the refugee crisis, illustrating what life is like for a child refugee. Please preview the video (more relevant for Key Stage 2) to ensure that it is suitable for your pupils or refugees in your class. A 2nd video 'Still The Most Shocking Second a Day' (2 minutes) is even more shocking.

Can anyone recall where Udia was from? How did Udia become a refugee? Udia's story gave us just a little insight into how people become refugees. Udia's story is very sad. 'Civil war' is the term we use when people in a country are fighting each other. Many countries are reaching out with compassion to thousands of refugees affected by civil war by giving them shelter, food and medical care. Does anyone know what the word 'compassion' means? Compassion is when we feel and show care and concern for the suffering and misfortune of others.

### Time to reflect

Whether you show the video 'Most shocking second a day' or not, ask the pupils to discuss what it would be like to:

- a) Leave your home because of war (a civil war).
- b) Travel through your country during a time of war (a civil war).
- c) Being housed in a refugee camp.
- d) Being sent to live in another country with or without your parents.

Why would you want to be shown compassion if you were a refugee fleeing a civil war?

### Reflection (Prayer)

*(Dear God)*

We are thankful for the relative peace we experience in this country. We are thankful for our school, our friends and teachers that all help to create a community where we can learn and grow. Please help us to consider those who have had to leave their homes due to war. May we be kind and show compassion to refugees. *(Amen)*

*World vision's website has a section called 'pray with world vision'.*



## 35.3 Climate Refugees

Can you give me an example of different types of weather? Can anyone tell me what a climate is? The climate is the weather conditions, like rain fall or temperature, over a long period of time. We might say the climate in the UK is quite wet or the climate in West Africa is very hot. Large parts of the Earth are currently covered in ice. The climate of the world is getting warmer and some of the ice is melting adding more water to the sea making the sea level higher.

Can anyone recall why Udia became a refugee? War is only one reason why someone may become a refugee. A climate refugee is a term that is being used to people forced from their homes due to changes in our climate. The first reported climate refugees left a country called Tuvalu which is a group 9 islands in the Pacific Ocean. In 2012 there were about 11,000 people living on the islands which are no higher than 4.5m above sea level. Rising sea levels cause regular flooding in parts of Tuvalu. Some islanders have complained that the salt water is ruining the soil making it difficult to grow crops. In 2007 a family moved 3,700 kilometres (2,300 miles) to set up a new life in New Zealand arguing that climate change had forced them from their home on Tuvalu. In 2013, they were accepted as refugees

after a court ruled that climate change was an important factor in the family's move to New Zealand.

### Time to reflect

- What kinds of things make people leave their homes?
- What is the cause of rising sea levels?
- What would you miss if you had to leave your town? (What landmarks would you miss? – tomorrow will focus on what you would miss from your home)

### Reflection (Prayer)

*(Dear God)*

We are thankful for the relative peace we experience in this country. We are thankful for our school, our friends and teachers that all help to create a community where we can learn and grow. Please help us to consider those who have had to leave their homes due to climate change. Help us to be kind and show compassion to refugees. *(Amen)*



## 35.4 Environmental Refugees

This week we are thinking about why people become refugees. Can anyone tell me why a person may be forced to leave their home? We heard about why a girl called Udia had to leave her home. We have also heard about the term 'climate refugee'. What does that mean? This morning we are going to think about environmental refugees.

Can anyone remember why a family left the islands of Tuvalu to live in New Zealand? Climate refugees are those people who have had to move because of events linked directly to climate change. Environmental refugees are those people who have had to move because of natural disasters. Can anyone give me an example of a natural disaster? Volcanos, floods and earth quakes are all natural disasters.

In 2010, Mount Merapi on the Indonesian island of Java began to violently erupt. It started on the 25th October and continued until 30th November. Hundreds of thousands of people had to leave their homes. Most of them eventually returned to their homes after the volcano. We have experienced floods in the UK that have resulted in houses being evacuated and schools, churches and other community buildings turned into temporary shelters.

People may leave their homes during, or just after, a volcano, flood or earthquake. Once the disaster is over many will go back to

their communities and get on with the job of rebuilding their homes and livelihoods.

Every year between 2008 and 2015 around 26 million people were forced to leave their homes due to natural disasters.\* (The population of the UK in 2011 was estimated to be 63.2 million.)

### Time to reflect

- Have you experienced a natural disaster?
- How would you feel if a natural disaster destroyed your home?
- What would you miss most if you had to leave your home?

### Reflection (Prayer)

*(Dear God)*

We are thankful for the relative peace we experience in this country. We are thankful for our school, our friends and teachers that all help to create a community where we can learn and grow. Please help us to consider those who have had to leave their homes due to natural disasters. Help us to be kind and show compassion to those that need it. *(Amen)*

*\*Estimation from the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre, IDMC.*



## 35.5 Time To Flee Through History

Throughout history people have fled due to war, persecution or natural disasters. The Bible gives an account of a man called Jacob and eleven of his sons leaving the country of Canaan, in modern day Israel, because of a famine and becoming refugees in Egypt over 3500 years ago. 2000 years ago, the Bible, describes the account of Jesus' father, Joseph, taking Mary and young Jesus to Egypt to seek safety because the king of Israel, Herod, wanted to kill Jesus. In 622 CE Muhammad had to flee Makkah, the city where he was born. People persecuted him due to his beliefs. He went to live in the city of Medina. This event is an important event in the history of Islam and is given the name 'Hijra'.

Persecution is a word that is used when someone or a group of people are treated badly because of their beliefs, the colour of their skin or because of the country they were born in. The holocaust is the word that is used to describe the persecution of Jewish people before and during the Second World War. Before and during the war Jews were leaving their homes looking for safety in other countries.

After the Second World War, when people found out the horrible things that had happened to millions of Jews, many countries felt they should have done more to help Jewish refugees. Events in history, like the holocaust, are a reminder of the horrors that people face if they stay in their

own homes, towns or countries during times of persecution. We don't always learn the lessons from the past.

This week we have thought about people who need to leave their homes because of war and persecution. We have thought about those who have fled their homes due to natural disasters and climate change.

### Time to reflect

The Golden Rule states 'do to others as you would have them do to you'.

- What would you want to happen if you became a refugee? Spend time thinking and talking about this question and the impact the Golden Rule would have on the way we treat refugees.

### Reflection (Prayer)

*(Dear God)*

We thank you for our school, our friends and teachers that all help to create a good community where we can learn and grow. Please help us to consider those who have had to leave their homes due to war and persecution. May others look after us if we ever became refugees. *(Amen)*



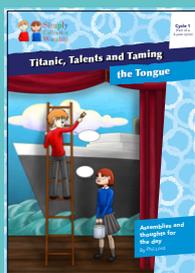
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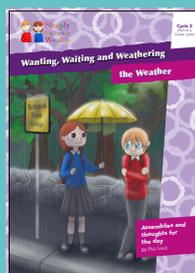
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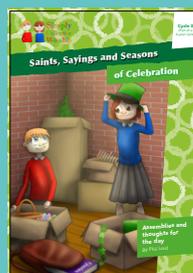
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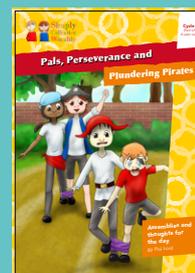
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'Titanic, Talents and  
Taming the Tongue'



**Cycle 2**  
'Wanting, Waiting and  
Weathering the Weather'



**Cycle 3**  
'Saints, Sayings and  
Seasons of Celebration'



**Cycle 4**  
'Pals, Perseverance and  
Plundering Pirates'

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