

# Refugee Reflections

Catholic Charities Migration And Refugee Services  
English as a Second Language Program  
Louisville, KY

WINTER 2006-07

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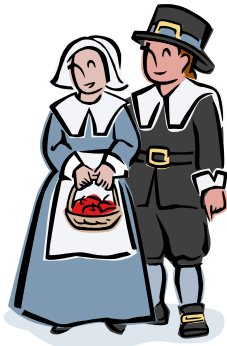
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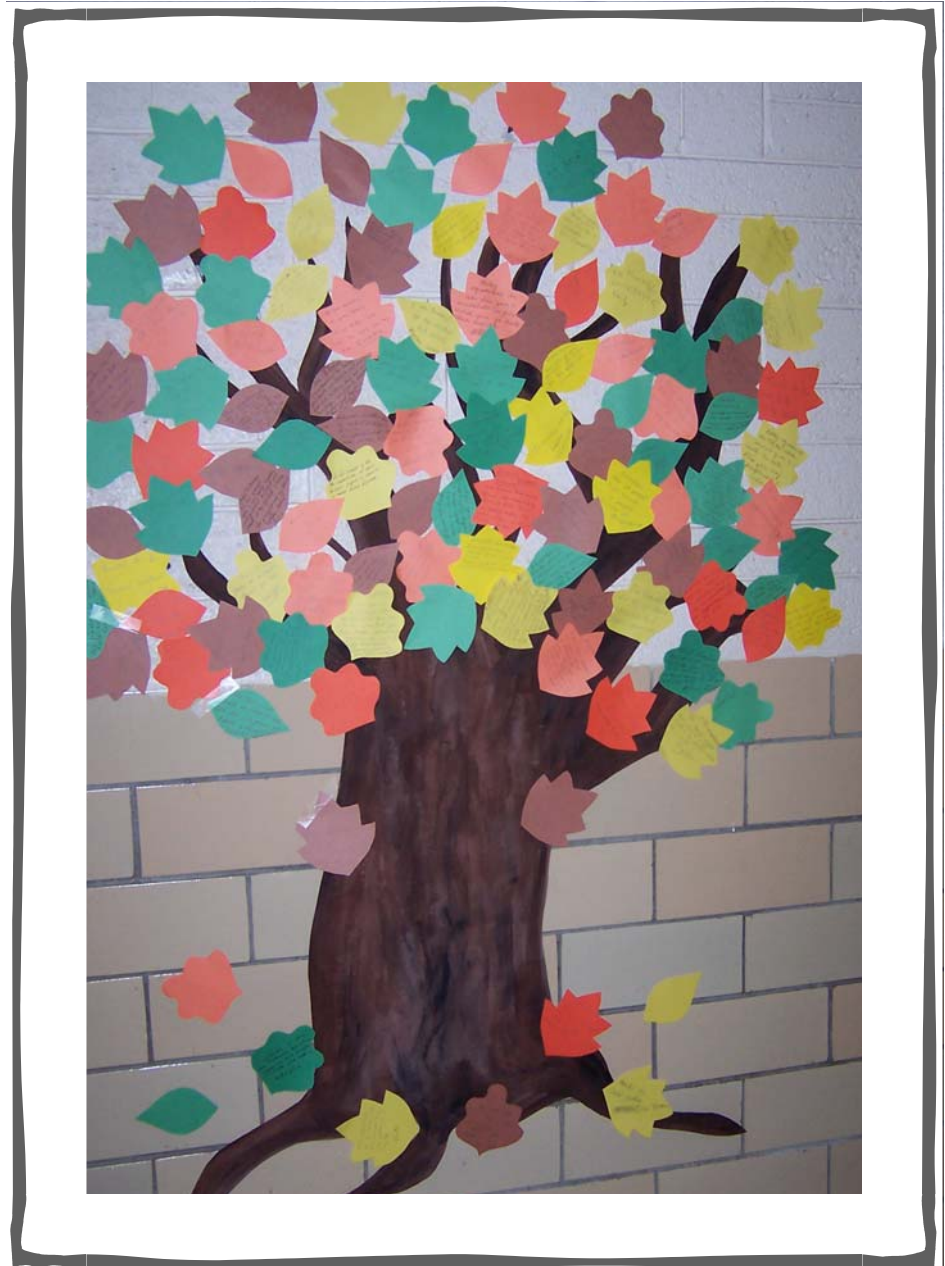
## English School Schedule At St. Helen

Monday through Friday

**9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.**

Afternoon Classes 1:00 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.:  
Monday: Parenting/PACT Class  
Tuesday: Cultural/work Orientation  
Wednesday: Cultural Orientation

## Giving Thanks At Thanks Giving



The Thanksgiving tree was created by Rose McGowan, and the leaves by Aida Drazic.

In a world where much is happening, all of us have things to be grateful for .....especially the refugees at Catholic Charities English School. Students in the school filled up an entire tree of things they were thankful for, which created a beautiful fall tree that is displayed in the hallway of the school. Check out more pictures from the Thanksgiving celebration!

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## Writings by Refugees



### Hope and Wishes for the New Year

By Miguel Ramirez Hernandez

It is an honor for me to come over from my home country where for many years I wanted one day to walk in the steps of Lincoln. If this land is able to give birth to a man of this great stature, than this is the best place for me to plant a seed. More, if I could wade in the historical waters of the maps of the Ohio, and follow the teacher's doctrine; "there is a time to sow and a time to harvest." I decided to take my hopes in a seed and my wishes in provisions to pick up for the future the best fruits in this land.

Now I have lived here for three months in Louisville. I changed my streets lined with cocoa, coconuts, palm and guavas trees, where dogs ran free and where wall lizards lived and where people played Josas. I changed my streets to ones lined with oak and pine trees, where squirrels run all the time and beautiful cardinals fly in the sky.

I could feel like I am in a far away world and be scared to be in this other world forever. However, the simple things relieve me because in the simple things there is the same. There are the

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*Thank you to our wonderful Santa this year —  
Jerry Murphy! You made a lot of kids ..... And grown ups ..... Very happy!*

2006



### **My Favorite Holiday Memory 2006**

*(Taken directly from the Refugee Papers as they Wrote Them.)*

I have had a nice memory on December 24, because I arrived to Miami, FL, and I got together with mine mother, sister and other familys. I spend a real good and wonderful time, before that day, I was in Cuba with my wife Ivette but I have had been missing them. —By Jose Garcia

My favorite memory in December of 2006 was the 31 because I call to Cuba and talk with my family. They were very happy because my children and I begin the new live here. —Maritza La Antiqua

My favorite holiday memory was Christmas, I liked a lot. I was happy because the children feel the happiness for received gift. I joyed very much because call to my parents in Cuba nad they were happy too. I liked a lot that in the Jefferson Mall the children took picture with Sta Claus. —Yuselys Morrell

December 2006 was really an interesting month for me and my family. My children were extremely glad when they received many gifts on Christmas from Catholic Charity. December 2006 is not forgettable for our family. Because we received many boxes of gifts and it was our first December holiday in the U.S.A. We also met many afghans on December 2006. They invited us and we invited them. They took us to down town and showed us the same parts of the city. We have very good memory from December 2006. —Abdul B. Alokozai

I want to be a doctor in the United States, but I need to study very much. I miss my daughter and my wife too. —Alarico Romero

I have in December a good holiday because the pilgrimage was this month and he is one our holidays and I was hear happy. —Leila Mohamud

My most memorable day in 2006 was spending my first Christmas with my husband after almost two years separation. —Evelyn Allotey

In December 30, 2006 I had the Eid Mobarak and there is no class for everybody and I enjoy it very well. —Bashir Mohamed

I was memory days in 2006. I came as a refugee from Cuba in 12/21/06. So I was talking with my family in 12/05/06, this was a holiday memory because I saw my daughter, my mother and my brother with a beam through Internet the 12/25/06. I was very happy. —David Perez

In December I speak for telephone with my grand dother from Cuba, was my day favorite. —Lazaro Hondares

Helo! My name is Mavlen, I from Cuba. My favorite day's when visited some business, my husband and our two sons they very happy because they are not understanding about to Christmas. Some people spoke about what Christmas represented for this country. Is very interesting know the culture this country. —Marlen Estrada-Navarrete

In December 2006 I saw my son again, after two years. He went to United States from Cuba in 2004. Christmas Day in 2006 was a excellent day for me certainly because I celebrated together my son this special day. We cooking a tasty and delicious dinner and invited some friends to celebrate Christmas Day in our home. —Ivette V. Solanus



### Library Update

Sophie Maier  
The Louisville Free Public Library  
Community Outreach Coordinator  
Iroquois Library

The Louisville Free Public Library has been conducting weekly outreaches to the Catholic Charities English School clients since the fall of 2003. The outreaches provide opportunities for students to obtain library cards, and check out books and materials that they can return in a special drop off box at the English School. Because of English School schedule changes this summer, we now visit the school every other Tuesday at 12:30 p.m.

Our excellent response over the years have inspired patrons to become regular participants of our Spanish language computer classes, and English learning programs. Current and past Catholic Charities students have attended cultural showcases and learned about countries as diverse as Iran and Vietnam.

Several Catholic Charities Alumni, like the ones listed below, have gone on to share their time and talents with the community. The Library greatly appreciates the connections we have made through our work with Catholic Charities.

- Madina Hassan - Teaches computer classes in the Somali language.
- Raphael Lopez - Performs in bands
- Joel Castillo - Lectures on the literature of his country
- Hasan Abdi - Represented the Somali Bantu by serving on the Community Advisory Board of the Louisville Free Public Library
- Yoel Castillo - Now works for the Library as a clerk.

Our hope is that we meet and serve those who arrive from other countries, and establish relationships as new residents in our community. We hope to become a familiar institution, and a place the students of Catholic Charities can go for recreational reading and lifetime learning.

#### Library Services

- Materials and resources to learn and practice English
- Instruction to access information for job searches and improvement
- Assisting children with school research
- Foreign language material to keep their native tongue meaningful to the next generation of new Louisvillians.

*Thank you Catholic Charities  
for giving us this wonderful opportunity!*

## Writings by Refugees



### Hope and Wishes for the New Year

*Continued from page 1*

sparrows, the rain, the grass and the beaches, too. There are mosquitoes, cockroaches and mice sharing and fighting. But the most important thing is the human being and in this I will say with Capital letters, ITS THE GREATEST TREASURE of our people. How is it possible that people who are similar to each other are also so far apart? How is it possible that some men do not realize that? How is it possible that between so many common objectives there has been foolishness unknown to each other?

The people of the United States, you will be sure, that you are a wonderful people and nobody sees in you intolerance and only respect for other people. This country, of the people, would have as its name not only the United States, but also the name, United Peoples. There is nothing more beautiful than to see a Somali, an African American, a Russian a pilgrim, a Cuban an Indian, a Vietnamese Arabic, a Mexican and men of all the world sharing the same cold and enjoying the same sun.

Oh my God! The Babel's tower does not exist here. This is all my hope to be made into reality.

My wishes are to have strength in my hands to cultivate my sprout with all wisdom and consciousness as is it possible. To fill out the pride and passion with dignity and to taste every fruit: to satiate me, with the smell and all the fragrance without suffocating me. To touch every relief softly and to look at every color without blinds and to listen to every sound without echoes and to enter into the American world with the whole security to become the best as a human being. Where my family will be happy and work honestly. And to make proper choices and live in peace. If in Marti's land I found life, in with man's land I find the rest. It is my wish to know the world and here the world is day to day, simple, visible and perfect.

The snow is cold, but her splendor is enough to adore her.

### My Decision

by Yanelis Valido from Cuba

Have you ever had to make an important decision in your life? I don't mean just any decision, I mean definitive decisions. Decisions that once you choose over others, take and leave bits of your heart in each that was taken and not taken. This happens rarely in the life of each person and some never have the opportunity to face this challenge. I say challenge because these situations make you grow as a person. I never thought that I would have to endure such pain in the soul but I did.

And here I am in the United States of America. I know a lot of people think we do not know or are self-conscious of exactly what we have left behind. But they are wrong. We are aware that we leave behind our hearts, our stories, our sadness, our joys and an immense love for those who cried our departure and anxiously hope for our return. However, we must keep the optimism. The decision has been taken and well, as someone I love very much said once: "Las palabras estan demas cuando los sentimientos quieren hablar." ("Words are overrated when feelings want to speak.") And we need to guess them because words are not enough.

I have been studying since I arrived and believe me that I have learned about their language, their culture, their development, their customs, and even how to respond on certain situations. Although I have only begun it has been difficult due to the support, the dedication, and the creativity of the wonderful professors, who have motivated and expand our purposes. Mine, for example, is to learn English and work hard in order to change the lives of those people that we have left behind and that we love very much.

I would like to thank the interest and preoccupations of all of those who in one way or another have help us.

I'm not going to pretend that this article will be published. I'm simply satisfied that this will be read by the group of professors that know our feelings and objectives and look at what I have written as a sincere and caring way to say thank you.

## Quotes . . .

Love is what makes you smile when you are tired.  
—Terri 4-Year Old

The best way to cheer yourself up  
is to try to cheer somebody else up. —Mark Twain

No one can make you feel inferior without your consent.  
—Eleanor Roosevelt

## WANT TO BE A VOLUNTEER?






Call Chris Clements at Catholic Charities at (502) 636-9263  
Process: Complete an application, Attend an Orientation, Background Check






# Giving Thanks at Thanks Giving

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## Some of the "Leaves" from the Thanksgiving Tree at the English School:

-  Thanks for Thanksgiving. Rahma Osman, Huriyo Abdi
-  For the help that the US government helped us with. Hawa Mohamed
-  Thanks for the teachers. Talaso Abdi
-  I'm thankful for my children's education and health. Zainab Dido
-  Education, food, good teachers. Markay Hassan

-  I thank God for my life. No name
-  I am thanks to God, because I am happy, and live in this country — The FREEDOM. No name
-  I am thankful for my children's education and health. Zainab Dido
-  The education in the USA. Hassan
-  Food, job, friends. Elmi Dahir

**Archdiocese of Louisville**  
Catholic Charities  
Migration and refugee Services  
English as a Second Language Program



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