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## Prayer for refugees

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Impoverished and cruelly treated people around the world are crying out for the right to live in peace - for liberty and justice. But when pleas of people living in desperate conditions for help go unheeded, many choose the next best thing. They leave.

Leaving home, job, or kin may seem incomprehensible to those living in a stable country. Yet, as I write, a large-scale exodus of people around the world is taking place as they move from one area to another, seeking asylum. The growing number of refugees leaving Africa and the Middle East is affecting many European countries. And such desperate people have even tried to make it to Australia on board fishing boats in the hope that they will be offered sanctuary here.

The refugee crisis has become a major focus of my prayer for the world. I believe that we all have a divine right to live in safety. Though I may not know how this will be accomplished for every person on this planet, I believe there is a divine power ready and able to respond to everyone's need.

That's why I pray with these reassuring words: "Divine Love always has met and always will meet every human need" ("Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures," pg. 494). This divine Love is God, entirely good and capable of taking care of each one of us. That may sound easy for me to say - living as I do in the peace and comfort of my suburban home in Brisbane, Australia. Yet I believe in my heart that no matter how threatened someone's existence may be, there is a solution for each and every one. Because God is our help.

Several years ago I decided to pray on a regular basis for the peace and safety of people around the world. At first I wasn't sure my prayers were of any use. How would I even know if they were helping anyone? Then I came across this statement: "The 'still, small voice' of scientific thought reaches over continent and ocean to the globe's remotest bound. The inaudible voice of Truth is, to the human mind, 'as when a lion roareth.' It is heard in the desert and in dark places of fear" ("Science and Health," pg. 559). This concept of the power of a single prayer impressed me greatly. I stopped thinking of prayer as just something going on inside my mind, and began to view it as far-reaching and powerful, capable of helping people in trouble.

I began to pray with much more authority and conviction, and I felt sure that my prayers were doing good. After several weeks, I received an airmail letter in Portuguese. It was from a man living in the Canary Islands, off the coast of northwest Africa, who'd found my name as a practitioner listed in The Christian Science Journal. I had the letter translated. The writer was asking if I would pray for him. He had fled his country of origin, and was

feeling ill and afraid for his life. He said that he needed help, so he'd written to me.

With the translator's help, I replied: "Divine Love is with you, keeping you safe. You are being guided and guarded by divine Love's protecting presence. God has made you well, and He keeps you this way. He will meet your needs." I included with my letter a copy of "Science and Health" in Portuguese and the magazine "O Arauto da Christian Science." And I prayed for this man each day.

After several weeks, another letter arrived. The man said he was now well and no longer afraid for his life. Prayer had helped and healed him. The book I had sent was explaining to him how to live a better life.

Since that time, I've had letters requesting prayer from a Malaysian seaman on a container ship plying the waters between Australia and Singapore, an English family living on a sailing boat in Hong Kong, and recently an e-mail from a refugee family trying to obtain asylum in a French-speaking country.

Prayer works - over the longest distances to the remotest regions. God's powerful healing presence is with us all - 24/7. That's why the prayers of someone in Australia, for example, can help a person on the other side of the globe. I no longer believe that any world crisis is ever too big to pray about. My prayers, and yours, are powerful responses to a cry for help.

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