

REFUGE

Jesuit Refugee Service Indonesia

Accompany, Serve, and Advocate the Cause of Forcibly Displaced People



A Plea from the Midst of Mankind

Disturb us, Lord

JRS: A New Field to Share Love

Pomegranate from Afghanistan

JRS Asia Pacific Regional Meeting

A Plea from the Midst of Mankind

My hands are raised towards the merciful kind -
the whole universe sees me

For I am imperfect, human - you gloriously give
and peacefully forgive me

Exhausted I stand- you look at me, in the eyes of a
human, still I lament

For the sake of humanity, you shall forgive me, if
still with love I dare to speak

Still, I shall sing the praise of the supreme being on
earth humanity

Still, I shall raise my hands to its glory, for peace to
bestow upon this heavenly universe -

We are meant to live in brotherhood and humility

Appeasing and embracing each other with love
and compassion is all we must strive for

For we all belong to one race, that is "humanity",
so we shall generously care for each other

Mankind is one, of one heart - brought to live
through compassion - you sought none other than
this

So let us nourish it for the sake of one race – for
there is one kind.... and that is mankind

With peace, love, compassion and acceptance we
shall all grow honorable

With hatred, bitterness, feud, envy and loath we
shall all bleed for decades

Being a brooding person for the sake of one's
strength, isn't gratitude

Infusing others' lives with poisonous drops of
violence is not brotherhood

I beg you not hate for worshiping in churches,
temples, or mosques- the one god you do

For the varied paths of religion are plenty...but the
hands I raise to the sky...are the same as of yours...
Oh my dear mankind

I pledge, I shall provide my caring watch upon you
worshiping in your churches, in your temples and
praying in your mosques

For you, I, and we are all the children of one
mankind

The holy books we follow are the words from one
god for the sake of humanity

Then the verses we preach are for what, if not for

the sake of brotherhood and peace, so why do we
spread enmity

Surrounding us are the dead bodies of our fellow
human beings, seeking refuge with us bleeding

Then if our consciences are still alive and for
most of us they are – why are they still in turmoil,
painfully grieving?

I plead for your mercy, they belong to our race -
please treat them with human love –they are still
breathing

If ye the rosebuds, the caring souls in human
spirit, please don't hate if with love they still seek
your warm hands.

*Poem written by Abdul Samad Haidari, a refugee
accompanied by JRS in Bogor*

Disturb us, Lord

Disturb us, Lord, when
We are too well pleased with ourselves,
When our dreams have come true
Because we have dreamed too little,
When we arrived safely
Because we sailed too close to the shore.

Disturb us, Lord, when
With the abundance of things we possess
We have lost our thirst
For the waters of life;
Having fallen in love with life,
We have ceased to dream of eternity
And in our efforts to build a new earth,
We have allowed our vision
Of the new Heaven to dim.

Disturb us, Lord, to dare more boldly,
To venture on wider seas
Where storms will show your mastery;
Where losing sight of land,
We shall find the stars.

We ask this in the name of Him who pushed
back the horizons of our hopes;

And invited the Brave to follow Him..
to venture into the future
In strength and courage;
with hope and with love.

http://www.worldprayers.org/archive/prayers/invocations/disturb_us_lord_when_we.html

JRS: A New Field to Share Love

Victoria Sindy M.



Valentina Istinah

That morning, a year ago, Valentina Istinah (63) went to the morning Eucharist at St Anthony Parish, Kotabaru, Yogyakarta. She saw on the big screen a little girl was crying because she lost her house and family, she had to flee to a far place, after a very long horrible journey. That video really touched Istinah's heart; she felt she had to do something.

The short video was played by JRS on Sunday September 13th 2015 during a fundraising activity in St Anthony Parish. JRS shared the refugees' stories, those who had to leave their home, family, and their country because of an on life threatening situation. JRS wanted to knock on parishioners' hearts to help JRS in serving the refugees.

That day, Istinah felt she found a new way to share her love. She is used to spare some of her income and give it as donation. She usually set aside her income for orphaned children, but one day the orphanage where she usually donated her money was closed. She couldn't find out where they moved. On the day she met JRS, she felt God wanted her to continue her habit of saving money for helping others.

Istinah does not live in abundance. Her wage

as a teacher in a public vocation high school is not always enough for her family needs. She sometimes asks for debt to cover those needs. But she still feels fortunate compared to the little refugee girl. Istinah always remembers the story of the poor widow who donated from her shortage.

After the mass, she asked a JRS volunteer if she could donate money another day without having to go to a bank. She was given the JRS office address in Yogyakarta. A week later, she came to JRS office and gave some amount of money. She comes every 3-4 months to give her donation since then.

Istinah felt God's grace is flowing abundantly in her life. God gives and provides, whenever she needs it.

"I always try to be thankful in everything, this is also a way of me being thankful. I remember in one of His verses, God wants us to give one-tenth of what we have. I could not give a tenth yet, but I believe God sees my efforts and is happy of this little amount I gave. In the past, I often felt worried whether my money was enough for my children and me. But many times God shows that He always suffices. I do not worry anymore and I'm even more encouraged to continue sharing my love to those in need. I am grateful that God shows me the new field to share, through JRS."



Child refugees accompanied by JRS in Bogor

Pomegranate from Afghanistan

*Roswita Mathilda Kristy dan Dionisius
Waskita Cahya Gumilang*



Ali during his MRI test in the hospital

ALS (Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis) is a progressive neurodegenerative disease that causes neuronal death, which controls voluntary muscles. This disease gradually reduces muscle control until all muscles are paralyzed.

Ali, an Afghani refugee, was striving to fight ALS. He never thought he would suffer from it while so far away from family. Accompanied by his friend Abdullah, Ali uttered his difficulty to JRS staff members, Rosi and Onik. Ali explained how difficult it was to do daily chores such as washing, cooking, showering, and putting on clothes. Ali seemed so sad because his condition meant he could no longer contribute with his housemates in their small house in Cisarua. But he was grateful that they didn't abandon him. Abdullah and Ali's other friends took care of him, and allowed Ali to live with them.

Ali brought himself to ask JRS for help, who took Ali to the hospital for a checkup. When we accompanied him to the hospital, we could see Ali was good-humored and persistent. His unknown disease didn't make him gloomy. In our conversation with him, assisted by Ahmad as an interpreter, Ali told us about how he missed the sweetness of fruits in Afghanistan, especially pomegranate or Ahn-nar in Persian.

"Masyaallah, I really like Anh-nar. It tastes sweet and refreshing," Ali remembered.

Unfortunately, after a series of examinations in several Bogor hospitals, they couldn't find the cause of Ali's disease. Doctors only suggested having examinations in the neuro department of a hospital in Jakarta. We could imagine how exhausting the trips would be from Cisarua to Jakarta, but that was the only option. Ali decided to persevere through the examination, and JRS accompanied him. Rosi and Ali, assisted by an interpreter, had to travel about 130km return, at least once a week, until they finally got the result of the examinations.

Through the EMG test results, the doctors diagnosed Ali with ALS. Gradually, Ali would lose control of his motor nerves. There is no medical cure yet to slow this process. Without a word, Ali accepted this explanation. His face showed mixed feelings. The doctor tried to cheer him up because research is still ongoing and there are still more tests he could take. Doctors also told Rosi to give Ali encouragement, as he believed it would help slow the spread of Ali's disease. Ali asked to go home to Cisarua, and was quiet during the trip.

"I need to go back to Afghanistan," Ali said to Rosi. *"Brother Ali, do you think it's safe for you to back home?"* Rosi was surprised. Ali left Afghanistan to avoid persecution; terrible things could happen if he returned. Ali only shook his head; he was not sure what would

happen. Ali said to Rosi, *“Thank you for giving me so much attention. I felt like I meant something. Even my family doesn’t care about me anymore. I thank you and your friends for doing this for me,”* he stuttered as ALS affected his tongue.

At that time Rosi felt that it was Ali who needed encouragement, but Ali gave her comforting words instead. Rosi noticed Ali’s perseverance and it became a valuable lesson. There were still some medical checks in hospital.

At one point, Ali said to Rosi, *“I know the doctor said I cannot be healed. You can stop all these check ups. It must be costly for all these exams. You should spend that money for someone else with a better chance of being healthy. Don’t spend it on something useless.”* He said with a smile on his face.

Rosi didn’t believe that was hopelessness. He said it from his heart because he felt bad for taking someone else’s rights. Even in his condition, Ali thought about others. *“No brother, don’t you think that way. Have some spirit to get healthy,”* Rosi replied to him. She felt Ali had the ability to process his feelings. Throughout his illness, Ali kept smiling and chatting with people, including Andi the driver who took him between Jakarta and Bogor.

After a series of medical examinations confirmed that he had ALS, Ali finally decided, *“I have to go home to Afghanistan.”* He was certain.

While he was organizing his trip, JRS visited him and gave him his medical documents. Rosi and Sr. Chiara, a JRS volunteer, explained to Ali his condition. His friends attended, helping with communication. Abdullah said Ali never spoke about ALS; he kept it to himself. He didn’t know what Ali suffered from or how to help him.

Ali finally had his visa and tickets ready. JRS came to see him for the last time. Ali seemed happy. He gave Rosi a handmade handkerchief. His wife made it for him before he left Afghanistan. Embroidered on it were some pictures symbolizing prayers and feelings arisen when someone left; praying hands, crying eyes, a pair of doves. That handkerchief



Handkerchief made by Ali’s wife

symbolizes that the person leaving will always be in the prayers of their family. Ali gave it to Rosi because he was going to see his family again so he didn’t need the handkerchief anymore. He hoped Rosi would also be in her family’s prayers and love. Rosi was really touched by the gift.

Then it was time to say goodbye, we shook hands. Ali held our hands tight, and broke down into tears. I couldn’t imagine how he felt, but I believe and I prayed Ali would have a happier life with his beloved family.

Several months after Ali left, Abdullah called JRS to inform us that they had spoken. Abdullah said Ali’s voice sounded clear, and that a doctor Ali saw in Afghanistan said it was not ALS and gave him medication, although Abdullah was not sure if it’s true since Ali was quite a closed person. That news made us happy, despite not knowing the truth. Ali taught us about caring for others even in tough situations. He showed us to still care about others in need even if you’re also in need. He was an example of perseverance and to surrender within limited situations. Our encounter with him was sweet and refreshing, maybe as sweet as the pomegranate from Afghanistan.

Regional Meeting JRS Asia Pacific

Yogyakarta, October 16th - 21st 2016



Last October, JRS Asia Pacific regional meeting was held in Sambu Resort, Kaliurang, Yogyakarta, attended by 45 JRS staff from JRS Asia Pacific Regional Office, JRS Australia, JRS Cambodia, JRS Indonesia, JRS Myanmar, Philipina, and JRS Thailand.

Photos by: Damrong Cheenmuang - JRS AP



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Thank you for your support
to help forcibly displaced people in Indonesia

JRS Indonesia is very grateful of the prayers and all kind of support from our donors, supporters, and volunteers through the year 2016. Your caring support will make a great difference in the lives of refugees and asylum seekers accompanied by JRS Indonesia.

We hope that you will continue to pray for and support us in our commitment to accompany, serve, and advocate the rights of refugees in Indonesia.

***Have a wonderful
Christmas
and Happy New Year!***



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