

REFUGE

Jesuit Refugee Service Indonesia

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



Do You Know How Shattered I Am?

Brothers in Humanity

Ability Is A Poor Man/Woman's Wealth

Areca Conqueror from Afghanistan

Philosophy for Refugees



Do You Know How Shattered I Am?

Abdul Samad Haidari

My heart is inexplicably shattered
and has fallen into many fragments
by the gales of unexplainable woes.

The affliction of wars and separation
left lines of red and black on my face
in scores!

You can't see them until you undergo
the unkind mastery of miserable wars -
until it dragged you out of your homes
and left you at the brink of
the troubling shores!

What you hear is my choked voice
about the brunt of the bruising pain
caged in my chest

It is the echoes of pain and suffering
gripping my throat and tongue
with no rest!

I don't know how do you see me
when I stumble every time
I try to speak!

I don't know how do you see me

when I pretend to smile while
holding the fragments of my heart
and force it to beat!

But please don't ask to explain
why my eyes are this sunken -
like the shattered piece of
annihilated stars
that nowhere fit.

There is no life on my face as you see
until I am granted a safe place
to call it home!

How do you know my obsession
with that home without my loved ones?
Even if it's filled with seasonless joy
where love and happiness bloom?
How do you perceive the pain of
being apart from your loved ones-
until like me,
you are not allowed to see them?

How can you know a man
with no strength left to run,
who only learnt to escape,
escapes even from his pride?

He is like an amputated man
with no arms to embrace,
have you ever touched a man
with no arms or with no breath?

If you will ever embrace one,
embrace him with compassion,
maybe you will learn more about
the scores of lines on his pale face
that define the extent of pain
he went through.

Maybe you will know
about his shattered dreams -
the dreams he has left behind
in his childhood streets,
dreams of what is possible,
and what is not!

Embrace him with compassion,
maybe you will know what it means
to freely breathe the fresh morning air,
to wake up to the calls of a mother
at your own home!

Maybe he will explain it to you
what it means to belong,
what it means to be safe,
to be allowed to dream
to be loved, to be valued
and to be accepted!

Maybe he will tell you
how it feels to be seeking
every possible reason
to remain alive.

Maybe he will tell you how it feels
to die thousands of times
before you are allowed
to learn how to breath.

Maybe he will tell you how it feels
to eat only one time a day
and save the remaining food
for the next!

Maybe he will tell you how it feels
to seek stranger's shoulders
for the appeasement of his pain.

If you embrace one,
will you know the wrench of
losing a home?
The pain of endurance?



The pain of laying on a bed
in the corner of a dismal room,
rolling in coldness and fatal pain
but there is no one to ask
if you are still alive or dead!

Will you know the burden of
those deep pains and sufferings
or the amount of tears he cried?

Will you love him as your own race?
as the generation of your own mankind?
or in the spirit of human love?
or for the love of the one
who unconditionally,
and equally loves us all?

*Abdul Samad Haidari is a former freelance journalist,
humanitarian aid worker and poet.*

*Abdul Samad currently resides in Indonesia as an
Afghan refugee.*

*Pictures and artworks by Nizar Ali Badr, Syria-based
artist and sculptor.*

Brothers in Humanity

Dominico S. Octariano Widianoro SJ



Nico SJ (fourth from right) with JRS staff and volunteers

A few months ago, I volunteered at JRS Indonesia as part of my Jesuit tertianship program. Probation with JRS meant working with a non-governmental organization. This was a good experience because I got to observe and learn about how JRS works. A week before my probation in Bogor, I undertook leadership training. This was a chance for me to put what I had learned into practice.

I admire how JRS staff and volunteers work. They take notes on everything they do. Every Monday morning they gather and plan their weekly activities. They also share what they did during the previous week. During my time with JRS I volunteered with healthcare services and helped provide food and housing support to the most vulnerable asylum seekers and refugees.

I had some touching experiences that will be remembered in my prayers.

First, during my visit to the learning center, Sabhar*, a teacher from Afghanistan invited me to close my eyes and imagine how it might feel if my family and I were chased, persecuted, and threatened to be killed by a group of people. It was so frightening to imagine how my family and I would have to run in panic to search for a safe place in fear for our lives. It was a short contemplation, which lasted for about 3 minutes, but I felt tears in my eyes when I opened them. I understood that the same was happening to Sabhar and his friends from Afghanistan.

Second, I met Amir, a six year old boy who has experienced breathing problems since arriving in Indonesia. The doctor says he has asthma. His father couldn't believe it because it never happened when they were still in Afghanistan. They have met with doctors many times and doctors always suggest using an inhaler. This time JRS took them to Ciawi Hospital. There we

met the pediatrician and therapist. When Amir was given inhalation treatment, his father saw a lot of improvement. He asked us to buy them the inhalation device. But the doctor said that it was unnecessary and that we were not allowed to buy it, as it requires a specific dose of medication for every use. I tried my best to explain this to him. Through this experience I could see how leaving the comfort of your own home can change everything. I remembered the Holy Family and their flight to Egypt; they had to leave immediately to a foreign land. It was probably not as difficult as now, ID cards were not required back then. But it's a similar situation, leaving your own home must be unpleasant.

Third, a woman from Afghanistan said that Indonesian people are really kind. During her stay in Indonesia, she could really feel how Indonesian people helped her in daily life: during her trip to the market, while she was on public transport, on the road, etc. She said she didn't get this feeling when she was in her home country. I felt happy to hear this. I am lucky to be a part of this country. But it also reminded me of a piece of short writing circulated recently on Facebook about how we can't choose where to be born and by whom. I remember also a quote from Sayyidina Ali bin Abu Thalib "He who is not your brother in faith, is your brother in humanity."

Overall, my time with the JRS in Bogor was very

interesting and challenging. Many things could be done. The asylum seekers and refugees I met don't live in detention or one specific compound. They are instead living within the local community, in many places. Most live in Cisarua as the living cost is low and weather is similar to their home country. They felt that JRS is dedicated and always there for them.

I also found that visits to houses, accompanying those with medical problems to hospitals, and providing classes in learning centers are really good ways of serving the refugees and asylum seekers. The English program and interpreter trainings to help communities are also provided by JRS. There are now about 1500 refugees around Cisarua area but JRS Bogor has only 10 volunteers.

JRS volunteers come from various backgrounds. Asylum seekers and refugees call the volunteers brothers and sisters. This shows how close JRS is to them. My experience with JRS has opened my eyes to the need for volunteers. I feel that my friends in JRS show high dedication in doing their job. No one felt forced. They often work overtime when needed and they are willing to do it freely without demanding a higher salary. I am really grateful for all of my experiences with JRS and I am willing to support JRS, especially in their fundraising activities in Catholic parishes.

*Name has been changed to protect identity



Refugees taking mid-semester test in JRS Learning Centre Bogor

Ability Is A Poor Man/Woman's Wealth

Chrispina Maria Gracia



Sister Ewita JMJ teaching refugee how to make simple patterns

During their waiting period in Indonesia, refugees often go through their days with very limited and monotonous activities. This situation, especially in shelters, prevents them from pursuing their hobbies or developing their potential. Women refugees living in a temporary shelter in Manado Immigration Detention Center (IDC) with their families experience it. Every day, they keep busy with household chores but are longing to be active in sewing or handicraft. They want to learn something new and develop their capacity. Considering this situation, the Sisters of Jesus Maria Joseph (JMJ) are taking the initiative to do something for and with refugees.

Since mid-2017, the JMJ sisters have actively supported JRS by accompanying refugee families, especially women and children. The JMJ sisters pay special attention to children's education and women's empowerment. Therefore, when they learned that children

and mothers needed more activities, the sisters were enthusiastic to help and did so by providing handicraft materials and sewing machines. In fact, Sr. Ewita, who's in charge of St. Familia belonging to JMJ Manado, personally teaches women refugees how to use sewing machines and make simple patterns.

"We will do what we can," Sr. Justien Tiwow, JMJ Manado Provincial, said when visiting refugee families. *"At least they slowly learn to sew clothes for their children. For us, the main thing is to help them,"* Sr. Margaretha Toliu JMJ added. Nazia*, one of the women refugees, felt very happy because the sisters were willing to come and visit them. She is grateful that the sisters help her family and other refugees.

JRS Manado also organized a training in collaboration with PT Daya Adicipta Wisesa (DAW), Honda's main motorcycle dealer for North Sulawesi, Gorontalo and North Maluku.



Refugees and asylum seekers participating in basic mechanical training for Honda motorcycles.

In August, twelve refugees in Manado, from Afghanistan, Ethiopia, Somalia, and Sudan, attended the basic mechanical training for Honda motorcycles. They were the first group of about 80 refugees who enrolled for this training.

In the three day training, refugees received materials to learn about the electric motor starter system regulation and Honda motor PGM-FI (Programmed Fuel Injection) technology. In addition to the material in the classroom, they also got the chance to practice new skills in the workshop. For the participants, this hands-on practice really helped them to better understand and clarify some unfamiliar mechanical terms. On the last day, they had to take a practical exam. The refugees received training certificates from PT DAW and those who passed this exam were given the opportunity to attend the next level of training.

The refugees were excited to gain new knowledge and skills. *"It was great and helpful for me. I learned many things about*

it (motorbike repairs)," Hassan, one of the participants, said. They also got to know new people during the training at PT DAW. The refugees really hope to get more opportunities to attend other trainings to improve their capacities so when accepted into a settlement country, they can apply it in a job. "Please give us more chances to improve ourselves. Thank you," Hassan added.*

Mr. Anwar Joesoef, Director of PT DAW who visited the refugees during the training, expressed his interest in the JRS program. He promised to encourage Honda dealers in other branches to work with local Immigration to provide mechanical training for the refugees. IDC Manado responded to this activity well. *"We strongly support this training. During this time, JRS has assisted Immigration to meet the needs of refugees with breakthrough activities that are very useful, especially the activities undertaken in cooperation with outside partners, such as churches, universities, schools, organizations and companies,"* said Mr. Rudolf F. Anis, Head Section of Health and Care IDC Manado. UNHCR Indonesia also showed support and appreciated this collaborative activity. JRS hopes by gaining new skills, refugees can achieve a better future and integrate well when they resettle.

*Name has been changed to protect identity



In addition to the material in the classroom, they also got the chance to practice new skills in the workshop.

Areca Conqueror from Afghanistan

Leocadia Puspitasari



Residents and refugees were cheering excitedly during this tug of war game

Rohullah Nasseri, 19-years-old, is one of the students in the Bahasa Indonesia class at JRS Learning Center who can communicate fluently. Despite his not so prime health, Rohullah is very diligent and active in following learning activities at the JRS center. He is a polite, friendly, and passionate young man from Afghanistan.

When last August, JRS communicated with the Head of RT 04 Babakan, Cisarua and its youth group about possibilities for refugees to participate in Indonesia's Independence Day celebration, JRS saw an opportunity to build stronger relationships between refugees and local residents. With a generous heart, the youth group, residents, and their neighborhood chief invited refugees to participate in this

event. Accordingly, JRS told this good news to the Bahasa Indonesia class students.

On August 17th, at 9 o'clock in the morning, Rohullah and his friends gathered at the JRS Learning Center, all well dressed; shirts, jeans, and sneakers. They were very happy to be allowed to attend the independence day celebration. At exactly 9.30, JRS with Rohullah and friends headed to the Babakan field. When we arrived, some preparations were still being made. The refugees immediately responded by helping the residents to set up the areca palm pole for the areca-climbing race.

On this day, there were various kinds of competitions held for the children; such as a marbles racing contest, putting pencils into



Some refugees joined the pillow fights game

bottles, inserting a thread into needles, eating crackers, and a sack race. Child refugees competed with local children. Residents and refugees were cheering excitedly, making the atmosphere so festive and warm. Rohullah and some of his friends cheered in support for child refugees. Two of the child refugees successfully won the marbles race and thread-needle competition. They were very proud and happy.

Then it was time for the adult competitions. Adult and adolescent refugees joined the clogs race, pillow fight, and tug of war game. No one wanted to join the areca-climbing competition, except Rohullah. He said that the areca-climbing race is very unique and it would be his first time joining this competition. Rohullah immediately went home and changed his clothes. He came back to the field wearing shorts and a terracotta colored t-shirt. As the only refugee among the 12 local youths, Rohullah appeared so confident. His thin and tiny body didn't fade his confidence nor break his spirits. Before he started climbing the areca pole, he listened to the directions from a local boy, his teammate.

Despite the size of his body, Rohullah was very strong and unyielding. He was mostly in the bottom position and was always ready to

provide his shoulders to support other youth who tried to climb and conquer the tall and slippery areca pole. In the heat of the sun, Rohullah didn't complain at all and remained excited. He occasionally climbed on his own, but kept slipping due to the oil rubbed along the areca pole. For approximately 2 hours, they still couldn't climb the pole to the top. The audience was still cheering faithfully and believed that the team could conquer the areca pole. Half an hour later, at about 3 pm, Rohullah and his team mates were finally able to defeat the areca pole and succeeded in waving the red and white flag at the top of the pole. Everyone was touched and they all applauded, including the refugees. Some women even shed tears while clapping and cheering. The beauty of unity and warmth at that time showed that the celebration of Indonesia's independence could be enjoyed not only by Indonesian citizens but also by the refugees. Happy and proud smiles appeared across faces, as the red and white flag waved beautifully.



Rohullah (top) and his teammates tried to climb and conquer the tall and slippery areca pole

Philosophy for Refugees

Martinus Dam Febrianto SJ

“To teach how to live without certainty, and yet without being paralyzed by hesitation, is perhaps the chief thing that philosophy, in our age, can still do for those who study it.”

Bertrand Russell,
A History of Western Philosophy

Tuesday September 12th was our third meeting discussing philosophy with refugees. *Introducing philosophy to asylum seekers and refugees, people living in limbo, are you kidding?* Yes, perhaps. Considering the need to organize extracurricular activities for English language students, these classes are meant to improve their reading and critical thinking skills. As Franz Magnis-Suseno SJ says in his book *Philosophy as Critical Science*, I believe through philosophy we develop critical and analytical thinking skills, that are increasingly needed but are very rare in our society, resulting

in dogmatism which leads to conservatism, or people easily believe in hoaxes spread through social media, which leads to fundamentalism and intolerant attitudes.

On the one side asylum seekers/refugees clearly need to develop their English skills, not only speaking, but also their reading and comprehension skills. Even though chances of resettlement to third countries like Australia and America are decreasing drastically, developing English skills is still relevant to prepare them for living in those countries. Therefore, having mastered grammar and daily vocabulary, it is also necessary for them to recognize more sophisticated English phrases or terms. On the other side having grown up in a very traditional culture and environment, although appreciating differences, they tend to have been living surrounded by a somewhat dogmatic mindset. The chance to



Erone SJ facilitating philosophy discussion for refugees and asylum seekers in JRS Learning Center

meet fundamental questions might open their awareness of limitations, so they then realize the importance of thinking rationally and openly.

So, are they fit for it? And do they have the capacity for philosophy? I think so. First, they are on the D level in JRS Centre, at least level 6 in English equal to a high school student level. In fact, compared to high school students in Indonesia, these refugees are far more fluent in speaking English. Second, the book I offer, *“What Does It All Mean?: A Very Short Introduction To Philosophy”* by Thomas Nagel, a small book with 100 pages, 10 chapters, and relatively big fonts, is very basic. Written simply, it discusses the basic questions without mentioning philosopher's names. Third, I position myself as a facilitator. I have asked them to read the book in the previous week, and one of them presents for 20-30 minutes each class, before we start the discussion.

People say philosophy is only for those who are free from demanding duties, or in other words, for those who are free economically. Philosophy is for scholastics, those who have

enough spare time (Lat. *scholae* = spare time). In terms of free time, these asylum seekers and refugees in Indonesia, who are not allowed to work, have actually met this qualification. They need more activities to get busy, even better if these activities can help them to reflect deeply.

During the second meeting the previous week, Nalerin Erone SJ, a Jesuit scholastic in his final year in Driyarkara School of Philosophy in Jakarta, was willing to be our guest facilitator, introducing the participants to philosophical thinking and its key themes. This stirred a very active discussion as participants asked questions and expressed their opinion excitedly. I cannot confirm if this class will succeed or where it will lead. Some of the students already commented that the text is too difficult. But I am overall happy to hear one of them saying, *“Ah... we learn philosophy. So then after this course we can be philosopher, right?”*

JRS Indonesia Eucharistic Service and Fundraising at St. Therese parish, Jakarta, August 2017



Fr. Maswan Susinto SJ celebrating Eucharist at St. Therese



Some JRS volunteers



JRS volunteer greets parishioners and distributes JRS newsletter



Thank you for helping refugees by supporting JRS with your donation

Jesuit Refugee Service Indonesia will hold another Eucharistic Service and Fundraising activities at following places:



**The Immaculate Heart of Mary Church,
Tangerang**

Saturday-Sunday, 4-5 November 2017
Sat 18.00 Sun 06.30, 09.00, 18.00



St. Anthony Church, Purbayan, Surakarta

Saturday-Sunday, 2-3 December 2017
Sat 16.30, 18.00
Sun 05.30, 07.00, 08.30

JRS Indonesia invites you to participate in the above events or kindly donate to BCA 037 4400 777 a.n. Yayasan JRS Indonesia.

Your caring support will make a great difference in the lives of the most vulnerable refugees and asylum seekers being accompanied by JRS Indonesia.



Like us on Facebook to get updates about our works and the latest refugee issues

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JMJ Sisters visiting refugee family during Eid al-Fitr day in Manado

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