

# Freedom Is God's Gift to You. Pass It On!



**Help Us Help  
Cuban/Haitian Emergency Appeal**  
123 East Ave.  
Rochester, N.Y. 14604



## Q and A

**Q — Who are the Cubans and Haitians now seeking to enter the United States?**

**A —** Men, women and children escaping political and religious repression and dire economic conditions. The Cubans seeking asylum are anti-Communist and they have lost all rights to their own lands and property because of their stand.

**Q — How many Cuban refugees will be resettled in this country?**

**A —** To date about 113,000 people have been transported from Cuba on the boat life. About 40 percent of these people have families in the United States.

**Q — What is the role of the United States Catholic Conference in resettling these refugees?**

**A —** USCC is one of 12 voluntary agencies that staff processing centers and conduct preliminary interviews with refugees when they enter the country. USCC, through its Migration and Refugee Services, will actually resettle about 70 percent of the current Cuban refugees. USCC estimates that it will be involved in the majority of resettlements because it resettled most of the Cuban refugees of the 1960s and because most Cubans are Catholic and place greater trust in Catholic organizations.

**Q — How does USCC handle refugee resettlements?**

**A —** Migration and Refugee Services works through diocesan offices, such as the Refugee Resettlement Program of the Catholic Family Center, 50 Chestnut St., Rochester, N.Y. 14604. Such agencies locate sponsors and resettlement opportunities, including housing and employment, for refugees. When refugees have relatives in the United States, USCC will aid in family reunification. Once the refugees are processed and have an offer of sponsorship, USCC arranges transportation and provides pocket money for initial expenses.

**Q — Doesn't the government provide money for refugee resettlement?**

**A —** Not always. The Cuban and Haitian people have not been officially designated as of refugee status. It is this official designation that makes refugees eligible for federal benefits under the Refugee Act of 1980.

## A Special Proclamation By Citizen's Committee For Cubans and Haitians

As we approach the observance of our independence as a nation, we wish to celebrate by renewing the spirit of hope in which this nation was founded. As a people, we see ourselves as history makers, creating a future out of what is best in our various traditions. For this reason July 4th speaks a message of hope, trust in God, and an openness to peoples from other nations who have lost hope because of political or economic oppression.

This year as we celebrate the founding of our nation we find within our shores many thousands of new refugees, Caribbean "boat people" from Cuba and Haiti, who hope to find freedom and opportunity to establish new lives in our midst.

Rochester and Monroe County have been richly blessed by experiencing local traditions of many diverse cultures, races, religions, and ways of life, united in common purpose. This season reminds us to honor and rejoice in these many groups who have immigrated to this area and blessed us with their energies.

Out of our commitment to this vision of America and out of gratitude for all that it has meant to us, we want to share the gift. We announce our personal commitment to extend a helping hand to the homeless Cubans and Haitians in our land. We are pleased to announce the formation of a broad-based citizens committee to coordinate efforts to welcome about 100 Cuban and Haitian families to Monroe County. We call on religious and community organizations to assist as sponsors for individual families. This committee has established a special fund through which contributions might be channeled to assist sponsors as necessary in meeting the needs of refugees with costs of getting established in our community. We call on leaders of the business community, educational and social service agencies to lend their special resources to assist in the resettlement effort.

We invite all our fellow citizens to join us in making this July 4 a special time of promise to the homeless refugees in our midst. As we celebrate our independence as a nation, let us also celebrate our interdependence as a people.

**Q — Won't most refugees end up on welfare roles?**

**A —** On the contrary, most refugees are employable and their record of employment is excellent. Refugees come to the United States expecting and wanting to work for a living. Virtually all Cubans (more than 95 percent) resettled in the U.S. in the 1960s are working. Even the more current refugees from Southeast Asia are, for the most part, employed or in job training programs.

**Q — Aren't many of the refugees forced to leave Cuba criminals?**

**A —** A very small percentage (about 1 percent) were prisoners in Cuba. However, many of these were political prisoners, priests and other religious, and others persecuted for their beliefs. Those refugees identified as true criminals will be detained and processed appropriately. But, accounts of the number of prisoners within the ranks of the refugees have been greatly exaggerated by the news media.

**Q — Where are the Cuban refugees being resettled?**

**A —** Because of the strength of the Cuban family and community, most Cuban refugees are being resettled by existing Cuban-American communities throughout the country. These communities must, of necessity, offer low-cost housing and employment, as well as educational opportunities for Spanish-speaking children and young people. These communities must also be able to support the refugees until they become self-supporting. USCC is making every effort to distribute refugees in every section of the country so that no one community will have to shoulder an unduly heavy burden.

**Q — How can other communities help?**

**A —** Contribute generously to:

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For further information on sponsoring the Cuban and Haitian refugees, contact:

Refugee Resettlement  
Catholic Family Center  
50 Chestnut St.  
Rochester, N.Y. 14604