

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

November 3, 2015

Dear Elected Official:

I write to you today to share my concerns regarding the Syrian refugee crisis. Like so many, I have been shocked and saddened by the news reports and images of thousands of refugees fleeing war and violence in Syria. This movement of more than 4 million refugees, half of whom are children, is the largest the world has seen since World War II.

Pope Francis has urged generous support for refugees from governments as well as Catholic institutions, encouraging all of us to help assist. As you may know, he mentioned this crisis when he spoke to Congress, saying:

“We must not be taken aback by their numbers, but rather view them as persons, seeing their faces and listening to their stories, trying to respond as best we can to their situation. To respond in a way which is always humane, just and fraternal. We need to avoid a common temptation nowadays: to discard whatever proves troublesome. Let us remember the Golden Rule: ‘Do unto others as you would have them do unto you’ (Mt 7:12).”

Echoing the Pope’s call, Archbishop Joseph Kurtz, President of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, has urged “all Catholics in the United States and others of good will to express openness and welcome to these refugees, who are escaping desperate situations in order to survive.” In this spirit and as the President of a Catholic and Jesuit University, I request your support for additional U.S. government efforts to address the refugee crisis. While the refugees are most urgently appearing on the shores and borders of our European friends, as Americans we can also play a critical role in helping to address this political and humanitarian crisis. I join with colleagues at Jesuit Refugee Service in their specific appeal that you:

- Re-double efforts to address the root causes of the conflict through robust political and diplomatic efforts across the region.
- Increase current levels of humanitarian aid, including life-saving resources, and invest in education programs for refugees.
- Increase U.S. refugee admission numbers to provide a safe haven for those in need.

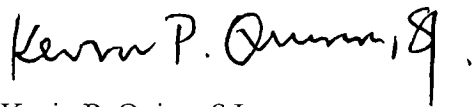
I believe we have compelling reasons to help. The geo-political conflict causing the refugee crisis must be addressed to create a positive future for all Syrians. The humanitarian needs are urgent and our compassion should abound to help men, women and children who have fled their homes in pursuit of safety. Lastly, increasing the number of Syrian refugees we admit into the United States aligns with our American ideals of welcoming neighbors from distant shores, and is a bedrock of our local Scranton history as well. The immigrant coal-

miners of the past, coming from diverse European origins, have risen to become the community and business leaders of our present and future.

For our own part, we are exploring how The University of Scranton can assist Syrian families resettled in Northeastern Pennsylvania through collaboration with Catholic Social Services, as well as looking at ways to assist Syrian college students seeking new educational opportunities in the United States. Our campus is being mobilized to consider the plight of refugees through a “Solidarity with Syrian Refugees” initiative that includes educational, prayer, awareness, and advocacy activities in cooperation with Catholic and Jesuit partner agencies. Alumni working in the Middle East with refugee populations will be sharing their on-the-ground reports with the campus. As Elena Habersky, ‘13, a Fulbright scholar in Jordan recently wrote, the stories of these refugees “show me the commonality and beauty of humanity”.

I appreciate your consideration of these urgent matters and offer you my prayers and encouragement in your important public service work.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kevin P. Quinn, S.J." with a stylized flourish at the end.

Kevin P. Quinn, S.J.
President