

## A Welcome Spirit

Author and Nobel laureate Elie Wiesel was a survivor of the Buchenwald concentration camp during World War II. In *All Rivers Run to the Sea*, he recalls how he became a citizen of the United States:

“I was working in New York City as a correspondent for a French newspaper when my travel permit expired. At the French consulate, I was informed that the document could be validated only in France. I didn’t have enough money to go back there, and I was anxiously wondering whether I would be deported from America. I went to the U.S. Immigration office, where an official smiled and said, ‘Why don’t you become a U.S. resident? Then later you can apply for citizenship.’ I stared at him. Could I actually become an American citizen?”

“It is hard to put into words how much I owe that kindly immigration official, especially when I recall my annual visits to the Prefecture de Police in Paris, with its long lines and humiliating interrogations. The refugee’s time is measured in visas, his biography in stamps on his documents. There is nothing romantic about the life of the exile.

“In later years, a high official asked whether I would like to have French nationality. Though I thanked him, I declined the offer. When I needed a passport, it was America that gave me one.”

People go where they are welcome. In the centers of Life Care and American Lifestyles, and in the work of Life Care at Home, kindness and helpfulness will always be appreciated, and bring returns – whether for care or for visits.

What will you do to welcome people today?

--Beecher Hunter