

'Building Bridges of Mercy – Welcoming Refugees and Asylum seekers'

The annual Seeds of Justice Regional Event was again held at Araluen Camp at Anglesea on August 9-10. A number of Ballarat Diocesan Mercy foundations were represented including St Joseph's Mildura, Mercy Regional College Camperdown, Damascus College Ballarat and Emmanuel College Warrnambool. From the Melbourne Archdiocese we welcomed Sacred Heart College Geelong and Sacred Heart Kyneton.



Focusing on 'Building Bridges of Mercy – Welcoming Refugees and Asylum seekers', the first keynote speaker was Sister of Mercy, Fina Woollcombe RSM who spoke of her journey into the Combined Refugee Action Group (CRAG) in Geelong and how she supports them. The second speaker was Zoe Brittain, also from CRAG, who led an activity that orientated students to the reality of life for those seeking refugee status in Australia – the game of life and death. The evening hypothetical focused on a fictitious Catherine McAuley College and the dilemmas associated with staging a public protest against Government refugee policy.



The development of a QR site enabled students to have resources from the conference available for demonstration on return to their respective colleges.

Seeds of Justice Conferences are run by associations of Mercy foundation schools and aim:

- To form students and staff in the Mercy charism;
- To raise awareness of contemporary issues in social justice; and
- To facilitate new links between students and staff of Victorian Mercy schools.



The group prayed so that we might find a way to be Building Bridges of Mercy.

***Merciful God, whose Son became a refugee and had no place to call his own;
Look with mercy on those today who are fleeing from danger, those who are homeless and hungry.
Bless those who work to bring them relief;
Inspire generosity and compassion in all our hearts;
And guide the nations of the world towards that day.
When all will rejoice in your Kingdom of justice and peace.
Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.***

Tony Haintz – Deputy Principal