



# Diocesan e-News

## NEWS FROM BDSJC

The role of the Ballarat Diocesan Social Justice Commission (BDSJC) is to assist and support the Bishop in areas of social justice issues in the diocese and spread the Gospel message to the local Church and wider community. The Commission collaborates to promote joint action with the Church and other groups in favour of justice, peace and the integrity of creation. The Commission's 2019 Annual report can be read at the below link:

### **[BDSJC Annual Report 2019](#)**

Our article titled 'All God's Children' on page 13 and 14 of '[Our Diocesan Community](#)' (Nov 2019) seeks to engage community members in support of refugees and those seeking asylum. Here are a number of contacts you may find helpful:

### **How to get involved:**

**Mercy Works:** recruits volunteers to support students from a refugee/asylum seeker background in Ballarat Schools through their Mercy Connect Project. The project aims to provide mentoring for young people to optimize their literacy development, academic and social learning.

Contact Donna Stewart on 0417 624 330 or email: [mercyconnectb@gmail.com](mailto:mercyconnectb@gmail.com)

**Saint Vincent de Paul:** a lay Catholic organisation that assists people experiencing poverty and inequality and works to shape a more just and compassionate society. Vinnies Conferences can be found throughout the Diocese.

Contact: <https://www.vinnies.org.au/>

**Ballarat Regional Multicultural Council:** works in partnership with other community organisations, Cultural Associations and members to actively promote multiculturalism, cultural diversity and the well-being of all migrant communities throughout the Region.

Contact: <https://www.brmc.org.au>

**Ballarat Regional Asylum Seeker Support Network (BRASSN):** is a subcommittee of the Ballarat Regional Multicultural Council. Its membership comprises representation from BRMC, GADRC, R.A.R. House of Welcome, Centre for Multicultural Youth (CMY), Ballarat Community Health, Ballarat City Council, ASRC,

Uniting Church and the Ballarat Catholic Diocesan Social Justice Commission. Members from this group facilitate fundraising events to raise funds to support the emergency needs of refugee families and much more. The committee also promotes and facilitates events during Refugee Week.

**Grandmothers against the Detention of Refugee Children (GADRC):** committed to achieving freedom for all refugee children held by or on behalf of the Australian Government.

Contact: <https://www.grandmothersadrc.org/>

**Rural Australians for Refugees (RAR):** grassroot movement striving to return compassion and humanity to Australian's treatment of asylum seekers. There are a number of GRADC chapters in our Diocese.

For contact details of a group in your region: <https://www.ruralaustraliansforrefugees.org.au>

**House of Welcome, Ballarat:** provides emergency accommodation, advocacy and support for asylum seeker families. Donations of food, toiletries and vouchers can be made.

Call 0401175045 for details and a list of donations needed.

*Rachel Smith – Executive Member, <mailto:social.justice@ballarat.catholic.org.au>*