



AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC BISHOPS CONFERENCE

Australian Catholic Migrant and Refugee Office



Resources released to support World Day of Migrants and Refugees

Catholics across the country are being urged to consider how they can pray for and offer practical support to neighbours around the world as the Church marks the World Day of Migrants and Refugees this month.

In his message for the 107th commemoration of the day, Pope Francis writes on the theme “Towards an Ever Wider ‘We’”. He encourages people to reject the temptation to create literal or metaphorical barriers with other people, and to instead recognise the barriers that exist due to individualism or nationalism.

“The truth however is that we are all in the same boat and called to work together so that there will be no more walls that separate us, no longer others, but only a single ‘we’, encompassing all of humanity,” Pope Francis writes.

The message is written to the Catholics of the world, but also the wider human family. Addressing the faithful, Pope Francis says the Holy Spirit “enables us to embrace everyone, to build communion in diversity, to unify differences without imposing a depersonalised uniformity”.

“In encountering the diversity of foreigners, migrants and refugees, and in the intercultural dialogue that can emerge from this encounter, we have an opportunity to grow as Church and to enrich one another,” he wrote.

When he switches his focus to the whole world, the Holy Father calls for “we” to take on a broader meaning “for the sake of renewing the human family, building together a future of justice and peace, and ensuring that no one is left behind”.

Each year, the Australian Catholic Migrant and Refugee Office (ACMRO) publishes resources to support the celebration of the World Day for Migrants and Refugees.

The 2021 kit includes the full text of Pope Francis’ message, a series of reflections and stories from Australian communities celebrating the diversity of the Church and prayer resources.

ACMRO national director Fr Khalid Marogi encouraged Catholics to reflect on and pray with Pope Francis’ message, which draws heavily on other papal writings and the Scriptures.

“The Church in Australia is greatly enriched by migrant communities, many of whom came to our shores as refugees across recent decades,” he explained.

“The kit produced this year shares the stories of some of those migrants, including the Filipino Catholics who celebrated 500 years since the faith arrived on those shores.”

Fr Marogi said the recent unrest in Afghanistan and strong support from Catholic leaders in Australia for a generous intake of refugees has brought the issue of welcoming those in need to the forefront of people’s minds.



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“The bishops and leaders of religious congregations, as well as key Catholic providers of support to migrants and refugees, understand the need for people fleeing to find safe haven,” he said.

“Indeed, the Holy Family – Mary, Joseph and Jesus – had to find safety when fleeing to Egypt.

“The World Day of Migrants and Refugees is also an opportunity for us to offer sincere appreciation for all those in our local Church communities who courageously deal with the challenges that arise from their generous commitment to supporting migrants and refugees. “May we all pray for the generosity of heart that Pope Francis calls for as we seek the wider ‘we’.”

[Access to 2021 Migrant and Refugee Kit here.](#)