

# Refugee and Migrant Sunday

28 August 2016

**Refugee and Migrant Sunday is a celebration of the dignity of people who are refugees and migrants and the contribution they have made to life in Australia. It is celebrated by the Churches together on or around the last Sunday of August each year.**

Our world stands at a crossroads. Around 60 million people across the world are now displaced, more than at any time since the World Wars. Torn from their homelands, pushed out of their communities and over borders by the viciousness and violence of war, conflict, persecution and poverty.

Human displacement presents us with complex issues. But as a nation we must rise above the slogans and politicking, and ask much more serious questions of ourselves. How are we to respond to the suffering of the world? Turn our backs in isolation – or embrace it in all its messiness and seek collective ways forward?

Pope Francis has stated:

*'How can we experience these changes not as obstacles to genuine development, rather as opportunities for genuine human, social and spiritual growth, a growth which respects and promotes those values which make us ever more humane and help us to live a balanced relationship with God, others and creation? ...*

*Dear brothers and sisters, migrants and refugees! At the heart of the Gospel of mercy the encounter and acceptance by others are intertwined with the encounter and acceptance of God himself. Welcoming others means welcoming God in person! Do not let yourselves be robbed of the hope and joy of life born of your experience of God's mercy, as manifested in the people you meet on your journey!'*

## **What can we do in our own communities to become more welcoming, connected and compassionate places?**

Below we have outlined a range of liturgical and other resources you can use to help celebrate and reflect on this occasion with your congregations.

We also urge you to consider taking some simple practical actions to assist some of the people in our local communities who are most in need of support.

Yours in Christ



Rev'd Canon Richard Tutin  
General Secretary  
Queensland Churches Together



## Liturgical and other resources

### *Prepared especially for Migrant and Refugee week*

Migrant and Refugee Week, resource kit - Australian Catholic Migrant and Refugee Office (AMCRO)  
<http://www.acmro.catholic.org.au/resources/migrant-refugee-kit/booklet>

### *Theological Statement*

From the *Australian Churches Refugee Taskforce*, an initiative of the National Council of Churches in Australia.

[www.australianchurchesrefugeetaskforce.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/ACRT-Theological-Statement.pdf](http://www.australianchurchesrefugeetaskforce.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/ACRT-Theological-Statement.pdf)

### *Study guides*

Asylum seekers and refugees: Scriptural, theological and ethical approaches, Study Guide – Anglican Church Southern Queensland - [http://anglicanchurchsq.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/Asylum\\_Seekers\\_study\\_guide\\_A4\\_single\\_pages\\_format.pdf](http://anglicanchurchsq.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/Asylum_Seekers_study_guide_A4_single_pages_format.pdf)

Bible study and prayer – Anglican Diocese of Melbourne  
<http://www.melbourneanglican.org.au/ServingCommunity/ParishPartnershipsMinistry/Documents/4.%20Bible%20Study%20and%20Prayer.pdf>

### ***Worship Resources***

Justice for Asylum Seekers, A Call to prayer – Uniting Justice  
<http://www.unitingjustice.org.au/refugees-and-asylum-seekers/information-and-action-resources/item/879-justice-for-asylum-seekers-a-call-to-prayer>

Sermon Outline 'Welcoming the Other' and Prayer resources 'For the Weak and Vulnerable, Let Us See' – Just Salvos  
[www.sarmy.org.au/en/Social/JustSalvos/Issues/Refugees/Refugee-Week1/](http://www.sarmy.org.au/en/Social/JustSalvos/Issues/Refugees/Refugee-Week1/)

### ***Parish kits***

Searching for Freedom, In Courage Let us All combine, Refugee Week 2016 resource – Uniting Justice  
<http://www.unitingjustice.org.au/refugees-and-asylum-seekers/information-and-action-resources/item/1200-refugee-week-2016>

Let's Fully Welcome Refugees, Parish Pack - Anglican Diocese of Melbourne  
[www.melbourneanglican.org.au/ServingCommunity/ParishPartnershipsMinistry/Pages/default.aspx](http://www.melbourneanglican.org.au/ServingCommunity/ParishPartnershipsMinistry/Pages/default.aspx)

### ***Prayers***

Prayer Guide: Refugees and Asylum Seekers – Just Salvos  
<http://www.sarmy.org.au/Global/SArmy/Social/justsalvos/Documents/PrayerGuide.pdf>

Prayers for Syria – Baptist World Aid  
<https://www.baptistworldaid.org.au/assets/Uploads/Syrian-Crisis-Prayers.pdf>



## Actions you can take

1. Take up a collection or make a **donation to support legal clinics for people seeking asylum** – this is an urgent and critical need across Queensland\*\*!
2. **Contribute** food, baby supplies, Go Cards and/or cash to a local group, such as the Romero Centre in Dutton Park ([www.romero.mercycs.org.au/](http://www.romero.mercycs.org.au/)). This will help support the increasing numbers of individuals or families with no income at all to support themselves.
3. **Sign up** to the Australian Churches Refugee Taskforce nationally ([www.acrt.com.au](http://www.acrt.com.au)) and Brisbane Refugee and Asylum Seeker Support Network locally to stay up to date, find opportunities for advocacy and get involved ([www.brassnetwork.org](http://www.brassnetwork.org)).

### **\*\*Why supporting legal clinics for asylum seekers in Queensland is so urgent?**

There are around 3,500 people living in Queensland, who are seeking asylum and need to put in an application for refugee protection. Only a small number of highly vulnerable people (such as unaccompanied children) have access to **funded legal support** to help them apply.

Making a refugee claim is an incredibly complicated legal process. The current system called “fast track processing” was introduced by the Australian Government in 2015. It was adapted from the UK (and last year the UK Courts suspended their system as they found it “unlawful” on the basis it was structurally unfair.) Now, in Australia, people are given only a short time to make this bid for safety, security, and freedom, in a language that is rarely their first. If our Government doesn’t get the decision right, people’s lives can ultimately be put at risk.

It is essential and urgent that people get legal advice to prepare their case and to have any chance of getting a fair go. There are hardly any free services in Queensland and they are in dire need of more financial support to keep going.

*The **Catholic Justice and Peace Commission** will receive any collections or donations by EFT from churches and distribute all money to these clinics. This includes:*

- *Salvos Humanitarian Legal Asylum Seeker Clinic*
- *Indooroopilly Uniting Church form filling*
- *RAILS Unsupported Asylum Seeker clinic*

**Account Name:** CJPC Brisbane Refugee Appeal Fund  
**Bank Name:** CBA, 240 Queen Street, Brisbane, Q 4000.  
**BSB:** 064 786  
**ACC No.** 520846002