

Welcome the Stranger



In his message on World Refugee Day (June 20) Pope Francis said “I wish to encourage all people of good will to create ever new spaces for sharing” so that such meetings may give life renewed feelings of fraternity with migrants and refugees.

At the heart of the Pope’s message was an encouragement to all to continue together on a journey with migrants and refugees by sharing meals and stories, and also by putting into action a series of everyday gestures to remind the world that “we are one human family”, that we need each other, and that together it is possible to create a “wave of solidarity” which is capable of moving the stones of indifference, prejudice and fear.

To welcome, to protect, to promote, to integrate are the four verbs chosen by Pope Francis as he called for action in his Message released for the 104th World Day of Migrants and Refugees marked in the Vatican on 14 January 2018 (<https://www.vaticannews.va/en/pope/news/2018-06/pope-caritas-world-day-refugees-share-the-journey.html>).

The ultimate aim is to create better understanding between different communities and to encourage successful integration enabling refugees to live in safety and to continue making a valuable contribution to Australia.

Refugee Week in Australia is always held from Sunday to Saturday of the week which includes 20 June, World Refugee Day (<https://www.refugeeweek.org.au/about/overview/>).

Prayer

God of all creation

You have given us the beautiful land we call Australia.

Rich in ancient culture and tradition,

rich in landscape, plants and animal life;

rich in resources, laws and social structure,

offering safety and opportunity.

Teach us to see those who are at our gates,

to act justly so all may come to the table and

to weep for those who perish before they are invited.

– Excerpt from ‘A prayer for solidarity’, <http://www.socialjustice.catholic.org.au/spirituality-for-justice/prayers>

REFLECTION

> How does your ministry encourage integration and solidarity?