



Australian Catholic Bishops Conference

Australian Catholic Migrant and Refugee Office



12 August 2016

**Media Statement from Fr Maurizio Pettena CS,
Director, Australian Catholic Migrant and Refugee Office**

“The Australian Catholic Migrant and Refugee Office is concerned over the allegations contained in ‘The Nauru Files’.”

“It is of grave concern that more than half of the allegations involve children, even though they make up 18 percent of those in detention. Of particular concern, is also the manner in which these allegations have been handled, in particular the downgrading of severity in allegations.”

“The Catholic Church calls for immediate action to be taken by the Minister of Immigration, Peter Dutton, in order to reduce the human suffering of the refugees on Nauru.”

“There has been a consistent decline in the mental and physical condition of refugees on Nauru. Concrete action must be taken to improve conditions.”

“Despite the Nauru senate inquiry and the Moss inquiry, revealing similar situations, unfortunately the situation remains the same.”

“Any response to people seeking asylum must focus on respecting their human dignity, above all else.”

“The Catholic Church opposes mandatory detention and offshore detention because these policy responses do not respect the dignity of people seeking our help. It is imperative that the dignity of the human person must always come first.”

“Governments have a responsibility to manage migration flows, but the Australian Government’s current approach is harsh and should change.”

**For media enquiries, please contact Fr Maurizio Pettenà on 0427 667 648 or
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