



AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC BISHOPS CONFERENCE



General Secretariat

Bishops Commission for Evangelisation, Laity and Ministry

This year we celebrate the 111th World Day of Migrants and Refugees (WDMR) and the Jubilee of Migrants in October 2025. The theme is: "Migrants, Missionaries of Hope."

For this day, Pope Leo has written his first message. He makes direct reference to the fact that so many in the world today are experiencing "frightening scenarios and the possibility of Global devastation." This is making so many people go on the move either as Migrants or Refugees.

Pope Leo writes about the great courage of such people. He says, "In a world darkened by war and injustice, even when all seems lost, Migrants and Refugees stand out as messengers of hope." We all know of Refugees and Migrants in our own personal lives here in Australia where this is so true. Taking time to sit back and listen to some of their wonderful stories generates a great sense of hope and an appreciation of their courage. For this reason, they are among the great evangelisers and leaders of faith in our Jubilee Year of Pilgrims of Hope.

Of course, our ultimate pilgrimage is to be with Christ in our Heavenly homeland. This must never be eclipsed or forgotten. For this reason, Pope Leo in his message reminds us that God's People must never forget about our Heavenly homeland. If so, "she ceases to be in the world and becomes of the world."

Finally, Pope Leo speaks of how Migrants and Refugees so easily become missionaries of hope journeying towards their final homeland. He writes and encourages that "the communities that welcome them can also become a living witness to hope."

Clearly Migrants and Refugees need our help. We need their help. Perhaps our help is more of a material kind and their help is more of a spiritual kind. The Pope concludes his message by saying, "I wish to entrust all who are on the journey, as well as those who are working to accompany them, to the maternal protection of the Virgin Mary, comfort of migrants."

I encourage you to read this beautiful message and see how Migrants and Refugees are an important part of our Jubilee Year Pilgrims of Hope.

Yours sincerely in Christ,

Archbishop Christopher Prowse
Chairperson
Bishops Commission for Evangelisation, Laity and Ministry
6th August 2025