

FREE TO CHOOSE WHETHER TO MIGRATE OR TO STAY

109TH WORLD DAY OF MIGRANTS AND REFUGEES

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MESSAGE OF HIS HOLINESS POPE FRANCIS FOR THE 109TH WORLD DAY OF MIGRANTS AND REFUGEES 2023

FREE TO CHOOSE WHETHER TO MIGRATE OR TO STAY

Dear brothers and sisters!

The migratory flows of our times are the expression of a complex and varied phenomenon that, to be properly understood, requires a careful analysis of every aspect of its different stages, from departure to arrival, including the possibility of return. As a contribution to this effort, I have chosen to devote the Message for the 109th World Day of Migrants and Refugees to the freedom that should always mark the decision to leave one's native land.

"Free to leave, free to stay" was the title of an initiative of solidarity promoted several years ago by the Italian Episcopal Conference as a concrete response to the challenges posed by contemporary migration movements. From attentive listening to the Particular Churches, I have come to see that ensuring that that freedom is a widely shared pastoral concern.

"An angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said: 'Get up, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you; for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him" (*Mt* 2:13). The flight of the Holy Family into Egypt was not the result of a free decision, nor were many of the migrations that marked the history of the people of Israel. The decision to migrate should always be free, yet in many cases, even in our day, it is not. Conflicts, natural disasters, or more simply the impossibility of living a dignified and prosperous life in one's native land is forcing millions of persons to leave. Already in 2003, Saint John Paul II stated that "as regards migrants and refugees, building conditions of peace means in practice being seriously committed to safeguarding first of all the right not to emigrate, that is, the right to live in peace and dignity in one's own country" (*Message for the 90th World Day of Migrants and Refugees*, 3).

"They took their livestock and the goods that they had acquired in the land of Canaan, and they came into Egypt, Jacob and all his offspring with him" (*Gen* 46:6). A grave famine forced Jacob and his entire family to seek refuge in Egypt, where his son Joseph ensured their survival. Persecutions, wars, atmospheric phenomena and dire poverty are among the most visible causes of forced

migrations today. Migrants flee because of poverty, fear or desperation. Eliminating these causes and thus putting an end to forced migration calls for shared commitment on the part of all, in accordance with the responsibilities of each. This commitment begins with asking what we can do, but also what we need to stop doing. We need to make every effort to halt the arms race, economic colonialism, the plundering of other people's resources and the devastation of our common home.

"All who believed were together and had all things in common; they would sell their possessions and goods and distribute the proceeds to all, as any had need" (*Acts* 2:44-45). The ideal of the first Christian community seems so distant from today's reality! To make migration a choice that is truly free, efforts must be made to ensure to everyone an equal share in the common good, respect for his or her fundamental rights, and access to an integral human development. Only in this way will we be able to offer to each person the possibility of a dignified and fulfilling life, whether individually or within families. Clearly, the principal responsibility falls to the countries of origin and their leaders, who are called to practise a good politics – one that is transparent, honest, farsighted and at the service of all, especially those most vulnerable. At the same time, they must be empowered to do this, without finding themselves robbed of their natural and human resources and without outside interference aimed at serving the interests of a few. Where circumstances make possible a decision either to migrate or to stay, there is a need to ensure that the decision be well informed and carefully considered, in order to avoid great numbers of men, women and children falling victim to perilous illusions or unscrupulous traffickers.

"In this year of jubilee you shall return, every one of you, to your property" (*Lev* 25:13). For the people of Israel, the celebration of the jubilee year represented an act of collective justice: "everyone was allowed to return to their original situation, with the cancellation of all debts, restoration of the land, and an opportunity once more to enjoy the freedom proper to the members of the People of God" (*Catechesis*, 10 February 2016). As we approach the Holy Year of 2025, we do well to remember this aspect of the jubilee celebrations. Joint efforts are needed by individual countries and the international community to ensure that all enjoy the right not to be forced to emigrate, in other words, the chance to live in peace and with dignity in one's

own country. This right has yet to be codified, but it is one of fundamental importance, and its protection must be seen as a shared responsibility on the part of all States with respect to a common good that transcends national borders. Indeed, since the world's resources are not unlimited, the development of the economically poorer countries depends on the capacity for sharing that we can manage to generate among all countries. Until this right is guaranteed – and here we are speaking of a long process – many people will still have to emigrate in order to seek a better life.

"For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me" (*Mt* 25:35-36). These words are a constant admonition to see in the migrant not simply a brother or sister in difficulty, but Christ himself, who knocks at our door. Consequently, even as we work to ensure that in every case migration is the fruit of a free decision, we are called to show maximum respect for the dignity of each migrant; this entails accompanying and managing waves of migration as best we can, constructing bridges and not walls, expanding channels for a safe and regular migration. In whatever place we decide to build our future, in the country of our birth or elsewhere, the important thing is that there always be a community ready to welcome, protect, promote and integrate everyone, without distinctions and without excluding anyone.

The synodal path that we have undertaken as a Church leads us to see in those who are most vulnerable – among whom are many migrants and refugees – special companions on our way, to be loved and cared for as brothers and sisters. Only by walking together will we be able to go far and reach the common goal of our journey.

Rome, Saint John Lateran, 11 May 2023

FRANCIS

PRAYER

God, Father Almighty,
grant us the grace to work tirelessly
for justice, solidarity and peace,
so that all your children may enjoy
the freedom to choose whether to migrate or to stay.

Grant us the courage to denounce
all the horrors of our world,
and to combat every injustice
that mars the beauty of your children
and the harmony of our common home.

Sustain us by the power of your Spirit,
so that we can reflect your tender love
to every migrant whom you place in our path,
and to spread in hearts and in every situation
the culture of encounter and of care.



REFLECTION ON POPE FRANCIS' 109TH WORLD DAY OF MIGRANTS AND REFUGEES MESSAGE

"Free to choose whether to migrate or to stay"

Archbishop Christopher Prowse
Chairman
Bishops Commission for Evangelisation, Laity and Ministry

In this year's World Day for Migrants and Refugees Message, Pope Francis focuses on the theme, "Free to choose whether to migrate or to stay."

In the message he points out that for a healthy society there should always be "the freedom that should always mark the decision to leave one's native land."

Migration movements throughout the world continue unabated. The Pope insists that we should always be "ensuring that that freedom is a widely shared pastoral concern."

We don’t often reflect on this given our current understanding of refugees, but the Pope reminds us, once again, that there are Biblical examples of refugees. We think first of all of the experiences of the Holy Family - Jesus, Mary and Joseph. The Pope notes, “The flight of the Holy Family into Egypt was not the result of a free decision.” He then insists that, “The decision to migrate should always be free, yet in many cases, even in our day, it is not.” He reminds us of St John Paul II who stated that there should be a real commitment “to safeguarding first of all the right not to emigrate, that is, the right to live in peace and dignity in one’s own country.”

The other example given in the Pope’s message is the flight of Jacob and all his offspring with him (Gen 46:6). Due to a grave famine in their land of origin, it necessitated them “to seek refuge in Egypt, where his son Joseph ensured their survival.” We are all aware that “Migrants flee because of poverty, fear or desperation.” The Pope makes the very important point that the country of origin must make a commitment which “begins with asking what we can do, but also what we need to stop doing.” He cites the example of “the arms race, economic colonialism, the plundering of other people’s resources and the devastation of our common home.”

For migration to be truly a choice that is free, “efforts must be made to ensure to everyone an equal share in the common good, respect for his or her fundamental rights, and access to an integral human development.” In anticipating the Jubilee Year of 2025, Pope Francis recalls the important dimension of jubilee years as “an act of collective justice.” Here people are able to return to their places of origin with the intention of “the cancellation of all debts, restoration of the land, and an opportunity once more to enjoy the freedom proper to the members of the People of God.” In other words the right not to be forced to immigrate is “the chance to live in peace and with dignity in one’s own country.”

The Pope concludes his reflection by reminding us again that “the migrant is not simply a brother or sister in difficulty, but Christ himself, who knocks at our door.” We are to construct “bridges and not walls, expanding channels for a safe and regular migration.”

“COME CLOSER TO SEE WHAT I SEE, FEEL WHAT I FEEL, AND FOR EFFECTIVE RESPONSES“

by Morris K Mukasa

Over 7.6 million migrants are living in Australia, with 29.8% of the population being born overseas. In the past two decades, I have noticed a growing number of African communities emerging. People from Africa choose to move to Australia for various reasons, like searching for jobs or escaping civil wars driven by factors like race, religion, nationality, or social and political affiliation.

In the 2021 Census, I learned that more than 400,000 individuals living in Australia identified as having African origins, which makes up 1.6% of the Australian population and 5.1% of the overseas-born population. Interestingly, most of them (about 58%) are white South Africans, while 42% come from black African countries in sub-Saharan Africa.

However, people within these African communities have faced difficulties adapting to Australian society, partly due to the predominantly Anglo-Saxon culture here. When deciding to migrate, I understand that it’s important to consider where to settle and how to connect with local community groups for a sense of belonging.

Welcoming Catholic Mass and dinners for refugees a pathway for connection with local community groups and employment

That is where the idea of welcoming Catholic Mass and dinners for refugees comes in. These events can serve as pathways for newcomers to connect with local communities and find employment opportunities. By participating in these gatherings within the Catholic Church, individuals can benefit from improved well-being, health, social networks, and stronger family relationships. On the other hand, it is also a way to address mental health issues, domestic violence, and family problems.

I have noticed that the Catholic Church in many African countries has introduced cultural elements like drumming, traditional songs, and dance into their Mass celebrations. This practice has inspired the creation of Kwetu projects in Australia, which I have led.

Kwetu project use music and drama-based social therapy to restore values, norms, and relationships, allowing for shared experiences and coping mechanisms.

These initiatives aim to make refugees feel at home during the process of evangelisation and therapy. Through music and drama-based social therapy, we are addressing issues like depression, anxiety, and loneliness.

As the coordinator of this effort, I am passionate about deepening African Church values in the diaspora. In many African communities, creative expression has shown its power in the healing process.

I have come to realise that creative arts and music therapy offered during a welcoming Catholic Mass can help restore emotional balance and reduce anxiety. The messages conveyed through these forms of expression can bring positive change to the lives of asylum seekers, the lonely, the chronically ill and the unemployed. Music's calming effects on the brain can potentially aid in restoring effective functioning and finding employment opportunities.

Focusing on youth models and vocational callings, the African Catholic Mass and welcome dinners can help newly arrived refugees adapt to Australian

society while maintaining their cultural identity. This process involves host communities understanding the needs and worshipping culture of newcomers. Every year, I look forward to organising one African Mass and welcome dinner in each Australian diocese.

Here are some recommendations based on my insights:

1. Bishops from refugees' countries of origin should emphasise African Catholic Church values while ministering to the diaspora and should address discrimination.

2. Special attention should be given to hidden children among refugees, just like in my case.

3. The Church should involve refugees at all levels, not just for testimonies or fundraising.

4. The Church should play a role in reconciling refugees with affected communities.

5. Vocational training programs should be revised to align with societal dynamics.

It is important to understand that creating inclusive Church communities is crucial. By embracing diversity and offering equal opportunities, we can make refugees feel valued and empower them to contribute positively. Though there might be resistance from some African Church leaders, our perspective as refugees emphasises the importance of upholding these principles. Together, we can build a more inclusive and compassionate world.



IN THANKSGIVING AND LOVE

O Yes in the presence of the Lord,
I will bring my gifts
In thanksgiving and love
There is joy in my heart.
It is flowing like a river
I will praise the Lord,
In thanksgiving and love

God our Father, Everlasting King
Please accept this gift we offer
In thanksgiving and love
Take our bread upon Your Altar
And our wine in the chalice
In thanksgiving and love

O Yes in the presence of the Lord,
I will bring my gifts
In thanksgiving and love
There is joy in my heart. It is flowing like a river
I will praise the Lord
In thanksgiving and love
With thankful hearts and joyful songs
We approach Your Holy Altar
In thanksgiving and love
Bearing gifts of Your Creation
We return what you have given
In thanksgiving and love

O Yes in the presence of the Lord, I will bring my gifts
In thanksgiving and love
There is joy in my heart. It is flowing like a river
I will praise the Lord
In thanksgiving and love

Homily Notes for 109th World Day of Migrants and Refugees 2023

There are libraries of books written about different parenting strategies. One of the topics to consider is choice. Will the children be given options to choose between, or will that freedom come when they are older? Will the consequences of choices always be meted out fairly, or will parents be lenient under certain conditions? Each family will approach these questions differently, but in general parents hope that their children will grow to make good choices that lead to good consequences.

As children of God, we have the freedom to choose to follow Jesus and to work for the 'vineyard' of the Gospel. However, God's 'parenting strategy' is a mystery. We cannot fathom the kindness and compassion of God, whose ways are not our ways, nor thoughts our thoughts. The landowner in today's parable chooses to mete out the same rewards to each of his workers. Justice and fairness go beyond any human standards - there is forgiveness and generosity for all.

Yet in our human world, there are so many who face uncertainty, fear, poverty and distress. Sometimes their conditions call for tough choices in order to preserve life and wellbeing for individuals and families. In an ideal world, Pope Francis says, the "decision to migrate should always be free". In reality, many are forced to make choices that are not fair or safe. Like the workers in the vineyard, they take any option that is available.

As a community, we can choose not to judge, but to respond with the generosity of God. We can create spaces of human dignity and flourishing. We can provide welcome, hospitality and means to earn an income. We can show love and build pathways towards hope and healing. We can support those who choose to return. Pope Francis says that ”the chance to live in peace and with dignity” is not yet a right, but “must be seen as a shared responsibility”.

As a Church, we are moving forwards together on a synodal journey. It is a rediscovery of listening to the Holy Spirit within our structures as we live the Gospel as a pilgrim people. We are called to make good choices that will lead to good consequences. In the end, however, we have to trust in the mystery of God’s ways.

We are children of God, and we place ourselves in God’s hands. As do those who make difficult choices about whether to migrate or to stay. Whatever happens, our communities are free to choose how to respond. Will our actions show that God’s greatness cannot be measured?

Prayers of the Faithful

Leader: Brothers and sisters, we are to seek the Lord and call while God is still near. In hope and trust we present our needs.

Reader: For Pope Francis and the universal Church.
May they become a source of life and mercy for all who seek human flourishing and safety. Lord, hear us.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader: For leaders in government and society at all levels.
May they serve the Common Good and give people the freedom to choose whether to stay or migrate. Lord, hear us.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader: For those who face poverty, conflict, discrimination or lack of opportunities in their home countries.
May paths of hope be opened, to allow for true life and dignity. Lord, hear us.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader: For those who seek to return from migration or exile.
May they be supported to rebuild and experience the care of neighbours. Lord, hear us.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader: For our local communities.
May we welcome migrants and refugees with the kindness and compassion of God. Lord, hear us.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader: For those who have died, especially those who have not survived migrant journeys.
May they be received into the joy of heaven, where the last will be first, and the first, last. Lord, hear us.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Leader: God of justice, you are rich in forgiving and loving in all your deeds. Give us the courage of Jesus to be generous in all our ways. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

DOWNLOAD POWERPOINT

School Ritual Prayer – Primary

109th World Day of Migrants and Refugees 2023

'Free to choose life'

Preparation

The Leader has prepared a prayer focus with a candle, cross and a pair of shoes. There are signs around the prayer focus, saying 'Stay', 'Go', 'Life', 'Hope', 'Yes', 'No', 'Home' and 'Away'. There are also arrows in different directions and question marks. There is one Leader, seven Readers and five Assistants. For more information, go to: www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/messages/migration/documents/20230511-world-migrants-day-2023.html

Introduction

Leader:

Today we come together for the World Day of Refugees and Migrants. This year, Pope Francis wants us to think about the choices we have in life. Have a look at our prayer focus, and imagine that these are your shoes.
… (pause)...

Everyone wants to be safe, healthy and happy. But some people need to make a choice about the best place for their family. Sometimes people decide to travel to another country or another part of the country. Others decide to stay at home even when it is difficult or to return to their

homes. We want everyone to be free to choose the best place for a good life. Let us begin with an Acknowledgement of Country.

Reader 1: We acknowledge the people who have cared for this special sacred land for thousands of generations. We thank them for providing safety for families and communities. We pray that we can show our respect by helping life to grow for all of God's people and creation.

Leader: Let us now join in the hymn, We Are Marching in the Light of God.

Opening Hymn

We Are Marching in the Light of God - traditional South African (AOV for Kids)
We are Marching In the Light of God - YouTube

GATHERING

Call to Prayer

Leader: Let us begin:
+ In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

All: Amen.

Opening Prayer

Leader: Let us pray in the words of Pope Francis … (pause) …
God, Father Almighty,
grant us the grace to work tirelessly
for justice, solidarity and peace,
so that all your children may enjoy
the freedom to choose whether to migrate or to stay.
Through Christ our Lord,

All: Amen.

LISTENING

Leader: Now let us listen to some words from the Bible. They are from the Old Testament, part of the story of Moses. He led the Israelite people from slavery in Egypt to safety in the Promised Land. Their freedom was important to God. But Moses wanted the people to keep choosing God and safety and freedom for all time.

Scripture

Reader 2: A reading from the Book of Deuteronomy [30:19, International Children's Bible].

Moses said, "I am offering you life or death, blessings or curses. Now, choose life! Then you and your children may live."
… (pause) …

RESPONDING

Prayer Response

Leader: So many people like Moses need to choose what is best for their families. Whether they should go or stay. I wonder what it is like to make that choice?

[Wait for responses.]

Let us offer our prayers to God for everyone who needs to choose.

[Assistant 1 to hold up the sign: Stay.]

Reader 3: We pray for people who stay in their countries when there is war or hard times. May they stay safe and keep

hope. Lord, hear us.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

[Assistant 2 to hold up the sign: Go.]

Reader 4: We pray for people who choose to leave to find safety and a good life in another country. May they be welcomed and accepted. Lord, hear us.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

[Assistant 3 to hold up the sign: Home.]

Reader 5: We pray for those who return to their homeland. May they have support to build their lives again. Lord, hear us.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

[Assistant 4 to hold up the sign: Away.]

Reader 6: We pray for those who miss home and find it hard in a new place. May we share God's love and care for them. Lord, hear us.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

[Assistant 5 to hold up the sign: Life.]

Reader 7: We pray for people who have to decide what is best for their families. May they be free to choose life. Lord, hear us.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Leader: Let us bring all our prayers to our loving God, in the words of Jesus:

All: Our Father...

Optional Educational Video

- ABC Behind the News for Refugee Week: Refugee Week 2023 - Behind The News (abc.net.au)

Closing Prayer

Leader: Now let us finish with the final part of the prayer of Pope Francis:

All: Keep us by the power of your Spirit
so that we can share your tender love to every migrant whom you place in our path, and to spread in hearts and everywhere the way of love and of care.
Amen.

SENDING FORTH

Blessing and Dismissal

Leader: May the God of hope bless and protect us, + Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

All: Amen.

Leader: And let us go in peace, free to choose life!
All: Thanks be to God!

DOWNLOAD POWERPOINT

School Ritual Prayer – Secondary

109th World Day of Migrants and Refugees 2023

'Free to choose whether to migrate or to stay'

Preparation

The Leader has prepared a prayer focus with a candle, cross and a pair of shoes.
There are signs around the prayer focus, saying 'Stay', 'Go', 'Life', 'Hope', 'Yes', 'No', 'Home' and 'Away'. There are also arrows in different directions and question marks. There is one Leader and seven Readers. For more information, go to: www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/messages/migration/documents/20230511-world-migrants-day-2023.html

Introduction

Leader: Today we come together for the World Day of Refugees and Migrants. This year, Pope Francis calls us to reflect on the freedom to migrate, to stay at home or to return home. The shoes in our prayer focus represent our decisions and choices in life, and choosing where we will go.
… (pause)...

Everyone wants to be safe, healthy and happy, but some

need to choose what will be the best place for their family to thrive. Sometimes people decide to travel to another country or another part of the country as migrants or refugees. Others decide to stay at home even when it is difficult or to return to their homes. As Christians, we hope that everyone is free to choose what is best for their life and wellbeing. Let us begin with an Acknowledgement of Country.

Reader 1: We acknowledge the people who have cared for this sacred land for thousands of generations. We thank them for providing safety for families and communities. We pray that we can show our respect by choosing life for all of God's people and creation.

Leader: We will now watch a video about Pope Francis's message for the World Day of Migrants and Refugees.

[Watch Pope Francis' Message on World Day of Migrants and Refugees 2023 to focus on right to stay - YouTube]

GATHERING

Call to Prayer

Leader: Let us begin:
+ In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

All: Amen.

Opening Prayer

Leader: Let us pray in the words of Pope Francis … (pause) …
God, Father Almighty,
grant us the grace to work tirelessly
for justice, solidarity and peace,
so that all your children may enjoy

the freedom to choose whether to migrate or to stay.

Grant us the courage to denounce
all the horrors of our world,
and to combat every injustice
that mars the beauty of your children
and the harmony of our common home.

Through Christ our Lord,

All: Amen.

LISTENING

Leader: Now let us listen to a passage from the bible. It is from the Old Testament, part of the story of Moses. He led the Israelite people from slavery in Egypt to safety in the Promised Land. Their freedom was important to God. But Moses wanted the people to keep choosing God, safety and freedom for all time.

Scripture

Reader 2: A reading from the Book of Deuteronomy [30:15-16, 19, International Children's Bible].

Moses said, "Look, today I offer you life and success, death and destruction. I command you today to love the Lord your God. Do what he wants you to do. Keep his commands, his rules and his laws. Then you will live and grow in number. And the Lord your God will bless you in the land you are going to take as your own. I am offering you life or death, blessings or curses. Now, choose life! Then you and your children may live."

… (pause) …

Optional Reflective Hymn

Leader: Let us take time to reflect on how we can choose life and help others to choose life.

- *Abundant Life* by Ruth Duck and Marty Haugen (*All Are Welcome* GIA) Abundant Life - YouTube
- *Comfort Me* by Gina Ogilvie (AOV Next Gen) QUEENSLAND FLOODS. AUSTRALIA - A tribute - Gina Ogilvie - YouTube

RESPONDING

Prayer Response

Leader: Like Moses, many people need to choose what is best for themselves and their families. Let us offer our prayers to God for everyone who longs to be free.

Reader 3: We pray for people who remain in their countries during times of war, poverty or persecution. May they stay safe and keep hope. Lord, hear us.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader 4: We pray for those who choose to leave to find safety, life and wellbeing in another country. May they be welcomed and accepted. Lord, hear us.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader 5: We pray for those who return to their homelands after a time of exile. May they have support to rebuild their lives. Lord, hear us.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader 6: We pray for those who find it lonely and challenging in a new place. May we share God's love and care for them.

Lord, hear us.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader 7: We pray for people who have to decide what is best for themselves and their families. May they be free to choose life. Lord, hear us.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Leader: Let us bring all our prayers to our loving God, in the words of Jesus:

All: Our Father...

Closing Prayer

Leader: So let us conclude with the final part of the prayer of Pope Francis:

All: Sustain us by the power of your Spirit,
so that we can reflect your tender love
to every migrant whom you place in our path,
and to spread in hearts and in every situation
the culture of encounter and of care.
Amen.

SENDING FORTH

Blessing and Dismissal

Leader: May the God of hope bless and protect us, + Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

All: Amen.

Leader: And let us go in peace, free to choose life!

All: Thanks be to God!



HAD JESUS NOT COME, WHAT WOULD WE HAVE BEEN!

Had Jesus not come, what would we have been!
What a mess we would be, if he didn't come
May Jesus be praised!

To whom would we have belonged
The devil would have crushed all of us
But thanks to Jesus, we are free now!

We would all have been in disarray
We would have been damned for our sinfulness
But Jesus saved us!

We would have groped in the darkness of sin
We would have died, sinners
But Jesus gave us the light of salvation!

We would have been totally condemned
But he came to our rescue
And we are forever grateful!

(translated by Fr. Henry Mulindwa,
Masaka, Diocese Uganda June 13, 2023)

Our Partners

Dicastery for Promoting
Integral Human Development

Fondazione Migrantes

Australian Catholic
Migrant & Refugee Office

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Pastoral Care of Human Mobility

ONLINE DIPLOMA





The Catholic Alliance for People Seeking Asylum (CAPSA)'s National Week of Prayer and Action

Freedom to Live

Each year, CAPSA runs a **National Week of Prayer and Action and celebrates World Day of Migrants and Refugees** to engage the Australian Catholic community across schools, organisations and parishes, to take-action and stand in solidarity with people seeking asylum.

The theme of CAPSA's National Week of Prayer and Action will focus on the **freedom to live for refugees and people seeking asylum in Australia.** Having the freedom to live means the freedom to be able to plan your life, to be with reunited your family, freedom to live in safety and have predictability and certainty about your future, and the freedom to have choice over your own life.

National Week of Prayer and Action this year will run from **Monday 4th September to Friday 8th September 2023**. The 109th World Migrant and Refugee Sunday will be celebrated on **Sunday 24th September 2023**.

Our key areas of focus will concentrate on what we can do to create a community where refugees and people seeking asylum have the freedom to live. These include:

- What having the freedom to live means for refugees and people seeking asylum
- Reflecting on the current challenges faced by refugees and people seeking asylum, and barriers that they face for them to live in freedom,
- How we can support refugees in our own communities, and
- What are the steps we can all take to advocate for issues affecting the lives of refugees and people seeking asylum and for them to be able to live in freedom

Our celebrations and events will be based on different ways that we can support and positively impact the lives of refugees and people seeking asylum through **prayer, reflection, action and advocacy**.

Further details on this year's National Week of Prayer and Action can be found online at: https://capsa.org.au/



For more information, please email:
wacmro@perthcatholic.org.au
or visit the website:
www.wacmro.perthcatholic.org.au

Every year, The Archdiocese of Adelaide celebrate World Day of Migrants and Refugees with Holy Mass at St Francis Xavier Cathedral at 2.30pm, on the fourth Sunday in September.

This annual multicultural Mass is a very important celebration for our church communities in Adelaide and consequently is live-streamed.

The theme chosen by Pope Francis for the celebration this year is:

"FREE TO CHOOSE WHETHER TO MIGRATE OR TO STAY"

You are **ALL INVITED** to join Archbishop Patrick O'Regan at this special Mass.

Migrant and Refugee Sunday is a day to celebrate interculturalism in your parish!

Each one of us bring our faith, our culture and our gifts to the eucharistic table – this day is a day to celebrate our diversity but mostly our unity!



You might encourage a special celebration in your own parish this Migrant and Refugee Sunday by using some of these ideas;

- Link up with your local multicultural community
- Share/display your migrant stories
- Share a multicultural meal
- Invite a community member to share their migration story as a 5-7 minute reflection
- Display a map of the world showing the rich cultural heritage of your parish community
- Gather in a small group for prayer and reflection with links to relevant prayer resources

Come join us for ice cream and coffee after Mass!



Lets make Migrant and Refugee Sunday a celebration of God's Kingdom, together as one:

LEARNING – LIVING - CELEBRATING – UNITED – VALUED – LOVED

MULTICULTURAL MASS

"Free to choose whether to migrate or to stay"
POPE FRANCIS



24 SEPTEMBER 2023 | 2:30PM

CATHEDRAL OF ST STEPHEN

CELEBRATED BY

ARCHBISHOP MARK COLERIDGE

MASS WILL BE FOLLOWED BY REFRESHMENTS AND PERFORMANCES IN THE CATHEDRAL GROUNDS

ST STEPHEN 150 Living Stones

ARCHDIOCESE OF BRISBANE

SCAN HERE TO REGISTER

For more information contact Liliana Ortiz at ortizl@bne.catholic.net.au

Migrants & Refugees

SUNDAY MASS

"Free to choose whether to migrate or to stay."

Theme chosen by Pope Francis for the 109th World Day of Migrants and Refugees



Celebrate with migrant communities from all over Melbourne

Sunday 24 September 2023

ST PATRICK'S CATHEDRAL • EAST MELBOURNE

2pm Rosary (in various languages)

3pm Mass (celebrated by Archbishop Peter A Comensoli and Migrant Chaplains of the Archdiocese)

CATHOLIC ARCHDIOCESE OF MELBOURNE

World Day of Migrants and Refugees
24•IX•2023
"Free to choose whether to migrate or to stay"

Catholic Organisations

NATIONAL

Australian Catholic Migrant and Refugee Office
National Director: Fr Khalid Marogi
GPO Box 2720, Canberra ACT 2601
Tel: (02) 6201 9848
Fax: (02) 9012 0866
Email: info@acmro.catholic.org.au
Web: acmro.catholic.org.au

LOCAL

Archdiocese of Adelaide
Director, Pastoral Life and Mission: Sarah Moffatt
Catholic Diocesan Centre, 39 Wakefield
Street, Adelaide SA 5000
Tel: (08) 8210 8210
Fax: (08) 8223 2307
Email: multiculturaloffice-sec@adelaide.catholic.org.au
Web: adelaide.catholic.org.au

Archdiocese of Brisbane
Evangelisation Brisbane
Executive Director: Dcn Peter Pellicaan
GPO Box 282, Brisbane Qld 4001
Tel: (07) 3324 3440
Email: eb@bne.catholic.net.au
Web: evangelisationbrisbane.org.au

Archdiocese of Melbourne
Episcopal Vicar, Migrants and Refugees
Mons. Joselito Cerna Asis EV
486 Albert Street
East Melbourne VIC 3002
Tel: (03) 9926 5677
Email: info@cam.org.au

Diocese of Parramatta
Episcopal Vicar for Migrant Chaplaincies and Pastoral Associates: Fr Peter Blayney
32 Calliope Street, Guildford NSW 2161
Tel: (02) 9632 2672
Web: parracatholic.org

Archdiocese of Perth
West Australian Catholic Migrant and Refugee Office
Director: Dcn Greg Lowe
PO Box 3075, Perth WA 6832
Tel: (08) 9220 5950
Email: wacmro@perthcatholic.org.au
Web: wacmro.perthcatholic.org.au

Archdiocese of Sydney
Catholic Immigration Office
Episcopal Vicar for Migration: Very Rev Roland Maurer EV
Manager: Kylie Cullen
Catholic Immigration Office,
Polding Centre Level 12,
133 Liverpool Street, Sydney NSW 2000
Tel: (02) 9390 5923
Fax: (02) 9264 6022
Email: immigration@sydneycatholic.org

Diocese of Armidale
Ministry to Migrants
Contact: Fr Paul Aguilar
PO Box 5002 South Tamworth NSW 2340
Tel: (02) 6765 9543



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Louis Barcelona

Australian Catholic Bishops Conference
Australian Catholic Migrant and Refugee Office
Bishops Commission for Evangelisation, Laity and Ministry
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