



Message from Archbishop

Christopher Prowse

Chair of the Bishops Commission for
Evangelisation, Laity and Ministry and Archbishop
Delegate for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and
Refugees

“Forced like Jesus Christ to flee”

Dear Friends,

Let us spend some time during this COVID-19 pandemic to focus on another crisis in our current times – those displaced throughout the world. Global migration is a major challenge for much of

today’s world and a priority for the Catholic Church. In words and deeds, Pope Francis repeatedly shows his deep compassion for all who are displaced. Witness his encounters with migrants and refugees on the islands of Lampedusa and Lesbos. Witness his call for their full embrace: to welcome, to protect, to promote, and to integrate migrants, refugees and victims of human trafficking.

This year’s theme for the Holy Father’s Message for 2020 World Day of Migrant and Refugee is: “Forced like Jesus Christ to flee”.

Regarding the many statements of the Catholic Church on various aspects of migration, a recurring biblical image has often emerged: the Flight into Egypt of Jesus, Mary and Joseph. Like an icon of so many of the displaced, the Holy Family represents people “on the move”. The Church stands alongside the fragilities and dangers of the millions attempting to find a dignified home in the world.

This pastoral care of the Church towards Migrants and Refugees aims at emphasising and focussing on the following aspects as named by the Pope Francis.

Welcoming: Increasing Safe and Legal Routes for Migrants and Refugees

Protecting: Defending the Rights and Dignity of Migrants and Refugees.

Promoting: Fostering the Integral Human Development of Migrants and Refugees.

Integrating: Greater Participation of Migrants and Refugees to Enrich Local Communities.

May I offer a final word of sincere gratitude to all those who dedicate themselves to the pastoral care to Migrants and Refugees in Australia.

Perhaps an exhortation from St Paul stresses our Gospel imperative to welcome those seeking hospitality as displaced persons:

May the God of steadfastness and encouragement grant you to live in such harmony with one another, in accord with Christ Jesus that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Welcome one another, therefore, as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God. (Rom 15:1-7)