



ARCHBISHOP CHRISTOPHER PROWSE

Chairman

Bishops Commission for
Evangelisation, Laity and Ministry

Dear Friends,

The theme chosen by Pope Francis for this year's 108th World Day of Migrants and Refugees 2022 is **BUILDING THE FUTURE WITH MIGRANTS AND REFUGEES.**

When Christians think of the future, it is not simply about the near future but also about our eternal future.

In His Death and Resurrection, Jesus has begun THE journey with us. It is the pilgrimage from unfolding the Kingdom of God in the here and now (the "already") to the total embracing of the entire universe under his forgiving mercy and love (the "not yet").

In his message, Pope Francis insists that this universal future is to be taken with the conscious accompaniment of our migrants and refugees. How can we build a future with Jesus without them?

There is so much for us to respond in embracing God's future on our journey. There is "personal conversion and the transformation of reality". We must never "lose heart". "No one must be excluded ... especially those living on the existential peripheries".

Migrants and refugees, too often on the peripheries of life, are never to be seen as "invaders or destroyers". They are always "a source of enrichment". They come to us "bringing their gifts". So many are Catholics who "can energize the ecclesial life of the communities."

In Australia, a country built on migrants and refugees, we can still overlook the newer Australians to our midst. The Pope insists that "if we want to cooperate with our heavenly Father in building the future, let us go together with our brothers and sisters who are migrants and refugees".

This is such an important teaching of Pope Francis that we can all well do to reflect more intensely on this special day.