

SUNDAY EXTRA

OUR LADY OF DOLOURS
Chatswood Catholic Parish



WORLD DAY OF MIGRANTS & REFUGEES

Extracts from Pope Francis' Message

In the Encyclical *Fratelli Tutti*, I expressed a concern and a hope that remain uppermost in my thoughts: "Once this health crisis passes, our worst response would be to plunge even more deeply into feverish consumerism and new forms of egotistic self-preservation. God willing, after all this, we will think no longer in terms of 'them' and 'those', but only 'us'" (No. 35).

For this reason, I have wished to devote the Message for this year's World Day of Migrants and Refugees to the theme, *Towards An Ever Wider "We"*, in order to indicate a clear horizon for our common journey in this world.

.....we are all in the same boat and called to work together so that there will be no more walls that separate us, no longer others, but only a single "we", encompassing all of humanity.

A Church that is more and more "catholic"

For the members of the Catholic Church, this appeal entails a commitment to becoming ever more faithful to our being "catholic", as Saint Paul reminded the community in Ephesus: "There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope of your calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism" (*Eph 4:4-5*).

ONE BODY
ONE SPIRIT

SOME FACTS *(Refugee Council of Australia)*

Global Need for Resettlement

The increasing displacement from Afghanistan does not reduce the compelling need for resettlement of refugees from other crises, including those in Syria, Iraq, Myanmar, Democratic Republic of Congo, South Sudan and other regions of Africa and Latin America.

In 2021, the United Nations refugee agency UNHCR released its assessment of resettlement **needs for 2022**, identifying **1,445,383 refugees** in urgent need of resettlement **out of the 20.7 million refugees** under its mandate.

Australia's Refugee Program

After increasing Australia's annual refugee and humanitarian intake to 16,250 in 2017-18 and 18,750 in 2018-19, the Australian Government **reduced the annual program by 5000 places in 2020-21 to 13,750**. In recent years, the Government has redefined the program target as a 'ceiling', with the 2019-20 programs falling well short because of COVID-related travel restrictions.

Our response to the arrival of migrating persons can be summarised by four words: welcome. protect, promote and integrate.

Fratelli tutti 129

ZAKI HAIDARI'S STORY

Zaki was born in Afghanistan, but was forced to flee aged 17, coming to Australia to seek protection. He holds a 5 year Safe Haven Enterprise Visa.

Zaki was recognised as an Australian Human Rights Commission Human Rights Hero in 2020 and NSW International Student of the Year in 2015. He has also completed a Diploma in Computing and a Diploma in Graphic Design.



I am from Afghanistan, from the Hazara ethnic group. We have been persecuted for centuries because of our race, our religion, the way we look and our beliefs.

About nine years ago, I was targeted by the Taliban to be killed and I had to leave Afghanistan.

When I came to Australia I was really young. I didn't have very good English. I was very fortunate that I came across the *Refugee Advice & Casework Service (RACS)* to go through the process of the refugee laws and how to seek asylum.

Since I came to Australia I was lucky enough to learn some English, gain a diploma and work but my temporary protection visa is expiring in 2021 and I don't know what's next for me ... I could be deported when my visa expires ... my life ends there. Thousands of people who are living in Australia are having the same experience. It's awful even to think that way but it's a fact. It's going through my mind every day.

It is important for me to advocate because being from the Hazara ethnic group, we have suffered a lot in Afghanistan because of our look, our religion. I feel that I have to come out and tell people who I am, why I came to Australia and why I left my country.

I WANT TO RAISE AWARENESS OF THE FACT THAT PEOPLE LIKE MYSELF STILL DON'T HAVE PERMANENT PROTECTION FROM THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT.

It's frustrating knowing our country is not safe and we can't return there. But also we can't call Australia our permanent home.

From *Refugee Advice & Casework Service*

For the stories of other people who are seeking asylum in Australia go to:

<https://www.racs.org.au/stories-landing-page>



"Today, even though it's been decades since I fled the war, it all comes flooding back to me as I see footage of people clambering onto planes. Some of the images of people dangling off the stairs of aircraft in Kabul were eerily similar to what happened in Saigon in April 1975."

Bishop Vincent Long Van Nguyen

Bishop Vincent (Bishop of Parramatta) escaped by boat from South Vietnam after it had fallen to the Vietnamese communist forces in 1975. After a week at sea and no food, water or fuel, the boat was rescued and the people were taken to a refugee camp near Malaysia. Bishop Vincent eventually arrived in Australia in 1981.

He writes: 'My Catholic faith compels me to try to address these injustices, ones that remind me of what I and my loved ones experienced in Vietnam. I believe in the universal and inclusive love of God, a love that seeks to embrace all people, most especially those at the periphery, who are experiencing poverty and injustice.'

I also believe that people of faith, and Australians more broadly, must stand for social and moral issues, because this is the only way that we can build the world we want to see in the future.

And this is a pivotal moment for us to step up and support those in need in Afghanistan. I hope to see the same level of bipartisan support for Afghan refugees now as there was for Vietnamese refugees.'

Eureka Street 30 August 2021

SUPPORTING ORGANISATIONS WHO ASSIST REFUGEES

COVID restrictions, increased demands for assistance and lack of Government funding have placed huge demands on organisations who try to support refugees. Go to any of these websites to see how you can help.

Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS)

<https://aus.jrs.net/en/jesuit-refugee-service>

Catholic Alliance for People Seeking Asylum (CAPSA)

<https://capsa.org.au/>

Refugee Council of Australia

<https://www.refugeecouncil.org.au/>

Edmund Rice Centre

https://www.erc.org.au/refugees_and_asylum_seekers

Refugee Advice & Casework Service

<https://www.racs.org.au/>