

## Day of Prayer for Refugees and Migrants Liturgy Notes

Sunday 19 June 2016

The New Zealand Catholic Bishops Conference marks a special Day of Prayer for Refugees and Migrants on a Sunday close to World Refugee Day (20 June). This year, the Day of Prayer falls on Sunday 19th June 2016.

Refugees and asylum seekers have been around for over 3,500 years. But since 2015, the number of displaced people internationally has been greater than it has ever been with 60 million people displaced by war and conflict. For a country like New Zealand, this is more than twelve times our population! In 2015, New Zealand offered to accept an extra intake of 600 refugees over the next three years from Syria alongside our current UNHCR quota refugee programme.

Today, the growing number of refugees is something that we cannot ignore. The New Zealand Bishops Conference has offered support for increasing our refugee intake and welcome to those settling in New Zealand and written a statement on Migration for this year's Day of Prayer for Refugees and Migrants and Social Justice Week.

The theme of Pope Francis' message for the World Day of Migrants and Refugees 2016 is *Migrants and Refugees Challenge Us. The Response of the Gospel of Mercy*. In his message, Pope Francis encourages us to pursue a culture of encounter:

*"Biblical revelation urges us to welcome the stranger; it tells us that in so doing, we open our doors to God, and that in the faces of others we see the face of Christ himself. Many institutions, associations, movements and groups, diocesan, national and international organisations are experiencing the wonder and joy of the feast of encounter, sharing and solidarity"*

*"Concern for fostering good relationships with others and the ability to overcome prejudice and fear are essential ingredients for promoting the culture of encounter, in which we are not only prepared to give, but also to receive from others. Hospitality, in fact, grows from both giving and receiving."*

### Liturgy notes

**Readings for the Day of Prayer for Refugees and Migrants, 19 June 2016** (*Liturgical Year C: 12<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Ordinary Time, Year C*):

**First reading:** Zechariah 12: 10-11; 13:1 ...when that day comes, there will be great mourning in Judah, like the mourning of Hadad-rimmon in the plain of Megiddo...

**Psalm:** Psalm 63:2-9 ... for you have been my help; in the shadow of your wings I rejoice...

**Second reading:** Galatians 3:26-29 ...there are no more distinctions between Jew or Greek, slave and free, male and female, but all of you are one in Christ Jesus...

**Gospel:** Luke 9:18-24 ...If anyone wants to be a follower of mine, let him renounce himself and take up his cross every day and follow me...

**Prayer of the Faithful:** *Please feel free to use any or all of these; and/or write your own:*

We pray for all refugees and asylum seekers who have taken enormous risks to cross land and ocean to seek a better life for themselves and their loved ones. Be their help and protect them in their pursuit of safety and peace. Lord hear us, *Lord hear our prayer.*

We pray for families who have been separated by war and conflict, by circumstances and by the cost of relocation. Move in the hearts of our leaders and policy makers to increase the opportunity for families to be reunited. Lord hear us, *Lord hear our prayer.*

We pray for those arriving in New Zealand from places of conflict and oppression. May we remember that we are all one in you, and together foster a culture of encounter where we can learn and share in the gifts of giving and receiving. Lord hear us, *Lord hear our prayer.*

You may wish to reference *Prayer of Pope Francis on the beach at Mytilene, Lesbos, 16 April 2016* This can be found at [www.caritas.org.nz/prayer-refugees](http://www.caritas.org.nz/prayer-refugees)

#### **New Zealand Catholic Bishops Conference 2016 statement:**

*“We are moved by the stories of migrants and refugees who have come to New Zealand from situations of hardship and suffering. Hearing their stories demands we address the poverty, injustice and violence that make leaving home necessary for many individuals and families.*

*At the same time we ask ourselves - how well are we as a country offering manaakitanga – welcome and hospitality - to those recently arriving to our shores?”*

#### **Ideas for celebrating the Day of Prayer for Refugees and Migrants in parishes**

- **Poster:** Caritas has prepared a poster for the Day of Prayer for Refugees and Migrants, which expresses different ways that we show welcome to others.
- **Please consider using the Day of Prayer as an opportunity to:**
  - **Celebrate cultural diversity of our communities** – *for example, through using hymns and prayers from the diverse languages of your congregation.*
  - **Acknowledge refugee or migrant backgrounds of parishioners** – *for example, by asking a member of your parish to talk about their journey to live in Aotearoa New Zealand.*
  - **Support service to refugees and migrants** – *for example, by asking people who work as volunteers to resettle refugees to talk about their work.*
  - **Pray for peace** – *a long-lasting solution to people fleeing their homeland due to conflict or economic reasons will only be achieved by solutions that address underlying causes.*
- **Retiring collection:** Many parishes undertake a retiring collection or other small fundraising activity towards the work of agencies supporting refugees in New Zealand or overseas such as:
  - Diocesan initiatives to resettle former refugees in New Zealand
  - Refugee Family Reunification Trust (in Wellington, Hamilton and Christchurch)
  - Caritas Aotearoa New Zealand’s Peace in the Middle East Appeal