

17 JUNE 2018

DAY OF PRAYER FOR REFUGEES & MIGRANTS

*To welcome, protect,
promote and integrate*

“Every stranger who knocks at our door is an opportunity for an encounter with Jesus Christ, who identifies with the welcomed and rejected strangers of every age.”

Pope Francis, 2018, Message for the 104th World Day of Migrants and Refugees

The New Zealand Catholic Bishops Conference promotes a special Day of Prayer for Refugees and Migrants on the Sunday closest to World Refugee Day on 20 June. This year it falls on Sunday 17 June 2018 which also marks the start of Caritas Internationalis' Global Week of Action (17-24 June 2018).

In the annual Papal message for the World Day of Migrants and Refugees this year, Pope Francis reiterates our shared response to the many migrants and refugees around the world fleeing from war, poverty, natural disasters, and persecution. We are called to welcome, to protect, to promote and to integrate every stranger for the sake of their fundamental dignity.

The Share the Journey Global Week of Action between 17th and 24th June 2018, aims to start a wave of solidarity in which communities host activities and events with migrants and refugees at their hearts. This Day of Prayer for Refugees and Migrants, we take the opportunity to be people of welcome and encounter.

Liturgy Notes

Readings for the Day of Prayer for Refugees and Migrants, 17 June 2018: Liturgical Year B: 11th Sunday in Ordinary Time.

First Reading: Ezekiel 17:22-24. *It will sprout branches and bear fruit, and become a noble cedar. Every kind of bird will live beneath it..*

Psalm: Psalm 91: 2-3, 13-16. *The just will flourish like the palm-tree and grow like a Lebanon cedar. Planted in the house of the Lord they will flourish in the courts of our God..*

Second Reading: 2 Corinthians 5:6-10. *...Going as we do by faith and not by sight – we are full of confidence, I say, and actually want to be exiled from the body and make our home with the Lord.*

Gospel: Mark 4:26-34. *It is like a mustard seed...once it is sown it grows into the biggest shrub of them all and puts out big branches so that the birds of the air can shelter in its shade.*

Prayer of the Faithful (Please feel free to use any or all of these, and/or to write your own)

For all people seeking a new place to call home. May they continue to live in hope of finding places of protection and encounter people who welcome them. Lord hear us. *Lord hear our prayer.*

For families whose members become separated when fleeing conflict and violence. May resettlement countries, like New Zealand, do everything they can to bring families back together and integrate them into our country. Lord hear us. *Lord hear our prayer.*

17 JUNE 2018

DAY OF PRAYER FOR REFUGEES & MIGRANTS

*To welcome, protect,
promote and integrate*

For the Church, give us the strength and courage to show leadership in promoting a “culture of encounter” by building more inclusive communities, especially during the Global Week of Action starting today. Lord hear us.
Lord hear our prayer.

Ideas for 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 focuses on the theme this year. We would appreciate it if you display a poster in each mass centre. More posters are available upon request to caritas@caritas.org.nz.

Sharing stories of welcome, protection, promotion and integration – have you or people from your parish been involved in supporting new migrants and refugees? Invite people in your parish to share stories of encounter.

Pray for peace and protection of those affected by the Rohingya Refugee Crisis – find out about the work of Caritas Bangladesh as they provide aid to affected individuals and families at <http://www.caritas.org.nz/emergency-relief/rohingya>.

Support services to refugees and migrants – find out what is happening in your diocese to support refugees and migrants and get involved.

Retiring collection – Many parishes undertake a retiring collection or small fundraising activity towards the work of supporting refugees in New Zealand or overseas. You may wish to use the Day of Prayer for Refugees and Migrants/Global Week of Action to raise funds for:

- 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 or Rohingya Refugee Crisis Appeal

Share a Meal for the Global Week of Action – bring people together to share a meal with migrants who are established in your community and ones who have just arrived. Find out more on how to plan an encounter meal in five steps at <http://journey.caritas.org/gwa18/>.

A community of welcome and integration

“I wish to reaffirm that our shared response may be articulated by four verbs: to welcome, to protect, to promote and to integrate.”

Pope Francis, 2018, Message for the 104th World Day of Migrants and Refugees

In this year’s Message for the World Day of Migrants and Refugees, Pope Francis encourages us to respond to every stranger in need of a home who knocks at our door.

A range of groups from across the Catholic community in NZ have said yes to responding to the call of

welcoming, protecting, promoting and integrating into communities.

Last year the NZ government announced they will be piloting a Community Organisation Sponsorship programme (CORS). This category will provide an alternative and additional form of admission for refugees to NZ. Caritas Aotearoa New Zealand (CANZ),

17 JUNE 2018

DAY OF PRAYER FOR REFUGEES & MIGRANTS

*To welcome, protect,
promote and integrate*

alongside the St Addai's Chaldean Catholic community, the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem (EOHSJ) and the Catholic Diocese of Hamilton, applied to sponsor refugees under this pilot. This was one of four successful applications by community-based organisations who will be welcoming refugees this May to July.

CANZ has been coordinating this partnership which stemmed from EOHSJ's visits to refugee camps in Jordan. The EOHSJ has established an ongoing relationship with those communities and with the St. Addai's Chaldean Catholic community in Auckland which was founded in 2003. Fr Douglas Al-Bazi is chaplain to the families in Auckland and Hamilton, many of whom came to NZ as refugees or asylum seekers after being displaced by the armed conflict in Iraq.

A parishioner and member of St. Addai's church council, Ayman Franso, came to NZ in 1996 under the skilled migrant scheme. *"While starting a new life in New Zealand was exciting, it also proved to be challenging. Language was a big hurdle."*

Ayman married his wife Diana, who came to NZ with a similar story, at St. Addai's and have had all three of their children baptised there. The community of St. Addai's has given Ayman and his family *"a sense of belonging to our roots and background"* while fitting in with the wider NZ community.

The Chaldean community has previously assisted 50 refugee families to resettle in NZ and will be providing much of the settlement support for the CORS pilot. Other Catholic church communities and agencies will be assisting the community in Hamilton.

It is the hope that the lessons learnt from this pilot project will enable the Catholic Church in New Zealand to decide how to continue to engage with a community sponsorship scheme. Taking responsibility and action from the grass-root level is how we can respond to the call of being people that welcome, protect, promote and integrate.

Ayman said: *"We keep telling our story to the kids to ensure that we emphasise how lucky they are to be living in beautiful New Zealand – that we now call home."*



Ayman and his family at St Addai's Chaldean Catholic church. Photo: Joanna Viernes.