



Catholic Archdiocese of Adelaide

Archbishop of Adelaide

22nd August, 2023
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Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

Re: Migrant and Refugee Sunday, 24th September 2023

Grace and peace I hope this note finds you well.

The 109th World Day of Migrant and Refugee will take place on Sunday, 24th September 2023 with the theme, *Free to choose whether to migrate or to stay*.

World Day of Migrants and Refugees (WDMR) has been celebrated since 1914. It is an occasion to recognise the courage and fortitude of these people and heighten our level of empathy and understanding for the plight and difficult decisions they have had to make.

The Archdiocese of Adelaide is a great example of the cultural diversity of the Catholic Church and is home to a multitude of Migrants and Refugees from all over the world. In the 21st Century, the mass global movement of people has become one of the most significant justice issues due to war and violence, climate change, economic instability, and human trafficking among other issues. World Migrant and Refugee Sunday is both a celebration of the gift of cultural diversity and a recognition of need to address the root causes of forced migration.

Pope Francis says the *“decision to migrate should always be free”*. In reality, many are forced to make choices that are not fair or safe. The Pope concludes his reflection by reminding us that *“In whatever place we decide to build our future, in the country of our birth or elsewhere, the important thing is that there always be a community ready to welcome, protect, promote and integrate everyone, without distinctions and without excluding anyone.”*

This year we are encouraging all Parishes and Communities to celebrate Migrant and Refugee Sunday in a manner which reflects collaboration, inclusion, and mutuality. Included with this letter is a resource guide for the celebration of the day as well suggestions for long term commitments.

The Archdiocesan celebration of World Migrant and Refugee Sunday will take place on **Sunday, 24th September 2023 at St Francis Xavier Cathedral at 2:00pm** with the annual Multicultural Mass. All are welcome to participate in the celebration.

For more information about these resources and World Migrant and Refugee Sunday, contact Tracey Tessitore ttessitore@adelaide.catholic.org.au in the Pastoral Services Team: Justice, Healing and Inclusion.

In Domino,

+ Pat O'Regan

+Patrick O'Regan
Archbishop of Adelaide