



Australian Catholic Bishops Conference

Australian Catholic Migrant and Refugee Office



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Media Release

Migrant and Refugee Sunday

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Next week the Catholic Church in Australia will be celebrating the contribution Migrants have made in our communities. This week-long celebration culminates with Migrant and Refugee Sunday, on 27 August 2017.

Each year the Universal Church commemorates the contribution migrants have made to our communities. The Catholic Bishops of Australia have selected the last Sunday in August each year to be the date where masses are celebrated for the enrichment these communities have provided in the Church.

Every year, for over 100 years, the Holy Father has chosen a theme to be the focal point during these celebrations. For 2017, the message for the 103rd World Day of Migrants and Refugees, Pope Francis chose the theme, “*Child Migrants, the Vulnerable and the Voiceless*”.

Pope Francis draws our attention to the needs of child migrants globally. He encourages by pointing out that, “Each person is precious; persons are more important than things, and the worth of an institution is measured by the way it treats the life and dignity of human beings, particularly when they are vulnerable, as in the case of child migrants.”

In Australia, schools and Parishes have many successful programs that have assisted in the integration of migrants. The Australian Catholic Migrant and Refugee Office (ACMRO) has produced a Migrant Kit, a parish and school, resource to assist in the celebrations. Contained are stories of resilience and success in the integration of migrant communities in Australia. Copies of the kit have been sent to schools and Dioceses, and electronic copies are available for download on the ACMRO website, www.acmro.catholic.org.au.

As part of the week-long celebrations, the ACMRO and Australian Catholic University, Melbourne, have organised a free public lecture on “*Freedom of Religion in a Multi-religious Society: the Contribution of Migration*”, at the Philippa Brazill Lecture Theatre, ground floor, Daniel Mannix Building, 8-18 Brunswick St, Fitzroy Vic. at 7:00pm.