

TIPS on celebrating National Migrant & Refugee Week 2019

The **105th World Day of Migrants and Refugees** will be on **Sunday 29 September**. Australian dioceses mark this event with the celebration of the **National Migrant & Refugee Week**, which is the last week of August each year culminating with **Migrant & Refugee Sunday** on **25 August**. In the Archdiocese of Brisbane, the **archdiocesan Multicultural Mass** will be celebrated at the Cathedral of St Stephen on **25 August at 2:30pm**. More and more parishes in the archdiocese now organise their own **parish Multicultural Mass** on the same Sunday, or any preferred Sunday during the year. These observances provide opportunities for reflection and appreciation of the contributions of migrants and refugees, as well as the richness that cultural diversity brings to the Australian church and society.

To celebrate the 105th Migrants and Refugee Day, parishes, schools, cultural and multicultural communities are encouraged to be creative in organising events during the National Migrant and Refugee Week or any time during the year by organising activities or initiatives that promote understanding among various cultures to prepare the path towards integration and positive intercultural relations. Here are some suggestions:

PARISHES

- The Centre for Multicultural Pastoral Care (CMPC) in coordination with the Cathedral of St Stephen, Community Chaplains and cultural communities. organises the annual archdiocesan Multicultural Mass on the last Sunday of August. **Celebrate your parish Multicultural Mass around this time, or any time during the year.** Allocate various parts of the liturgy to a person or group from a particular ethnic or linguistic background. If Mass parts are read in a language other than English, have the English text on print or projected on screen. Encourage people to come dressed in traditional/national costume. Ensure that Acknowledgment of Country is included in the liturgy. Greet people before Mass or during the Sign of Peace in your native language.
- Invite choirs from various cultural groups in the parish to sing hymns in their own languages or prepare appropriate liturgical dances that reflect their faith expression.
- Create a parish multicultural group, a parish multicultural choir or a parish multicultural sports team to promote interaction among cultural groups in the parish or deanery.
- Display a National Migrant and Refugee Week poster, maps or symbols that represent the countries of origin of parishioners. List the countries of origin of all parishioners from culturally diverse background. **Be aware of the sensitivities involved in flag displays**

particularly felt by those who come from countries that were previously colonised or currently under the rule of another country.

- Read and reflect on the message of Pope Francis for this year's **World Day for Migrants and Refugees (2018)** and initiate discussion.
- **Use the resources prepared by the Vatican's Migrant & Refugee Section** <https://migrants-refugees.va/>. **Show the videos at some point during the homily on 25 August.**
- Initiate a forum or use a parish approved social media platform where parishioners can share positive information on cultural diversity, harmony and integration or share stories and experiences of resettlement in Australia.
- List the feast days celebrated by cultural communities present in the parish or deanery; incorporate these feast days in the parish liturgical calendar.
- The parish office can research on and keep a list of migrant/cultural/service delivery organisations in the area.
- Possible activities after Mass: Food stalls offering a variety of cuisine from various countries, cultural performances, sports & games, a mini-fete showcasing arts and crafts from various cultures.
- Encourage parishioners to host gatherings similar to **A Taste of Harmony**, **Welcome Dinner**, **Luminous Lantern Parade** etc.

SCHOOLS

- Host a school Multicultural Week or Cultural Diversity Week.
- Develop a social media platform dedicated to cultural diversity, harmony and integration.
- Organise a story/poetry/poster competition with cultural diversity as a theme to be judged at various age levels.
- Ask students to research their own cultural heritage by speaking to parents, grandparents and other family members.
- With the help of parents and grandparents, encourage students

to draw their own family tree.

- Children from various cultural backgrounds could teach each other a word of greeting in their respective language.
- Develop a discussion group for sharing ideas on multiculturalism and integration. Invite speakers to talk on interesting topics; invite parents and grandparents to attend.
- Organise movie screenings <https://www.refugeecouncil.org.au/resources/key-resources/films-on-refugees/>

CULTURAL COMMUNITIES

- Start a group that would engage on regular cultural exchanges with other cultural communities in the archdiocese.
- Invite parish multicultural groups or other cultural communities to your special religious or cultural gatherings.
- Establish a roster, or set up a mentoring partnership, for example, between an established cultural community with a newly arrived community towards mutual learning and enrichment.
- Organise rostered prayer gatherings (and other activities) with various cultural communities.
- Explore initiatives on cultural diversity and integration in other countries eg. <http://citiesofmigration.ca/>

ONLINE RESOURCES

- **Centre for Multicultural Pastoral Care**
- **Australian Catholic Migrant and Refugee Office**
- **Refugee Council of Australia**
- **Together for Humanity**
- **Australian Catholic Religious Against Human Trafficking**
- **Harmony Day Australia**
- **Queensland Multicultural Month**
- **EXPLORE BEYOND BORDERS**
- **Migrants & Refugees Section of the Dicastery for the Promotion of Integral Human Development**
- **Cultural Diversity in the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops**
- **Cities of Migration**
- **British Council – Storytelling to Celebrate Cultural Diversity**
- **Scarboro Missions Canada**