



What's Up?

Volume 21, Issue 2

June 2018

Resource Kit Launched in Brisbane

A resource kit designed to assist parishes, schools and communities to reflect and prepare for Migrant & Refugee Sunday (26 August) was launched on Tuesday, 12 June at the Hanly Room of Francis Rush Centre in Brisbane.

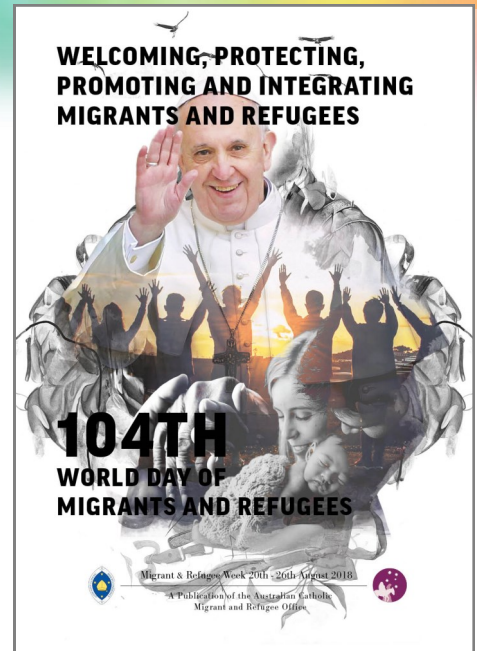
First released in 2008, the Migrant & Refugee Kit is produced each year by the Australian Catholic Migrant and Refugee Office (ACMRO) for the Australian Catholic Bishops' Conference and launched in various locations in Australia. It is the first time that the Kit is launched in Brisbane.

The Kit includes promotional posters and a booklet containing stories, reflections and prayers that carry the theme of Pope Francis' message for the 2018 World Day of Migrants and Refugees (celebrated annually on 14

January). Pope Francis' message for 2018 is 'Welcoming, protecting, promoting and integrating migrants and refugees'. Australia celebrates National Migrant and Refugee Sunday on the last Sunday of August each year.

Close to a hundred representatives from ethnic communities, parishes, schools and archdiocesan agencies gathered in support of Archbishop Mark Coleridge as he launched the Kit alongside ACMRO National Director Fr Maurizio Pettenà CS.

At the gathering, Archbishop Mark urged everyone to take on seriously Pope Francis' message and our Christian calling to 'welcome, protect, promote and integrate migrants and refugees – *whoever they are and wherever they came from.*'



"If they are human beings, that's what we do," the Archbishop said, "not just – if they can better the economy, or if they are useful, or if they are nice, or if they are like us, if they are white and Christian and all that stuff," he added.

Archbishop Mark acknowledged that 'the fear of *the other* lurks in all of us' and it is at that point when we need some conversion of heart.

Launching the kit, Archbishop Mark said, "It is my ardent hope that the resource will help, not just to bring into consciousness the need that we face, but also to help bring about that change of mind and heart which allows us individually and as the church, the body of Christ, to welcome, protect, promote and integrate anyone – any human being, who comes to these shores in search of a home'.

The resource kit will be useful for those who wish to organise school/parish/community activities during the week of 26 August. Printed

Heeding Pope Francis' message

At the beginning of the year, Pope Francis presided over the Mass for World Day of Migrants and Refugees in Rome. His message was made to governments and society at large to keep four things in mind – migrants and refugees need to be welcomed, protected, integrated and have their development promoted.

Msgr. Fabio Baggio, the Under-Secretary to the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development had this to say:

When (the pope) has spoken about welcoming, he's also spoken about doing it responsibly, which is doing it in a way that respects the dignity of all and allows everyone to feel committed to this welcoming.

According to *Rome Reports*:

The International Organization for Migration estimates at least 5,000 migrants and refugees died in 2017, although the true figure is impossible to determine given that thousands of them perish during dangerous

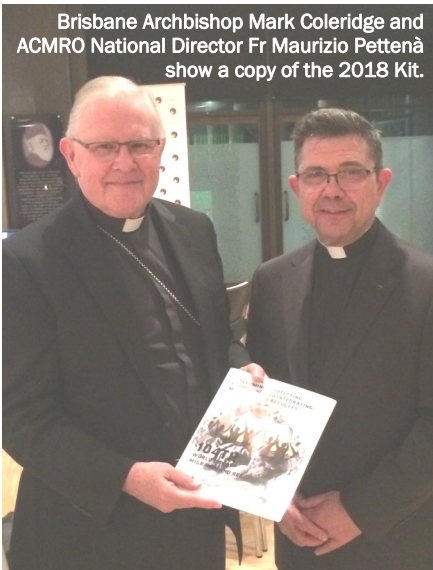
(Continued on page 2)

(Continued on page 2)

Resource Kit Launched....

(Continued from page 1)

copies are currently being distributed in various dioceses across Australia. Brisbane parishes will receive copies in the second half of June. Schools will receive their copies via the July BCE mailing. A downloadable copy is



Welcoming Migrants and Refugees....

(Continued from page 8)

Fast forward to 2018, a number of dedicated community leaders have worked with the support and guidance of four Filipino priests (two diocesan parish priests, one Augustinian and one St Paul father) which made possible the continuation of monthly Masses (in English) in major areas across the Brisbane diocese. This cooperation between organisers and priests, alongside support from the Archbishop and parishes, also made possible the continuation of Filipino popular

“I would like to hope that these practices will continue and begin to include other cultural expressions of faith paving the way towards liturgical inculturation in Brisbane parishes.”

available on the [ACMRO](http://www.acmro.org.au) website www.acmro.org.au.

The Centre for Multicultural Pastoral Care wish to thank all who were able to represent their parishes, ethnic communities, schools and archdiocesan agencies at the launch. Special thanks to the cultural performers – Sandra from the Capellanía Católica Latinoamericana de Brisbane and the Lebanese Maronite dancers in Brisbane (StMaroun Brisbane) and their chaplains. The Centre is grateful for the presence of Uncle David Miller who delivered the Acknowledgement of Country. More photos are available on the [CMPC Facebook page](#).

The Irish Catholic Bishops Conference also produced a Parish Resource Pack for World Day of Migrants and Refugees celebrated in Europe in January. Visit <https://www.catholicbishops.ie/2018/01/09/world-day-of-migrants-and-refugees-2018/>

religiosity such as the *Santacruzán, Flores de Mayo, Salubong, Black Nazarene, Santo Niño*, annual pilgrimage to Marian Valley in honour of Saints Lorenzo Ruiz and Pedro Calungsod, and *Simbang Gabi*.

This integration experience unique to the Filipino Community in Brisbane is in its early stages. To date, a set of guidelines for Mass celebrants in parishes is being developed to address a few gaps arising from this unique setup. Moreover, parish priests are being reminded to be responsible in making ethnic communities in their parish aware of various archdiocesan policies, eg. Migrant Community Financial Policy, Workplace Health and Safety, and Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults. It is hoped that issues that arise are addressed accordingly.

Of particular note is *Simbang Gabi*, a popular Filipino tradition where Masses are held for nine consecutive

Heeding Pope Francis' Message

(Continued from page 1)

journeys. Three thousand of these deaths occurred in the Mediterranean. This is one of the crisis' major danger zones. Since 2014, more than 14,000 people have lost their lives here. Another area is northern and central Africa, which recorded nearly 900 deaths in the last year. According to the UN, since the year 2000, the total number of migrants has ballooned 49 percent. In total, there are an estimated 258 million of them throughout the world. (<https://www.romereports.com/en/2018/01/13/pope-francis-to-celebrate-world-day-of-migrants-and-refugees-on-sunday/>)

In fact, 2018 will be an important year. The UN wants to achieve a world agreement on migration. The goal is to establish a legal framework for protecting those who have been forced to abandon their homes, wherever they may be.

Here in Australia, the Australian Catholic Migrant and Refugee Office, on behalf of the Australian Catholic Bishop's Conference, launched the Migrant and Refugee Kit 2018 on 12 June in Brisbane. The Migrant and Refugee Kit is titled *“Welcoming, protecting, promoting and integrating migrants and refugees”*.

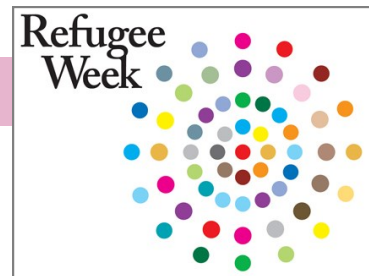
Let us take to heart Pope Francis' message to respect the dignity of migrants and refugees and to commit ourselves responsibly in welcoming them.

Clyde Cosentino
Director

days leading to Christmas. For a few years now, *Simbang Gabi* has become a recurring event in the liturgical calendar of three Brisbane parishes, attended not just by Filipinos but also by parishioners and visitors. This is in addition to *Simbang Gabi* Community Masses held in various churches in Brisbane. Archbishop Mark Coleridge has celebrated *Simbang Gabi* in the last few years. I would like to hope that these practices will continue and begin to include other cultural expressions of faith paving the way towards liturgical inculturation in Brisbane parishes.

Percy Pamo Lawrence
CMPC Staff

Refugee Week



Refugee Week in Australia takes place on 17 - 23 June 2018. This year's theme is '#With Refugees'.

Refugee Week is celebrated each year in major cities around the world in recognition of the many positive contributions of refugees in society. The Week coincides with the celebration of World Refugee Day which is held annually on 20 June.

The Refugee Council of Australia (ROCA) [website](#) lists a variety of information on events happening across Australia during Refugee Week. This can be found on www.refugeeweek.org.au.

Resources

The ROCA website also runs a page dedicated to resources on refugees for use in schools and learning communities. This can be found on <https://www.refugeecouncil.org.au/resources-home/key-resources/>.

Resource topics include, refugee status determination, building a new life in Australia, resettlement fraud, offshore processing, detention, to name a few. This website also provides resources for teachers, books

and films on refugees and a comprehensive list of publications and audio visual resources on refugees.

Constance on the Edge

Constance on the Edge is an award winning documentary about refugee life in Australia. Filmed over 10 years, it follows one extended family from Sudan as they resettle in Wagga Wagga, NSW. It's a story about the impact of war and what it takes to belong in a new country far from home. After premiering at the Sydney Film Festival, the documentary was the Refugee Council of Australia's featured film during Refugee Week 2017, with over 200 screenings held around the country. Constance's family have been very involved with, and supported by, the Catholic community in Wagga Wagga.

The *Constance on the Edge* team have now created a comprehensive education resource for senior students, including classroom activities and short clips from the documentary, mapped to various curriculum areas, including CAPS, PDHPE, History; English, Geography and EALD. The video clips

would also be useful tools as discussion starters for community work.

For more information, contact film director Belinda Mason on admin@constanceontheedge.com or visit *Constance on the Edge* website <http://constanceontheedge.com/>

* * *

World Refugee Day Websites Overseas
UNHCR World Refugee Day
<http://www.un.org/en/events/refugeeday/>

World Refugee Day - Canadian Government
<https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/campaigns/world-refugee-day.html>
<http://www.unhcr.org/>

World Refugee Day - Waterloo Canada
<http://worldrefugeedaywr.com/>
<http://www.abc.net.au/tv/programs/cast-from-the-storm/>
<http://refugeeweek.org.uk/>

More online resources on migrants and refugees

[Exodus: Our Journey to Europe](#) [YouTube]

Documentary following some of the million people who smuggled themselves into Europe in 2015.



[A Church Leader's Tool Kit to the Syrian Refugee Crisis](#)

- This and other resources found on the website of World Relief Sacramento

[Prayer for Migrants and Refugees](#) - Contained in a parish resource pack prepared by the Irish Catholic Bishops' Conference

[Teachers' Resource Kit](#): Classroom Activities on Cultural Diversity - There are many ways teachers and schools can help foster community harmony and encourage positive attitudes towards cultural diversity. This kit produced by the Victorian Multicultural Commission is designed to provide some inspiration and assistance to help your school bring diversity to life in the classroom.

[Interreligious dialogue and integration](#) - Welcoming migrants is only a first step; offering spaces and activities that support integration and interreligious dialogue is the next one. Elena Dini shares a concrete experience of dialogue in Rome.

[Seeking Sanctuary](#) - Prayers for Migrants and Refugees

[If you have received a printed copy of this newsletter, obtain an electronic copy on www.multiculturalcare.org.au and click on links.]

QPASTT Professional Development Training Calendar 2018

The Queensland Program of Assistance for Survivors of Torture and Trauma (QPASTT) is a specialist, state wide service supporting the recovery of people who have survived torture and trauma. Among other services, QPASTT offers professional development workshops developed to support services and individuals who are interested in working with people from refugee backgrounds. Here is a list of topics for the second half of 2018. A complete calendar is available on the [QPASTT](http://qpastt.org.au/training/professional-development-calendar/) website <http://qpastt.org.au/training/professional-development-calendar/>. Please ring Elise Barton (Training Coordinator & Counsellor/Advocate Monday -Thursday) on 3120 1529.

Thursday 26th July - Information Session about QPASTT
Thursday 30th August - Working with Families from Refugee Backgrounds
Thursday 6th September - Responding to and Managing Challenging and High Risk Behaviour in Young People from Refugee Backgrounds
Thursday 20th September - Supporting Trauma Recovery with Children from Refugee Backgrounds
Thursday 25th October - Information session about QPASTT
Tuesday 30th & Wednesday 31st Oct - Engaging with the Imaginal: The use of Sand-tray, Metaphor and Story in Complex Trauma Therapy
Thursday 15th November - Working with Communities from Refugee Backgrounds

HIGHLIGHTS Catholic Ethnic Communities Brisbane

Various Communities Holy Week, Easter and various events



Polish - Palm Sunday



Latin American - Santo Entierro



South Sudanese - Oz Rosary

Many events have occurred since the March issue of this newsletter. Lent and Easter activities were widely observed by all Catholic ethnic communities. There was Ash Wednesday, Palm Sunday and Stations of the Cross. There were Lent reflections and retreats. And there was the Easter Triduum – *Mass of the Lord's Supper* and *washing of the feet* on Holy Thursday, *Jesus' passion and crucifixion* and *veneration of the Cross*

on Good Friday, Easter Vigil on the evening of Holy Saturday and finally, Easter celebrations from Sunday onwards. Other recent gatherings in some communities include, to name a few – the Italian Community's Feast of Three Saints on 3 May, the South Sudanese Community's Oz Rosary in May, the Timor Leste Community's independence day celebration on 19 May, the Latin American Community's kerygmatic workshop on

evangelization from 12 to 13 May, the Indian Syro Malabar Community's Santhom Multicultural Festival, the Filipino Community's celebration of 120th year of independence at Barrio Fiesta on 10 June, and the Brazilian Community's *Feijoada* on 23 June.

Many other events are not listed here. To keep up to date on multicultural and ethno specific gatherings, follow our [CMPC Facebook page](#).



Taller Kerygmatico de Evangelizacion_12-13_Mayo_2018



Syro Malabar - Santhom Festival

Eastern Catholic Communities Pilgrimage at Marian Valley

On Pentecost Sunday, 20 May, the Marian Valley Shrine of Our Lady Help of Christians in Canungra, once again, became the venue for the annual gathering of Eastern Catholic communities in the Brisbane Archdiocese.

Members of the Maronite, Melkite, Chaldean, Assyrian, Syriac Catholic communities along with Greek Orthodox guests enjoyed a day of prayerful, reflective and joyful pilgrimage at Marian Valley starting with a Maronite Mass (next year will be Melkite, and so on) followed by rosary, prayers at the shrine of Our Lady of Lebanon and community picnic.

The joint pilgrimage was guided by Fr Fadi Salame and Fr Hovig (St Maroun's Maronite), Fr Elie Francis (St Clement's Melkite), Fr Nour Casmousa (Syriac Catholic) and Fr John Abed Elkirim (Greek Orthodox).

More information on Maronite and Melkite communities on this link <http://www.multiculturalcare.org.au/asp/index.asp?pgid=11674>. Many thanks to Fr Fadi and Fr Elie for the photos (taken from the St Maroun's Maronite and St Clement's Melkite Facebook posts.



HIGHLIGHTS Catholic Ethnic Communities Brisbane

Community Chaplains Meetings become avenues of welcome



This year, meeting venues rostered at various community bases and locations have become avenues of welcome and hospitality.

At their meeting in April, the chaplains and cross cultural pastoral ministers of ethnic and multicultural communities were warmly welcomed by the Indonesian community led by their Chaplain Fr Martinus Situmorang OFM Cap and the Dutton Park West End Parish.

After the meeting, the Community Chaplains and CMPC staff enjoyed sumptuous Indonesian cuisine for lunch. Photos above show some of the Chaplains present together with parish staff and Indonesian community members. Many thanks to



Chaplains, CMPC staff, and guest speakers for a feast of Salvadorean, Peruvian and Colombian cuisine prepared by members of the Latin American community.

Fr Martinus for leading the warm welcome and for arranging venue and catering.

In June, the Community Chaplains met at the New Farm Parish meeting room in New Farm. Sr Melissa Dwyer fdcc from Vocation Brisbane and Lorraine Wynne from Evangelisation Brisbane's Children and Families were guest speakers at this meeting.

After the meeting, Bishop Ken Howell (photo below) joined the Community

Many thanks to Fr Nacho Gutierrez cs, New Farm Parish Priest and Chaplain of the Latin American community for providing a welcoming atmosphere.



Cultural Diversity in the Church

Below, Mar Muñoz-Visoso, Executive Director of the Secretariat for Cultural Diversity in the Church of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) introduces key documents and initiatives of the USCCB on fostering a proactive and inclusive culturally diverse Church in the US. The underlined texts are live links to pertinent resources. Hover, click away and explore the US experience and initiatives on fostering cultural diversity in the church.



The mandate of the Committee of Cultural Diversity in the Church, and its corresponding Secretariat, is to be present on behalf of the Bishops' Conference to the many cultures, ethnicities and races that today constitute the Roman Catholic Church in the United States. The goal is to encourage the inclusion and fuller participation of all God's People in the life and ministry of the Church by building up their Catholic identity in a spirit of unity in diversity.

Throughout the United States we experience a profound demographic shift as Hispanics, Asians, Africans, Caribbean people, and many other communities of non-European origin are on the rise. Today, as ever, the Church's mission to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ and promote the life and dignity of each and every human being has much to do with insight into cultures. Catholic parishes are moving from mono-cultural patterns to ones we call "shared," that is, to parishes in which more than one

language, racial or cultural group seek to celebrate the Eucharist and embody Christian community. For ministers and pastoral workers to be effective in this diverse environment, the right knowledge, attitudes and skills need to be developed.

Our [Intercultural Competencies](#) page explains the five competencies that were defined by the U.S. bishops in making "Recognition of Cultural Diversity in the Church" one of their priorities. The manual ***Building Intercultural Competence for Ministers*** has been developed and can be found online or obtained in print from [USCCB Publishing](#). Regional trainings on the competencies are being scheduled at this time. Visit the Intercultural Competency site often for updates.

The Secretariat of Cultural Diversity is also looking for opportunities to partner with Catholic colleges and

universities, and other institutions of higher education to disseminate the competency guidelines.

A study of ***Best Practices in Shared Parishes*** for pastors and their teams also is forthcoming. Under the title "So That They All May Be One," this resource was developed in consultation with and from the experience of nearly 20 pastors of multicultural/shared parishes from around the country.

Just as with the first evangelization, the New Evangelization compels us to go and make disciples of all nations. In the United States of America we do not need to go too far to find people "of all nations." That's our blessing and our challenge. [Source: <http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/cultural-diversity/>]

CREATIVE RESOURCES found on USCCB's Secretariat for Cultural Diversity <http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/cultural-diversity/>

The Secretariat of Cultural Diversity in the Church Spring/Summer 2018 newsletter, [One Church Many Cultures: The Good News of Cultural Diversity](#). This resource covers new initiatives, programs, news, and much more!

[What's Below the Surface is Affecting Your Ministry](#) . . . - Read the reflection by Patti Gutiérrez of the Diocese of Owensboro about Building Cultural Competence for Ministers (BICM).

[Study on Cultural Diversity Displays Catholic Church's Growing Multicultural Parish Population](#). Check out the [study!](#)

TIPS....

(Continued from page 7)

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](#)
- [Irish Catholic Bishops Conference – World Day of Migrants 2018 resource pack](#)
- [Cities of Migration](#)
- [British Council – Storytelling to Celebrate Cultural Diversity](#)
- [Scarboro Missions Canada](#)

Rest in Peace

We remember and pray for those who have died recently:

Fr John Pagnin cs

Served in the past as Chaplain of Italian Community and supply Priest for the Latin American Community.

Fr Lawrence Ayoub

Served as Chaplain of St Clement's Melkite Parish in South Brisbane from Community from 1987 - 2000.

Luis Calderon

Former volunteer at the Centre for Multicultural Pastoral Care and a valued member of the Latin American Community.

TIPS on celebrating National Migrant & Refugee Week 2018

World Day of Migrants and Refugees is celebrated each year on 14 January. In Australia, the National Migrant & Refugee Week is observed in the last week of August each year, culminating with Migrant & Refugee Sunday which falls on the 26th of August this year. In the Archdiocese of Brisbane, Multicultural Mass will be celebrated at the Cathedral of St Stephen on 26 August at 2:30pm (see flyer insert for more information). More and more Brisbane parishes in the archdiocese now organise their own parish Multicultural Mass on the same Sunday, or a nominated Sunday during the year. These observances provide opportunities for reflection and appreciation of the contributions of migrants and refugees to the Australian church and society.

Parishes, schools, ethnic, multicultural and wider communities are encouraged to be creative in organising events during the National Migrant and Refugee Week or any time during the year; activities or initiatives that promote understanding among various cultures and prepare the path towards integration and positive intercultural relations. Here are some suggestions:

Parishes

- The Cathedral of St Stephen hosts 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 from an ethnic 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 particular ethnic groups in the parish to sing hymns in their own languages or prepare liturgical dances that reflect their faith expression.
- Create a parish multicultural group, a parish multicultural choir or a parish multicultural sports group that could interact with ethno-specific groups that exist in the parish or deanery.
- Display a National Migrant and Refugee Week poster, maps or symbols that would 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 and initiate discussion.
- **Show the 3-minute video of Pope Francis' message at some point during the homily on 26 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 ethnic 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. Be creative.
- 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 of ideas on multiculturalism; 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/>

Ethnic and Multicultural Communities

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

ONLINE RESOURCES ON MIGRANTS/ REFUGEES/CULTURAL DIVERSITY:

- **Centre for Multicultural Pastoral Care** www.multiculturalcare.org.au, 'Resources' tab
- **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**

(Continued on page 6)

WELCOMING MIGRANTS AND REFUGEES IN OUR COMMUNITIES

The Filipino Catholic Community in Brisbane: A Brave First Step

Reprinted from the *Migrant & Refugee Kit 2018* produced by the Australian Catholic Migrant and Refugee Office for the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference)

Picture this: An 'Integration Processing Zone' where dishevelled unprocessed ethnic communities go in, and then come out all neat and branded 'Integrated into Parish'. If only we were robots!

Each ethnic community is as unique as a human fingerprint. Pope Francis, in his message for the 104th World Day of Migrants and Refugees, asks us to focus on four action words: welcome, protect, promote and integrate. Each of these action words is a process in itself, an ongoing journey that takes time and effort, trial and error, steps back and forward. The success of one or a number of ethnic communities' integration into a parish depends largely on how the parish itself interprets these four action words. Integration, in particular, should not be forced upon but rather firmly encouraged. Otherwise, the process simply becomes subtle assimilation under the guise of integration.

This reflection comes from my perspective as a member of the Filipino Catholic Community in Brisbane and an observer of multicultural pastoral care in the

Archdiocese of Brisbane over the last 23 years.

Owing to its collective and natural ability to adapt, and armed with a good grasp of the English language, Filipino Catholic communities across Australian dioceses are well and truly integrating into parishes. Many are regular parish Mass attenders, and many are active in various areas of parish and diocesan ministry.

Recent data from the Pastoral Research Office of the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference show that there are 29,260 Filipino Catholics living in Queensland; 15,168 of these live in the Greater Brisbane area. Filipinos form the largest group of Catholics from a non-English speaking background (NESB) in Brisbane and in Australia. It is the second largest group, following Australian-born Catholics, in the overall tally of the most number of Catholics per country of origin.

It is an interesting fact, therefore, that the Filipino Community in Brisbane has not had a chaplain for over a year now. In early 2017, a decision was

"This integration experience unique to the Filipino Community in Brisbane is in its early stages."

made to discontinue the Filipino chaplaincy. This announcement was met with mixed reactions from members of this 30-year-old vibrant community who have grown accustomed to the well organised monthly Masses and religious events held across Brisbane and the Gold Coast. Having six chaplains and pastoral ministers in succession since 1988, many members were concerned that the community would be at a disadvantage without a Chaplain and an official structured chaplaincy. The community feared gloomy prospects, to name a few: fragmentation, loss of official representation as an ethno-specific entity in special archdiocesan events, weakened representation in discussions relating to multicultural pastoral care, loss of contact with ethno-specific government and NGO services usually made through the chaplains, and gaps in the provision of pastoral and spiritual care to the elderly. It is also worth a mention that changing religion from Roman Catholic to other Christian denominations, particularly into Pentecostal churches, is also an emerging phenomenon in the Filipino diaspora. At the beginning of 2017, things looked like a step back into the 30 years pre-chaplaincy period.

Nevertheless, a major step has been made and the community soldiered on.

(Continued on page 2)



Archbishop Mark Coleridge with Catholic Filipinos at the Marian Valley Shrine of Our Lady Help of Christians in Canungra.