

Supporting Refugees and Asylum Seekers: Providing Financial and Material Aid

*“Freely you have received,
freely give” (Matthew 10:8).*

This note has been prepared to assist parishes in providing financial and material support for asylum seekers and refugees.

*“Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and
whoever sows generously will also reap generously.
Each of you should give what you have decided in your
heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for
God loves a cheerful giver”
(2 Corinthians 9:6,7).*

Asylum seekers and refugees often arrive in our communities with few resources other than their families, their life experiences, and the clothes they wear. In addition, many are not eligible for income support while in Australia. They need our help to meet their immediate living requirements and to achieve a basic standard of living. Many parishioners and parishes are very generous, regularly providing financial and material support to asylum seekers and other groups. What your parish undertakes to provide will depend upon your parish's human and financial capacities, and how you feel called to give.

Support can be provided in many ways:

Fundraising within the parish (consider trivia nights, collection drives), and providing the funds raised towards:

- rental support for a family or individual, either within the parish or another parish
- assisting with utilities or other living expenses bills of asylum seekers
- supporting one of the agencies helping asylum seekers and refugees such as the Brigidine Asylum Seeker Project, Asylum Seeker Resource Centre (ASRC), Anglicare Victoria and the Brotherhood of St. Laurence – see our website for contact details and a full list. (Refer to Community List in Volunteering insert).
- collecting non-perishable food and other items and making them available directly to asylum seekers, or other parishes or agencies supporting asylum seekers, as above.
- contributing kitchenware, blankets, furniture, bicycles, toys and the like.

A great example of parish support to refugees is provided by St. Alban the Martyr, St. Albans, who support refugees through a partnership project with Anglicare Victoria, distributing food packages, whitegoods and furniture. You can read about this <http://tma.melbourneanglican.org.au/parishes/asylum-seekers>.



**For further information contact the Vicar, Carmel Hunter
at prayersonwheels@netspace.net.au**