



AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC BISHOPS CONFERENCE

BISHOPS COMMISSION FOR EVANGELISATION, LAITY AND MINISTRY
BISHOPS COMMISSION FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE, MISSION AND SERVICE

MEDIA STATEMENT

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Australia welcomes refugees and migrants

Australians have been urged to reflect on the values of compassion, justice and hope as Catholic communities mark the World Day of Migrants and Refugees on October 5.

The Catholic Church has a long-standing commitment to welcoming and supporting migrants and refugees, while promoting social justice, cohesion and unity.

Archbishop Christopher Prowse, chair of the Bishops Commission for Evangelisation, Laity and Ministry, and Bishop Timothy Harris, chair of the Bishops Commission for Social Justice, Mission and Service, urged Australians to respond with compassion and hope amid growing public debate around immigration.

“In the immigration debate, there’s a difference between reacting and responding,” Archbishop Prowse said.

“Let’s not go backwards. Yes, there are difficulties, but we can work it out together because Australia is renowned worldwide for its hospitality.

“Social cohesion is a central part of what makes Australia a good place.”

Reiterating his recent [pastoral letter](#), Bishop Harris said: “Each newcomer to our shores is a person created in God’s image and arrives with hopes for safety, dignity and the opportunity to contribute to a new life.”

This year also marks the 75th anniversary of the Australian Catholic bishops’ pastoral letter on immigration, a foundational document that continues to shape the Church’s advocacy.

In the [recent publication](#) *Under the Southern Cross: A Journey of Faith and Unity*, the bishops wrote: “This timeless call to hospitality and generosity remains as vital today as it was 75 years ago ... We are called to become a living witness to hope and to build a community that recognises migrants and refugees as brother and sister.”

Across Australia, Catholic parishes, schools, and organisations are hosting events, liturgies, and community gatherings to mark the World Day of Migrants and Refugees.

These initiatives echo the call of Pope Leo XIV to foster dialogue, celebrate cultural diversity, and promote pathways to inclusion.

In his [official message](#) for the 111th World Day of Migrants and Refugees, Pope Leo XIV described migrants and refugees as: “Privileged witnesses of hope ... Their courage and tenacity bear heroic testimony to a faith that sees beyond what our eyes can see and gives them the strength to defy death on the various contemporary migration routes.”

The Bishops Commission for Evangelisation, Laity and Ministry and the Bishops Commission for Social Justice, Mission and Service invite all Australians to stand in solidarity with migrants and refugees, and to build a future where compassion, justice, and shared belonging are at the heart of national identity.

Resources to celebrate this occasion are available at:

<https://acmro.catholic.org.au/wdmr/2025>

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