



Catholics in South-East Queensland Call for Welcome, Compassion and Justice for People Seeking Asylum

Over the last two years, many of us Catholics who accompany and support people seeking asylum in South-East Queensland have noted how a series of Federal Government decisions have seriously affected them.

These Government decisions have withdrawn income and accommodation support and left many destitute. While most still have the right to work, it is often very difficult to get work and enough work for individuals and families to live with any dignity.

At present, there are about 300 people seeking asylum in South-East Queensland who have become destitute because of these Government decisions and this number could further increase.

We are appalled that fellow human beings, our sisters and brothers, can be treated like this. It is cruel and we reject this treatment of mothers, fathers and children.

As Catholics, we are called to be the presence of Jesus Christ in the world today. We are called to be good news to all those who are vulnerable and treated with indignity. It is clear to us that many people currently seeking asylum face significant hardship and indignity. We cannot stay silent and do nothing in the face of this immense suffering.

We say to the Federal Government and all Members of Parliament that we will replace the cruelty we see with welcome, hospitality, mercy and compassion. There is no excuse for treating our fellow human beings in this cruel and inhuman way and we will continue to demand an end to this cruelty. In the name of Jesus Christ, we demand justice for our sisters and brothers.

There are many Catholics who are already working in the community, along with other people of goodwill, to replace this cruelty with welcome and kindness. We encourage Catholics in every parish, school and agency in South-East Queensland to join us in reaching out in mercy and love to our sisters and brothers to ease the suffering caused by this cruelty. We encourage them to pray earnestly that the Prime Minister, Mr Turnbull, the Home Affairs Minister, Mr Dutton and all Parliamentarians will find compassion in their hearts for all people seeking asylum, but especially for those who are now being made destitute by Government policy decisions. And we urge all Catholics to join us in demanding that the Government and all Parliamentarians take action to end the policies which cause this hardship and indignity.

