



A MOVEMENT OF THE HEART

**A Novena of Prayer
For 9 days from 22 August to
30 August (Migrant and Refugee Sunday)**

**Seeking to rekindle a spirit of tender mercy and loving compassion
for all those who flee persecution and violence in our world.**



The United Nations High Commission for Refugees today says there is a worldwide total of 50 million refugees, refugee claimants and people displaced within their own country's borders.

Just like them, Jesus spent a large part of his life as a refugee. He fled to Egypt with Joseph and Mary to escape Herod's murderous rampage in Bethlehem and lived there for many years. Jesus and his family knew well what it meant to flee from danger and live as strangers in a foreign land.

The Australian Church is no stranger to the refugee experience too. Woven into the fabric of the Church in Australia are the stories of successive waves of migrants and refugees fleeing from violence and great hardship in Ireland, Europe, Vietnam and other parts of Asia, Latin America, Africa and the Middle East. Together with our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander sisters and brothers, we are a living testimony to the recent history of human suffering across the globe and the yearning for dignity and freedom which burns ceaselessly in the human heart.

Pope Francis has spoken of a global indifference to the plight of refugees and displaced people. He invites us to reject this indifference and to, instead, reflect the boundless love and abundant mercy of God in our response to refugees and all those seeking protection from persecution and violence.

We invite you to join A Movement of the Heart, a movement of Christians seeking to be at one with the loving and merciful heart of Jesus. In particular, we ask you to show your commitment to this movement by participating in a novena of prayer from 22 August to 30 August, Migrant & Refugee Sunday. **You might also consider using material from this novena for Parish Masses on Migrant & Refugee Sunday.**

Let us seek an ever-deepening union with God through a renewed commitment to the tender mercy and compassionate love which flows from Jesus' heart! May we become a powerful witness of this divine love and help to wash away the global indifference towards the plight of refugees.

A Novena of Prayer

Below are provided a selection of scriptural passages, a quotation from the Pope and a number of prayers. **On each of the nine days from 22 to 30 August, set aside time at home, in your parish, your classroom or your agency to reflect on some of the scriptural passages and the quotation and to pray some or all of the prayers for the intention of overcoming the indifference and hard-heartedness of our world to refugees.**

From Scripture

And I will give them one heart, and a new spirit I will put within them. I will remove the heart of stone from their flesh and give them a heart of flesh, that they may walk in my statutes and keep my rules and obey them. And they shall be my people, and I will be their God. But as for those whose heart goes after their detestable things and their abominations, I will bring their deeds upon their own heads, declares the Lord God.

Ezekiel 11: 19 - 21

The foreigner residing among you must be treated as your native-born. Love them as yourself, for you were foreigners in Egypt. I am the LORD your God.

Leviticus 19:34

They are darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, due to their hardness of heart.

Ephesians 4:18

Blessed are the merciful for they shall receive mercy.

Matthew 5:7

Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience,

Colossians 3: 12

From the Church

We have lost the sense of fraternal responsibility; we have fallen into the hypocritical attitude of the priest and of the servant of the altar that Jesus speaks about in the parable of the Good Samaritan: We look upon the brother half dead by the roadside, perhaps we think "poor guy," and we continue on our way, it's none of our business; and we feel fine with this. We feel at peace with this, we feel fine! The culture of well-being, that makes us think of ourselves, that makes us insensitive to the cries of others, that makes us live in soap bubbles, that are beautiful but are nothing, are illusions of futility, of the transient, that brings indifference to others, that brings even the globalization of indifference. In this world of globalization we have fallen into a globalization of indifference. We are accustomed to the suffering of others, it doesn't concern us, it's none of our business.

Pope Francis, 8 July 2013



Prayers

Loving and merciful Jesus
Come dwell in our hearts
So that we may love as you love,
So that our mercy and compassion might be as abundant
as yours.
Soften our hearts
So that we may never be indifferent to the plight of others
Especially those forced to flee persecution and violence.
Make our hearts like yours
So that all may know of God's wondrous and boundless
love. **Amen.**

Almighty and merciful God,
whose Son became a refugee
and had no place to call his own;
look with mercy on those who today
are fleeing from danger,
homeless and hungry.
Bless those who work to bring them relief;
inspire generosity and compassion in all our hearts;
and guide the nations of the world towards that day
when all will rejoice in your Kingdom of justice and of peace;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

(From An Invitation to Prayer)

Consider praying one or more decades of the Rosary each day as part of this Novena.

Other Suggestions

Share this novena with others in your family and neighbourhood and with other students or work colleagues.

Use the novena reflections and prayers at the start of meetings in your parish or school during the nine days or ask various groups in your parish or school to lead a time of prayer and reflection each day during the novena period.

Write to or e-mail your local Federal MP and State Senators, telling them that you are participating in 9 days of prayer for a conversion of heart in Australia and the world on the treatment of refugees.

Donate clothing, non-perishable food, beds and appliances, Go cards or money to refugee support agencies like the Romero Centre, MDA Inc, Access Inc & the Red Cross.

Contact the Justice & Peace Commission about making donations or fund raising to help establish legal clinics to support unrepresented asylum seekers locally

Like the Facebook Page for "**A Movement of the Heart**" and share it with others asking them to also like the page and join in the novena. The Facebook page is at: <https://www.facebook.com/amovementoftheheart>

