

## Refugees and Asylum Seekers across the World

This prayer reflection invites you to gather in your community or workplace for a few minutes to reflect on the current situation of refugees and asylum seekers.

Refugee and asylum seeker numbers have reached unprecedented levels across the globe. Millions of people are displaced, seeking refuge from conflict and war, famine and poverty. Refugees from the Africa and the Middle East seek shelter in Europe. Refugees and migrants from Latin America seek a better life in the US and Canada. Refugees and minority groups from the poorest parts of Asia seek refuge in other Asian countries and in Australia and New Zealand. Our Governments set quotas, make decisions on how refugees will be treated, keep them in detention for years, and continue to fund conflicts in war torn regions...

The Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations urge and challenge every nation to do its best for those who are most vulnerable in every society. Each one of us, within our own context, have the **opportunity** to respond to the serious global situation of refugees and asylum seekers.

*How do we as Good Shepherd - sisters and mission partners – respond to this opportunity?*

In many units of the Congregation, we are already involved ...

- Providing material and physical support
- Providing food, medicines and accommodation
- Providing spiritual support with our prayer and reflection on the issues

Our task is also to pray for the strength to support those seeking our help, and to pray that those seeking help and a new start will find compassion and encouragement to do so! Our task is enormous! Are we up to the task?

"If it happens that you should see one of our poor children covered with the world's dust, not to mention anything more, imitate the holy woman who with her veil wiped the face of *the Good Shepherd*."  
St. Mary Euphrasia Pelletier, Conferences, p466





**Activity:** Gather together as sisters and mission partners

**Reflection:** Finding ways to respond to the **Opportunity** to help those seeking asylum or escaping violence and conflict is never easy. It takes commitment, patience, compassion and energy. And, it is the call of God to each one of us in today's world.

Choose a reading – a passage of scripture or a story/poem/news item that tells the story of a person or a group seeking asylum or seeking refuge.

Share this story together.

- What touches you most about the story/situation?
- What image does the story bring to mind for you?
- What is happening in your area/city/country right now regarding asylum seekers or refugees?
- What can you as an individual or you as a group do to help those seeking refuge? Take some time to reflect on what is needed for you or your group to respond effectively.
- Together write a **“February Resolution”** – a sentence or statement that says what you will do for the refugees/asylum seekers in your area.
- Share this statement with others in your Good Shepherd work place.
- Share this statement with the Good Shepherd NGO Office. Together we can weave a tapestry of activities across the Congregation that will make a difference to the lives of refugees and asylum seekers.

Pray together for the energy, courage and audacity you need to be true to your **“February Resolution”**. (For example, use the Prayer of St Francis).

Prayer Contributed by Sister Caroline Price, Province of Australia/Aotearoa/New Zealand