

*I was a
stranger
and you
welcomed
me...*



Matthew 25:35

We gather in prayerful solidarity with refugees, migrants and all who long for justice and peace. As followers of Christ, we are called to welcome the stranger, stand with the vulnerable, and work for a world where every person is treated with dignity.

In October 2025, we mark the 111th World Day of Migrants and Refugees and the Jubilee of Migrants, with the theme “*Migrants, Missionaries of Hope*.” Pope Leo has shared his first message for this occasion, highlighting the global challenges—conflict, injustice, and fear—that are forcing many to leave their homes.

He praises the courage of migrants and refugees, calling them “messengers of hope” in a world overshadowed by suffering. Their stories, often filled with resilience and faith, inspire us and remind us of the strength found in adversity. Here in Australia, many of us know migrants and refugees whose journeys reflect this hope.

Pope Leo also reminds us of our ultimate journey—towards unity with Christ in our heavenly home. If we lose sight of this, he warns, we risk becoming too focused on worldly concerns. This Jubilee invites us to walk with hope, faith, and compassion alongside those on the move.

“The current global context is sadly marked by wars, violence, slavery, injustice and extreme weather events which force millions of people to leave their homelands in search of refuge elsewhere. The widespread tendency to look after the interests of limited communities poses a serious threat to the sharing of responsibility, multilateral cooperation, the pursuit of the common good and global solidarity for the benefit for our entire human family. The prospect of a renewed arms race and the development of new armaments, including nuclear weapons, the lack of consideration for the harmful effect of the ongoing climate crisis, and the impact of profound economic inequalities make the challenges of the present and the future increasingly demanding. Faced with frightening scenarios and the possibility of global devastation, it is important that there be a growing desire in peoples’ hearts for a future of peace and of respect for the dignity of all.” Pope Leo XIV

Old Testament Law called on citizens to show compassion and solidarity towards the stranger because they too, had been oppressed and exiled.

“You shall love the alien as yourself, for you were aliens in the land of Egypt. I am the Lord, your God.” Leviticus 19: 33-34

In the New Testament the infancy narrative of Matthew’s gospel shows that the first days of Jesus’ life were characterised by the wise men’s adoration of his kingship and immediately afterwards the Holy Family’s escape from Herod’s slaughter. The flight into Egypt is also a story of the children of Bethlehem who do not escape Herod’s wrath. Pope Francis was moved to ask, “Has anyone wept? Today has anyone wept in our world?”

Read Matthew 2: 11-15

...and on entering the house they saw the child with Mary his mother. They prostrated themselves and did him homage. Then they opened their treasures and offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they departed for their country by another way.

“...When they had departed, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, “Rise, take the child and his mother, flee to Egypt, and stay there until I tell you. Herod is going to search for the child to destroy him.”

Joseph rose and took the child and his mother by night and departed for Egypt. He stayed there until the death of Herod, that what the Lord had said through the prophet might be fulfilled, “Out of Egypt I called my son.”

Take some time to look at and reflect upon the image below.



Close your eyes and imagine being forced to leave your home, carrying only what you can hold. Who is with you and who is left behind? Imagine the fear, the uncertainty and the hope for safety. Think about the danger present to yourself and those with you.

Do you recognise the family and child fleeing Herod's massacre?

What of those who did not survive?

How do you respond to people who seek protection from violence and persecution?

What are your hopes for the future?

Who will welcome you and offer you solace and safety, understanding and acceptance as you seek refuge in their land?

How will you keep this hope alive in your new land that awaits the end of your journey?

Prayer

God of refugees and migrants,
sharing the exile road,
with all who flee the violence that enslaves and kills:
As the Holy Family sought asylum in a foreign land,
make us ready to welcome refugees and migrants
and receive from them a new language of life and hope
through Jesus your Son. Amen.

Intercessory Prayers

We pray for all who come to our land to better their lives and to escape oppression, poverty, persecution, violence, and war, that they will gain the peace and security they long for.
God of hope, hear our prayer.

We pray for migrants, refugees and other strangers in our midst, that they may find strength in our concern for justice and feel the warmth of our love.
God of hope, hear our prayer.

We pray for those who have travelled away from their homelands, may their courage and tenacity help them to forge new paths and become missionaries of faith and hope.
God of hope, hear our prayer.

We pray for our local and parish communities. In this Jubilee pilgrimage of hope may we walk together as one family, in which all can participate and express their talents.
God of hope, hear our prayer.

We pray for those who have died, especially along the way of migrant journeys. May they enter their true homeland under the maternal protection of the Virgin Mary, comfort of migrants.
God of hope, hear our prayer.

God of hope we can all do all things with our tiny seeds of faith. Help us to trust in your steadfast love and cooperate in the building of your Kingdom.
God of hope, hear our prayer.

Personal Prayers

Pope Francis' Prayer of Hope

*Lord, make us bearers of hope,
so that where there is darkness,
Your light may shine,
And where there is discouragement,
Confidence in the future may be
reborn.*



*Lord, make us instruments of your justice,
So that where there is exclusion,
Fraternity may flourish,
And where there is greed,
A spirit of sharing may flourish.*

*Lord, make us builders of your Kingdom,
together with migrants and refugees.
And all who dwell on the peripheries,
To live together as sisters and brothers.
Amen.*



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