

National Lament

An Overview of the Call for a National Lament Over People Seeking Asylum

"We are a society which has forgotten how to weep." - Pope Francis

Many people throughout Australia are disturbed by the punitive and harsh policies and conditions to which people seeking asylum in Australia are being subjected.

The recent incident on Manus Island and the death of one person and the injury of many highlights the lack of care and dignity in the policies of both the Government and the Opposition and the absence of awareness of their legal and moral responsibilities.

In response to the desire for prayer and action, Catholic Religious Australia is inviting you to participate in a "National Lament".

We are taking our inspiration from the words of Pope Francis when he visited Lampedusa, Italy.

The National Lament is a campaign of prayer, penance and action for people seeking asylum in Australia.

We are seeking to make a Christian response to these people, rather than treating them as a "problem" to be solved.

The National Lament will have 2 parts:

Part 1 - Engaging in prayer, penance and action for people seeking asylum in Australia by:

- making Friday in Lent a day of prayer and penance for people seeking asylum
- continuing this practice after Lent through to the Ascension
- writing to one's local Federal member and to the Minister, Scott Morrison, expressing our lament for people seeking asylum in Australia

Part 2 - Engaging in a Week of Prayer and Prophetic Presence during Ascension to Pentecost, 1 to 8 June 2014.

Participate in the National Lament using the **Reflection and Prayer Sheet** overleaf.

Write to your local Federal member and to Minister Scott Morrison using the letter sample/template National Lament Campaign Letter at the website:

www.catholicreligiousaustralia.org (Some are also available in the church.)

For more information, email Suzette Clark at:
justice@catholicreligiousaustralia.com.au



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Pope Francis

Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the traditional custodians of country throughout Australia.
As you take your next step remember the first people who walked this land.

Aboriginal Catholic Ministry, Sydney

Our Lament

We lament the lack of compassion for people seeking asylum in Australia
We lament the denial of human dignity and freedom
We lament the indifference
We lament our inability to turn the tide

Our Challenge

"The other" is no longer a brother or sister to be loved, but simply someone who disturbs my life and my comfort...

In this globalized world, we have fallen into globalized indifference. We have become used to the suffering of others: it doesn't affect me; it doesn't concern me; it's none of my business!

Pope Francis, Lampedusa 8.7.2013

Our Prayer

We beg forgiveness for our indifference to so many of our brothers and sisters.
God, we ask your pardon for those who are complacent and closed
amid comforts which have deadened their hearts;
we beg your forgiveness for those who by their decisions on the global level
have created situations that lead to these tragedies.
Forgive us, Lord!

Pope Francis, Lampedusa 8.7.2013

For Reflection

Jesus said, "An evil spirit of this kind is only driven out by prayer and fasting"

Mark 9: 29

Our Response

- Make Friday a day of prayer and penance
- Write to your local member and to the Minister, Scott Morrison, expressing your lament for people seeking asylum in Australia