

March 2017

## **HELPING SYRIAN REFUGEES SETTLE IN AUSTRALIA**

Syrian refugees included in Australia's Humanitarian Program and the 2015 special intake are assisted by the government with initial accommodation, rental and living costs, some English language training and torture and trauma counselling services. More information is available [here](#).

Refugees often need additional assistance. The initial language training is insufficient for many, rents are very expensive, and the rental assistance provided has to be topped up. New arrivals need assistance in settling into a new strange country, learning how to tap in to social and community groups, government services, negotiating entry of children to schools, and so on.

Among Catholic parishes and agencies providing first hand assistance to refugee families are:

- **St Joseph's Melkite Catholic Parish, Fairfield** Since the beginning of the war in the Middle East, St. Joseph's Church has been a shelter for many families. Fr Samir Haddad, Parish Priest and parishioners, along with others, have established the Australian Syrian Charity (ASC) to support the new families. The local community and the ASC are providing intensive support for around 130 families in the northern and western suburbs. If you or your parish would like to support these families, contact the ASC - Fr Samir Haddad [frsamirhaddad@gmail.com](mailto:frsamirhaddad@gmail.com) or visit the web ([syriancharity.org.au](http://syriancharity.org.au)).
- **Sts Peter and Paul Melkite Catholic Parish, Hampton Park** is providing assistance to an increasing number of families in the Dandenong/Hampton Park area. If you or your parish would like to support these families, please contact Fr Elias Matta on Tel (03) 9702 9806.
- **CatholicCare Melbourne and St Vincent's Care Services** are working with the Syrian community and the Department of Immigration and Border Protection to provide accommodation for up to 60 family groups in Eltham. The project has received incredibly generous community support through offers of volunteering, material aid, skills assistance and public advocacy. If you would like more information about the project or want to sign up for the Project newsletter to stay in touch with what is happening, please email: [elthamproject@ccam.org.au](mailto:elthamproject@ccam.org.au).
- **St Vincent de Paul Society** is supporting several refugee families with accommodation and other services.
- **Catholic parishes** of Eltham, Diamond Creek, Greensborough, Belgrave, Montmorency and others are welcoming the new arrivals in a variety of ways.

For further information or assistance, email [adrian.foley@css.org.au](mailto:adrian.foley@css.org.au).