

# CSBQ Discussion paper

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Lutheran Church of Australia

(see also [Discussion Paper on What you Can Do](#) and [Refugees Fact Sheet](#))

## PASTORAL STATEMENT ON 'BOAT PEOPLE'

*I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothes, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me (Matt 25:35 ff)*

The plight of refugees right across our globe needs to be faced by all nations.

The injustices and oppressions forcing people out of their homes and countries must be addressed.

Trading in refugees cannot go unchecked, and we urge our government to play its part in curbing this immoral practice.

Governments charged with keeping law and order and protecting their constituents have a responsibility which may properly include guarding their borders and attending to orderly immigration. We pray for all authorities who are accountable for our wellbeing.

Jesus has special compassion on the poor, the needy, and the disenfranchised.

Lives are precious gifts of God. People were created in the image of God. Because the image was lost, the Son of God went to the cross to redeem all people. Those who have drowned at sea may never have need of that hope.

All people need to be accorded dignity. We do not wish to contribute to more injustice by criminalising refugees or treating them as criminals.

Refugees ought not to be judged on account of those who, as radicals and extremists, may seek to infiltrate their number with the intent of destabilising a society.

We must urge governments to work to find a more effective and efficient way to expedite the checking process for those who now live as captives in our land.

As church, we are called to reflect the mercy of Christ and to show love to those who know nothing of, or who may even be enemies of Christ.

We, as Ephesians 2:19 reminds us, who 'are no longer strangers and aliens, but are citizens with the saints and also members of the household of God', can do no less on this earth than 'show hospitality to strangers' (Hebrews 13:2) who may have been given residency in our country. In the face of this vexed issue, and a time of political decisions and high feelings, this is a service well pleasing to God.

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President, Lutheran Church of Australia (24 October 2001)

See also  
[Discussion Paper: Refugees – What You Can Do](#)  
and  
[Refugees – Fact Sheet](#)