

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – SEPTEMBER 23, 2021

National Week of Prayer and Action supports #ActionForAfghanistan

Members of the Catholic community across Australia are encouraged to take #ActionForAfghanistan, in support of those fleeing persecution and refugees in Australia, as part of the Catholic Alliance for People Seeking Asylum (CAPSA)'s National Week of Prayer and Action 2021.

The National Week of Prayer and Action, which commences on Migrant and Refugee Sunday (September 26), will offer a range of activities people can engage with online including social media resources, the ability to send a letter to local MPs through the CAPSA website and a webinar, *A Call to Prayer and Action for Afghanistan*, on September 28.

CAPSA supports individuals, schools, parishes and Catholic organisations across education, health, refugee and social services to advocate for fair and humane treatment for people seeking asylum in Australia, and is co-convened by Jesuit Social Services and Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS) Australia.

“Like millions of Australians, we are deeply saddened and concerned about the scenes that have unfolded in Afghanistan over recent weeks. Ethnic and religious minorities, women and girls, human rights defenders, ex-government officials, and local staff of Coalition forces, foreign embassies, and international NGOs are particularly unsafe and at risk of targeted persecution at the hands of the Taliban,” says Jesuit Social Services CEO Julie Edwards.

“The Catholic community in Australia, including schools, health, refugee and social services, stand willing and ready to help settle displaced people from Afghanistan, and support the 5,100 people from Afghanistan already in Australia. Now is the time for the Federal Government to demonstrate compassion and leadership by increasing our humanitarian intake from Afghanistan, providing permanent protection for people from Afghanistan already in the country, and urgently seeking to reunite families,” says Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS) Australia Country Director Tamara Domicelj.

The three key advocacy asks of the National Week of Prayer and Action are for the Federal Government to:

- provide an additional 20,000 humanitarian places for people fleeing Afghanistan
- guarantee permanent visas to those living here under temporary visas
- enable family reunions for people from Afghanistan living in Australia.

The National Week of Prayer and Action is a way that all members of the Catholic community can share their support for the diaspora community and become advocates for change.

To participate, visit the CAPSA website at www.capsa.org.au/nwpa21/, sign up for the CAPSA newsletter, [register for the webinar here](#) or engage with CAPSA via social media at:

- www.facebook.com/joinCAPSA
- www.twitter.com/CAPSA_WeCan

CAPSA is a national initiative to influence hearts and minds in the Catholic community towards a more just, compassionate and humane welcome of people seeking asylum.

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