

## **“Welcome our Neighbour”**

### **Mathew 25:35**

“I was a stranger and you invited me in”

### **Laudato Si #25**

There has been a tragic rise in the number of migrants seeking to flee from the growing poverty caused by environmental degradation. They are not recognised by international conventions as refugees; they bear the loss of the lives they have left behind, without enjoying any legal protection whatsoever. Sadly, there is widespread indifference to such suffering, which is even now taking place throughout our world. Our lack of response to these tragedies involving our brothers and sisters points to the loss of that sense of responsibility for our fellow men and women upon which all civil society is founded.

### **Caritas Diocese of Portsmouth**

We have all seen on our TV screens the many migrants who are forced to flee their countries and homes with little chance of ever returning. We have also seen the negative language in the media when discussing this tragedy. In response to this Caritas now has several parishes who have formed a group to bring a refugee family into their community and helping to integrate them into society here. Caritas also has educational projects for young asylum seekers who turn up on our shores from troubled countries.

### **Action – what can I do to be more open to those different from me?**

#### **Personal**

How do I feel when I see refugees walking across Europe in search of a better life or seeing people in small boats risking everything to cross the English Channel? Have I ever imagined myself being forced to leave my home country with no hope of ever returning? Is there something I could do for those in these situations?

#### **Family**

As a family could we make that extra effort to be friends with an immigrant or refugee family, make them more welcome in our local community?

#### **Parish**

What could we do to be a more inclusive and integrated parish? Are there refugee families in our parish area that we could reach out to? Do we see people coming to church who no one seems to talk to? Could we as a parish form a group and sponsor a refugee family under the Caritas refugee community sponsorship scheme?

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