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AUSTRALIAN ✦ JESUITS



## The Bookends Project

Bringing together our hopes for Australia's First Nations peoples and for the country's most recent arrivals, refugees and people seeking asylum.

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The Australian Province of the Society of Jesus acknowledges that we walk upon the traditional lands of First Nations peoples. We pay our respects to them, especially to their Elders, and recognise the continuing gift of their cultures to the life and spirit of Australia.

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The Bookends Project is an initiative of the Australian Jesuit Province which expresses our commitment to justice for Australia's First Nations peoples and for the country's most recent arrivals, refugees and people seeking asylum.

Australian Jesuit Provincial Fr Brian McCoy SJ asks all who are involved in the work of the Province to reflect:

***How do I open my heart to address the human rights of our First Nations peoples, and form better relationships with them?***

***How do I open my heart to address the human rights of refugees and people seeking asylum, and form better relationships with them?'***

This booklet introduces the Bookends Project. It will help all of us involved in Province ministries to understand the history of our work with First Nations peoples, refugees and people seeking asylum.

Our 2019 - 2024 Australian Jesuit Province Apostolic Plan calls us to 'Heal Humanity and our World' where we 'walk with the poor, the outcasts of the world and those whose dignity has been violated, in a mission of reconciliation and justice'. Building upon the important work already done in this area we are asked to make a 'particular commitment to ongoing reconciliation with our First Nations people and accompanying and advocating for refugees and people seeking asylum.'

Through sharing of ideas, stories, information, events, opportunities to engage and action, we hope to draw closer to those we seek to accompany.

**[www.jesuit.org.au](http://www.jesuit.org.au)**

*Cover image: Chris Johnston*

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St Ignatius' College Riverview student immersion in the Northern Territory.



'We hear Christ summon us anew to a ministry of justice and peace, serving the poor and excluded and helping build peace.'

*GC36, Decree 1, 25.*

In the world today, there are many and varied contexts in which we are working to build God's Kingdom of justice and peace.

I hear the call and challenge of Christ in two very clear and urgent focal points for our nation — our First Nations peoples, who have ancient ties to the land but have felt dispossessed for the last 230 years, and those who are rejected because they are seeking asylum. I have described these two groups as reflecting the 'bookends of rejection' in our Australian story.

I would like to issue an invitation to all those engaged in our Province mission to enter a process of reconciliation involving three phases:

**OUR HISTORY:** We review points of gratitude in the history of our relationships with First Nations peoples and with those who are seeking asylum or refugee status.

**OUR PRESENT:** We appraise the current nature and quality of those relationships. Are we in 'ministry to' or 'companionship with'?

**OUR FUTURE:** We seek 'the Magis' in what we say and do, desiring to deepen the quality of our relationships and to live more deeply the gift of accompaniment.

Some of us might not have direct relationships with First Nations peoples, people seeking asylum or refugees. If so, I ask you to explore possible responses that might help open and build such relationships.

Our 2019 – 2024 Australian Jesuit Province Apostolic Plans' second priority invites us to 'build upon the Bookends Project to make a particular commitment to reconciliation with our First Nations people and accompanying and advocating for refugees and people seeking asylum'.

I ask that we commit ourselves as a Province to a journey that may take several years to deepen. Opportunities will be provided to spend time with First Nations peoples, people seeking asylum and refugees. We need to hear from and accompany them at local, regional and provincial levels.

We can only gain from the privilege of walking more closely with those who have experienced rejection; we can be blessed by their presence and enriched as a community and nation if we seek the relationships they offer.

I look forward to working with you as we engage in this journey over the next few years.

*Fr Brian F. McCoy SJ, Provincial*

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## OUR WORK WITH AUSTRALIA'S FIRST NATIONS PEOPLES

'We Australians are still coming to terms with the consequences of invasion, settlement and exclusion of Indigenous Australians. Among the descendants of the later arrivals is a will for reconciliation, but not if it costs. Indigenous Australians desire recognition that they are the original Australians, but insist that it must be accompanied by measures that give them an assured voice in shaping the policies, laws and administrative regulations that affect their lives.'

— Fr Andrew Hamilton SJ, 'Bookending Australia's History' (Eureka Street, July 2017).

Jesuits first encountered Australia's First Nations peoples in 1848 at Sevenhill in the Clare Valley, SA. There they met the Ngadjuri people, the original inhabitants of the region.

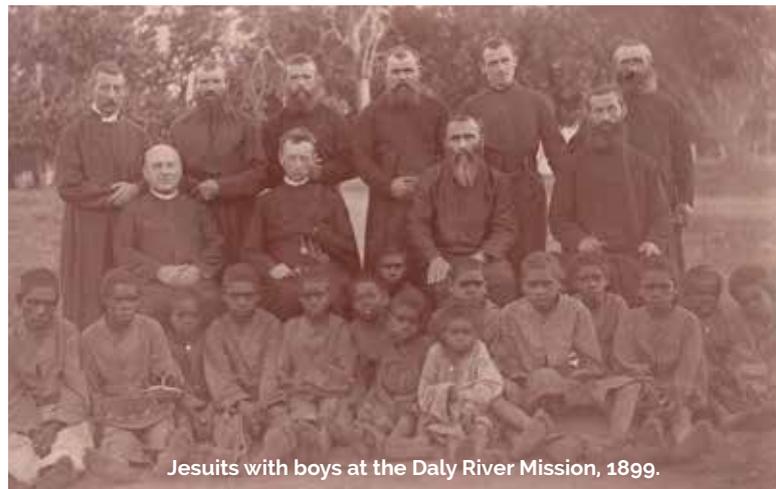
Subsequent important occasions of engagement have marked our Province history. The story tells of ups and downs, of failures, and of a long period where we had little engagement with First Nations communities. As we look to the future, we can profitably look back in order to learn from our past.

The Austrian Jesuits established a Mission at Daly River, NT in 1882. First, four Jesuits arrived, and in all, nineteen Jesuits (eight priests and eleven brothers) were to labour in four mission stations in the Territory. When they saw that the local Aboriginal people didn't speak English, the Jesuits decided to learn the local languages. They founded small mission stations in different tribal areas. In 1886, they printed the first Larrakia language books, and hymns set to familiar Catholic tunes. Fr Conrath SJ, who studied the Malak-Malak language, considered it more sophisticated than the classical European languages.

Despite these promising beginnings, life was hard. When it proved difficult to supply food, communities couldn't be sustained. Eventually, after funding from overseas dried up and after experiencing several floods, the Mission was closed in 1899.

After the closure of the Northern Territory missions there was little direct Province engagement with First Nations communities for a long period. Only in 1973, some 74 years later, did Brian McCoy and Pat Mullins, still Jesuit scholastics, move to Balgo Mission in the Kimberley region of Western Australia. A new era in Jesuit engagement with First Nations peoples began.

Other Jesuits followed their lead, including Frank Brennan, John Egan, Maurie Heading, Robin Koning, Tom Nicholas and Dave Ryan. Jesuits ministered



Jesuits with boys at the Daly River Mission, 1899.



St Aloysius' College Principal Mark Tannock, school captain Oliver Boyle, and Rector Fr Ross Jones SJ commemorate the 30th anniversary of the school's raising of the Aboriginal Flag above Sydney Harbour.

in communities in Townsville, Palm Island, Darwin, Nguuu, Garden Point (Pularumpi), Snake Bay (Milikapiti), Turkey Creek (Warmun), Broome, the Kutjungka region of the South-East Kimberley, Alice Springs, Daly River (Nauiyu) and Mt Druitt.

To sustain and develop the work of these individual Jesuits, ministries across the Province have more recently developed their own programs to engage with First Nations peoples. A meeting at Sevenhill in 2011 gave impetus to this movement. Following, are some examples of what has been done.

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## JESUIT SOCIAL SERVICES

Jesuit Social Services has focused on enabling First Nations peoples throughout Australia to advocate for their own needs. Particularly in the NT, Victoria and NSW it works collaboratively with Aboriginal-controlled organisations through a variety of programs. It has also formalised its commitment to First Nations peoples through a Reconciliation Action Plan, endorsed by Reconciliation Australia. The Plan commits Jesuit Social Services to measurable outcomes in its work with First Nations peoples.

## HOLY FAMILY PARISH

Holy Family Parish, Mt Druitt, known since its beginning 40 years ago for its richness and diversity, has contributed pastorally to those who live in its community. In recent years, Jesuit Social Services has worked with the parish in outreach to disadvantaged people in the area.

Holy Family Parish also works with First Nations peoples through parish schools, the Men's Shed, and through the many community programs offered by the local Baabayn Aboriginal Corporation.

## JESUIT AND COMPANION SCHOOLS

Jesuit and Companion Schools engage with First Nations communities in remote Australia. They also promote reconciliation within their own school communities. Each year the colleges undertake immersion programs to First Nations communities.

The Jurrumwani immersion program at Saint Ignatius' College Adelaide engages with the people of Bathurst Island and the Daly River community of Nauiyu Nambiyu. Xavier College, Kew has close links with the traditional people of Gulargambone in Central NSW and has long-standing relationships with the people of Broome, Lombadina and Djarindjin in the Kimberley, and with the traditional people of Arnhem Land and Kakadu in the NT. Saint Ignatius' College Riverview works with the traditional people of Borrooloola, Bathurst Island and Central Australia, and provides a substantial boarding scholarship program for First Nations secondary students.

Redfern Jarjum College was established in 2011 with the vision of mentoring, educating and helping local disadvantaged First Nations children to transition into mainstream schools. In December 2018, two students graduated to High School and one transitioned to Year Five.

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Above: Aunty Ali Golding and Warwick Bell with students from Jarjum College.

*“We Australians are still coming to terms with the consequences of invasion, settlement and exclusion of Indigenous Australians.”*

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## CENTRES OF IGNATIAN SPIRITUALITY

The Ignatian Spirituality ministry has offered retreat programs which have focused upon First Nations spirituality. Amongst the offerings are immersion experiences in First Nations communities. In Nhulunbuy, NT, retreatants experience the Ignatian Prayer of the

Senses beside a billabong. In Queensland, Faber CIS introduced an annual 'Companions Pilgrimage', where Aunty Joan Hendriks, a Ngugi women and respected First Nations elder, took part as mentor and spiritual guide. Raising awareness of Indigenous spirituality is also done through guided nature walks, mini-Caminos focused on 'Laudato Si'.

The development of 'stations' by an artist and the journey in accompaniment with an Indigenous elder has enabled moments for pausing for prayer and reflection. Loyola CIS Adelaide continues conversations with the Aboriginal Catholic Ministry Adelaide and provides companion spiritual accompaniment.



Left: Photo by Ladiras-depositphotos.com

### FR DONALD MCKILLOP SJ 1853-1925

Fr Donald McKillop SJ was born in Melbourne in 1853. He was educated at St Aloysius' College Sevenhill. In 1882 the Jesuits from South Australia undertook a mission among the Aboriginal people of the Northern Territory. Donald was 33 when he arrived in Palmerston in 1886 full of energy.

'The approach of the Jesuits was quite advanced for its time: to found small mission stations in the different tribal areas, respecting the language of the local people and undertaking to learn the language themselves, which was not the usual thing for missionaries to do at that time'

(Jesuit Life, Issue 94, December 2010).

*Letter written by Donald to his sister Mary MacKillop in 1888*

*'They treated me like a king. Told me I was the first white man who ever trusted his life to them and gave me the best of everything. Snakes about seven feet long were served for dinner once and really there are worse things than snakes. However, I like iguanas better.' — A Sister of St Joseph: Life and Letters of Mother Mary of the Cross (Westmead, NSW: Boys' Industrial Home, 1916, p. 379)*



Fr. M<sup>c</sup>Killop S.J. Johnny Charles  
Blacks from N.T. mission

YEAR	EVENT
1848	Jesuits first encounter Australian First Nations peoples, the Ngadjuri, in South Australia.
1882	The Austrian Jesuits establish a Mission at Daly River, NT.
1889	Frs McKillop and Marschner SJ establish Sacred Heart Station at Serpentine Lagoon, 32km west of Daly River.
1899	Jesuit Missions in Northern Australia close.
1973	Brian McCoy SJ and Pat Mullins SJ go to Balgo, WA. Later they and other Jesuits go to various Northern Australian communities.
1977	Jesuit Social Services is formed in response to the needs of young offenders exiting prison.
1979	Formal Province re-commitment to First Nations ministry begins because of reconnection in 1973. Fr Brian McCoy and Fr Pat Mullins sent to Townsville.
1980	The Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS) is founded in November as an international work of the Society of Jesus.
1982	JRS starts in Australia under the direction of Fr Mark Raper SJ, as both the Asia Pacific base and an Australian base. In 1985, the regional office moves to Bangkok and Fr Celso Romanin SJ is appointed director of the Australian office.
1987	Fr Frank Brennan SJ begins work as adviser to Australian Catholic Bishops Conference on Aboriginal issues, a role he continues until 1992.
1991	Fr Maurie Heading SJ is appointed to Nungalinga College (until 2005), an adult education college offering ecumenical theology for First Nations peoples, based in Darwin.
1993	Province gathering in Alice Springs celebrates International Year of the World's Indigenous Peoples.
2011	Province meeting at Sevenhill recognises that the Province is at a crossroad with First Nations inclusion and that outreach and commitment of the Jesuits and Province works are needed.
2013	Redfern Jarjum College opens its doors with the vision to mentor, educate and assist local primary First Nations children to enter mainstream schools.
2017	Provincial announces the Province Bookends Project embracing First Nations peoples, refugees and people seeking asylum.



Refugee mother and child.

## OUR WORK WITH REFUGEES AND PEOPLE SEEKING ASYLUM

'No excess of cruelty, it has seemed, could sate the cry to be tough on asylum seekers. Manus Island is the emblem of this policy. Australians respond to it with the same ambivalence they feel before Indigenous people, alternating between satisfaction that governments are doing what it takes and occasional shame when the whips and scars of the policy are seen close up.'

— Fr Andrew Hamilton SJ, *'Bookending Australia's history.'*

The Austrian Jesuits who first encountered the Ngadjuri in South Australia were themselves asylum seekers. In 1848 they were expelled from Austria, and so led a group of German Catholic refugees aboard the *SV Alfred* bound for Australia.

After World War II, many Jesuits worked in camps in Europe with Latvian, Lithuanian, and Polish refugees. As refugees were resettled in Australia, migrant chaplains, including several Jesuits, were invited to Australia to care for their respective groups. Following the Hungarian revolution, a great number of Hungarian refugees came to Australia. Fr Zoltan Varga, a Hungarian Jesuit chaplain, ministered to them in a migrant camp.

These chaplains offered pastoral care and settlement services to the refugees, enabling them to make connections with the Australian community. They had a strong sense of national solidarity, and some invited Sisters out to Australia to set up schools for their groups. Unfortunately, migrant chaplains in Australia were often not

accepted into local church communities because they, along with their people, seemed different and did not fit into established patterns.

In the Asia Pacific region, many Australian Jesuits were working on behalf of refugees before Jesuit Refugee Service was established. Their interest was encouraged by Asian Bureau Australia (ABA), which was begun by Jesuits and focused on Asian issues. Since the late 1970s, ABA had been involved in issues of refugee policy and resettlement. Jesuit Mark Raper was Director of ABA and also the Australian representative of the regional Jesuit network, Social and Economic Life in Asia.

The plight of the Vietnamese boat people, forced to flee after Saigon fell to the communists in 1975, prompted Fr Pedro Arrupe SJ, then Superior General of the Jesuits, to appeal to Jesuit superiors for practical assistance. The spontaneous response resulted in the creation of Jesuit Refugee Service on 14 November 1980. Its mission was to accompany, serve and advocate for forcibly displaced people.

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## JESUIT REFUGEE SERVICE (JRS) AUSTRALIA

JRS is an international organisation working in 52 countries in refugee camps, detention centres, urban settlement and war zones. In 2017 JRS made an impact on the lives of nearly 640,000 people.

JRS Australia is part of JRS International and was formed in 1982 under the direction of Fr Mark Raper SJ, Regional Director of JRS Asia Pacific. Fr Celso Romanin SJ was appointed coordinator, and was succeeded in 2000 Fr Cao Nguyen SJ, a former Vietnamese boat refugee.

The Mission is to accompany, serve and advocate for the rights of refugees, people seeking asylum and other forcibly displaced people. It works with people seeking asylum in the community, refugees on temporary protection visas and with those who have been detained.

Right: Refugee mother and child supported by JRS.  
Below: Celebrating Harmony Day at JRS.



## JRS ACCOMPANIMENT AND SERVICES

JRS Australia provides direct services and support to people seeking asylum, refugees and other vulnerable migrants through a drop-in centre based in Westmead, NSW. We provide professional casework support, home visiting, emergency relief, a foodbank, legal clinics, English classes and other community activities. In 2018 we assisted approximately 3000 persons through its presence in Western Sydney.

JRS also provides short-term accommodation support for people seeking asylum through a shelter for homeless men that is based in St Canice's Parish in Kings Cross. Additional programs include Empowered to Work, an employment program run in partnership with the House of Welcome to support people seeking asylum to build their capacity to find work, and Finding Safety, an innovative women's program supporting asylum seeking women and girls who are at risk or who have experienced sexual and gender-based violence run at JRS's women's space in Parramatta NSW.

Refugee Voices, an awareness-raising program with primary and secondary schools is also run by JRS. As part of that program, refugees and people seeking asylum share their personal experiences and engage with young people, teachers and parents.



## ADVOCACY AND A STRONGER VOICE FOR REFUGEES

JRS Australia combines accompaniment and service provision with international, regional, national, and local advocacy to shift community attitudes and encourage states to adopt humane and workable refugee policies. JRS Australia's advocacy priorities are based on and informed by the voices of refugees and people seeking asylum.

We work closely with JRS's regional and country offices and other key stakeholders in Asia-Pacific to advocate for the rights of forcibly displaced peoples, and is a key contributor to government, academic, UN and civil society debates on the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly, and Regular Migration (GCM) and the Global Compact on Refugees (GCR).

JRS Australia has a history of advocating for alternatives to detention and was instrumental in the roll-out of the Community Detention program in the late 2000s. Today JRS Australia is the co-chair of the End Child Detention Coalition, a campaign to legislate the end of child detention in Australia.

A major priority for us is to advocate for the rights of people seeking asylum or on temporary protection visas in the Australian community, a cohort of people facing varying levels of destitution, homelessness, and denial of basic human rights.

Over the last year, JRS Australia has been a lead partner in three national campaigns to ensure a safety net and fair process for people seeking asylum in the Australian community, as well as to end child detention. We carry out high level advocacy activities with parliamentarians, departmental officials and peak bodies on the basis of submissions, policy briefs and research reports.



## REFUGEE AND ASYLUM SEEKER TASK FORCE

The Task Force, established by Fr McCoy in 2016, studied what was being done around the Province for refugees and asylum seekers. It looked at current and future needs, the resources available, what a Province-wide response might look like, and how it might be resourced, implemented and evaluated. The Bookends Project seeks to implement and expand this work.

Above: JRS Australia Director Carolina Gottardo (middle) visits JRS staff in Indonesia.

## JESUIT MISSION

Jesuit Mission supports displaced people by raising funds in Australia for projects assisting refugees and people seeking asylum in Asia Pacific, Cambodia, Thailand and the Southern African region.

Right: Newly arrived IDP family in Tanghpre, Myanmar.

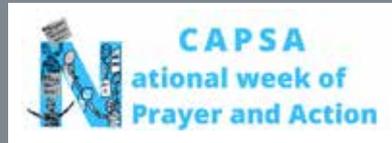


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## JESUIT SOCIAL SERVICES

Through its Settlement Program and Jesuit Community College in Melbourne, Jesuit Social Services supports people from migrant backgrounds, including refugees, so that they can integrate into mainstream Australian society, while keeping them in touch with their culture. Support services are tailored to the needs of the community. They include English language classes, housing, casework support, community development and a homework club.

In 2014 Jesuit Social Services and Cabrini Health jointly founded the Catholic Alliance for People Seeking Asylum (CAPSA). Supported by an advisory group of Catholic organisations, CAPSA links people together, creating a Catholic voice for change.



## JESUIT AND COMPANION SCHOOLS

All Jesuit and Jesuit Companion Schools include the study of refugees and people seeking asylum in their Religious Education Curriculum. In partnership with JRS, St Ignatius' Riverview developed an e-book to support and equip students and teachers in Catholic schools to engage more deeply in the study of refugees, asylum seekers and other forcibly displaced persons.

### JESUIT AND COMPANION SCHOOLS ABSORB RESETTLED REFUGEES INTO THEIR SCHOOL COMMUNITY.

- Loyola Watsonia has enrolled and supported many refugee students and their families.
- St Ignatius' Riverview has enrolled several students from refugee backgrounds and seeks to take two students each year. Students are provided with a boarding scholarship program. Each student has a mentor from the Old Ignatians' Union Mentoring Program and the mentors will remain with the boys until the end of Year 13.
- St Ignatius' Adelaide has enrolled students from refugee backgrounds for many years, beginning with the Vietnamese boat children.

### SEVERAL JESUIT AND COMPANION SCHOOLS ARE ENGAGED IN PROJECTS WORKING WITH ASYLUM SEEKERS AND RESETTLED REFUGEES:

- The Xavier Social Justice Network is a volunteer organisation originally begun by Xavier staff and parents. The Network offers volunteering opportunities through partner organisations, such as the Brigidine Asylum Seekers Project's 'Friendship through English Teaching Program'. XSJN also holds several advocacy events each year and offers ways to get people involved in work that leads towards positive solutions.
  - St Ignatius' Geelong students support a Refugee Holiday Program, which provides programs for refugees during the school holidays.
  - For several years, three schools (St Ignatius' Geelong, Xavier College and Loyola Watsonia) ran a joint awareness program, 'The Cage', which focused on refugees and asylum seekers.
  - Xavier and Loyola Watsonia provide student volunteer tutors for Homework Clubs for families who are mainly from a refugee background.
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## JESUIT PARISHES

When Toowong in Brisbane was still a Jesuit parish, the St Ignatius Peace Through Justice Group established a roster for parishioners to employ asylum seekers living in the community to work in their gardens of houses.

Over 20 years ago, at St Ignatius' Richmond, Vic., a parishioner created the Friday Night School, which has developed into a program with 200 enrolled students in tutoring lessons at the Parish Hall. Volunteer tutors from many schools, including Xavier, attend weekly sessions to work with children from refugee backgrounds, and with their parents to teach them English.

The Adelaide parish of St Ignatius Norwood has a Refugee Support Group which raises money in the parish to provide scholarships for university students with refugee backgrounds. The North Sydney parish of Our Lady of the Way supports the Nagami Peace and Justice group, founded by parishioners to seek to effect change. In 2018, in partnership with JRS and Sydney Alliance, the group helped a 'Table Talk' event, hosting a conversation about and with refugees and people seeking asylum.



## NEWMAN COLLEGE

Newman College, a residential college at Melbourne University, supports a stateless refugee, has an annual Community Service Dinner organised by the students to raise funds for Jesuit Refugee Service, Jesuit Mission and Jesuit Social Services, and for some years has had student volunteers tutoring refugee children in their school subjects on a regular basis.

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Above: **OLW Table Talk.**  
Below: **Circle of Silence at Xavier Catholic College.**



## AN ASYLUM SEEKER'S STORY

Kanthi\* is a Tamil woman, who arrived by boat from Sri Lanka, and is seeking asylum in Australia along with her infant son and her husband. Kanthi is constantly reminded of the trauma and violence she experienced during wartime, as she still has shrapnel lodged in her head from a bomb explosion near her home.

As is the case with many of the people Jesuit Refugee Service comes into contact with, the circumstances of Kanthi and her family are quite complex. For a period of time the family did not have the right to work and were also ineligible for financial support through government funded services.

JRS assisted the family with some emergency relief payments. However, they could not provide enough to sustain Kanthi's accommodation. At risk of homelessness, a JRS caseworker advocated on behalf of Kanthi and her child for urgent government financial assistance.

Kanthi and her child were eventually successful in gaining assistance. However, the family are still very much at-risk. This will not change until Kanthi's husband is given the right to work and the family are recognised as refugees and granted protection.

*\*Name has been changed to protect her identity*

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## PATHWAYS TO ACTION

'These two bookends need fixing because both involve a policy designed to advantage one group by treating another group brutally. This has corrupted Australian society and has had fatal consequences both for the persons affected and for the majority group.'

Fr Andrew Hamilton SJ, 'Bookending Australia's history.'

The Bookends Project aims to raise awareness and prompt action across the Province in support of First Nations peoples and people who seek protection in Australia. These are Australia's oldest and newest peoples. In our 2019 – 2024 Australian Jesuit Province Apostolic Plan we are called to build upon the Bookends Project to make a particular commitment to ongoing reconciliation with our First Nations people and accompanying and advocating for refugees and people seeking asylum. This has been emphasized as a priority as we strive towards 'Healing Humanity and Our World'.

The project will also invite you to act. Whether or not your ministry has direct engagement with First Nations peoples, people seeking asylum

or refugees, you will find many opportunities to acknowledge them, hear their stories, and advocate for their concerns in our communities.

**What can you do to further the work of the Province to remedy what the Provincial has called Australia's 'bookends of rejection'? Everyone has something to contribute, large or small, to this crucial work.**

*How do I open my heart to address the human rights of our First Nations peoples, and form better relationships with them?*

*How do I open my heart to address the human rights of refugees and people seeking asylum, and form better relationships with them?*

## THREE STAGES OF THE BOOKENDS PROJECT

The Bookends project has three overlapping stages.

### STEP 1: GET TO KNOW

**Personal Engagement.** This stage involves exploration of opportunities for all our Jesuit family to meet and engage with First Nations peoples, asylum seekers and refugees. We know much is going on in this space already, and we hope to share our ideas, stories and opportunities to listen, and continue to encourage each other to engage with our fellow travelers in life's journey in and with God.

### STEP 2: COME TO UNDERSTAND

**Engage Minds and Hearts.** Sharing of information will deepen our understanding of issues and policy challenges that are critically important to First Nations peoples and asylum seeker and refugee communities. This will enable us to integrate our 'heart and head' to inform our 'Faith in Action'.

### STEP 3: GET TO WORK

**Local Action.** Strong action is occurring in many of our Ministries currently. We need to communicate, inspire and share our experiences to reach even greater depths in our ministry related to Bookends. Exploration of steps we can take to support and advance the interests of our local First Nations peoples and asylum seeker and refugee communities can be undertaken at the local level.

### WHAT TO DO NOW?

Express gratitude and celebrate the great work that you are already doing in this space within our Ministries! We would love to communicate and share your ideas, events and stories to enable us to grow more in our engagement and advocacy with our First Nations peoples, asylum seekers and refugees.

Contacts for ideas, suggestions, events, stories, etc.,

- ➔ First Nations peoples: Lisa Connell, Delegate for Social Ministries: [lisa.connell@sjasl.org.au](mailto:lisa.connell@sjasl.org.au)
- ➔ Asylum seekers and refugees: Anne Nesbitt, Project Officer: [anne.nesbitt@jrs.org.au](mailto:anne.nesbitt@jrs.org.au)

Using social media channels, Facebook, Twitter and other forums we hope to inspire each other to 'go deeper' through the sharing of experiences and encounters. Australian Jesuit News and Companions magazine are also great forums for articles. There is a Bookends Project section on the Australian Province website with contact details, as well as a calendar of events which will be updated.

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## SYMBOLISM

The Australian Aboriginal Flag was designed by artist Harold Thomas and received legal recognition in 1995. The black represents the First Nations peoples, the yellow circle represents the sun, the giver of life and protector, and the red represents the red earth: the red ochre used in ceremonies, and First Nations peoples' spiritual relation to the land.

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Above: JRS Refugee Voices speakers meeting with students.

The Torres Strait Islander flag was designed in 1992 by Bernard Namok. The green panels at the top and bottom symbolise the land, while the blue panel in the centre represents the waters of the Torres Strait. The thin black stripes between the green and blue panels signify the Torres Strait Islanders themselves. The white five-pointed star at the centre represents the five major island groups, and the white dhari (dancer's headdress) around it also symbolises the Torres Strait Islander people. White symbolises peace, while the star is a symbol for navigation.





## AUSTRALIAN ★ JESUITS

In a Spirit of gratitude, thank you for all you are doing currently doing to engage, understand and work towards a better future for the First Nations peoples, people seeking asylum and refugees. We look forward journeying together so that we can continue to grow and accompany our fellow travelers into the future.

For further enquiries relating to Reconciliation with First Nations peoples, contact the Delegate for Social Ministries [provinceoffice@sjasl.org.au](mailto:provinceoffice@sjasl.org.au) or **03 9810 7300**.

For further enquiries relating to Reconciliation with Asylum Seekers and Refugees, contact the JRS Project Officer [anne.nesbitt@jrs.org.au](mailto:anne.nesbitt@jrs.org.au) or **02 9356 3888**.