

Richard



Bishop of Arundel & Brighton

PASTORAL LETTER
for the Twenty-Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time
13th September 2015

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Having heard the Holy Father's invitation to parishes and religious houses in Europe to respond to the growing refugee crisis, and after discussion with Deans, the following arrangements are to be put in place in this Diocese.

Parish Priests are asked to request information from those who are able and willing to assist in the following ways:

1. With emergency short term placement accommodation; short term accommodation for those who are unable to pay; self-contained long term property for those granted refugee status (who are able to pay rent);
2. With skills and time – including language skills; the teaching of English; legal assistance; knowledge of the local community and the facilities that may be available;
3. Financial support.

This information is to be sent directly to either Aidan Cantwell at DABCEC or to Mary-Jane Burkett at St. Cuthman's. Mary-Jane will welcome information especially from Brighton & Hove. Aidan and Mary-Jane will act as our contacts with local councils and information from the Bishops' Conference will also be passed to them.

It is of the utmost importance that we work through these channels to ensure that the best possible support and aid can be directed in the most effective way.

In terms of schools, Local Authorities will be looking to place an increased number of refugee children through their 'Fair Access' protocols. I encourage our Catholic school communities to be as open to this as possible.

We can all be attentive to those who may be newly arrived in our parishes and communities. A warm welcome is, in itself, a gift. Your continuing support and prayers for those refugee families who are already living within the Diocese is greatly appreciated and I am sure our response to the present deepening crisis will prove effective.

With every Blessing,

Bishop of Arundel & Brighton