

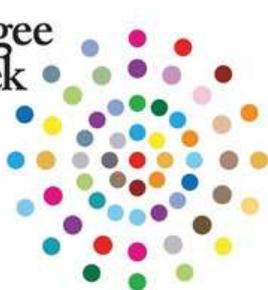


# Coloma Catholic Life.



## Refugee Week 14<sup>th</sup> – 20<sup>th</sup> June 'We Cannot Walk Alone'

Refugee Week



Refugee Week is a UK-wide festival celebrating the contributions, creativity and resilience of refugees and people seeking sanctuary. Founded in 1998 and held every year around World Refugee Day on the 20 June, Refugee Week is also a growing global movement.

Through a programme of arts, cultural, sports and educational events alongside media and creative campaigns, Refugee Week enables people from different backgrounds to connect beyond labels, as well as encouraging understanding of why people are displaced, and the challenges they face when seeking safety. Refugee Week is a platform for people who have sought safety in the UK to share their experiences, perspectives and creative work on their own terms.

Refugee Week's vision is for refugees and asylum seekers to be able to live safely within inclusive and resilient communities, where they can continue to make a valuable contribution. [You can find out more about Refugee Week here.](#)

### Background

In December 2012, UN High Commissioner for Refugees António Guterres organized a Dialogue with faith leaders, faith-based humanitarian organizations, academics and government representatives from countries around the world on the theme of "Faith and Protection." As the High Commissioner noted in his opening remarks, "...all major religious value systems embrace humanity, caring and respect, and the tradition of granting protection to those in danger. The principles of modern refugee



## Pope Francis

### Prayer Intention for June:

#### The Beauty of Marriage.

'Let us pray for young people who are preparing for marriage with the support of a Christian community: may they grow in love, with generosity, faithfulness and patience.'

#### Video:

<https://www.vaticannews.va/en/pope/news/2021-06/pope-francis-june-2021-prayer-intention-beauty-marriage.html>

**Tweet:** 'The seed of our good works can seem like a small thing, yet all that is good pertains to God, and thus it humbly, slowly bears fruit. Good always grows in a humble, hidden, often invisible way.'

### Liturgical Year

Week: 11<sup>th</sup> of Ordinary Time, Year B

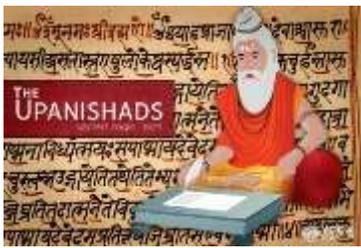
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law have their oldest roots in these ancient texts and traditions.” At the conclusion of this landmark event, the High Commissioner embraced a recommendation for the development of a Code of Conduct for faith leaders to welcome migrants, refugees and other forcibly displaced people, and stand together against xenophobia.

In response to this call, from February through April 2013, a coalition of leading faith-based humanitarian organizations and academic institutions (including HIAS, Islamic Relief Worldwide, Jesuit Refugee Service, Lutheran World Federation, Oxford Centre for Hindu Studies, Religions for Peace, University of Vienna Faculty of Roman Catholic Theology, World Council of Churches, World Evangelical Alliance and World Vision International) drafted “Welcoming the Stranger: Affirmations for Faith Leaders.” The Affirmations, which have been translated into Arabic, Chinese, French, Hebrew, Russian and Spanish, inspire leaders of all faiths to “welcome the stranger” with dignity, respect and loving support. Faith groups around the world will use the Affirmations and supporting resources as practical tools to foster support for refugees and other displaced people in their communities.

### Founding Principles

The call to “welcome the stranger,” through protection and hospitality, and to honour the stranger or those of other faiths with respect and equality, is deeply rooted in all major religions.



In the **Upanishads**, the mantra atithi devo bhava or “the guest is as God” expresses the fundamental importance of hospitality in Hindu culture. Central to the Hindu Dharma, or Law, are the values of karuna or compassion, ahimsa or non-violence towards all, and seva or the willingness to serve the stranger and the unknown guest. Providing food and shelter to a needy stranger was a traditional duty of the householder and is practiced by many still. More broadly, the concept of Dharma embodies the task to do one’s duty, including an

obligation to the community, which should be carried out respecting values such as non-violence and selfless service for the greater good.

The **Tripitaka** highlights the importance of cultivating four states of mind: metta (loving kindness), muditha (sympathetic joy), upekkha (equanimity), and karuna (compassion). There are many different traditions of Buddhism, but the concept of karuna is a fundamental tenet in all of them. It embodies the qualities of tolerance, non-discrimination, inclusion and empathy for the suffering of others, mirroring the central role which compassion plays in other religions.



The **Torah** makes thirty-six references to honouring the “stranger.” The book of Leviticus contains one of the most prominent tenets of the Jewish faith: “The stranger who resides with you shall be to you as one of your citizens; you shall love him as yourself, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt.” (Leviticus 19:33-34). Further, the Torah provides that “You shall not oppress the stranger, for you know the soul of the stranger, having yourselves been strangers in the land of Egypt.” (Exodus 33:1)



In **Matthew’s Gospel** (32:32) we hear the call: “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...” And in the Letter to the Hebrews (13:1-3) we read, “Let mutual



love continue. Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by doing that some have entertained angels without knowing it.”



When the **Prophet Muhammad** fled persecution in Mecca, he sought refuge in Medina, where he was hospitably welcomed. The Prophet's hijrah, or migration, symbolizes the movement from lands of oppression, and his hospitable treatment embodies the Islamic model of refugee protection. **The Holy Qur'an** calls for the protection of the asylum seeker, or al-mustamin, whether Muslim or non-Muslim, whose safety is irrevocably guaranteed under the institution of Aman (the provision of security and protection). As noted in the Surat Al-Anfal: “Those who

give asylum and aid are in very truth the believers: for them is the forgiveness of sins and a provision most generous.” (8:43)

There are tens of millions of refugees and internally displaced people in the world. Our faiths demand that we remember we are all migrants on this earth, journeying together in hope.

## Religious Festivals

### Martyrdom of Guru Arjan – Sikhism, 16<sup>th</sup> June



This festival is one of the major Sikh *gurpurbs*, and as with other *gurpurbs*, the day is preceded by an akhand path, a continuous reading of the Sikh scriptures. It is observed for several reasons. It marks the day when the fifth Guru was put to death after severe tortures on the orders of the Moghul Emperor, Jehangir. Traditionally, a cooling drink known as a Chabeel is distributed on this day, recalling that the Guru was tortured in the extreme heat of June.

Guru Arjan became the first Sikh martyr, having given his life upholding justice. The Guru lived out the divine message (*Gurbani*) of conquering death and suffering. He remained fearless in defending the truth and showed how one can remain steadfast. Guru Arjan said, lived and showed that he could accept *Shaheedi* (martyrdom) but he would not accept restrictions on individuals being able to practise their faith. He claimed that the way a leader or prophet lives determines the character of the followers of that faith; a Sikh should live in dignity and die with honour, and never tolerate insult or oppression.

The Guru also laid the foundation of the *Harmandir Sahib* (the Golden Temple) in the middle of the tank (pool) at Amritsar. Many of his followers wanted it to be the tallest building in the new town. Guru Arjan however felt otherwise and reminded his followers that humility should be a great virtue. The temple was therefore built on as low an elevation as possible. To counter the Muslim belief that God's House is in the west and the Hindu belief that it is in the east where the sun rises, the *Harmandir Sahib* had entrances on all four sides. Guru Arjan exclaimed; ‘My faith is for the people of all castes and all creeds, from whichever direction they come and to whichever direction they bow.’ To help raise money for these monumental public works projects, the Guru declared that all Sikhs should donate a tenth of their earnings to charity.

Guru Arjan is equally notable for drawing together compositions by the first five Gurus, to which he added hymns by other saints from Hindu and Muslim backgrounds. In this way he compiled the Adi Granth (the Sikh



scriptures), and eliminated the inclusion of other false writings put forward by his brother and others, who not only claimed they had material written by the earlier Gurus but also sought to eliminate his favourable references to Hindu and Muslim viewpoints. When complete, the handwritten version of these scriptures was bound and then lodged in the Harmandir Sahib, where the Adi Granth was opened and read every day.

## Saints of the Week

### St Richard of Chichester – 16th June.



Richard Wych was a Worcestershire man, born at Droitwich (then known as Wych) in about 1197. His family were yeomen farmers. His parents died while he was still at school, and the property was administered by guardians, who so mismanaged the estate that Richard and his brother and sister were left almost penniless. The elder brother was equally unable to cope, and it was Richard who got the farm back on its feet, by sheer hard manual work. His brother offered to hand over the whole inheritance to Richard, but with the proviso that he “married and settled down”, as we would say. Richard however had his mind set on being a clerk – a member of the clergy, though that did not necessarily imply priesthood. At all events, he was now free to go to Oxford, where he joined the school of Edmund Rich, the future Archbishop of Canterbury and Saint. Edmund had a profound influence on Richard, and their friendship was to be lifelong. After graduating in Law from Oxford, Richard went on to study in Paris and Bologna. In 1235 he returned to Oxford, where he was elected Chancellor.

By now his mentor Edmund had become Archbishop of Canterbury, and within two years he called him to be his own Chancellor. For the next three years Richard lived and worked with Edmund, and grew to revere him for his pastoral concern, his devotion to prayer, and his asceticism. In 1240 he accompanied Edmund on a visit to Rome and was at his bedside there when he died. Up to this time there is no indication that Richard felt a call to the priesthood. But now, in his early forties, there came a change. Instead of returning home from Rome, he went to Orleans to study theology, and there after two years he was ordained priest.

Returning to England, he took up the pastoral duties of a parish priest in Kent, but he was not to be left in obscurity for long. In 1244 the see of Chichester fell vacant. The King, Henry III, instructed the Chapter to elect his own nominee, a certain Robert Passelewe, which they duly did, even though it was well known that this Passelewe was a thoroughly unsuitable candidate.

Archbishop Boniface of Canterbury decided to make a stand against what had become in practice royal appointment to episcopal sees and took the brave and unprecedented step of quashing the election and nominating to Chichester Richard, his Chancellor. The King’s immediate reaction was to refuse to accept the homage of Richard, or to release to him the “temporalities” (the property and income) of the see, which were legally held by the Crown during an interregnum. Richard appealed to the Pope, who upheld his appointment and personally consecrated him bishop at Lyons on 5th March 1245.

It was an unhappy beginning. When Richard came to Chichester to take possession of his see, he found the gates of the city closed against him and access to his estates barred, by order of the King. He was given lodging, in defiance of the royal will, by Simon, the Rector of Tarring, who became a lifelong friend. There and then Richard began the work of chief pastor, working from the Rectory at Tarring. He visited assiduously the

parishes, monasteries and homes for the sick and poor in the diocese. After sixteen months the King relented, under threat of excommunication by the Pope, although he still refused to restore the income that had accrued to the royal treasury during the dispute. Richard took possession of his Cathedral amid great rejoicing.

The Bishop could now devote himself fully to much-needed reforms. He instituted diocesan synods, at which the teaching and laws of the Church were expounded, and local statutes enacted. These statutes covered a wide range. The sacraments were to be administered without payment, Mass was to be celebrated in a dignified manner, clergy must practice celibacy, observe residence and wear clerical dress. There were instructions regarding the hearing of confessions, and clergy were reminded of their duty of hospitality and care of the poor. At the same time, he made provision for their proper payment and security of tenure. The laity were obliged to attend Mass on Sundays and Holy Days, and all must know by heart the Lord's Prayer, the Hail Mary and the Creed. He also had to face the task of fund-raising for the maintenance of the Cathedral. He revived the practice of "Pentecostals", directing that all parishioners should visit the cathedral church once a year at Whitsuntide, there to pay their dues. Those who lived too far away could fulfil this duty at Hastings or Lewes, and those unable to attend at all must still hand in their dues.

Richard set great store by hospitality, and he kept a good table; but he himself was frugal and refused the good things he provided for his guests. He practised penance, wearing a hair shirt to the day of his death. He was a man of compassion, his biographer mentioning particularly his concern for handicapped children and convicted criminals. His early life on the farm is echoed in some of the miracle stories told about him – the out-of-season flowering of a fruit tree at Tarring, good advice to men fishing on the bridge at Lewes, resulting in an exceptional catch.

In 1252 the Pope appointed Richard to preach the Crusade. The Bishop saw this not just as a means of raising money but as a call to renewal of life – much as we would see a Holy Year. He began a tour along the south coast, which eventually brought him to Dover. Here he consecrated a cemetery chapel for the poor, which he dedicated to his friend and teacher, St Edmund, who had been the chief inspiration for his own life's work. It was his last public function. A few days later he collapsed. He died on 3rd April 1253. He was about 56 years of age and had been bishop no more than eight years. His body was brought back to Chichester, where he was immediately hailed as a saint. He was canonised within the decade, and his body placed in a new shrine behind the High Altar in his cathedral, where it remained until destroyed at the Reformation. But today Richard is honoured again in that same spot, as a Saint and patron of Sussex.



Shrine of St Richard, Chichester Cathedral, West Sussex

## St. Romuald, Abbot – 19th June.



Saint Romuald was born in the middle of the tenth century in Northern Italy. After his father killed a relative in a duel, Romuald entered a local monastery for a few weeks of penance. But the weeks turned into months and the months into years. He stayed. Unfortunately, the monks were as lukewarm as old bathwater, and Saint Romuald told them so. He had to leave. He put himself under the tutelage of a wise hermit, then travelled to Spain to live as a hermit on the grounds of a Benedictine monastery. He subsequently spent about thirty years walking the length and breadth of Italy. He had acquired a great reputation as an ascetic and master of prayer and so founded, or reformed, various monasteries which sought his assistance.

Finally, in 1012, he settled down in Tuscany and established a reformed branch of the Benedictines. The Order was named after the man who granted Saint Romuald the beautiful land on which he first built. The donor's name was Maldolus, and the new community was thus called the Camaldolese Order. The Order still exists in several countries and continues to attract those few men and women inclined to the radical isolation, prayer, asceticism, and deep hunger for God, which only a hermit's life can satisfy.

Saint Romuald planted the seed of his Order in the Benedictine garden. Camaldolese monks emphasize solitude more than their monastic cousins. In a typical Benedictine monastery, every single monk places his oar in the water to pull the monastery's school, or orchard, or farm, forward. The Camaldolese tradition is more hermit based (eremitical) while allowing some community based (cenobitical) life. Camaldolese monks generally live in individual structures but pray the Mass and Liturgy of the Hours together daily in the Church. They live simplicity, penance, and contemplation more intensely due to their total focus on these goals to the exclusion of all outside apostolates. Unlike modernity's reclusive technological monks enraptured by their screens, the Camaldolese choose to live without phones, the internet, or television. The tabernacle is their screen, and the scene stays the same. With this intense focus on solitude and prayer, Camaldolese monks perpetuate, in their narrow, unique, and faithful way, the vision of their pioneering founder.

