

## Preparing for action – two options for primary schools

The following are two different ways to prepare, each with its own focus. Clearly, depending on circumstances and time, one or other could be used or they could be combined. Stories, Catholic teaching and current facts can be found on the CAPSA website.

### Goals

- to provide students with some basic information about seeking asylum and the present government policies in regard to people seeking asylum
- to provide students with an opportunity to reflect on their own attitudes
- to encourage a compassionate stance in line with the Jesus of the gospels and Catholic social teaching

### OPTION ONE

1. Share one of the stories of an asylum seeker or refugee by reading or showing a video.
2. After the story, ask students what stood out for them, what may have shocked them or what seemed unfair.
3. Present a few quotes from either Catholic teaching or the gospels. Ask each student to choose one or two of these quotes which have bearing on one or more aspects of the story and to think about what that means for the way people seeking asylum should be treated.
4. Invite students to share their findings in small groups or have a general class discussion.
5. Make a connection between what has been covered and the particular action in which your students are to participate, eg the need for solidarity, an expression of empathy and love of neighbour or challenge to unjust policies.
6. Conclude with a time of quiet and the prayer.

God, no one is a stranger to you and no one is ever far from your loving care. In your kindness watch over refugees and asylum seekers, those separated from their loved ones, those who are lost, and those who have been exiled from their homes. Bring them safely to the place where they long to be, and help us always to show your kindness to strangers and those in need.

## OPTION TWO

Steps one and two could be done very quickly like a brainstorm with no discussion of the rights or wrongs.

1. Ask students to name any things they have heard people say, or (depending on the age) what they themselves think about people seeking asylum. These can be noted without judgement.
2. From a page of facts about asylum seeking and current government policies present a few which either support or challenge the ideas that have been put forward. Have some discussion as a whole group.
3. Invite students to share their findings in small groups.
4. Make a connection between what has been covered and the particular action in which your students are to participate, eg the need for solidarity, an expression of empathy and love of neighbour or challenge to unjust policies.
5. Conclude with a time of quiet and the prayer.

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