

Refugee Week 2024: Love The Stranger

In March 2023, The Department of International Affairs at the Bishops' Conference of England & Wales (CBCEW) published a new teaching document, [*Love the Stranger*](#). It presents a Catholic response to refugees and migrants, with 24 guiding principles rooted in Catholic Social Teaching. Caritas Social Action Network has been promoting the document to the Catholic community. In advance of Refugee Week 2024, we have worked with the Bishops' Conference and members of the social action network to make the document accessible to schools.

Refugee Week 2024 will take place from 17 to 23 June, with World Refugee Day on 20 June. Caritas Brentwood, with support from Clifton Diocese and the St Vincent de Paul Society (SVP), has produced resources for Refugee Week to introduce the principles of Love The Stranger to schools. The resources include a PowerPoint presentation and 5 worksheets, one for each day of the week, designed to inform and facilitate discussion, as well as a document signposting other available resources and support.

We are pleased to share these resources with you and would appreciate any feedback on the materials provided. Pope Francis, in his publication for the Jubilee Year 2025, *Spes in Confundit*, has invited us to offer “signs of hope” to people whose dignity is under threat, including migrants and refugees. We would like to make support for migrants and refugees a key theme as we prepare for the Jubilee Year and look forward to sharing further resources with you, including a youth version of *Love The Stranger*.

Please reach out to the Migration Officer at Caritas Social Action Network with any feedback or queries:
aliya.zahin@csan.org.uk

Yours faithfully,



Raymond Friel OBE
CEO, Caritas Social Action Network

DAY ONE: PLANNING SHEET

What is a refugee and what is Refugee Week?



DOWNLOAD

*Invite students into a time of reflection and quiet before you begin.
Sign of the Cross: In the name of the Father...
We pray for all those who are working for justice and peace around the world.
We ask that they might be your hands and feet on the earth.
Together, we say our greatest community prayer, Our Father... Amen*

GATHER

Slide 3

What is a refugee?

A person just like you and me but they have had to leave the country where they were born because it's not safe for them to stay, and they have been allowed to settle in another country.

LISTEN

Slides 4-5

Scripture suggestion of the day:

- *Hebrews 10:24-25*

Video: www.youtube.com/watch?v=eJ3mOQaA5nE

RESPOND

Slide 6

Discussion:

- *What do you think this film is about?*
- *How was the new classmate made to feel welcome?*
- *When was a time that you were welcomed?*
- *What can you do to make someone feel included?*
- *What do you like that you could share with someone new?*

SEND FORTH

Slide 7

Refugee Week

This week is a chance to celebrate all the people who have had to make challenging journeys to find safety in a new place and for us all to learn more about the lives of refugees.

Let us pray:

*Lord, Help us to work hard for fairness, joy, and peace, so everyone can choose to stay or move safely. Give us the bravery to speak up against bad things and to stop unfairness in our world. Keep us strong so we can show Your love and welcome to every person who we meet. Let us be like You, caring and welcoming.
In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, Amen.*

DAY TWO: PLANNING SHEET

What does home mean to you?

DOWNLOAD

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GATHER

*Slide 11**What does HOME mean to you?*

LISTEN

*Slides 12-13***Scripture suggestion of the day:**

- **2 Corinthians 5:1-10**

Home can be a place of safety or a feeling. It can be a smell, a taste or a sound that reminds us of home, like your favourite meal or a song your family always sing, from the clothes we wear to the words we grow up with. It's in food, music, art and the people we love.

RESPOND

Slides 14-16

We asked students of different ages what home means to them, and here are some of the answers...

Examples of other students x5

SEND FORTH

Slide 17

[The colouring sheet is available here.](#)

[The worksheet is available here.](#)

What does home mean to you?

- A feeling
- A person/people
- Taste
- Smell
- Sound
- Location

Let us pray:

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In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, Amen.

DAY THREE: PLANNING SHEET

Each of us has a name, a face, a story.



DOWNLOAD

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GATHER

Slides 21-22

7-second Countdown

A study a few years back said that you judge them within the first seven seconds of meeting a person. You decide whether you like them and whether you will get on. IN 7 SECONDS?!

How can you learn about someone new in 7 seconds?

LISTEN

Slides 23-24

*Scripture suggestion of the day:
1 Samuel 16:7*

Pope Francis says: “Every migrant has a name, a face and a story.”

RESPOND

Slide 25

*A refugee is just like you and me!
We all have a name, a face, and a story.*

If we take the time to get to know people and not judge them, we can learn so much more. We each have favourite things, friends and family who we love, future dreams, and hidden talents.

SEND FORTH

Slide 26

Let's be brave and share a little about ourselves and also learn a little more about those around us.

Each of us has a name, a face, a story.

[The worksheet is available here.](#)

Let us pray:

Lord, Help us to work hard for fairness, joy, and peace, so everyone can choose to stay or move safely. Give us the bravery to speak up against bad things and to stop unfairness in our world. Keep us strong so we can show Your love and welcome to every person who we meet. Let us be like You, caring and welcoming.

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DAY FOUR: PLANNING SHEET

The impact of welcoming people in.

DOWNLOAD

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GATHER

Slide 30

From a wave to a welcome sign, a warm welcome can have a great impact. Simple acts of kindness help people feel safe, valued, and part of the community. A friendly greeting builds trust and brings a sense of belonging, showing how powerful a welcome can be.

Imagine how different you might feel if you entered a room of people cheering than a room of people booing and angry.

LISTEN

Slide 31

Scripture suggestion of the day:

- **Matthew 10:40**

RESPOND

Slide 32

This week, all over the country, young people are discussing how to welcome refugees.

SEND FORTH

Slides 33-34

Can you create a welcome sign so that refugees know they are welcome and a part of your community?

Be as creative as possible!

Let us pray:

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DAY FIVE: PLANNING SHEET

Simple Acts

DOWNLOAD

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GATHER

Slide 38

Simple Acts

Simple Acts are everyday actions we can all do to stand with refugees and make new connections in our communities. Taking these small steps joins us with all the other young people who are creating big change.

LISTEN

Slides 39-40

- Discover a story
- Share the message
- Make a new connection
- Share a meal
- Walk together
- Care for our home
- Get active
- Join the movement

Scripture suggestion of the day:

- **Matthew 7:7**

RESPOND

Slide 41

What will you choose to do as your Simple Act for Refugee Week?

SEND FORTH

Slide 42

[The worksheet is available here.](#)

As a group, what will your Simple Acts grid look like?

What do you think you could do before the summer?

(9 boxes)

Let us pray:

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In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, Amen.

Related Resources

The shared resources provide an introduction to Refugee Week and the principles outlined in Love The Stranger; however, many other resources are available online for further learning and involvement in refugee support.

To access the **Love The Stranger** document in full, please visit the Bishops' Conference website, where you will also find video recordings of each of the principles: www.cbcew.org.uk/love-the-stranger

Following the publication of Love The Stranger, CSAN and its members compiled a **Call-To-Action** which includes a number of links to organisations, resources and campaigns: www.csan.org.uk/love-the-stranger-call-to-action

You can access migration-related resources on the CSAN website: www.csan.org.uk/guidance/?guidance_focus=refugees

CSAN and some of its members are also part of the **Together with Refugees** coalition, along with a number of civil society organisations, calling for a fairer and more humane asylum system: <https://togetherwithrefugees.org.uk>

Other organisations active in this space include:

- **CAFOD**, CSAN's sister agency, has a number of resources available on its site: <https://cafod.org.uk/>
- **JRS UK**, a CSAN member accompanying and advocating for refugees in the UK: www.jrsuk.net
- **SVP**, a CSAN member and national agency advocating for the rights of refugees, has fact sheets and resources available on its site: <https://svp.org.uk/migrants-refugees-and-people-seeking-asylum>
- **Refugee Council** is the leading organisation in the UK working with refugees and people seeking asylum – they offer a number of support services as well as ongoing advocacy and campaigns: www.refugeecouncil.org.uk

For further information or support, we encourage you to reach out to your local Caritas agency – you can find their details on our members' page: www.csan.org.uk/map-of-members

We have also compiled a list of refugee projects in dioceses across England & Wales: www.csan.org.uk/resettlement-toolkit/diocese-resettlement-services-map

If in need of support, you are also able to contact the SVP: <https://svp.org.uk/request-help>

If you have any queries regarding the resources, would like to offer some feedback or share ideas for future resources, please contact **Aliya Zahin, Migration Officer at Caritas Social Action Network**: aliya.zahin@csan.org.uk

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