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**Xavier Social Justice Network**  
**Dinner 2023**  
**Supporting Jesuit Refugee Service**

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## PROCEEDINGS

Welcome – MC Chris Runciman (OX)  
Acknowledgement of Country –  
Reconciliation Prefect Kane Emery  
Opening Prayer and Grace –  
Fr Chris Middleton SJ

### Main Course

Musical Interlude –  
Thomas Bolger and Don Jeffery (XC Students)

**First Speaker** – Tamara Domicelj –  
Director Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS)

**Second Speaker** – Shuja Jamal –  
Head Policy, Advocacy and Communications JRS

### Dessert

Silent Auction and Raffle results  
**Thanks and close** – MC Chris Runciman (OX).

## Questions to consider:

What are we  
witnessing?

What values  
influence our  
understanding?

How should we  
act on our  
understanding?

What can  
we do?

*'I was a stranger and you made me welcome.'* Matthew 25:35i

## Current Climate

In 2023 the number of people fleeing conflict, violence or human rights violations and persecution has drastically risen to an unprecedented level due to the war in Ukraine as well as other deadly conflicts.

**72% of these refugees come from only five different countries.**

**6.8 million**

Syrian/ Arab  
Republic



**2.4 million**

South Sudan

**5.6 million**

Venezuela

**2.8 million**

Afghanistan

**5.4 million**

Ukraine

**For the first time in recorded history, the number of people forcibly displaced worldwide is now 103 million, and over 32.5 million are refugees.**

Since February 2022, 12 million refugees from Ukraine have crossed the Polish border, with the largest number on 6<sup>th</sup> March – with more than 142,000 people.

*Saint John Paul II stated that “as regards migrants and refugees, building conditions of peace means in practice being seriously committed to safeguarding first of all the right not to emigrate, that is, the right to live in peace and dignity in one's own country”.*

# Budget 2023- 2024

## **OVERSEAS HUMANITARIAN AND DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE**

Australia's overseas development assistance in 2023-24 will be 0.19% of gross national income, a historic low.

## **OFFSHORE PROCESSING**

Offshore processing is budgeted to cost \$1.5 billion over the forward estimates to 2026-27, despite only approximately 30 people remaining in Nauru and the Government's commitment to resettle all people to third countries. From July 2012 to June 2024, the Australian Government has spent \$12 billion on the policy of offshore processing. In total, approximately 4,183 people have been sent offshore during this time. The Budget papers also note that the Home Affairs Department is "at risk" of failing to meet its 2022-23 performance measure of resettling 95% of the 150 refugees due to go from offshore processing to New Zealand this year.

## **ASSISTANCE FOR PEOPLE SEEKING ASYLUM**

Payments made through Services Australia for Asylum Seeker Support for 2022-23 are expected to be \$15 million, less than half of the \$36.9 million allocated in last year's Budget. For 2023-24, \$37 million has been allocated. Spending on this vital program has been cut by 95% since 2015-16, from \$300 million to just \$15 million.

**Interesting fact: The number of refugee and humanitarian entrants welcomed to Australia since World War II will pass 950,000 in the early months of 2023.**



## XAVIER SOCIAL JUSTICE NETWORK

*Justice through advocacy and volunteering*

**Pope Francis' message for 109<sup>th</sup> World Day of Migrants and Refugees 2023.** *"In whatever place we decide to build our future, in the country of our birth or elsewhere, the important thing is that there always be a community ready to welcome, protect, promote and integrate everyone, without distinctions and without excluding anyone".*

Scan the QR code  
to read the full  
message.



### What can we do

- Share the knowledge you heard today from the speakers with your friends, families and colleagues to help advocate for the rights of refugees and asylum seekers
- Make a donation to support the important work of Jesuit Refugee Service Australia [aus.jrs.net](https://aus.jrs.net)
- Join the XSJN or subscribe to our mailing list by emailing [xsjn@xavier.vic.edu.au](mailto:xsjn@xavier.vic.edu.au)
- Volunteer with one of the XSJN's agencies supporting refugees and asylum seekers
- Drop off food donations to the Brigidine Asylum Seeker Project, contact <https://basp.org.au/you-can-help/>
- Write a letter to call your local MP about the injustice of long-term detention enforced long-term separation of refugees from their families, and human rights breaches. If you need help with a script for your email, contact [communications@jrs.org.au](mailto:communications@jrs.org.au).
- If you meet a current or former refugee, person seeking asylum or migrant in a situation of vulnerability, reach out to them and initiate a conversation; show that you care.

Sources for the data in this issue: Refugee Council of Australia <https://www.refugeecouncil.org.au> › how-many-refugees <https://www.unhcr.org/refugee-statistics/> and [www.statista.com](https://www.statista.com)

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