



SANCTUARY

West Coast Refugee Sanctuary Group

Patrons – Angela and Fred Chaney AO

A PROJECT INSTIGATED BY THE GREENWOOD CATHOLIC PARISH IN WA

NEWSLETTER AUTUMN 2009

The Australian Government offers a few thousand Special Humanitarian Visas each year to people living outside their home country who have experienced substantial discrimination amounting to gross violation of human rights in their home country. To this small number of refugees it's like winning lotto and being unable to collect the prize because they or their proposer cannot afford the air fares to come to Australia. This is where our group helps by providing no-interest loans to help fund the airfare.

15 Sanctuary groups across Australia are actively supporting refugee families to make a new start in a safe and humane environment. The plight of the estimated 33 million refugees around the globe is quite tragic and unfortunate media press given to asylum seekers trying to reach Australia by boat, even though they account for only 5% of so called unauthorised people living in Australia, is not helpful. Our support goes to refugees assessed by UNHCR and given 202 visas to come to Australia.

Since our inception in 2005 we have assisted over 160 refugees to be reunited with family members living in Australia under the UNHCR sponsored humanitarian visa programme. We work in conjunction with the International Organisation for Migration, the Christian Brothers and St. Vincent de Paul to co-fund assistance to families. Our work is vital and with conflicts in our region increasing the numbers of refugees seeking asylum across the globe, we as Christians and global citizens must hold out the hands of kindness to assist wherever possible. Later this year we hope to run a quiz night to raise some new funds to support our humanitarian work and we would like your support in either donating a small prize or coming along on the night. Details will be posted on our web site and sent to members directly.

We thank all of our financial members for their compassion and ongoing support of those refugees who desperately want to live a normal life, away from fear and oppression, with their extended family members in W.A. Without your support and the ongoing work of our executive committee we would not be able to strive as Christ preached to his followers; "to do unto others as you would have done unto you."

"ONE PLANET – ONE HUMANITY"

Please pass onto your friends who might wish to find out more about the West Coast Refugee Sanctuary Group by visiting our web site at:

<http://www.sanctuarywa.com.au/>