

FEATURE

A day in the life of ...

FAITH TALK

Now that we know, what will we do?

MY STORY

Supporting refugees fleeing Ukraine

Living in limbo

The hidden uncertainty of asylum seekers as they wait to belong

REFUGEE WEEK 19-25 JUNE



SALVOS

MAGAZINE





*It is the obligation of every person born
in a safer room to open the door when
someone in danger knocks.*

Nadia Hashimi



The Salvation Army is about giving hope where it's needed most.

What is The Salvation Army?

The Salvation Army, an international movement, is an evangelical part of the universal Christian Church.

Vision Statement

Wherever there is hardship or injustice, Salvos will live, love and fight alongside others to transform Australia one life at a time with the love of Jesus.

Mission Statement

The Salvation Army is a Christian movement dedicated to sharing the love of Jesus by:

- Caring for people
- Creating faith pathways
- Building healthy communities
- Working for justice

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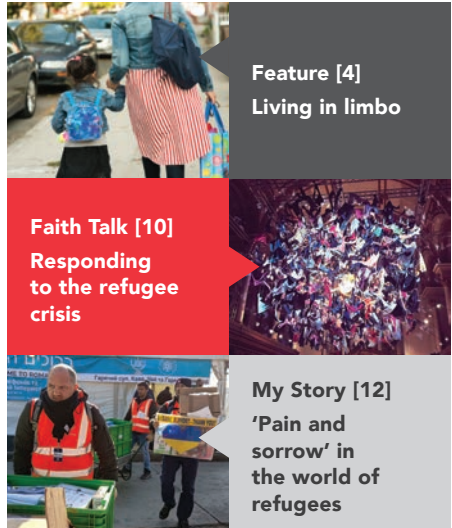
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'Pain and sorrow' in the world of refugees

A place to call home

In the first months of 2022, more than 100 million people were displaced globally through persecution, conflict, violence or human rights violations. This includes:

- 26.6 million refugees;
- 50.9 million internally displaced people; and
- 4.4 million asylum seekers.

As Refugee Week (19-25 June) begins, this edition focuses on seeing refugees and those seeking asylum as individuals needing safety, acceptance, protection and hope.

Major Karen Elkington, Manager of the Salvos Asylum Seeker and Refugee Centre in Melbourne, explains that many Australians may not know an asylum seeker personally but would often engage with them in local schools, cafes and shops. They are people just like us, trying to build a life for themselves and their families as they work through trauma, fear and uncertainty.

Captain Sandra Pawar challenges us in our response to this crisis and shares her promise to God to continually fight for justice for refugees.

Ukraine is a global focal point, and we hear from Salvos volunteers assisting those who have fled Ukraine after the Russian invasion. They, too, look to God for the strength they need to continue their work.

For these stories and more, go to **salvosmagazine.org.au**

Simone Worthing **Assistant Editor**

Living in limbo

The hidden uncertainty of asylum seekers as they wait to belong

WORDS Cliff Worthing

Who would know that Maryam*, the smiling lady handing you the best kebab you have ever tasted, is experiencing extreme levels of stress?

Maryam runs a successful kebab business in Melbourne, but that's not the source of her stress. She is just one of 30,000 asylum seekers on temporary visas in Australia, and it's this life in limbo that is causing her debilitating anxiety.

Major Karen Elkington, Manager of the Salvos Asylum Seeker and Refugee Centre in Brunswick, knows Maryam. She knows she fled to Australia from Iran for her safety, worked in a factory, saved hard, and is now running the kebab business while waiting for her appeal for refugee status to go through the courts.

"Her customers keep returning to tell her she sells the best-tasting kebabs in Melbourne, yet have no idea how stressed she is with her life full of uncertainty," Karen explained.

GREAT UNCERTAINTY

Asylum seekers who live in limbo can't settle or put down roots even if they have Australian-born children. They can't go to university and never know when a decision will be made on their refugee status.

Many have waited more than nine years and still don't know when they will get their first interview. They don't know if their application will be rejected or accepted or why some asylum seekers can work and others can't. Many wonder if a change of approach will work or whether they will stay in limbo in Australia because they can't return to their country of origin.

"I see this as a human rights issue," Karen said.

Karen and her team have seen increased levels of desperation recently.

They question the Salvo centre's capacity to continue providing adequate support in the new financial year as current government support programs end. They see genuine hunger growing, with clients standing at the table at the front of the centre eating the pears and mandarins placed there. The team say there's very little left at the end of each day.

"They, and we, are hanging on to hope at the moment," Karen said.

“

I see this as a human rights issue.

”

HOLDING ON TO HOPE

Karen said that around 6000 asylum seekers haven't had an interview yet to assess their status.

"If they arrived by boat and are subject to the Fast Track visa assessment process, this interview is their one and only chance to explain their circumstances," she said. "This is still while dealing with trauma, language challenges, personal circumstances, lack of resources and massive uncertainty."

Other asylum seekers' temporary refugee visas have expired, but they have to re-apply for refugee status. "They have been told they



Asylum seekers can't put down roots, even if they have Australian-born children.

won't be processed until all Fast Track visa processing is completed," Karen added. "So, they keep going as best they can while trying to hold on to hope."

Asylum seekers like Maryam who have had their applications rejected lose their government benefits and must fend for themselves while challenging the decision. Many know if they are returned to their country of origin they will face persecution, imprisonment ... even death. Some countries will not take back people refused asylum in Australia.

So, living in limbo continues.

REMOVING THE BARRIERS

Thousands of people like Maryam just want to live in peace, work, study, look after their families and contribute to their communities. They want to belong – just like any other Australian family.

"We need to embrace and welcome people from refugee backgrounds and ensure they

are included," Karen said. "We need to remove the barriers for them."

She challenges Australians to use empathy and ask themselves what they would do if they, or their family, were threatened with danger?

"We would do exactly what every asylum seeker has done in the same situation," she concluded.

Asylum seeker and refugee numbers are a small proportion of our population, so most Australians would not know an asylum seeker.

However, you have probably had contact with them at work or school, at your local coffee or kebab shop, without realising the 'normal and nice' person you know is living in limbo.



Scan here for more on mental health.

A day in the life of ...

Supporting refugees and asylum seekers

Over the coming months, *Salvos Magazine* will feature different people from all walks of life who are part of the varied work of the Salvos across the country. In conjunction with Refugee Week (19-25 June, which includes the United Nations World Refugee Day on 20 June) and its theme 'Healing', below we feature Major Karen Elkington, Manager – Asylum Seeker & Refugee Service, in Brunswick, Melbourne.

Salvos Magazine: Can you give us an overview of your role?

Karen Elkington: I ensure that our specialised service that provides, food, clothing, case-work, and spiritual support to people seeking asylum in Melbourne's north and west runs as smoothly as possible. I'm always working on a few projects and engaging with other people to develop more supportive programs and activities to help people seeking asylum and people from refugee backgrounds.

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... everyone is made in the image of God, and everyone is valued and welcome in God's eyes.

”

SM: What's the first thing you do when you arrive at work (even if that's at home!)?

KE: My team has been here working on-site throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. The first thing I do is chat with the staff one-on-one and together to see how everyone is and update them on any news. Then it's usually setting up tables outside to put donated fruit and vegetables out the front of the building



Helping to fundraise is a part of Karen's role.

so people can select fresh food to take home to their families.

SM: What can a typical day involve for you?

KE: Meeting people at the front door and helping them to feel welcome and valued. Assisting staff and volunteers with enquiries. And then there is the never-ending stream of emails, administration tasks and meetings!

SM: What's the most challenging part of your work?

KE: Hearing and seeing how difficult many of our people's lives are. It's not uncommon for our staff to call myself, or our other team members – Major Colin Elkington (chaplain) or Kevin Amiri (ministry assistant) – to listen and provide spiritual support to our clients. They will often ask us to pray with them.

SM: What's the most rewarding part of your role?



Major Karen Elkington, centre, says she is looking forward to the day when there is justice for everyone and the asylum seeker and refugee service is no longer needed.

KE: Developing new relationships and programs that further support people seeking asylum and people from refugee backgrounds. For example, we are very excited to have a specialised employment program with The Salvation Army's Employment Plus now working to help people with work rights into employment.

SM: How has COVID-19 affected your work?

KE: We have needed to adjust with each wave of the virus and with different restrictions and lockdowns here in Melbourne. We are now enjoying seeing people back in the centre and supporting them with face-to-face interviews after supporting them over the phone and at the door for a good part of two years.

SM: Why is ending racial discrimination so important?

KE: Because everyone is made in the image of God, and everyone is valued and welcome in God's eyes. We have a lot in common with all people if we take the time to listen to those who appear to be outwardly different to us. It enriches our lives when we share life with each other and see each other as being of equal value.

SM: How do you see your work achieving the mission of the Salvos to transform lives?

KE: Every time we ensure that we can work as flexibly as possible and explore ways in which we can say 'yes' to helping people's needs more often than being restrictive in our response. This leads to people developing a relationship with us and sometimes our Lord Jesus, which can help people to journey towards hope and better future. I'm looking forward to the day when there is no injustice for people seeking asylum and our service is no longer needed.



Treatment of refugees & asylum seekers

The United Nations defines a refugee as “any person who, owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of their nationality and is unable, or owing to such fear, unwilling to avail themselves of the protection of that country”.

An asylum seeker is a person who is seeking protection as a refugee and is still waiting to have their claim assessed. Australia is a signatory to the UN Convention and Protocol that provides a framework for the protection and fair treatment of all people seeking asylum.

Data from the United Nations Human Rights Council indicates that at least 82.4 million people worldwide have been forced to flee their homes at the end of 2020, including 26.4 million formally recognised refugees. While Australia has consistently resettled refugees and asylum seekers, the number it accepts is low compared to many of our OECD counterparts.

Some experts have also raised concerns around whether the ways in which Australia assesses and treats asylum seekers is consistent with the UN Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees.

The numbers and nationalities of people seeking asylum can vary significantly and dramatically with changing political realities. Countries that can accommodate refugees, including Australia, need to have programs and services that remain agile in responding to the humanitarian crises that often follow political instability, totalitarianism and war.



One in every 97 people globally has fled their home due to conflict or persecution.



42 per cent of all refugees are children aged under 18.



Between January 2009 and December 2018, Australia recognised or resettled almost **181,000 refugees**. This represented **0.89 per cent** of the 20.3 million refugees recognised globally over that period. Australia’s total contribution for the decade was ranked 25th overall, 29th per capita and 54th relative to national GDP.

What we can do?

AS A NATION

» **We can ensure humane standards of treatment and conditions for refugees and asylum seekers in line with relevant international conventions and commitments.**

This includes ensuring that having a status of refugee or asylum seeker does not make a person more vulnerable to other forms of harm, such as family violence. We can also increase Australian intakes and actively resettle refugees in Australia with appropriate support.

AS A STATE OR TERRITORY

» **We can focus on social cohesion and support.** We can offer grants and programs that promote social cohesion, education opportunities and safe, affordable housing when refugees and asylum seekers are based in the community.

AS A COMMUNITY

» **We can create welcoming spaces and events that actively include refugees and asylum seekers.** If appropriate, we could even sponsor refugee families to settle in local communities.

AS INDIVIDUALS

» **We can be friends.** We can intentionally engage with refugees and asylum seekers when our paths cross and provide opportunities, where possible, for employment, training and social interaction. We can speak up when we hear or see racism or bias against refugees and asylum seekers.

THIS INFORMATION COMES FROM THE SALVOS SOCIAL JUSTICE STOCKTAKE REPORT. TO SEE THE FULL REPORT, GO TO SALVATIONARMY.ORG.AU/SOCIALJUSTICESTOCKTAKE

Wrapping up the Red Shield Appeal

The Salvos' major fundraising campaign, the Red Shield Appeal (RSA), officially ends on 30 June. Salvos churches, centres and a range of community members across the country have contributed to help reach the appeal target of \$36 million.

COOKING UP A STORM IN VICTORIA

Celebrity chef Gary Mehigan stopped by the Salvos Project 614 church in Melbourne to lend a helping hand to raise funds for the RSA.



Gary Mehigan pipes the finishing touches to RSA cupcakes.

Accompanied by Salvos officer (pastor) Major Sandra Nottle, Gary chatted with staff, volunteers and community members about the vital work being done to support those in need in the heart of Melbourne.

CONNECTING WITH THE MULTI-CULTURAL COMMUNITY

Multicultural RSA launches took place in Sydney and Melbourne. In Sydney, Naikbakht Wahidi, a recipient of a Dell computer as part of the Digital Poverty Project, shared her story with local business people, politicians and supporters.

Former NSW Opposition Leader Jodi McKay also spoke at the event, which was sponsored by MultiConnexions.

MultiConnexions CEO Sheba Nandkeolyar said, "We have supported the valuable work of The Salvation Army, especially in multicultural communities, for over two decades, and we are proud to be supporting this event again this year. The work done by The Salvation Army is diversity-inclusive, and they reach out to all audiences including multicultural audiences."

RIDING FROM NAMBOUR TO NOOSA

Nambour Salvo and keen cyclist Matt Seaman has completed the Suncoast Salvos Red Shield Ride for the third year in a row. Joined by Dean Morrison, the duo took a 175km route from Nambour Salvos to Noosa. Along the way, they stopped at major Salvo centres to highlight the Red Shield Appeal. They completed the course in just under eight hours, including a 1983m elevation, raising more than \$2700 for the crucial work of the Salvos in Nambour.



Dean Morrison, left, and Matt Seaman rode 175km to raise funds for their local Salvos.

Responding to the refugee crisis

Now that we know, what will we do?

WORDS Sandra Pawar

I attended a showing of the documentary called *Syria's Disappeared* at St James Piccadilly, United Kingdom, back in 2018.

In addition to the showing of this documentary, there was an installation artwork by Arabella Dorman called 'Suspended'. This artwork aimed to highlight the plight of thousands of refugees – men, women and children – fleeing war and persecution. It featured items of clothing discarded by refugees at the Lesbos camp in Greece, which were suspended above the church pews. This symbolised that refugees are often "suspended between a past to which they cannot return and a future to which they cannot move" (Arabella Dorman).

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Refugees are often suspended between a past to which they cannot return and a future to which they cannot move.

”

As people entered the Sanctuary at St James Piccadilly, I watched as each one raised their eyes to look at the clothes. Cameras came out and pictures were taken, and yet sadness and grief filled people's faces.

FLEEING FOR THEIR LIVES

You could see baby shoes, women's scarves of many colours, t-shirts, track pants, gloves

and socks. These were not just anybody's clothes; they belonged to people who had to flee for their lives, seeking safety and taking only what they could wear.



One particular item caused a lump to form in my throat. It was a baby outfit, with the words 'My first Christmas ever' on it. I thought about the baby who wore it. Was it their actual first Christmas, or was it an outfit a charity gave them? Did this baby get to see another Christmas? Where are they now? How did this baby get to the Island of Lesbos? What was the journey they took? How long did it take?

Many different people sat under these clothes – white, black, Muslim, Christian, students, lawyers and survivors. I joined in the conversation with the small group of people that stood around me. A tech student was here because he helped develop a

project with Google to make a translation app for refugees in Germany. This young man was deeply struck by the art display and kept commenting on how it smelt like baby clothes and made him think of his small nephew. He had tears in his eyes. There was no smell, yet he commented at least three times on it and was visibly shaken by the display.

Behind him was another student. She was studying International Community Development and was overwhelmed with her studies and which direction to go with her thesis. She wanted to learn more about refugees and their plight but didn't know the direction to take. Next to her was a Human Rights lawyer who had been to Syria and could only speak lovingly about the people of Syria and their hospitality. All were deeply affected by the display of clothes.



Arabella spoke about the display being her passion project, her cry for justice. She told us that, now that we had seen it, we must bear witness and not let the people of Syria be forgotten.

A PROMISE TO GOD

Stories of refugees cycle in and out of the news and often become a distant thought. Refugees have often become people we fear and don't want in our country. I can't help but be angered and think how dare we reduce God's children to afterthoughts, or to people who do not deserve the same rights as us.

I don't yet know how I can genuinely fight this injustice, but I promised God that night that I would not forget about the plight of refugees, and I haven't. I will stand up against those that want to refuse to help them, and I will tell their stories. I know many stories of refugees fleeing their homeland, and I will not let these stories go. No one will be able to say to me, "you knew and did nothing".

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No one will be able to say to me, 'you knew and did nothing'.

”

A refugee survivor stated: "If we cannot tell our story, we may as well die." I know that I need to tell their stories and that I need to continue to bring awareness to this crisis.

How will you respond?

Captain Sandra Pawar is an Australian Salvation Army officer (pastor) in the United States.



Scan here for more on finding meaning.

'Pain and sorrow' in the world of refugees

Captain Rezo Bakhtadze and his wife, Major Sophie Bakhtadze, are The Salvation Army's leaders in Georgia. Below, Rezo shares his experience of helping Ukrainian refugees in Romania

WORDS Rezo Bakhtadze

Once we heard the Romanian Division (of The Salvation Army) call for volunteers, my wife Sophie and I spontaneously agreed to go. Volunteers Captain Temo Galustian, who oversees the Salvos Youth and Children's work in Eastern Europe, and Eliza, soon joined us. This was our Georgian team.

We were sent to the north-eastern part of Romania, Siret, near the Ukrainian border. We spent eight days there with Salvation Army teams, helping Ukrainian refugees (who had fled the Russian invasion).

Every day we prepared and distributed food, handed out anti-human trafficking brochures, carried out pastoral care, solved problems

with people's documents and assisted in any way we could.

HUMAN TRAFFICKING

One day the leaders of the Salvation Army in Romania – Captain Ionut and Major Roxana Sandu – told us there had been several cases of human trafficking in a nearby town where a refugee shelter had been opened. There was a request that Eliza go to the camp with a local social worker to investigate the situation.

When Eliza arrived in the town, the situation was not good. They had kept internally displaced people (IDPs) in the shelter for a week despite their request to move to other European countries.

A group of 17, mostly women and children, wanted to go to Germany. We knew that a bus was scheduled to go to Germany from the border, so we tried to take them there so they could get where they wanted to go.

However, on hearing this, Eliza was forced to leave the camp, and the group of 17 had to stay in the shelter. Eliza informed Ionut and Roxana, who contacted the director of the Romanian Social Centre and explained the situation.

Emil Ghenea, a Romanian Salvation Army officer (pastor), went to help Eliza. Those of us who remained at the border were a little alarmed, but we trusted everything to God and showed our support to Eliza. When Emil arrived, the City Mayor intervened in the



Romanian police help protect refugees from human trafficking.



Captain Rezo Bakhtadze, at front, was part of the Georgian Salvos team assisting Ukrainian refugees in Romania.

situation, and, despite efforts to keep the group in the camp, Eliza and Emil were able to get all 17 across the border and secure their departure to Germany.

About 50 people remained in that shelter who also tried to move to another country. Unfortunately, we were not able to help them. We were all disappointed, but we trusted the situation to God. Late one night, Ionut contacted us to say that the director of the Social Centre was very grateful for the Georgian team's hard work. All staff at the shelter were fired, the city mayor was fired, and the vice mayor was installed in his place. The police are now constantly stationed at the refugee shelter to make sure the refugees are safe. Our whole team rejoiced and thanked God for answered prayers.

GLIMMER OF HOPE

At the border, we met a retired couple from Mariupol. Their story was very hard to hear. They told us they had spent almost a month in a basement during the shelling, plus six days and nights on the road. They were hiding in the forest in fear of the enemy. When they finally crossed the border into Romania, they stayed in our accommodation tent for two

days while waiting for their daughter. They shared horrible stories of the war with us. But, at the same time, they tried their best to be positive. They both often thanked us for everything. The morning after their arrival, we saw that they were helping other refugees coming in from Mariupol by distributing food and hot tea. We were introduced to all of them with great love and warmth.

As well as materially, we also had many opportunities to carry out pastoral care to IDPs. We prayed with them and used every opportunity to implant God's hope in their lost hearts.

Since our time in Romania, I often think and pray for the children, women and the elderly who are still crossing the border to this day. I trust and believe that God will lighten all the pain and sorrow they are experiencing today.

Captain Rezo Bakhtadze leads The Salvation Army in the Republic of Georgia.



Scan here for more information on Salvation Army Disaster and Emergency Services.

Lemon garlic chicken



Ingredients

¼ cup olive oil, 2 tbs lemon juice, 3 garlic cloves (minced), 1 tsp chopped fresh thyme, 1 tsp salt, ½ tsp chopped rosemary, ¼ tsp pepper, 8-10 chicken pieces (thighs or drumsticks), 8 new potatoes (halved), 1 lemon (sliced), 2 tbs parsley (chopped) to garnish.

Method

- Preheat oven to 220°C. In a small bowl, whisk oil, lemon juice, garlic, thyme, salt, rosemary and pepper until blended. Pour ¼ cup of marinade into a shallow dish and add chicken. Turn to coat. Refrigerate for 30 minutes. Refrigerate remaining marinade.
- Drain chicken and place on a baking tray. Add halved potatoes in a single layer. Drizzle over reserved marinade and top with lemon slices.
- Bake 40-45 minutes.
- Top with chopped parsley. Enjoy!

Quick quiz

1. What causes 'watermelon' snow to be pink in colour?
2. Which condition refers to the damage to body tissue caused by freezing?
3. The Winter Palace is in which European city?
4. What is a chinook?
5. 'Winter is coming' is the motto of which family in Game of Thrones?
6. "Now is the winter of our discontent" is the opening line from which play by William Shakespeare?



Tum-Tum

On which page of this week's *Salvos Magazine* is Tum-Tum hiding?



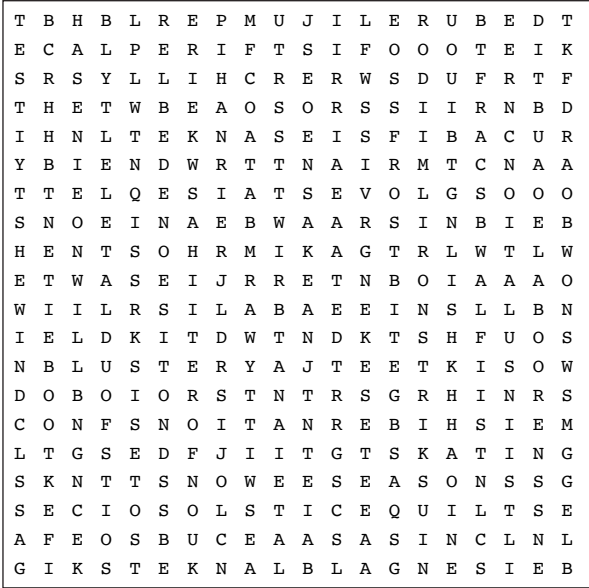
Bible byte

"Welcome one another, therefore, as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God."

Romans chapter 15, verse 7
Revised Standard Version

Wordsearch

Words are hidden horizontally, vertically, diagonally, forwards and backwards. Enjoy!



- Beanie
- Blankets
- Blustery
- Brisk
- Chilly
- Coat
- Cold
- Dark
- Fireplace
- Frost
- Frostbite
- Gloves
- Heater
- Hibernation
- Ice
- Insulation
- Jumper
- Quilt
- Scarf
- Season
- Skating
- Skiing
- Snow
- Snowboard
- Solstice
- Warm
- Wind
- Winter



HAVE A LAUGH

Winter was so cold that ...
False teeth chattered, and they were still in the glass.

Winter was so cold that ...
When you milked the cows, you got ice cream.

Winter was so cold that ...
You had to chisel the dog off a lamppost.

DID YOU KNOW?

Snowflakes almost always have six sides.

Winter lasts for 21 years on Uranus.

The lowest temperature recorded was -89.2°C in Antarctica in 1983.

Dog sledding originated in Alaska.

Chinophobia is a fear of snow.

Answers: 1. Algae 2. Frostbite 3. St Petersburg 4. A type of winter wind 5. House of Stark 6. Richard III
 Turn-Turn: is hiding in Gary's pocket on page 7.

Turn your **Passion** + into **Purpose**

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SCAN ME



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