

STRENGTH AND KINDNESS

Brigidine Asylum Seekers Project (BASP)



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*I was a stranger and you made
me welcome ...*

Newsletter 120 May2025

The Project aims to:

- * provide hospitality and practical support for people seeking asylum
- * actively network with like-minded individuals and groups who are working for justice for asylum seekers
- * promote advocacy for the rights of asylum seekers
- * raise awareness of asylum seeker issues and concerns through a range of activities

Why was there so little talk about asylum seekers during the election? And was that a good thing or not?

Unlike federal elections over the past thirty years, in 2025 asylum seekers were not part of the major debates. This time around, both major parties had obviously decided not to make an issue of refugee policies and, in particular, how to manage the outstanding applications for asylum. That was good and bad—elections in the past that made a big issue about asylum seekers have been negative, scaremongering and always designed to make a virtue out of promising to be tough on refugees. On the other hand, no mention of policies or intended processes to address the situation for those stuck with no visa security leaves the same black hole!

However, Anthony Albanese made a number of statements about kindness and compassion being hallmarks of an Australia he now leads: “One of the things that you have to do as a leader is show kindness and compassion to the vulnerable. That's not weakness.” He said this in an interview after the last debate between himself and Peter Dutton. In his acceptance speech he spoke about “the strength to show courage in adversity and kindness to those in need”.

At the same time as the election campaigns, Pope Francis died. This reminds us strongly that leadership around the issue of the displacement of peoples around the world, including Australia, is needed. A global consciousness and a global culture of compassion and kindness could change the cruelty meted out to so many who become victims of indifference and a mentality of ‘it’s not our problem’.

In July 2013, shortly after Pope Francis was elected, he visited Lampedusa, a tiny Italian island where many refugees arrive from North Africa. At that time Pope Francis offered a challenge to the world, particularly to the comfortably affluent: “(We have built a) culture of comfort, which makes us think only of ourselves, makes us insensitive to the cries of other people...”

“In this globalized world, we have fallen into globalized indifference,” said Francis. “We have become used to the suffering of others: it doesn’t affect me; it doesn’t concern me; it’s none of my business!”

We believe that a significant role for leadership is influencing for the common good. We need a moral voice of compassion. We need this to be echoed and reinforced in all parts of our society. We have elected a political party whose leader sees kindness and compassion as hallmarks of Australia to be cherished. May this extend to people seeking asylum, especially those with no reasonable hope for the future.



National Catholic Reporter July 6, 2023

Donations to the Brigidine Asylum Seekers Project are tax deductible

Can Australia legally lock people up indefinitely or not?

The NZYQ decision in November 2023 determined that The High Court found that there are limits on the powers of Ministers to detain people in immigration detention. It basically said that detention is a form of punishment and can usually only be inflicted on a person by a court once they are found guilty of a crime. It seemed as though mandatory detention that was indefinite had been ruled out in Australia.



However, in April of this year another Court decision (CZA19 and DBD24) held that detaining people seeking asylum while their visa applications are pending is lawful in some instances, even when there is no real prospect of their removal in the foreseeable future. The Court considered the precedent set in NZYQ, which held that indefinite immigration detention is punitive and therefore unlawful when there is no real prospect of a person's removal becoming practicable in the reasonably foreseeable future.

The government argued that the limitations on detention established in NZYQ do not apply when a person is detained for the legitimate purpose of having their visa assessed. The High Court affirmed this position, effectively meaning that some people can still be subject to prolonged or indefinite detention.

It is very disappointing when, even in the face of a decision that seemed to give people some hope, the Government chose to have some of its impact overruled.

Most groups advocating for the rights and welfare of asylum seekers will be turning their attention to what do we do next. At BASP we believe this is the time to try to have meaningful dialogue about what, as a country, we should do after this election—the results of which we have been waiting for.

We need permanent visas for all those who have been waiting with no security for over a decade. We have described the situation for these people over and over again. We know many and we know the anguish many of them are suffering.

Then we need, as a country to tackle the big issues.

- What practices do we believe are fair in terms of boats arriving with people who have no visas?
- How can we do away with mandatory detention?
- How can people apply for protection in the future and get a reasonably quick decision and not have their lives put on hold interminably?
- What things can be put in place immediately when an individual or family applies for protection on-shore so that they are treated with dignity as soon as they arrive?
- How can things like housing and food security be addressed?

What did you think would happen when you got to the airport?

Almost by definition, most people who arrive seeking protection do not have a well thought through plan to deal with this issue. Their lives have been thrown into disarray, they are threatened and they don't know what to do. We asked one newly arrived man what he thought would happen when he arrived at the airport and he said, "I thought there would be dark-skinned people like me and that I could ask someone to help me".

Discussion Session

Wednesday, June 11th

2pm – 3.30pm

At 54 Beaconsfield Pde Albert Park
(Brigidine Ministries Centre)

Will the recent elections make any difference to the fate of asylum seekers?

We will ask a few people from different groups to attend and inform us of any plans or ideas from their groups. Then we will have a general discussion.

What should we do next?

SOIREE
CABRINI CHOIR
IN COLLABORATION WITH
ST JOSEPH'S MUSIC MINISTRY
'Music in the Chapel'

01 SUNDAY
JUNE 2PM – 3PM
Cabrini Malvern Chapel
183 Wattletree Rd Malvern

Entry by donation at the door

All funds support the
Brigidine Asylum seekers Project

Donations to the Brigidine Asylum Seekers Project are tax deductible

Are there still ‘boat people’ in Australia?

Very few boats try to make an entry into Australia because the Australian maritime authorities intercept boats and return people to their home countries or send them elsewhere. However there are still people caught within this system.

Our law deems that non-citizens who arrive by sea without lawful permission are categorised as ‘unauthorised maritime arrivals’ and are never allowed to settle in Australia even if they are determined to be owed protection under refugee conventions. Some of those who arrived in the years 2012-14 and were detained off-shore were then brought to Australia for medical or other reasons and are still in Australia. Most spent time in immigration detention after being brought back to Australia. Those in ‘hotel detention’ brought their situation into prominence.

At the end of 2024, there were 927 people in this category. They are called ‘transitory persons’. These individuals had been transferred from Manus Island or Nauru to Australia on or after July 19, 2013. So they have been in Australia for over a decade. Over this time, their options were to return to their own country or to seek a third country to resettle. The only three reasonable options for this latter possibility were New Zealand, USA and Canada. All are limited and they have virtually finished as options now. (About 300 have gone to NZ and 1,100 to the US. The Canadian assistance was via groups of private citizens in that country sponsoring families or individuals.)

Nauru was emptied as an offshore processing centre in June 2023. However the Australian Government has an arrangement with Nauru that the centre will be kept open for any future need and it was reanimated in September 2023 because a group of 11 asylum seekers had been sent to the island, the first such transfer in nine years. Subsequently other groups have been intercepted and sent there. Now the number is over 100.

Why do some people still try to enter Australia by boat?

The short answer probably is that refugees have few options to settle anywhere that gives them a reasonable life. It is not always possible for people to seek refuge in a refugee camp, and the number of resettlement places available for refugees is extremely small.

Why not come by plane? Australia operates a visa system that makes it very difficult for many people from certain countries to enter this country by plane with a valid visa. Often, people from countries with a high number of refugees—such as Afghanistan, Bangladesh, and Myanmar—are excluded through strict border controls from entering many countries.

BASP is primarily concerned by those who have been the victims of draconian policies and seemingly have no solution to their need for a permanent place to settle. We support many of these. We are not naïve about the difficulty of facing the ongoing global need to manage the issue of refugees. The situation involves various interconnected issues, including wars, repressive regimes, humanitarian concerns, and national security considerations. As a country we need to manage those wanting to come in the best way we can. A lot depends of how the country is brought to see the issue—as a threat or as an opportunity to help a significant number of people who in their turn will enrich and contribute to our society.

In the meantime we strongly object to going back to off-shore processing—it is cruel, costs a lot of money and eventually some answer has to be found for the people currently still in PNG and Nauru. Since 2012 more than \$13 billion has been spent on off-shore processing.

19-25 May 2025 is National Volunteer Week — Australia's largest annual celebration of volunteering

This newsletter is timely for BASP to celebrate and say THANK YOU to all BASP's volunteers who support our work in so many ways. As we have said before, it is the volunteers who are often the eyes and ears for the coordinators, alerting us to concerns and changes in people's situations and enabling us to reach so many people in need.



One volunteer who has been visiting a very vulnerable family for some time sent through a letter written by the mother to support her visa application, which included this about the volunteer: "I frequently confide in [...], whom I now see as a parental figure because I have never received such kindness in my life." This same volunteer alerted us recently that there had been a fire in the family's home and the four children needed clothing. She had arranged some and BASP was able to provide additional help.

Another couple of volunteers have agreed to help asylum seekers learn to drive—one learner starting from scratch and providing some hairy moments—but the volunteer has persevered!

BASP received a grant from the Mercy Foundation to support women who are doing it tough. Many have had a weekend away with the family at Saltbush Balnarring and others have had a 'Pamper Day', thanks again to volunteers taking them out.

One woman, Parisa, when asked what she would like as a treat, said tyres for the car and underwear. We used other funds for the tyres and then she and the volunteer went out, having lunch, shopping and getting her nails done. The volunteer reported the smile on Parisa's face as she looked at her nails was a joy to behold.

Another woman chose a massage which she said was wonderful and then she and the volunteer went out for lunch, where they talked a lot about the situation in Iran (and elsewhere) for the Kurds. The volunteer really enjoyed their exchange, reinforcing the two-way benefit these encounters offer.

The BASP Board is also comprised of volunteers, most working in demanding full-time employment, yet still giving time to provide the governance and support to BASP. At the March meeting, one member was in hospital waiting for serious surgery, so he Zoomed in from his hospital bed in his hospital gown. Certainly a first for us! A volunteer is also attending Board meetings to assist as minute secretary, a great help for all.

Tony and Karen have been visiting a couple of men and a single mother for some time. When the Palm Sunday committee needed help on the day, they assisted and also brought Samson and Kaveh, two asylum seekers, to also help. All their efforts were greatly appreciated in helping to make meeting a success.

Where we can offer people seeking asylum with some volunteering work, we do. This builds their participation in the broader community, may give some work skills or work experience for CV's and can help their wellbeing in helping others.



Another Karin (with an i) has been involved for many years in assisting with housing-related matters mainly. With a recent move of a single mother and son to a new place, she spent all day ensuring their new home was ready and welcoming and followed up with getting curtains to complete the set-up.

Carmel, who volunteers each Tuesday in the office to help people seek work, mentioned there was a walk in Williamstown in memory of a vet. BASP had just housed a recently arrived

Ugandan man who was a vet and so he was linked into the activities. He had such an enjoyable day, saw a new part of Melbourne and was again, moved by the goodwill of others.

There are many more volunteer stories each month where we know that people are quietly supporting asylum seekers in many and varied ways. Support from volunteers comes in many ways—a smile, a visit, giving some hope. Or delivering things, packing food into the pantry ... so many things make a difference.



HOUSING NEWS

The need for and movement in housing certainly keeps us busy. The Housing Support Officer role is funded by the Sisters of St John of God. Julian, an asylum seeker, has been working part time in this role since December. He has now been joined by Gloria who began work in early May to cover the other part of the role. Together, they enable us to assist people with moving in and out of properties, collect donated furniture, and to maintain the properties in good order.

In April, some longtime supporters offered us a low rental property for asylum seekers. This coincided with a request from a single mother and her son, recently having to seek refuge from domestic violence. The team swung into gear, assisted by Marg Fyfe, a Brigidine, volunteer and Board member, and she was able to move in pretty quickly.

We have also heard that two or three of the men who were on Manus or Nauru and have been housed by BASP will be relocating to NZ in early June. This does mean a new start again, but at least it is with visa certainty and will allow travel to meet family in a third country, as well as application for family reunion.

We recently had a message from one man who moved to Canada earlier in the year, taking his wife. “Hi Libby, all good me and Melanie both studying, me in the BCit and Melanie in the UBC, but till now we couldn’t find jobs, here is little bit hard to find jobs but all good and we hope to find jobs soon.” We wish them every success and happiness after years of waiting and not knowing.

Ten years ago, BASP was asked to help two families being released from detention. A house for eight was a big task, and one of the women was about to have a baby. Fortunately, we found a place in Kings Park, where they settled, learnt English and fairly quickly the men began working in handyman/home maintenance roles.

Once they were financially viable, they moved into their own respective homes and BASP lost touch with them. A couple of weeks ago, the two wives, who are also sisters in law, called in to let us know how they are. They have set up as NDIS providers in the eastern suburbs, providing personal care, home care and respite. Their husbands are each doing maintenance jobs in that area and Bitu’s older son is doing car detailing. We reminisced about the early meeting when they moved from one motel room to a house for eight. They have worked hard and have settled so well into the community.



Christ Church South Yarra held a special harvest festival recently and the parish gave BASP the beautiful fresh fruit and vegetables that resulted. This meant that the bags we distribute were really enhanced this past week. Thanks once again to this very generous parish.

Palm Sunday 2025 came and went. BASP has always been very involved in preparing for this event. Marie Hapke chaired a group to manage the day in Melbourne. Marie contributed so much to the success of the event. It is an important time each year to show the public support for asylum seekers and refugees in many cities and towns across Australia.



Around 1,000 people attended the Palm Sunday action for Justice and Kindness in the beautiful gardens in Melbourne. Comedian and social justice advocate Tom Ballard was MC for a rich program with refugee speakers, special guest Emeritus Professor Gillian Triggs, students and faith representatives, with music by Sebastian, Eldalkatur, Melbourne Drumming Circles and Melbourne Mass Gospel Choir.



Many thanks to Paul Dunn and Sumitra Vignaendra who recorded the event with so many beautiful photos.

“These lovely Australian people helped me lots and are still helping. “

Muru’s story written by Delia Bradshaw

I came to Australia in 2009, 16 years ago. I am now 41, then I was a young man. My parents, who are 64 and 65, worry that I’m getting old.

I got my Permanent Resident (PR) visa last year. I was on a Bridging Visa E till I got my PR in October 2024. Once my travel documents are finalised, I can go to India to meet my parents there. (There is no point in going back to Sri Lanka. I left there at the end of the war and I do not want to go back.) I cannot afford to go to meet them yet, as I have only had works rights since getting my PR and, right now, I have only just enough money to live on.

When I arrived in Australia, I spent 30 months in detention, 6 months on Christmas Island (from October 2, 2009), 2 years in Villawood in Sydney and 2 years in community detention in Perth.

I feel I am a very lucky person. I don’t worry about the past. I focus on the future. Many of my friends, from Nepal and Somalia and other Sri Lankan Tamils, have not been granted a PR so far. Many of them are panicking, especially thinking about a possible change of government in the future. Many have spent a lot of money on lawyers; one of my relatives spent \$23,000 on lawyer’s fees and still nothing.

I was in Sri Lanka till I was 25. I had no peace there. The army attacked me when I was 21 and I lived in fear for 4 years. I always felt life threats. Anytime, there could be ‘Boom!’. I have been in Australia from the age of 25 to 41. Even before my PR, I felt freedom here. At one time, I was homeless for 41 days, sleeping in my car. Even then, I did not worry about anything because I was in Australia. I have always felt safe and happy here. I never think anything negative.

I have been in Melbourne for 10 years. I came here from Perth to join friends and because I could find cash work. I have done cleaning work, farmwork and been a kitchen hand. I can send money home to my parents. If they are happy, I am happy.

I make money from hard rubbish that is like gold for me. I even carry it in two bags on public transport. Soon, when I have my Australian car licence, I will be able to visit Trash & Treasure markets. There are lots of them around Melbourne. The organisers take 30 percent and I keep the rest.

I live in Broadmeadows now but lived in Dandenong from 2015-2019. I had some difficult times earning a living then. I was assaulted; my arm was broken and my car damaged. I was scammed a few times and quite a few employers did not pay.

From 2019, several people in Melbourne helped me find work. Libby organised me garden work with a supporter of the Brigidines. It was my difficult time, COVID19 time. For my first time in Australia, she paid me huge money, like \$50 per hour. I got COVID19 three times and didn't get any help from government. She transferred her own money at those times. She told me it's her help for me. If I needed money for something urgent, she paid me before I worked. Then, I worked and settled her money. She helped me lots. She believed in me lots. When she went overseas, I worked her place. She always prays for me. When I got good news, she was very happy. I really appreciated her help and love. I also discovered that I like garden work and the chance to see things grow in the new country - so different from Sri Lanka. I planted a banana tree for her garden as part of my own background or heritage.

She introduced me to another lovely lady. I worked her garden too. She also pays me \$50 per hour and she always gives me unwanted electronic items for my selling business. Until the end of last year, I still

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work for another lady. From 2021, I also did cleaning work for nuns in Kew.

These lovely Australian people helped me lots and are still helping. They are really good with me still. I don't know, if I hadn't met them, how I would have survived in the past. I met all of them through BASP, especially Libby. I will always remember their support in my life.

I am also a volunteer with the Colostomy Association of Victoria where I receive a volunteer payment.

Finding housing is so important. Red Cross tried to find me a house but gave priority to families over a single man. An African friend told me about the Brigidine Asylum Seekers Project (BASP) in 2019. Thanks to Brigid and Libby, I was given accommodation, and they supplied all the bedding. I only had a bedsheet. I moved back to Dandenong a few times, because there was farming work, but then the farms were sold. I am back in Broadmeadows now.

Two organisations have been very important for me – BASP and the Blue Mountains Refugee Support Group (BMRSG). They have provided my key turning points. BASP, with accommodation and BMRSG with legal support for my visa applications. I have been in contact with BMRSG for many years, since 2010. When I was in Villawood, BMRSG brought food and helped me with legal support. They also provided food vouchers and financial support, sometimes \$50 a week, sometimes \$100.

I was also given a lot of medical support. I didn't have Medicare between 2015 and 2024. A psychiatrist helped me from 2015 to 2019, and he didn't charge me anything. Also, between 2015 and 2022, Monash Health Refugee Health in Dandenong helped me. As well, between 2022- 2024, the Cabrini Asylum Seeker and Refugee Health Hub helped me.

My top priority now is employment. I hope later to find a partner and marry. I'd really like children. My Australian driver's licence is very important for work because then I will be able to do Uber Eats.

I am currently on a Health Care Card until I have my Medicare card. (It sometimes takes a while, after being granted a PR, to have all the bureaucratic details finalised.) I know my positive points and I can plan well. With my medication for schizophrenia, I need eight hours of sleep a day. This means I cannot start early in the morning.

Now, I am focusing on my future. I am very proud of where I am. I have forgotten my Sri Lankan life. I don't worry about the past 16 years in Australia. With loss, there is one day of crying and then a positive mentality helps us to move on. From now till I am 60, I will work very hard. Perhaps, when I am 60, I will have children to look after me. In my hand, I have everything: my PR, works rights, right to travel, Centrelink, and soon Medicare.

I have confidence that, eventually, everyone will get their permanent visa because, in Australia, people help, and rules are followed. In Sri Lanka, the army is present and checking all the time.

I'm not Superman. I did everything required. When the Immigration Department rejected me, people still accepted me as their friend or brother. First, we must eat. When I was in Dandenong, every day there were places offering food.

In the past, doors were closed. Now, God has opened many doors.

*Muru is not his real name, which has been changed for privacy and protection reasons.



Lest we forget

On Anzac eve, there was a profound, poignant gathering in Melbourne's Recital Centre — 'Music and Poetry for Anzac Day'. Composer and pianist Shauna Beesley organised this event. The funds raised were for BASP.

We heard the poems and songs of young artists who died so young in World War I. The concert featured the Australian première of Shauna Beesley's song cycle *Lest We Forget*, sung by dynamic baritone Nicholas Beecher, with Shauna herself at the piano. Also on the program was the beautiful soprano, Lisette Bolton and arresting voice actor Tim Dehn, who read texts and poems relating to WW1 and WW2.

We take this opportunity to say again that the arts, with their ability to sensitise us and make us feel for others, are so important in raising social awareness and working for change.

Truly it was an inspirational evening. We thank all who made it happen, especially Shauna.



Money always tells a bigger story than dollars and cents (2025 Budget)

Largely another disappointing budget for refugees and people seeking asylum

- Top points affecting asylum seekers from the Budget:
 - no increase to the humanitarian intake
 - no increase to SRSS budget (small income stream for a relatively small number of asylum seekers who are too sick to work or are single parents or having no work rights. So no alleviation of destitution and making charities and good hearted people in the community stepping in to help—clearly not sustainable)
 - increase in funding for offshore detention
 - expenditure of \$13 billion for offshore detention over the past decade

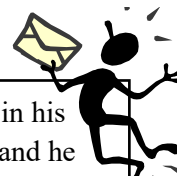
Also no information re:

- Payments made to Nauru
- Areas of expenditure for refugees e.g. employment pathways, housing possibilities

Over the past few months a few of the people in our BASP circle have been given permanent visas—amid much rejoicing. However this process is agonisingly slow and there has been no light shed on why these folk and not others.

A small number have been given work rights (after a lot of requests) and others short term visas (usually three months). An indication of how hard it is for people in the situation of having no work rights and/or no visas is that there is a lot of rejoicing over these small 'wins'.

As an indication of how unrealistic it becomes for some asylum seekers: a man who hasn't had a visa or work rights was given both. The visa was for three months, but to get a job he needs ID, and an Immi card (the only ID he has access to) can take as long as two months to be issued!



It was mid-April and we were running short of some items when a very large delivery came in from St Dominic's parish and primary school. Along with gift cards and monetary donations these helped us so much.



A newly arrived man who was a professional in his own country was kindly given a job cleaning and he sent a message to BASP saying 'I had such a good day today because I was busy'.

Prime Minister Anthony Albanese has spoken about kindness many times over the course of the past months:

"One of the things that you have to do as a leader is show **kindness** and **compassion** to the vulnerable. That's not weakness."

*Interview after the final pre-election debate
(28/4/2025)*

"Today the Australian people have voted for Australian values, for **fairness**, aspiration and opportunity for all. For the strength to show courage in adversity and **kindness** to those in need. And Australians have voted for a future that holds true to these values, a future built on everything that brings us together as Australians."

"Our differences unite us, and our courage and **kindness** sets us apart from the world!"

"So let all of us work together to build our national unity on the enduring foundations of **fairness, equality and respect** for one another."

Election victory speech (3/5/2025)

"Where we see such trauma in the world, there is nothing, **no cost**, to **Australians showing kindness**, thinking with their heart as well as their head."

Speech on the Voice Referendum (23/10/2024)

We agree with these sentiments/exhortations from our Prime Minister. Can we ask him and his Government to let these be guiding lights for them as they make decisions about asylum seekers?



Christ Church, parish South Yarra, are the amazing donors of eggs for our pantry.



Marian College Ararat are sending boxes of

toilet paper which are always very welcome. 'We have just placed an order for Who Gives a Crap toilet paper to donate to BASP. It should be delivered to you in a couple of days. BASP will receive 3 boxes of 48 rolls. Hope this helps'.



It is a source of great joy at BASP when people from the past contact us or call in to just tell us how they are going. M, a woman who lived with the Brigidines for a while after escaping from a violent relationship, visited us recently. She is married, has a teenage son, is employed in the health industry and, with her husband, is buying a home in the eastern suburbs of Melbourne.

As with most refugees, M still cannot see her own family. This remains a source of sadness and reminds us of the loneliness that is always a part of refugee stories..

We are grateful for any of the following food items (or vouchers to buy food and household necessities)

We currently have enough tinned food, except for cans of fruit, peas, carrots, corn.

The following are still very much appreciated:

- 1 kg sugar, oil (olive and vegetable), salt, pepper, tea, coffee
- Herbs and spices, especially coriander, cinnamon,
- Blocks or individual wrapped cheese.
- **Eggs are really appreciated**



Long life milk, **honey is a most appreciated food**, noodles, tuna, basmati rice, dates, jam (especially any red jam)



Gladwrap, tinfoil,

We would like to try flat bread in sealed wrapping as people often ask for bread.

Sweet and savoury Biscuits, snacks for school lunches (even when home!),

Shampoo, shaving cream and shavers, toothpaste and toothbrushes. Soap, deodorants

Garbage bags and bin liners (small and large)

We seemingly never have enough washing powder, dish washing detergents or cleaning products.

For anyone wishing to make a donation, the Project Bank details are: Brigidine Asylum Seekers Trust Account: bsb: 083-004; a/c: 56-924-6603; NAB.



Please put your name on the entry and email us at contact@basp.org.au after making a donation so we can send you a tax deductible receipt. We will send a newsletter but feel free to tell us that you don't want one.

Those of us who work directly with asylum seekers are very privileged. At BASP we can use your donations—money, food, time, houses, skills ... and give them to others and make their lives somewhat easier.



It is amazing how often many of you say to us Thanks for the work you do—but we are very conscious we could not do much of it without the amazing generosity that all of our BASP supporters give us—and then through us people seeking protection in Australia.

We see the immediate impact getting some food and income makes. It would be wonderful if those of you who help in so many ways could see this too. None of us do this work to get thanked but the tears of gratitude from many of those we assist are palpable signs of the appreciation.

Especially at times like Mother's Day those thousands who are separated from their own families are so grateful for some love and concern.

Brigid Arthur

Libby Saunders

(BASP Coordinators)