



Church Bells Toll for Children on Nauru

Anglican Churches across the North Coast of NSW that have Church Bells are being encouraged to toll them at noon each Friday to support asylum seeker children detained on Nauru.

This follows the lead of Altona Anglican Church in Melbourne's West which began a vigil toll in September this year.

At the first Altona vigil the bell tolled 95 times, once for each child.

Anglican churches in Melbourne, rural Victoria and in the Diocese of Wangaratta have now joined the #refugebell campaign.

Other churches across Australia are being encouraged to join the weekly vigil.

Every Friday at 12:00pm churches will ring bells for each child remaining on Nauru.

The #refugebell will sound until Universal Children's Day, (November 18) when the #KidsOffNauru national campaign plans to project the image #KidsOffNauru and the faces of asylum seeker children on the sails of the Sydney Opera House.

The #KidsOffNauru campaign now includes about 300 organizations across Australia.

The Anglican Diocese of Grafton has been concerned for asylum seekers detained on Nauru and Manus Island since the Australia Government reopened the centres in 2012, a Diocesan spokesperson said today.

"Motions seeking justice and resettlement were passed through Synod, earlier this year, and letters written to the relevant Government Ministers of the time.

"However, the government's offshore regional processing policy continues.

"As at October 22, the number of asylum seeker children effectively detained on Nauru has fallen to 52 as a result of medical evacuations to Australia.

"Another three children are detained in the Immigration Department's Melbourne Immigration Transit Accommodation (MITA).

"The organization, "Rural Australians for Refugees" (RAR) is encouraging all faith communities in Australia to participate in the #refugebell campaign.

"These communities are asked to advise RAR at rar.australia@gmail.com or text [0409 912 967](tel:0409912967) details of their participation and a contact point.

"RAR will update participating communities every Thursday with the number of asylum seeker children remaining on Nauru.

"This is simple action, but powerful. The bells speak for children whose voices are not otherwise heard.

"The sound helps to sharpen the awareness of our communities to the plight of those still detained.

"The tolling inspires us to never give up on our detained brothers and sisters.

"Most of all we are called to love and care for our neighbours, who include aliens seeking shelter in our land."