

Places of Sanctuary Ireland is an all-island network of groups in towns, cities and local communities which share the objectives of promoting a culture of welcome, and inclusiveness right across every sphere and sector of society, so that wherever people seeking sanctuary go they will feel safe, find people who welcome them and understand why they are here, and have opportunities to be included in all activities.

Sanctuary in Faith

This document is intended to encourage and help churches to engage in the process of joining the Sanctuary in Faith network. Examples offered below are intended to be descriptive, rather than prescriptive. This process is primarily about dialogue, sharing and mutual learning, rather than a set of prescribed steps:

- Bring the template ‘Statement of Support’ to your governing body (council/board/select vestry) for discussion. Encourage those who are involved in governance and decision-making to have a look at the Places of Sanctuary Ireland (<https://ireland.cityofsanctuary.org/>) or the Churches of Sanctuary website (<https://churchofsanctuary.org/church-of-sanctuary/>) to get a sense of the ethos and goals of the City of Sanctuary movement.
- If your governing body chooses to adopt the Statement of Support, return the completed form to the Revd Abigail Sines (abigail@christchurch.ie) to get started in the process of joining the network. Then you may consider:

If this type of work is new to you:

- Think about the awareness-raising that can happen within your own congregation/parishioners/members. Learning about the migration, refugee issues and the asylum process is an important key value of the Sanctuary movement. You might consider:
 - ‘Hospitality and Sanctuary for All’ discussion resource (<https://churchofsanctuary.org/resources/>)
 - Inviting a Sanctuary Ambassador to give a talk (recommendations available from Places of Sanctuary). This could take place by Zoom enabling you to draw on resources from different parts of the island.
- Make Refugee Week part of your plan of activities for the year. The UK-based Refugee Week website (<https://refugeeweek.org.uk/>) offers suggestions, including digitally based resources which could be shared remotely.
- Mark Sanctuary Sunday in some way.
- Participate in networking events to share questions and experiences with other places of worship on the Sanctuary journey.

If you have already been engaging in this work:

- Document what you’ve done! Your experiences and stories can be inspiring to others.
- Can you share some of your positive case studies on your website, via Facebook, through your church/diocesan/denominational newsletter? Some examples of case studies:
<https://faith.cityofsanctuary.org/case-studies>
<https://christchurchcathedral.ie/cathedral-of-sanctuary/>
- Are voices and perspectives of asylum-seeking friends part of how you present your story?
- Are there ways that you can reach out to colleagues within your network/denomination/faith group to increase the awareness of the Sanctuary movement and encourage them as well to get involved?
- Continue to deepen your engagement in learning, embedding and sharing as part of the Sanctuary ethos.
- Participate in networking events to share questions and experiences with other places of worship on the Sanctuary journey.
- Keep up the good work!

Sanctuary designation awards are made in consultation with the Places of Sanctuary Ireland board. When the designation is granted your place of worship will be presented with a certificate. We hope you will find an opportunity to make this a point of celebration not only for your place of worship but amongst the wider community.

We hope by increasing the network to increase the visibility of the Sanctuary movement, to enable opportunities sharing of experiences and even visits to one another’s communities to join in activities together, and in future the establishment of an annual Sanctuary in Faith conference. We hope as well by increasing this network that as asylum-seeking friends move from one part of the island to another we would be able to commend them to another Sanctuary group in their new local area, where they could expect to find a similar offer of welcome and friendship.