The parable of the Good Samaritan is often invoked in discussion of refugee issues, but in the times in which we are living, Pontius Pilate seems to be the more popular role model. In this lecture, Professor Maley discusses some of the bases of responsibilities towards refugees on the part of states and their agents, explores some ways in which contemporary state practice in Australia is devoted to finding ways of avoiding the discharge of such responsibilities, and shows how it is inspirational and innovative individuals, rather than agents of the state, who often played the most critical roles in assisting those who face a dire threat of persecution.

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