



## ACSJC Monthly Briefing April 2014 No 155



### From the Secretariat, April 2014

I have had the opportunity to attend a number of rallies against Australia's treatment of asylum seekers over the past year. They have been important occasions to join in a peaceful public protest. The people attending are passionate for their cause. Sometimes the anger at public policy is palpable, and, just as often there is a spirit of hope for change and an optimism that is born of the practical solidarity of being present and being there together.

The right to peaceful assembly is broad and applies not just to protests, but also to occasions of commemoration and celebration. But the right is perhaps most important when it allows participation in the political debate. This right is fundamental to a society that respects the dignity of the individual and values participation in the civil and political processes of a nation. It is an important part of the democratic process.

The United Nations outlines the 'right of peaceful assembly and association' in Article 20 of the UN Declaration on Human Rights. The neighbouring two articles in the Declaration give a basic indication of what a free and democratic society looks like in terms of the rights afforded to its citizens.

Article 19 states that 'Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers'.

Article 21 [lists](#) three essential components of democracy: 'the right to take part in government, directly or through freely chosen representatives'; the right of equal access to public service; democratic representation expressed in genuine elections 'which shall be by universal and equal suffrage and shall be held by secret vote or by equivalent free voting procedures.'

The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights [spells out](#) the right of assembly more fully. Article 21 says: 'The right of peaceful assembly shall be recognized. No restrictions may be placed on the exercise of this right other than those imposed in conformity with the law and which are necessary in a democratic society in the interests of



national security or public safety, public order ... the protection of public health or morals or the protection of the rights and freedoms of others.’

The Church has expressed this right in the broader context of ‘freedom’, which is a fundamental value of social life. Article 200 of the Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Catholic Church says:

*‘The value of freedom, as an expression of the singularity of each human person, is respected when every member of society is permitted to fulfil his personal vocation; to seek the truth and profess his religious, cultural and political ideas; to express his opinions; to choose his state of life and, as far as possible, his line of work; to pursue initiatives of an economic, social or political nature. This must take place within a “strong juridical framework”, within the [limits imposed by](#) the common good and public order, and, in every case, in a manner characterized by responsibility ... freedom must also be expressed as the capacity to refuse what is morally negative, in whatever guise it may be presented, as the capacity to distance oneself effectively from everything that could hinder personal, family or social growth.’*

In a country like Australia, it is sometimes easy to take for granted the rights and freedoms we enjoy – unless we have experienced or know someone who has experienced dispossession or the denial of fundamental rights. I think of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples of Australia and their struggle over many years for recognition, restitution and self-determination. It has often been the democratic mechanisms of freedom of speech, open debate, peaceful assembly and protest that have raised awareness of the issues and provided the catalyst for change.

The Aboriginal rallies and protests around the country at the time of Australia’s celebration of the bicentenary in 1988 caused many non-Indigenous people to recognise another history and story of this nation that stretched far earlier than the short period of white settlement. It also provided the opportunity for greater solidarity among Indigenous and non-Indigenous people in addressing past wrongs and seeking social justice. These demonstrations were part of a movement that has progressed the National Reconciliation and given impetus for vital initiatives such as the Constitutional Recognition for Indigenous Australians.

In their 2004 Social Justice Sunday Statement, ‘Peace Be With You’, Australia’s Catholic Bishops spoke of the importance of cultivating a culture of peace in the field of democracy and society. They drew on the word of Pope John Paul II in the encyclical *Centesimus annus*:

*‘The Church values the democratic system inasmuch as it ensures the participation of citizens in making political choices, guarantees to the governed the possibility of both electing and holding accountable those who govern them, and of replacing them through *peaceful* means when appropriate.’*(n. 46 – emphasis added)

The Bishops [highlighted the fact](#) that claims of human dignity and the right to engage in non-violent political processes are universal. They noted how the potential for violence is high in countries where some groups are excluded from the political process or lack an effective voice at the governmental level: ‘Protest movements and the outbreak of civil conflict are suppressed or countered by the violence of unrepresentative and often tyrannical regimes.’



The power of peaceful protest in seeking social justice and social change can be seen in the lengths to which some regimes will go to crack down on peaceful assemblies and to stifle public debate.

But what happens when a peaceful protest turns ugly – through brutal repression by a regime and/or protesters turning violent, for example, by taking up arms? The use of violence by protesters can destroy the valid cause of citizens and can be used by regimes as a pretext to prevent assembly on the grounds of national security or public order, as mentioned in Article 21 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

The Church's social doctrine also speaks to this issue – emphasising how peaceful assembly and passive resistance to political authority must be maintained in all but extreme cases and that there are very significant risks if protests become violent.

Article 401 of the Compendium of the Social Doctrine says:

*'The Church's social doctrine indicates the criteria for exercising the right to resistance:* "Armed resistance to oppression by political authority is not legitimate, unless all the following conditions are met: 1) there is certain, grave and prolonged violation of fundamental rights, 2) all other means of redress have been exhausted, 3) such resistance will not provoke worse disorders, 4) there is well-founded hope of success; and 5) it is impossible reasonably to foresee any better solution". Recourse to arms is seen as an extreme remedy for putting an end to a "manifest, long-standing tyranny which would do great damage to fundamental personal rights and dangerous harm to the common good of the country". The gravity of the danger that recourse to violence entails today makes it preferable in any case that *passive resistance* be practised, which is "a way more conformable to moral principles and having no less prospects for success".'

The Church's position on this matter always demands peaceful assembly and non-violent resistance. But there is also a recognition of the complexities of political discord and the desperate conditions related to prolonged oppression, social and economic deprivation and civil unrest that limit the option for peace. This is as complex as the just war theory the world was debating last decade when the forces of a 'Coalition of the willing' were preparing to invade Iraq.

The recent turmoil in the cities of Venezuela has resulted in the deaths of 31 people and the injury of over 460. The unrest, which continues, has been driven by a range of factors including political instability, economic decline, social decay and violent crime. In 2013, following the death of Hugo Chavez, Nicolas Maduro of the Socialist Party was elected President by the narrowest of margins – 50.7% – and is susceptible to challenges from the opposition to destabilise the government. The inflation rate is 56%, private industry is in decline, public services are inadequate and the supply of basic products such bread, meat and even toilet paper have been critically low. Violence in Venezuela is extremely high – with around 80 homicides per 100,000 and over 120 per 100,000 in the capital Caracas.

What began as peaceful demonstrations in February turned deadly – with student rallies provoking a violent response from government forces, shooting at protesters, arbitrary arrests and the beating of detainees. It should be noted that some protesters have resorted to violence and government forces are also among the dead and injured.



In all of the complexity of this unrest, there are different readings of the motivations behind the protests. Some say it is a legitimate peaceful protest against the unbearable socio-economic conditions of the country – a protest that has been met with a ‘terror campaign’. Others say it is a protest that has been promoted and used by the Opposition to generate violence that will destabilise the government.

(examples: [1](#), [2](#), [3](#), [4](#))

However, despite the complexity, there remains a special responsibility of the government authority to exercise restraint, to protect its citizens – in particular, those citizens exercising the right to protest peacefully – and to bring pro-government and anti-government groups to the table to negotiate peace.

This is straightforward, and it is what the Church and human rights groups are calling for.

The Catholic Bishops Conference of Venezuela has issued a [statement](#), saying:

‘Facing the grave challenges of our country in the struggle against personal insecurity and social violence and also the serious economic problems that affect us all, the protest against the government is both legitimate and constitutional, but it has to be peaceful.’

UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon has urged that all efforts be made to lower the tensions and prevent further violence. The High Commissioner for Human Rights, Navi Pillay, has expressed deep concern at the reported excessive use of force by the authorities and condemned the violence leading to death and injuries, ‘irrespective of the perpetrators’. She has urged all parties to move beyond verbal aggression and inflammatory rhetoric and to meaningful dialogue. A group of UN Special Rapporteurs has called on the Venezuelan Government to investigate allegations of arbitrary detention and the excessive use of force and violence against protesters. They have called for a guarantee of the rights of freedom of peaceful assembly, association, opinion and expression. - [1](#), [2](#), [3](#).

The important point is this: whether we are speaking of the particular right of peaceful protest, or the broad range of civil, political, economic and social rights, we all have a responsibility to promote and protect those rights. But elected governments and their institutions have the primary responsibility – they must take the first step.

As Pope Francis [said](#) during his General Audience on 26 February:

‘I sincerely hope that violence and hostility will cease as soon as possible, and that the entire Venezuelan People, beginning with political leaders and institutions, will endeavour to promote reconciliation through mutual forgiveness and a sincere dialogue, that is respectful of truth and justice and that is capable of dealing with concrete issues for the common good. As I assure you of my constant prayer, especially for those who lost their lives in the fighting and for their families, I invite all believers to lift up prayers to God, through the maternal intercession of Our Lady of Coromoto, that the country might quickly find peace and harmony.’

John Ferguson





## Current Issues/Resources, April 2014

### RESOURCE: I WAS A STRANGER AND YOU WELCOMED ME

The Australian Catholic Migrant and Refugee Office (ACMRO) has produced a resource for people who want to know more about the Church's teaching on asylum seekers, refugees and migrants. The leaflet, titled 'I Was a Stranger and You Welcomed Me' (from Matthew 25:35), deals briefly with issues including the numbers of refugees worldwide; the right to seek asylum; dignity, humanity, justice and mercy; and what scripture and Church teaching tell us about what we need to do as individuals and as a nation to 'heal a global wound'. See the ACMRO [website](#).

### ANDREW FORREST JOINS WITH POPE, RELIGIOUS LEADERS TO END SLAVERY

Australian mining magnate Andrew Forrest has launched a global network, along with the Vatican, the Anglican Communion and a leading Muslim institution, to end human trafficking worldwide by 2020, reports CNS/The Sydney Morning Herald. The new accord, signed during a Vatican news conference on 16 March, launched the beginning of the Global Freedom Network, which hopes to expand to include all the world's major faiths. The global initiative aims to prevent modern forms of slavery; to protect, rescue and rehabilitate victims; and to promote concrete measures that condemn or criminalise human trafficking. Read [here](#) about the Global Freedom Network.

### VICTORIAN SLAVERY-FREE EASTER CHOCOLATE CAMPAIGN

A coalition of anti-trafficking advocates in Victoria are behind the Slavery-Free Chocolate Campaign urging people to 'eat only ethically made chocolate'. The campaign is currently encouraging people to buy slavery-free chocolate for Easter to help stop the trafficking and forced labour of children and adults for chocolate production. [Read](#) about the Slavery-Free Chocolate Campaign.

### LAUNCH: ONLINE TRAINING PROGRAM ON TRAFFICKING AND SLAVERY

The first free Australian online training program for frontline workers dealing with trafficking and slavery was launched on 25 March by Sydney-based Anti-Slavery Australia at the University of Technology, Sydney. The course offers comprehensive training on human trafficking, slavery and slavery-like practices including forced labour and forced marriage. It has been developed for frontline workers from community organisations, government, teachers, health care professionals and law enforcement. The course also covers principles for working with trafficked people and details available support, indicators, referral pathways and next steps. Start the [Anti-Slavery Course](#).

### PETITION: MONDELÉZ: END CHILD TRAFFICKING IN YOUR CHOCOLATE BY SETTING A PUBLIC DEADLINE TO CERTIFY YOUR ENTIRE CHOCOLATE RANGE

Cocoa harvesting is backbreaking and hazardous work. The shocking reality is that much of this work is done by children. Thousands of boys as young as 10 years old, from the Cote



d'Ivoire and neighbouring countries, are trafficked to pick and harvest these beans. Their freedom is taken and they are forced to work long hours on the cocoa plantations without receiving any money for their work. Other global chocolate companies such as Mars, Ferrero and Hershey have made commitments to certify their entire chocolate range by 2020. Mondelez is lagging behind. This Easter ask Mondelez to set a public deadline for certifying their entire chocolate range. Ask to see a third party certification stamp (such as Fairtrade, UTZ or Rainforest Alliance) on all of their chocolate products. [Sign](#) the End Child Trafficking Petition.

## **CATHOLIC RELIGIOUS AUSTRALIA: NATIONAL LAMENT**

‘We are a society which has forgotten how to weep.’ - Pope Francis

Many people throughout Australia are disturbed by the punitive and harsh policies and conditions to which people seeking asylum in Australia are being subjected. The National Lament is a campaign of prayer, penance and action for people seeking asylum in Australia. It aims to make a Christian response to these people, rather than treating them as a ‘problem’ to be solved. The Lament will include prayer, penance and action. A [program and resources](#) are available for the National Lament.

## **WELCOME TO MY PLACE FOR DINNER**

‘For I was hungry, and you fed me. I was thirsty, and you gave me a drink. I was a stranger, and you invited me into your home.’ — Matthew 25:35

This is an opportunity for Australian Christians, compelled by the love of Christ, to show hospitality to asylum seekers and refugees during Refugee Week, 15-21 June 2014. Right now the church has the opportunity to rise up and show the tangible love of Christ to those fleeing the trauma of conflict, crisis and poverty in their birthplace to face uncertain futures here in Australia. [Find out](#) how to run a Welcome to My Place for Dinner in your home or church.

## **NATIONAL INQUIRY INTO IMMIGRATION DETENTION OF CHILDREN, TEN YEARS ON**

The Australian Human Rights Commission has launched a new inquiry into the immigration detention of children. It has been ten years since the publication of *A Last Resort*, the report that made very clear recommendations for the protection of children seeking asylum. For those who have experienced immigration detention, who visit families and children in detention, health practitioners who have worked with people affected by immigration detention – the Commission would like to hear your input. The submission process is simple (and it can be video) and it is open until the end of May. If you know people who may like to participate, would like assistance in telling their story (have it transcribed, take part in a group discussion etc.) please get in touch with ChilOut by email [team@chilout.org](mailto:team@chilout.org) [Visit here](#) to make a submission on the National Inquiry into immigration detention.

## **EDMUND RICE EDUCATION RESOURCE: ACTIVITIES FOR STUDENTS: ASYLUM SEEKERS AND REFUGEES – FOCUSING ON REAL PEOPLE AND THEIR STORIES**



The free 52 page Education Resource offers 35 cross-curricular activities which are practical, engaging and focused on increasing awareness about human rights and advocacy. The activities are adaptable to all year levels in secondary school and some can also be used with primary classes, students with special needs and could also be used in community group discussions. Students are encouraged to think about asylum seekers and refugees with compassion, to move their understanding from the head to the heart. [Download](#) the Edmund Rice Resource

### **INSTITUTE FOR ECONOMICS AND PEACE REPORT: THE ECONOMIC COST OF VIOLENCE CONTAINMENT**

The global economic impact of violence has reached an astonishing US\$9.46 trillion, which is equivalent to 11% of Gross World Product, according to a report from the Institute for Economics and Peace. The report, calculates the cost of violence containment in over 152 countries according to 13 different types of violence related spending. The findings outlined in the report show that violence containment costs US\$1,300 per person per year and is almost double the size of the world's agriculture industry. To put this in perspective: violence containment spending is over 2.4 times the size of the total GDP of Africa. For the full picture, [download](#) the report on the Economic Cost of Violence Containment

### **NATIONAL ENERGY EFFICIENCY NETWORK.**

NEEN is a national initiative to promote open learning and collaboration amongst faith-based and not-for-profit community organisations to achieve energy savings and a positive energy future. Social services organisations, churches and parishes, kindergartens, aged care organisations, not-for-profit agencies and religious congregations are welcome to register for NEEN. For more information, visit the NEEN [website](#) or the NEEN Facebook [page](#), which includes a number of ideas and opportunities for grants.

### **NEW PUBLICATION: 'THE FRANCIS EFFECT: LIVING THE GOSPEL OF JOY'**

Catholic Mission and Catholic Religious Australia's Mission Network are excited to present 'The Francis Effect: Living the Joy of the Gospel.' This comprehensive book contains twelve responses to the new Apostolic Exhortation, *Evangelii Gaudium* ('The Joy of the Gospel'), from experts across the Church in Australia and a foreword by leading Missiologist Stephen Bevans svd. Read [here](#) about The Francis Effect

### **UNICEF PUBLICATION - UNDER SIEGE: THE DEVASTATING IMPACT ON CHILDREN OF THREE YEARS OF CONFLICT IN SYRIA**

Syria's children are living today through the most damaging conflict for children in the region's recent history. More than 5.5 million Syrian children now see their future besieged by war. It is estimated there are up to one million children who live under siege and in hard-to-reach areas that UNICEF and other humanitarian partners cannot access on a regular basis. [Read](#) the full UNICEF Publication 'Under Siege'

### **PROJECT COMPASSION 2014 – A FULL AND BEAUTIFUL LIFE**

Caritas Australia's annual Project Compassion appeal is now up and running. Caritas Australia CEO, Paul O'Callaghan, said that Australians have traditionally been supportive of



this annual appeal because they see how Caritas works to achieve impact in 35 countries. ‘The wonderful generosity of the Australian community has enabled Caritas to work alongside communities over the long term in Asia, Africa, the Pacific, Latin America and with First Australian communities. This has helped to transform the lives of many marginalised people. Every dollar raised and every individual, school, parish or community that embraces Project Compassion makes a real difference,’ Mr O’Callaghan said. During Lent, Australians are invited to raise funds for Project Compassion in a variety of ways. Caritas has provided a Lent Calendar that helps you explore the Project Compassion stories each day until 20 April. Donate [here](#) to Project Compassion or phone 1800 024 413.

## **TERROR GRIPS SOUTH SUDAN AS CONFLICT INTENSIFIES**

Caritas Australia is working through its international network to alleviate suffering in South Sudan, the world’s newest country, where thousands have been forced to abandon their homes following fighting during a so-called ceasefire. According to reports in the Catholic media, large sections of Unity, Upper Nile and Jonglei States in South Sudan have been abandoned, as residents and members of the church flee south in a desperate bid to escape the violence and terror. ‘The situation facing so many is devastating. Women, men and children are forced to run for their lives,’ Ms Wachira said. ‘The people now in most dire need are those in the camps. They’re tired, hungry and longing for a peaceful resolution to this crisis.’ With your support during Project Compassion, families can rebuild their lives and be confident of a more secure future. Donate [here](#) to Project Compassion or phone 1800 024 413.

## **REDUCING RED TAPE FOR CHARITIES**

Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission have commissioned research into the regulatory and reporting burden faced by Australian charities. The research is in response to a recommendation from the Measuring and Reducing Red Tape in the Not-for-profit Sector forum to measure the baseline of red tape imposed on the sector and to identify target areas for red tape reduction. The research includes developing a conceptual framework, conducting case studies and mapping and costing red tape. A key element of the red tape mapping is the survey of charities to collect high level information on regulatory burden. Charities are requested to help completing this Regulatory and Reporting Burden on Charities [Survey](#) by 11 April. It will take about 15 minutes to complete the survey.

## **NOMINATIONS FOR THE 2015 SYDNEY PEACE PRIZE**

Each year the Sydney Peace Prize, \$50,000 and a hand-made glass trophy crafted by the Australian artist Brian Hirst, is awarded to an individual or organisation that has:

- made significant contributions to peace with justice locally, nationally or globally; such as steps to address structural and cultural forms of violence (for example poverty, racial and gender discrimination and environmental destruction)
- who is committed to the promotion and attainment of human rights
- whose work illustrates the philosophy and principles of nonviolence





The Sydney Peace Prize Jury accepts nominations until the end of July of the year prior to when the Prize is awarded. We invite you to submit a nomination please download the Sydney Peace Prize nomination [form](#) and submit it via email or post along with supporting documents before the 31 July 2014.

## **NATIONAL CONGRESS: PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE RACIAL DISCRIMINATION ACT THREATEN RACIAL COHESION**

The elected representative body for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples says Federal Government plans to abolish important legislative protections for the racially vulnerable threaten decades of hard work to build positive race relations in Australia. The National Congress of Australia's First Peoples (Congress) rejects the government's Freedom of Speech (Repeal of s. 18D) Bill 2014, which seeks to amend the Racial Discrimination Act 1975. Attorney General George Brandis released the Bill today after its endorsement by the Coalition party room. Congress has pursued a vigorous campaign to dissuade federal parliamentarians from watering down the nation's racial discrimination laws. [Read](#) the full National Congress Report

## **VACANCY - POLICY OFFICER, ABORIGINAL PEAK ORGANISATIONS NT (APO NT)**

APO NT is an alliance of the NLC, CLC, AMSANT, NAAJA and CAALAS, committed to increasing Aboriginal engagement in policy development and expanding opportunities for Aboriginal community control. Interested persons should possess appropriate tertiary qualifications or equivalent, experience in policy analysis and development, and an understanding of the policy environment affecting Aboriginal people in the NT. The successful applicant will require advanced research, oral and written skills, be an excellent communicator and be able to effectively coordinate input from APO NT's members and manage its external relationships. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander candidates are strongly encouraged to apply by 7 April. [Read](#) the APO NT Policy Officer position description

## **PETITION: PROVIDE FUNDING FOR ABORIGINAL EARLY CHILDHOOD SUPPORT AND LEARNING INCORPORATED (AECSL) TO CONTINUE ITS SUPPORT AND ADVOCACY WORK**

AECSL are seeking support to ensure that there is continued funding for the Aboriginal Early Childhood Support and Learning Incorporated (AECSL) to continue its support and advocacy work for Aboriginal early childhood in NSW. AECSL has a long history of supporting and advocating for quality early childhood education for Aboriginal children and families in NSW. The organisation is facing a serious funding crisis following the Commonwealth decision to axe funding under the 'Indigenous Support Unit' program. [Sign](#) the petition for AECSL

## **NEW PUBLICATION: 'IN THE ABSENCE OF TREATY'**

This book explores the current inadequacy of the process used in engaging with Aboriginal people, which results in control slipping away from them. It provides concise but incisive account from recent reports about the reasons for the ongoing and growing frustration of



many Aboriginal people in the NT. In doing so it hints at possibly the only solution – treaties. Visit [here](#) to read ‘In the Absence of Treaty’

## **LENTEN REFLECTION - THE GRACE OF EARTH**

This online resource is produced by the St Columban Mission Society and is available for free to download. During Lent, it gives an opportunity to learn about six aspects of Earth’s life support systems: Atmosphere, Oceans, Fresh Water, Land, Plant Life and Animal Life. It includes ideas for reflection, inspiration, meditation, prayer, information, discussion, action. It is suitable for: Schools, Youth Groups, Religious Congregations, Parish Groups, Social Justice Groups, Ecumenical Groups, and Adult Discussion Groups. Visit [here](#) to download ‘The Grace of the Earth’

## **COMPETITION: ‘ECONOMY AND SOCIETY’ INTERNATIONAL AWARD**

In order to promote the knowledge of the Social Doctrine of the Catholic Church (SDC) the Centesimus Annus – Pro Pontifice Foundation will bestow two awards:

A €30,000 ‘Economy and Society’ international award to publications in the fields of economics and social studies. The prize will be awarded to a work published after 2005 which stands out for its original contribution to in depth study and implementation of the Social Doctrine of the Church, is of proven doctrinal soundness and exceptional quality. The Foundation wishes to honour works that can reach out to a large audience and are the expression of a strong Christian commitment in economic and social activities.

A €20,000 award to young SDC researchers, to be divided among two or more researchers. The award will be bestowed on two or more theses in the field of SDC. Applications can be filed by young researchers born after January 1980 who must submit two copies of their thesis with a brief presentation by their Department Head.

The jury will consider works published in English, French, German, Italian, Portuguese and Spanish. Apply for the Economy and Society’ International Award, [submit](#) applications by April 15.

## **AFTINET SUBMISSION: URGENT LETTER TO THE TRADE MINISTER RE: CONCERNS AT INVESTOR RIGHTS TO SUE GOVERNMENTS IN THE JAPAN-AUSTRALIA FTA**

AFTINET is concerned about the possible inclusion of investor-state dispute settlement (ISDS) in the Japan-Australia Free Trade Agreement, as occurred in the recent Korea-Australia FTA. ISDS allows foreign investors to sue federal, state and local governments for hundreds of millions of dollars in international tribunals, over claims that domestic laws and policies harm their investment. There have been many cases of governments being sued over health and environmental laws. This is a serious risk to our democracy and sovereignty, and should not be used as a bargaining chip in trade negotiations. [Read](#) the full AFTINET submission



## **ACSJC Publications**

Social Justice Council PO Box 7246 ALEXANDRIA NSW 2015  
02 8306 3498 [admin@acsjc.org.au](mailto:admin@acsjc.org.au) [www.socialjustice.catholic.org.au](http://www.socialjustice.catholic.org.au)



(Orders: phone (02) 8306 3499 or download an order form from the ACSJC [website](#) that can be faxed to (02) 8306 3498)

### **COMING SOON – BUILDING BRIDGES**

The Australian Catholic Social Justice Council (ACSJC) is preparing to publish a collection of Social Justice Statements issued by Australia's Bishops between 1988 and 2013.

The book, *Building Bridges: Social Justice Statements from Australia's Bishops 1988 to 2013*, brings these Statements together in an attractive and readable format. The publication is fully indexed, making this an exceptional resource for education and research. It will offer an invaluable insight into Catholic social teaching brought to life in an Australian context over the past 26 years. This collection is a vital resource for anyone interested in the Church's teaching on justice. It will be of special interest to schools and universities and to parish and diocesan groups.

### **ORDER NOW! – 2014 SOCIAL JUSTICE DIARY**

The 2014 Social Justice Diary includes the dates of significant events, anniversaries and special days which celebrate particular aspects of social justice. The Diary provides a social justice program for the full year. Information and ideas for prayer and reflection are included. This is an essential resource for teachers and parishes. Cost: \$7.50 (including postage). To download an order form, [click here](#).

### **DISCUSSION GUIDE: 2014 WORLD DAY OF PEACE MESSAGE**

The theme for the 47<sup>th</sup> World Day of Peace Message from Pope Francis is *Fraternity: the Foundation and Pathway to Peace*. In this his first World Day of Peace message, Pope Francis expresses his wish for everyone to live a life filled with joy and hope, in fraternity that helps us 'look upon and treat each person as a true sister or brother'. The ACSJC has prepared a Discussion Guide for the papal message, which is available on our [website](#).

### **SERIES PAPER 75 – 'JUSTICE IN THE NAME OF GOD'**

Time and again in the Bible we come across the concepts of 'name' and 'word'. People of our time hear and read these concepts so often in Scripture and in the liturgy that it is very easy not to ask what their deeper meaning is. In part, this is because in today's society, 'word' and 'name' do not have the significance they had for the ancient peoples of the Eastern Mediterranean. For them, the name of God went with the idea of justice, and the prophets, in taking up the call to justice, did so in God's name: the two are inseparable. In the Gospel of John, the Incarnation is described in a profound way: the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us. Author Gerard Moore describes this paper as 'an attempt to revisit the theology of God as a God of justice' and asks: 'Where does justice fit as we contemplate the nature of God?' This paper surveys the prophets as messengers of God's ideal of justice and shows how this mission culminates in the mission of Jesus himself. Available [here](#).

### **SERIES PAPER 74 – 'TIME TO DRAW THE LINE: FINDING A JUST SETTLEMENT BETWEEN AUSTRALIA AND TIMOR-LESTE'**



Beneath the Timor Sea vast deposits of oil and gas lie between Australia, Timor-Leste and Indonesia. Who has a just claim to those resources? What does international law say about them? What are Australians' obligations as citizens of the world? What can we learn from the teaching of Christ and his Church as we grapple with these questions? Fr Frank Brennan tries to outline some answers to these questions in this Series paper, a sequel to his 2004 paper 'The Timor Sea's Oil and Gas: What's Fair?' He writes: 'This paper attempts to explain the issue so that Australians of good will can reach a conclusion about the best way forward for any Australian government committed to justice, transparency and good neighbourly behaviour.' Frank Brennan sets out the facts calmly and clearly and points us towards some ways forward. Available [here](#).

(Catholic Social Justice Series papers: \$7.50 a copy, including postage)



## News Monitor

### [ACMRO launch: What the Church teaches on asylum and migration](#)

The official launch of *What The Catholic Church Teaches About Asylum and Migration* was held in Sydney. Organised by ACMRO, the launch featured talks by Head of the Jesuit Refugee Service, Aloysius Mowe SJ, and Bishop Gerard Hanna, currently the ACBC delegate for migrants and refugees.

### [CHA says health gap widens as politicians ignore report](#)

A report found billions of dollars could be saved annually if recommendations from a bipartisan Senate Inquiry were implemented has failed to spark politicians into action on the social determinants of health. 'Reports seem to emerge every couple of weeks pointing to unacceptable variances in people's health based on their socioeconomic status or their ethnicity or where they live or their education level', said Catholic Health Australia CEO Martin Laverty.

### [Andrew Forrest joins with Pope, religious leaders to end slavery](#)

Australian mining magnate Andrew Forrest launched a global network, along with the Vatican, the Anglican Communion and a leading Muslim institution, to end human trafficking worldwide by 2020. In a joint statement, the accord's signatories called human trafficking and modern forms of slavery 'crimes against humanity' and called for urgent action by all faith communities to join the effort to 'set free the most oppressed of our brothers and sisters.'

### [Religious leaders join NSW coal mining protest](#)

A Buddhist monk, a Catholic priest and Uniting Church ministers were at Maules Creek in NSW supporting local protesters trying to stop the expansion of mining in the area. Thea Ormerod, president of the Australian Religious Response to Climate Change, said that though many believed religion and politics shouldn't mix and such action might be seen as radical, they were following a well-worn path for people of faith.



### [Francis to hold first Papal audience for blind, deaf](#)

Pope Francis became the first pontiff to hold an exclusive audience with people who are blind and deaf. 'There have probably always been deaf at (events of) other popes on the side. But a Pope has never invited us on the basis of being deaf,' said spokesperson Jakob Badde.

### [PNG bishops call for Manus centre closure](#)

Australia's Papua New Guinea based Manus Island Refugee processing centre should be closed down, said the Pacific Island nation's peak Catholic body in an appeal to the Australian government. It was also concerned over the Australian government's 'rhetoric of a righteous campaign' against people smuggling at the expense of PNG's reputation, the CBC said in a statement.

### [CRA calls for National Lament over asylum seeker treatment](#)

Catholic Religious Australia called for a 'National Lament' for people seeking asylum in Australia. 'Many people throughout Australia are disturbed by the punitive and harsh policies and conditions to which people seeking asylum in Australia are being subjected,' said CRA President, Sr Annette Cunliffe.

*For details click on headlines or go to [cathnews.com](http://cathnews.com)*



## **Social Justice Diary, April 2014**

**2 Wed** World Autism Awareness Day

**4 Fri** International Day for Mine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action

National Youth Week begins

**6 Sun** Fifth Sunday of Lent

International Day of Sport for Development and Peace

**7 Mon** World Health Day

Day of Remembrance of the Victims of the Rwandan Genocide

**8 Tue** Yom ha-Shoah, Holocaust Memorial Day

**11 Fri** 1963: Pope John XXIII's encyclical *Pacem in Terris* ('Peace on Earth')

**12 Sat** International Day of Human Space Flight

**13 Sun** Palm Sunday

**15 Tue** 1991: Aboriginal Deaths in Custody Royal Commission Final Report signed



- 18 Fri** Good Friday  
World Heritage Day
- 20 Sun** Easter Sunday
- 22 Tue** International Mother Earth Day
- 24 Thu** 1945: First United Nations Conference opens with 45 nations attending  
1986: Nuclear plant accident in Chernobyl, Ukraine, causes thousands of deaths and widespread contamination in Europe
- 25 Fri** ANZAC Day
- 26 Sat** 1998: Bishop Gerardi murdered in Guatemala
- 27 Sun** Second Sunday of Easter  
Divine Mercy Sunday  
2014: Popes John XXIII and John Paul II to be canonised
- 28 Mon** 1841: Death of St Peter Chanel, first martyr from Oceania, in the New Hebrides
- 29 Tue** Day of Remembrance for all Victims of Chemical Warfare

