

ACSJC Monthly Briefing October 2015 No 172



From the Secretariat October 2015

Dear Friends,

On Wednesday September 9, the Australian Catholic Bishops' 2015–2016 Social Justice Statement, *For Those Who've Come Across the Seas*, was launched by Phil Glendenning, President of the Refugee Council of Australia and Director of the Edmund Rice Centre. The response was given by Professor Mary Crock, Professor of Public Law at the University of Sydney.

Auntie Elsie Heiss, Aboriginal elder and former member of the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Catholic Council and Sydney's Aboriginal Catholic Ministry, acknowledged the Cammeraygal people as Traditional Owners.

The Chairman of the ACSJC, Bishop Vincent Long Van Nguyen, contributed a reflection and thanked those participating.

Human dignity is central

Phil Glendenning commenced by saying that this year's Social Justice Statement was 'both timely and needed after what we have witnessed in Australia's treatment of refugees and asylum seekers over the past 20 years. It is as if we have been at war with them.'

'The Social Justice Statement we launch today calls for something better, amplifying the calls of Pope Francis for more just treatment of refugees, and echoing his identification of the "globalisation of indifference" in our world that as a result means we have forgotten how to weep, and how to experience compassion – of "suffering with others".'

He suggested that our souls had been touched by the image of the little Syrian boy Aylan Kurdi, whose drowned body had been found on a Turkish beach.

'He looked so familiar to anyone who has struggled to put shoes on a toddler, tucked a child into bed, or struggled to wash a child's hair', Mr Glendenning said.

'The tiny appallingly peaceful image of his death has pierced the consciousness of an indifferent, deaf world and evoked a response where previously there had been too much turning away, too much globalised indifference', he said.

Mr Glendenning went on to emphasise that in any discussion of refugees, human dignity is central. This means that, in the words of the Statement, 'it is never right to use human beings as if they are things – means to an end.' Australia is doing just that and justifying it on the grounds that it 'stops the boats' and 'saves lives'.

In fact, he said, the boats have not been stopped but have been deflected elsewhere. In 2014, 53,000 people embarked on dangerous sea journeys from the Bay of Bengal to Thailand, Malaysia and Indonesia. 'They have not arrived here. They have however been at sea and moving, risking their lives, and in many cases drowning.'

Other issues include extended detention of innocent people, labelling them ‘illegal’ and ‘queue jumpers’, towing boats back or turning them around, hasty and inadequate screening that send people back to danger, the ‘militarisation of what is a humanitarian issue’, laws that would punish people who report sexual, physical and psychological abuse of detainees on Nauru and Manus, and the ‘establishment of a paramilitary wing of the Immigration Department, the Border Force’.

‘This has all happened on our watch. For the most part it has been bi-partisan, and has represented the globalisation of indifference across our nation

‘Against that backdrop we have the call of Pope Francis and the call of the Australian Bishops Conference through this Social Justice Statement that draw on the examples of the life of Jesus, the Scriptures and Catholic Social Teaching – to point to something better and different.’

Concluding his address, Mr Glendenning said:

‘I believe this Statement is a call to the Church as to how seriously we take our faith into the world, and it is a call to the world to never see compassion as a sign of weakness. Compassion is the antidote to the globalisation of indifference and it is probably our greatest civilising strength. It needs to be embraced, mobilised and lived – so that together we can live on this planet like human beings.’

A call for leadership

Responding to Phil Glendenning’s address, Professor Mary Crock remarked on an ‘increasingly toxic’ discourse on refugees in Australia. Our politicians ‘have sought electoral gain in fomenting fear of the outsider – embodied particularly in persons of the Muslim faith – at precisely the time when the opposite is needed’, she said.

She mentioned the three ‘running sores’ that the Statement identifies in Australia’s refugee law and policy: mandatory detention of asylum seekers, our treatment of boat arrivals who are in the community, and the ‘Pacific Solution’.

‘In a recent meeting with the shadow minister for immigration, I went so far as to suggest that our treatment of persons transferred to Manus Island and Nauru constitute crimes against humanity’, Professor Crock said. She urged that Australia continue the tradition of an immigration policy free of discrimination on the grounds of religion or race.

‘The fiscal and moral costs of Manus Island and Nauru are more than our country can bear’, Professor Crock said. ‘Women, children and vulnerable persons are suffering abuses that future generations will condemn. Do we need yet another Royal Commission before the abuses are stopped?’

‘Detaining children who we know cannot be returned to the countries from which they have fled can never be in our national interest’, she said.

Professor Crock pointed out the UN’s mechanisms for prioritising the resettlement of the most needy. ‘We should continue to respect these processes without imposing an arbitrary screen based on religious beliefs’, she said.

‘The most lamentable feature of Australian law and policy is that we have ceased to observe even the most elementary aspects of international refugee law – the principle that refugees should never be returned to a country where they face death or persecution.’

Remembering Australia's past generosity

The Chairman of the ACSJC, Bishop Vincent Long, thanked Phil Glendenning and Mary Crock for their contributions to the launch of the Statement. He began his address with the words of Najeeba, a young Hazara woman who fled Afghanistan in 2010:

Asylum seekers carry sorrow and distress and depend on human sympathy. An asylum seeker is a kneeling person; kneeling in front of the ship to ask for a reduced escape price; kneeling in front of the aid agency asking to be saved.

They get on a boat, on a piece of wood, not knowing where it is taking them; their safety and security limited to that piece of wood, risking starving or drowning at sea.

Najeeba's words are quoted in the Social Justice Statement. Bishop Long reflected that his experience had been similar to Najeeba's: he, like two million of his fellow citizens, had fled Vietnam after the fall of Saigon. He survived the boat trip and 16 months in a Malaysian refugee camp and eventually found refuge in Australia.

'My episcopal motto "go further into the deep" is in part meant to honour the memory of my people who suffered and died in the pursuit of freedom and dignity', he said.

'How many more have shared such a story?' he asked.

Bishop Long compared this experience of so many Australians with our country's present policy of interception and offshore detention. At the height of arrivals in 2013, he pointed out, 'the numbers arriving amounted to about 20,000 people' – a tiny proportion of the total number displaced around the world.

'To my mind, we cannot approach the issue of refugees and asylum seekers without reference to the broader context of justice and solidarity ... We need to approach the issue as primarily a humanitarian and justice issue rather than merely a political one.'

'Can we continue to secure our privilege as our exclusive right without confronting injustice in the world?' Bishop Long asked.

Australia needs to become aware of the stories of asylum seekers, now hidden behind a veil of secrecy. 'The accounts of the atrocities they are fleeing will shock us', Bishop Long said.

'I remember with pride the Australia that rose to the challenge in the past with its generous embrace of migrants and refugees. It proved itself especially courageous during the Indochinese exodus and accepted an unprecedented number of Asian refugees. Australia changed for the better as it always has with each successive wave of new arrivals.'

In closing, Bishop Long reminded the audience of the constant appeals of Pope Francis to address the issues of refugees and asylum seekers as a matter of justice and compassion.

Catholic Bishops' Statement and associated resources

There are many ways the message of the Bishops' 2015–2016 Statement can be promoted throughout the year ahead.

The Statement can be downloaded from the ACSJC [website](#).

View [this short Video](#) and consider passing it on to your local parish.

The Video can be downloaded from the ACSJC website along with other resources that are ideal for prayer, worship, and personal reflection, and for discussion in classrooms and among groups.

John Ferguson (National Executive Officer)



Current Issues/Resources October 2015

MEDIA STATEMENT: Bishop welcomes announcement Australia will accept 12,000 more refugees

‘Australia has a primary obligation to protect desperately vulnerable people and so I welcome the Prime Minister’s announcement today that an extra 12,000 refugees will be accepted from Syria and Iraq. This is a generous response to suffering that demonstrates the compassion of the Australian people,’ says Bishop Vincent Long, Chairman of the Australian Catholic Social Justice Council. ‘These are the sort of vulnerable people we should focus on when responding to claims for refugee status,’ he added. Bishop Long was speaking at the launch of the Australian Catholic Bishops’ 2015-2016 Social Justice Statement. [Read more](#).

BISHOP LONG ON ABC RELIGION AND ETHICS REPORT

With some 60 million refugees and displaced people on the move globally, nations around the world are grappling with the issue of how many refugees they can afford to take in. The refugee debate has particular significance for Bishop Vincent Long Van Nguyen, Chairman of the Australian Catholic Social Justice Council. He came to Australia back in 1980 from Vietnam on a boat as an asylum seeker when he was 18. He’s told the Religion and Ethics Report that, ‘We, as a regional leader, as a prosperous nation can do much more. We have to get away from the notion that refugees are a burden to Australia. On the contrary, it’s been proven otherwise. With that in mind, we can commit ourselves to a more generous acceptance of refugees.’ To listen, [visit here](#).

THE GLOBAL CAMPAIGN TO END CHILD DETENTION

Tracking progress on child detention around the world, the Global Campaign to End Immigration Detention of Children urges states to adopt alternatives to detention that fulfil the best interests of the child and allow children to remain with their family members and/or guardians in non-custodial, community-based contexts while their immigration status is being resolved. The Campaign coordinates international, regional and national activities with the goal of raising awareness of the issue of child immigration detention and encouraging states to ‘expeditiously and completely cease the immigration detention of children’ consistent with the CRC Committee’s guidance. [Sign up and show your support](#).

JESUIT REFUGEE SERVICE ARTICLE: HOW CAN YOU SUPPORT ASYLUM SEEKERS AND REFUGEES?

'Jesuits have a tradition, originating in the Spiritual Exercises of our Founder, St Ignatius, of praying the following questions: "What have I done for Christ? What am I doing for Christ? What should I do for Christ?" When Pope Francis spoke about his prayer life in an interview for Jesuit journals in September 2013, he said that these were the questions that he asks himself when he prays.' Read their recommendations to practically support asylum seekers and refugees [here](#).

THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION ON THE SITUATION OF REFUGEES AND ASYLUM SEEKERS

The Conference of Leaders of Religious Institutes (CLRI) (NSW) has published a theological reflection on the situation of refugees and asylum seekers, particularly in the context of recent developments in legislation pertaining to the reporting of abuse in detention centres. Download [the reflection written by Justin Glynn sj](#).

CATHOLIC ALLIANCE FOR PEOPLE SEEKING ASYLUM

The Catholic Alliance for People Seeking Asylum, which aims to change hearts and minds in support of the abolition of harsh asylum seeker policies, has been officially launched at the start of World Refugee Week. CAPSA was formed in 2014 to challenge the current inflammatory national debate on asylum seekers and to promote an Australia that welcomes and respects people seeking asylum. [Visit their website](#).

LETTERS TO ASYLUM SEEKERS

Refugee advocate and barrister, Julian Burnside QC, has started a letter writing campaign to let asylum seekers know we have not forgotten them and we care. Will you write to an asylum seeker on Manus Island or Nauru? [Find out how](#).

ANTI-POVERTY WEEK: 11 – 17 OCTOBER 2015

Poverty and severe hardship affect more than a million Australians. Around the world, more than a billion people are desperately poor. In Anti-Poverty Week, YOU can help fight poverty and hardship! Anti-Poverty Week is a week where all Australians are encouraged to organise or take part in an activity aiming to highlight or overcome issues of poverty and hardship here in Australia or overseas. It was established in Australia as an expansion of the UN's annual International Anti-Poverty Day on October 17. The main aims are: to strengthen public understanding of the causes and consequences of poverty and hardship around the world and in Australia; and to encourage research, discussion and action to address these problems, including action by individuals, communities, organisations and governments. Everyone is encouraged to help reduce poverty and hardship by organising an activity during the Week or taking part in an activity organised by others. To find out more, [visit the website](#).

CATHOLIC EARTHCARE RELEASES VIDEO ABOUT *LAUDATO SI'*

Catholic Earthcare Australia is celebrating the very first World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation today by releasing a short video entitled *Laudato Si' – An urgent appeal for action*. The video features three prominent Catholic leaders - Archbishop Adolfo Tito Yllana (Apostolic Nuncio to Australia), Bishop Michael Kennedy (Bishop of Armidale and Chair of Catholic Earthcare Australia) and Jacqui Rémond (Director of Catholic Earthcare Australia). It offers a unique Australian perspective on Pope Francis' encyclical *Laudato Si'*, and a direct call to action for the Australian Catholic community. [The video can be viewed online here](#).

Smaller Island States Leaders' Port Moresby Declaration on Climate Change

Meeting in Port Moresby and preparing for Paris Climate Conference, the Leaders of the Pacific Smaller Island States have called for a legally binding agreement to: limit global average temperature increases, ensure the right to exist as a people, uphold the polluter-pays principle, address all sources of greenhouse gas emissions, renew international mitigation commitments every five years, include a mechanism to address loss and damage, ensure ease of access to adequate and predictable finance, technology and capacity building, and to recognise the special circumstances of Small Island Developing States and Least Developed Countries and direct additional efforts to assist them meet the challenge of climate change. 'We, Leaders of the Pacific Smaller Island States, also call on all nations, particularly the advanced economies in our region and beyond, to rise to the challenge of climate change and take transformational action to steer us on a path where climate change is no longer a threat to our planet. As a first step in this direction we call for a global moratorium on all new coal mines. We cannot afford to lock in any further fossil fuel emissions. Green-Blue economies must be the way for now and into the future.' [Read more.](#)

REPORT: 'WEST PAPUA: THE IRREPRESSIBLE STRUGGLE FOR FREEDOM'

A new report by Peter Arndt, Executive Officer of the Catholic Justice and Peace Commission of Brisbane, highlights the ongoing human rights challenges faced by the people of West Papua. Earlier this year, Peter joined a peace pilgrimage to West Papua, where he encountered the control of Indonesia's security system and witnessed the resilience of the Papuan people. Peter has been working with organisations inside West Papua and within the Papuan diaspora in their campaign for membership of the Melanesian Spearhead Group which met in the Solomon Islands in June. In his report, 'West Papua: The Irrepressible Struggle for Freedom', Peter outlines the pilgrimage through Mansinam Island, Manokwari, Jayapura, Biak and the Paniai highlands. He highlights how past atrocities from the time Indonesian military forcibly annexed West Papua, and ongoing human rights abuses and constant monitoring by security and intelligence forces, have come to characterise life for indigenous communities in West Papua. [Download the report here.](#)

NEW BOOK: PRAYING A SCRIPTURE ROSARY IN AN ABORIGINAL WAY

Recently Aboriginal Catholic Ministry (ACMV) for Victoria published this book. It is the completion of many years of prayer and consideration as to different ways of promoting the Rosary from an Aboriginal perspective. In 1997, the first 15 mysteries of the Rosary were painted by Maria Galea, Doug Smith and Lorraine Nelson. The paintings were called The Happy Stories (Joyful Mysteries), The Sad Stories (Sorrowful Mysteries) and the Wonderful Stories (Glorious Mysteries). Before the painting of each picture, the staff of Aboriginal Catholic Ministry, Melbourne, prayed with the artist and a consensus was made as to how each painting would be depicted. In 2002 St John Paul II gave us the Luminous Mysteries which contained the Public Life of Jesus, the only part of Jesus' life not included in the other Mysteries. In 2010 again the ACMV team prayed with the artist, Melissa Brickell. The Rosary paintings are now complete with the addition of the Mysteries of Light. The book is available for \$15 a copy and can be ordered from ACMV by [downloading an order form.](#)

PUBLICATION: 'EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT THE REFERENDUM TO RECOGNISE INDIGENOUS AUSTRALIANS'

This book details how our Constitution was drafted, and shows how Aboriginal peoples came to be excluded from the new political settlement. It explains what the 1967 referendum – in which over 90 per cent of Australians voted to delete discriminatory references to Aboriginal people from the Constitution – achieved and why discriminatory racial references remain. With clarity and authority the book shows the symbolic and legal power of such a change and how we might get there. Concise and clear, it is written by two of the best-known experts in the country on matters legal, Indigenous and constitutional. This is essential reading on what should be a watershed occasion for our nation. Authors: Megan Davis and George Williams. [For more information visit here.](#)

DVD RESOURCE: EXPLORING PERSPECTIVES

The Women's Reconciliation Network ran a forum on constitutional recognition at Ashfield Town Hall in Sydney in March 2014. A recording of the forum is now available in the DVD 'Exploring Perspectives: Conversations on Constitutional Recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People'. The Women's Reconciliation Network invites you to share this valuable resource in schools, tertiary institutions, community groups and learning circles. The 27-minute DVD includes presentations by: Kirsten Grey, Kamilaroi/Muruwari Woman, CEO NSW Reconciliation Council; George Williams AM, Professor of Constitutional Law UNSW; Nicole Watson, Birri Gubba Woman, Researcher, Jumbunna House of Learning UTS; and Jeff McMullen AM, Journalist and Film Maker. The DVD costs \$10. To purchase copies, contact Sr Helen Kearins at the ACSJC on (02) 8306 3499 or admin@acsjc.org.au

PUBLICATION: RELIGION AND VIOLENCE: A DIALECTICAL ENGAGEMENT THROUGH THE INSIGHTS OF BERNARD LONERGAN

Author: Dominic Arcamone, Mission Manager in Healthcare, sessional Lecturer, Australian Catholic University. The aim of this book is to engage dialectically key symbols of religiously motivated violence through the insights of Bernard Lonergan. Lonergan's insights have helped the author arrive at a number of conclusions regarding the link between religion and violence. He argues that there is a difference between distorted religion and genuine religion, between authenticity and inauthenticity of the subject. Distorted religion has the capacity to shape traditions in ways that justify violence, while genuine religion heals persons, helps them make different moral decisions when confronted with situations of conflict, and aims to explore new ways of understanding themselves as shaping history toward progress. [Order here.](#)

NEW BOOK: 'POPE FRANCIS' INSPIRING VISION'

Fr Noel Connolly's new book reflects on Pope Francis' Apostolic Exhortation, *The Joy of the Gospel*. Fr Noel says, 'The *Joy of the Gospel* is an inspiring and demanding document. It is Francis' programme for the Church and will take us years of prayerful thought, action and discernment before it starts to shape our hearts and reform the Church'. The 24 page booklet contains ten reflections on what might be involved. \$7.50 including GST and postage. [Buy online.](#)

ACBC POSITION VACANT: RESEARCH OFFICER FOR THE PASTORAL RESEARCH OFFICE

The Australian Catholic Bishops Conference (ACBC) is seeking to engage a Research Officer to work as a member of its Pastoral Research Office (PRO). The PRO is located on the Australian Catholic University campus in Fitzroy, Victoria. This position involves contributing to the design and implementation of quantitative and qualitative research projects, and analysis of project data and data from the Australian

Census and the National Church Life Survey. The Research Officer will be required to prepare reports and publications, and present research findings to general and academic audiences. [See more here.](#)

FAIRTRADE AUSTRALIA NEW ZEALAND PETITION

When half of the world's hungriest people produce 70% of our food, something has to change. Global trade and poverty reduction go hand in hand. We must level the playing field to ensure trade policy empowers poor farmers. Imagine what could happen when trade policy prioritises livelihoods of farmers and workers. By making trade fair we can help break the poverty cycle. This September, world leaders will take to the global stage at the United Nations, backing new targets to end global poverty and reduce inequality, known as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Now is the time for the Government to highlight trade as a way for developing countries to tackle poverty. The SDGs are a unique opportunity to call for a fairer, more sustainable trading system - but we need government talks to be backed by real change. FTANZ are calling on the Australian Government to commit to the proposed SDGs; adopt policy and processes which aim to break the cycle of poverty for those in poorer countries; and use trade as a powerful tool to tackle global poverty. Please join FTANZ by signing the petition to call on the Australian Government to adopt the SDGs and make trade fair. [Sign the Petition here.](#)



ACSJC Publications October 2015

SOCIAL JUSTICE STATEMENT 2015–2016

This year's Australian Catholic Bishops Conference Social Justice Statement is entitled 'For Those Who've Come Across the Seas: Justice for refugees and asylum seekers'.

PDF and Word versions of the Statement as well as a range of print and multimedia resources – available [here](#).

Prayer Cards and 'Ten Steps' leaflets can be ordered from the ACSJC on (02) 8306 3499 or by email: admin@acsjc.org.au

SERIES PAPER 77 – 'BEAUTY AND OUR BIBLICAL CALLING TO PEACE, JUSTICE AND SUSTAINABILITY'

In this paper Professor McCormick explores the Biblical account of the Creation and its vision of a rich and bountiful world in which we are called to live as responsible and loving members of a community, caring for and cherishing our world and all that lives in it. He shows how the teaching and actions of Jesus bring this vision to its culmination to become our Christian mission. Available [here](#).

PASTORAL LETTER – FEAST OF ST JOSEPH THE WORKER 2015

The Pastoral Letter for the Feast of St Joseph the Worker for 2015 is entitled *The Dignity of Work – When it matters most*. It is available for download in regular and 'three-column' versions [here](#).

SERIES PAPER 76 – 'I WAS IN PRISON'

I Was in Prison: A window into prison ministry, by Dr Ruth Webber, explores the work of prison chaplains serving prisoners, ex-prisoners and the families of all who are or have been imprisoned. Dr Webber investigates the various ways in which chaplaincy is able to bring comfort to prisoners, meet their spiritual needs and provide practical help. The paper is based on interviews with prison chaplains,

prisoners, ex-prisoners and families of prisoners. The paper draws on the 2011–12 Social Justice Statement *Building Bridges, Not Walls* and revisits some of the issues raised in that Statement. Available [here](#).

BUILDING BRIDGES

The book, *Building Bridges: Social Justice Statements from Australia's Bishops 1988 to 2013*, brings the Statements together in an attractive and readable format. The publication is fully indexed, making this an exceptional resource for education and research. It offers 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 is of special interest to schools and universities and to parish and diocesan groups.

Building Bridges is available from the ACSJC for \$35.00 per copy including postage anywhere in Australia. Order forms are available [here](#).

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



News Monitor October 2015

Pope's UN speech to call for support for marginalised

In his much anticipated speech at the UN headquarters, Pope Francis called on the countries of the world not to abandon those who are, in any sense, in the peripheries.

Francis at the White House: Act on climate change

Pope Francis urged action on climate change during a welcoming ceremony hosted by President Barack Obama at the White House.

Catholic women's conference to focus on domestic violence

Domestic violence and human trafficking was top of the agenda when 200 delegates gathered in Sydney for the 47th National Biennial Conference of the Catholic Women's League.

Gay US Catholics greet visit with rainbow rosaries

Gay Catholics welcomed Pope Francis to the United States by flying rainbow flags, wearing rainbow prayer cloths, and carrying rainbow rosaries.

Vatican welcomes first family of Syrian refugees

Embracing Pope Francis' request to sponsor a refugee family, the Vatican's St Anne parish welcomed a family of four from Damascus.

Syrian priest tells of atrocities and why Australia must help

Father Rahal Dergham spoke about the Syrian refugee crisis and the unimaginable changes since he moved here eight years ago.

[Centacare calls for more action on domestic violence](#)

Government should strengthen “over-stretched” resources and programs in response to domestic violence in Queensland, according to Centacare in Brisbane.

[Migration, freedom, ecology to be topics on US trip: Cardinal](#)

When Pope Francis arrived in the United States from Cuba, he was expected to “enter as a migrant” as millions of people have done before him, according to Cardinal Pietro Parolin, Vatican Secretary of State

[Saunders: 'The greatest scourge in Australia today? Racism'](#)

At the annual Australasian Catholic Press Association conference in Broome, former ACSJC chair Bishop Christopher Saunders reflected on the gift of Pope Francis to the Church, and the great scourge Australia still faces.

[Tony Abbott's generous decision showed welcome leadership](#)

The Government's announcement that Australia would accept 12,000 refugees from Syria, in addition to the capped intake, was a generous decision and a welcome demonstration of leadership, said Fr Andrew Hamilton SJ.

[De La Salle Brothers offer property to house Syrian refugees](#)

The De La Salle Brothers in Australia wrote to the Prime Minister offering to use a property they own on the NSW South Coast to house Syrian refugees.

[Pope warns militants could sneak into Europe with refugees](#)

Pope Francis warned against the risk that Islamic militants could slip into Europe under cover of the huge wave of asylum seekers fleeing war in Syria.

[Prison inmates tour Vatican Gardens and Sistine Chapel](#)

Fifty inmates from a Rome jail were given a private tour of the Vatican Museums, setting the tone for Pope Francis' visit to a US prison later in the month.

[Cuba pardons thousands of prisoners ahead of Pope's visit](#)

Cuba's government announced pardons for more than 3500 prisoners, setting the stage for an eagerly awaited visit by Pope Francis with the largest release of its kind since the 1959 revolution.

[Social Justice Council welcomes increase in refugees](#)

ACSJC chair Bishop Vincent Long welcomed the Prime Minister's decision to accept an extra 12,000 refugees from Syria and Iraq, speaking at the launch of the Council's Social Justice Statement.

[Vatican refugee family to come from Lampedusa](#)

The Chief Priest of St Peter’s Basilica said efforts were underway to identify a family of refugees who will be cared for by the Vatican as part of Pope Francis’ appeal for all Catholic parishes to welcome in migrants.

[Caritas says time to end cruel asylum-seeker policies](#)

Caritas Australia joined with the thousands of Australians who rallied seeking a more compassionate response by Australia’s political leaders to the plight of more than four million Syrian refugees.

[Archbishop calls for increased Syrian refugee intake](#)

The Archbishop of Sydney, Anthony Fisher, called upon the Commonwealth Government to increase the number of Syrian Christian refugees being received into Australia.

[Naomi Klein on climate change and the Holy Father](#)

Naomi Klein, who has had a long association with the anti-globalisation movement, spoke on the ABC's *Late Night Live* about Pope Francis's climate change campaign.

[UK Cardinal urges Britain to be more generous to migrants](#)

English Cardinal Vincent Nichols said images of drowned refugees were causing the British people to cry out for a more generous response to the migrant crisis engulfing Europe.

[Pope begs global community to end Christian persecution](#)

Pope Francis asked the international community "to put a stop to the violence and oppression" after calling attention once again to the fate of persecuted Christians, especially in the Middle East.

– courtesy cathnews.com



Social Justice Diary October 2015

October 2015

1	Thu	<i>International Day for Older Persons</i> <u>2005: Second Bali bombing: 20 people killed and more than 100 injured</u> - ACSJC Resources on <u>Peacebuilding</u>
2	Fri	<i>International Day of Non-Violence</i> - ACSJC Resources on <u>Peacebuilding</u> <u>1869: Birth of Mahatma Ghandi</u>
3	Sat	
4	Sun	Twenty-Seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time <i>Feast of St Francis of Assisi</i> <i>World Animal Welfare Day</i>

		<u>World Space Week commences</u> <u>1957: Sputnik 1 launched by the Soviet Union</u>
5	Mon	<i>World Teachers Day</i> <i>World Habitat Day</i>
6	Tue	
7	Wed	
8	Thu	
9	Fri	<i>World Post Day</i>
10	Sat	<i>World Mental Health Day</i> READ MORE ↓
11	Sun	Twenty-Eighth Sunday in Ordinary Time St John XXIII <i>International Day of the Girl Child</i> <u>Anti-Poverty Week begins</u> - ACSJC Resources on <u>World Poverty</u> <u>1962: Opening Session of Vatican Council II</u>
12	Mon	<u>2002: First Bali Bombing: 202 people killed and 240 injured</u> - ACSJC Resources on <u>Peacebuilding</u>
13	Tue	<i>International Day for Disaster Reduction</i>
14	Wed	
15	Thu	<i>International Day of Rural Women</i> READ MORE ↓
16	Fri	<i>World Food Day</i>
17	Sat	<i>International Day for Eradication of Poverty</i> - ACSJC Resources on <u>World Poverty</u> READ MORE ↓
18	Sun	Twenty-Ninth Sunday in Ordinary Time <u>World Mission Sunday</u>
19	Mon	<u>2001: Sinking of SIEV X</u> - ACSJC Resources on <u>Refugees and Asylum Seekers</u>
20	Tue	<u>1973: Opening of Sydney Opera House</u>

21	Wed	
22	Thu	St John Paul II
23	Fri	
24	Sat	<i>United Nations Day</i> <i>World Development Information Day</i> <u>Disarmament Week begins</u> - ACSJC Resources on <u>Peacebuilding</u>
25	Sun	Thirtieth Sunday in Ordinary Time
26	Mon	<u>1985: Uluru returned to traditional owners, the Anangu people</u> - ACSJC Resources on <u>Justice for Indigenous People</u>
27	Tue	
28	Wed	
29	Thu	
30	Fri	
31	Sat	