

ACSJC Monthly Briefing February 2016 No 175



From the Secretariat February 2016

Dear friends,

'God is not indifferent! God cares about mankind! God does not abandon us!'

These are the opening [words](#) of this year's Message of Pope Francis for the World Day of Peace (January 1) 2016. Its title is 'Overcome Indifference and Win Peace', and that first sentence is infused with the passion and commitment that is the trademark of all Pope Francis' writing. Later in the first paragraph he says:

'Peace is both God's gift and a human achievement. As a gift of God, it is entrusted to all men and women, who are called to attain it.' (n. 1)

Pope Francis' message is a heartfelt plea to us all to engage with the world around us, not to turn our backs on suffering and injustice, and 'not to lose hope in our human ability to conquer evil and to combat resignation and indifference' (n. 2).

He begins with an overview of the best and worst of the past year. On the one hand, he mourns the violence and brutality that 'have become so common as to constitute a real "third world war fought piecemeal"'. On the other, he sees great steps forward: the global climate negotiations in Paris, the Summit in Addis Ababa for funding worldwide sustainable development, and the adoption of the United Nations' 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

He also recalls the great events that have been the foundation of the Church's expression of solidarity with the world. The year 2015 was the 50th anniversary of the Vatican II documents *Nostra Aetate* and *Gaudium et Spes*, which are 'emblematic of the new relationship of dialogue, solidarity and accompaniment which the Church sought to awaken within the human family'. (n. 2)

Since he became Pope, Francis has made the challenge of indifference a constant theme. His memorable phrase 'the globalisation of indifference' has been used more than once and reappears in this Message. For him, indifference takes many forms: indifference to God, leading to a 'false humanism' – the sense that 'we are the source and creator of ourselves' and that we 'owe nothing to anyone but ourselves'. Related to this is indifference to our neighbour: he speaks of 'the attitude of those who know, but keep their gaze, their thoughts and their actions focused on themselves' and 'simply content themselves with blaming the poor and the poor countries themselves for their troubles' (n. 3).

Pope Francis shows us exactly the opposite of indifference in the engagement of God in our world and in the presence of God in Jesus himself. He gives the example of God speaking to Moses about the enslaved Hebrews:

'I have seen the affliction of my people who are in Egypt, and have heard their cry because of their taskmasters; I know their sufferings, and I have come down to deliver them out of the hand of the

Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land to a good and broad land, a land flowing with milk and honey’

This, the Pope says, is a God who ‘sees, hears, knows, comes down and delivers. God does not remain indifferent. He is attentive and he acts.’

Similarly, in his mission on Earth, Jesus ‘was not content merely to teach the crowds, but he was concerned for their welfare, especially when he saw them hungry (cf. Mk 6:34-44) or without work (cf. Mt 20:3) ... He saw and embraced all of creation. But he did more than just see; he touched people’s lives, he spoke to them, helped them and showed kindness to those in need. Not only this, but he felt strong emotions and he wept (cf. Jn 11:33-44). And he worked to put an end to suffering, sorrow, misery and death.’(n. 5)

This, then, is the context in which the Pope Francis reminds us of the purpose and potency of the Jubilee of Mercy he has proclaimed. ‘All of us’, he says, ‘are called ... to work concretely to improve the world around us, beginning with our families, neighbours and places of employment.’ (n. 8)

And we have responsibilities not simply as individuals but as a society. If we are to honour the spirit of this Jubilee of Mercy – and the presence of a God who cares about us and will not abandon us – we need to show genuine and practical concern for the most vulnerable among us. Pope Francis names three groups who deserve our special consideration – groups that we as Australians need to consider particularly (n. 8).

The first of these groups is prisoners:

‘With regard to prisoners ... practical measures are urgently needed to improve their living conditions, with particular concern for those detained while awaiting trial. It must be kept in mind that penal sanctions have the aim of rehabilitation ... In this context, I would like once more to appeal to governmental authorities to abolish the death penalty where it is still in force, and to consider the possibility of an amnesty.’

These [words](#) have special relevance to the Australian context. As a recent article shows, the number of prisoners in Australia has more than doubled over the last 20 years and we now imprison people at the rate of 186 per 100,000. More than a quarter of our prisoners – 27 per cent –are now Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, even though Indigenous people make up only about three per cent of our [population](#). In their Social Justice Statement for 2011–12, Australia’s bishops called for a deep re-examination of our attitude to prisoners and imprisonment, and referred to the rate of [incarceration](#) of Indigenous people as ‘the great Australian shame’. Australia does not execute people, but some countries close to us do. Our hearts were deeply troubled when, after years in prison, Andrew Chan and Myuran Sukamaran were put to death by our neighbour Indonesia. Sadly, the Pope’s call for a new attitude to prisons and the death penalty needs to be heard with fresh ears by our nation and our near neighbours.

The second group the Pope reminds us of is migrants:

‘I would ask that legislation on migration be reviewed, so, while respecting reciprocal rights and responsibilities, it can reflect a readiness to welcome migrants and to facilitate their integration. Special

concern should be paid to the conditions for legal residency, since having to live clandestinely can lead to criminal behaviour.’

Those words again remind us of the most recent Social Justice Statement from Australia’s bishops, who mourn our harsh refugee policies and the panic and mistrust that are ‘out of all proportion to the true scale of the issue in Australia’. Since that Statement was launched, the time spent by asylum seekers in Australia’s detention facilities has reached record levels – an average of 445 [days](#). There is no end in sight to the suffering of the men, women and children Australia has sent to Nauru and Manus Island.

The Pope must also have had in mind the nightmare of hundreds of thousands of people fleeing into Europe from the violence and terror of the Middle East. In his Message for the 2016 World Day of Migrants and Refugees, he [says](#):

‘The tragic stories of millions of men and women daily confront the international community as a result of the outbreak of unacceptable humanitarian crises in different parts of the world. Indifference and silence lead to complicity whenever we stand by as people are dying of suffocation, starvation, violence and shipwreck.’

Lastly, Pope Francis calls for justice for ‘our brothers and sisters who suffer from the lack of ‘labour, land and lodging’ – the unemployed, the homeless and those on the fringes of society with no real means of earning a living. The mention of land might remind Australians of the continuing struggle of our Indigenous brothers and sisters for land rights and for the right to live in the remote communities that are their ancestral [homes](#).

So the Pope’s Message for the World Day of Peace has much to say to us as individuals, as Australians and as citizens of the world. It shows us what can be done and what is still to do, and it puts its finger on some of the most vital issues of justice in our world. We pray that in the coming year we can hear the words of Pope Francis and work for a more just world.

John Ferguson
National Executive Officer.



Current Issues/Resources February 2016

POSITION VACANT: ACSJC ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

The Australian Catholic Social Justice Council is seeking an experienced Administrative Officer for a key role in this national agency of the Catholic Church, which is based in Sydney. This is a full-time position providing a range of secretarial and administrative services, including word processing, tracking sales and liaising with customers to support the effective operations of the Council.

The requirements: Advanced computer skills in MS Office suite (including Access) and basic desktop publishing skills; minimum 3 years’ relevant experience; good communication skills; great attention to detail; ability to work autonomously and in a small team.

Written applications which include two referees should be posted to John Ferguson, ACSJC, PO Box 7246, Alexandria NSW 2015, by Friday 26 February 2016.

The Australian Catholic Bishops Conference is an equal employment opportunity employer and promotes and supports a family friendly workplace. The successful applicant must be eligible to work in Australia and may be required to provide a Working with Children Check or a suitable Police Check as part of the recruitment process.

A position description can be obtained from the ACSJC [website](#) or by contacting the office on 02 8306 3499.

MEDIA RELEASE: HUMAN RIGHTS A REAL CONCERN FOR AUSTRALIA

On Human Rights Day, Bishop Vincent Long called on the Australian government to take stock of its human rights performance. 'News that little or no progress has been made on key 'Closing the Gap' targets of life expectancy, literacy, numeracy and employment is an indictment on our society. Warnings by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner show that governments are failing to properly consult and gain free, prior and informed consent from Indigenous communities before imposing measures like the compulsory Healthy Welfare Card or plans to close remote communities. Australia's continued detention of asylum seekers in the offshore immigration facilities of Manus Island and Nauru is an unfolding human rights disaster. Numerous reports, including those of Federal Parliament, continue to reveal instances of child abuse, rape, violence and inhumane treatment.'

Commenting on Australia's role in promoting human rights in our region, Bishop Long said there were many areas where Australia can be a positive force. 'The government is to be commended for its efforts at the moment to advocate for the global abolition of the death penalty and to address human rights abuses against women and girls in South Asia and the Pacific. ... We can have a greater credibility when we exercise our leadership in accordance with our tradition and status as a welcoming and wealthy migrant nation. Multilaterally, we must work for a more effective response to the over three million asylum seekers looking for protection in the region. Bilaterally, we must be more active in addressing the kind of reports we regularly hear coming from West Papua of killings, torture and other serious human rights abuses against unarmed civilians,' [said](#) Bishop Long.

70TH ANNIVERSARY OF UN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

The UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) turns 70 in 2016 and that means 70 years of coordination, policy guidance and cooperation on international economic and social development. Established as one of the six principle organs of the United Nations in 1945, ECOSOC has grown not only in membership, but also in the scope of its work and impact in the last 70 years. [Read about the highlights of ECOSOC](#).

2015–2016 SOCIAL JUSTICE STATEMENT REPRINT

For those who have missed out or those who would like more, the Social Justice Statement *For Those Who've Come Across the Seas: Justice for refugees and asylum seekers* has been reprinted and is available to [order here](#).

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](#) .

CHURCH LEADERS DENOUNCE KILLINGS IN PAPUA

Protestant and Catholic leaders in Indonesia's easternmost province of Papua have denounced a series of killings that occurred last month and have urged an end to the violence in the troubled region. The first incident occurred December 1 when four separatists were allegedly tortured and shot to death by Indonesian security officers on Yapen Island. In another killing, a Papuan was allegedly shot dead by a soldier Dec. 20 in Keerom district, which borders Papua New Guinea. Father Neles Tebay, coordinator of the Papua Peace Network, said the shootings are a clear indication of the unresolved conflict between the Indonesian government and indigenous West Papuans, particularly those who support the Free Papua Movement. [Read the full story](#) .

PROJECT COMPASSION 2016: 'LEARNING MORE, CREATING CHANGE'

Running through the six weeks of Lent each year, Project Compassion is an extraordinary, ongoing demonstration of the faith, love and generosity of caring supporters, all in the name of justice and peace. Pope Francis has said, 'Education is an act of hope'. This year Project Compassion celebrates the power of learning, and the many ways in which Caritas Australia is working with local partners around the world to provide vital learning and renewed hope to children, women and men most vulnerable to extreme poverty and injustice. Throughout Project Compassion 2016, inspiring stories from Malawi, Laos, Papua New Guinea, Australia, Cambodia and India will show how education, training and sharing knowledge can empower individual communities to transform their futures and create lasting change. To find out more, visit [Caritas](#) .

MERCY CARDS: RESOURCE PACK FOR CATHOLIC PARISHES.

These cards offer prayers, scripture, discussion starters, reflective questions, song suggestions, a call to action. For parish meetings and groups, children's catechesis and home activities, school assemblies, classroom and staff. Centred on the Jubilee Year of Mercy focusing on a challenging statement from Pope Francis. Phone: 0412 850 883. Email: info@gpbs.com.au . Web: www.gpbs.com.au.

REFUGEE COUNCIL OF AUSTRALIA: THE 'AUSTRALIA SAYS WELCOME' CAMPAIGN

Inspired by the art of Peter Drew, the campaign is all about making refugees feel welcome in Australia. By joining the campaign you are also helping the smooth resettlement of refugees into the Australian community, supporting our work with local refugee organisations and promoting a welcoming and nurturing environment for refugees and asylum seekers in Australia. You can find out how to donate, offer services or find current information, participate on facebook or twitter [here](#) .

CHILOUT'S YOUTH AMBASSADOR PROGRAM

ChilOut's Youth Ambassador Program is an exciting opportunity for young people from across Australia, aged between 16 and 24, to speak up for children in immigration detention. As part of this program, young former refugees and Australian-born young people participate in activities in the community to raise awareness about children in detention, conveying stories and participating in activities which carry the message that keeping children in detention centres causes serious harm. The aim of the Youth Ambassador Program is to empower young people to raise their voices and work toward ensuring that all children, no matter how they arrived in Australia, are given the basic human rights they are entitled to. [Find out more](#).

NEW BOOK. JOY AND HOPE, PILGRIM, PRIEST AND BISHOP: PAT POWER

This book is a collection of homilies, occasional addresses, newspaper opinion pieces, letters and personal reflections. They cover a wide range of topics, and always with an openness and humble respect. When Pat was appointed bishop in 1986, he says, 'many of the people closest to me told me not to turn away from being my real self. That advice in some ways was easy enough to adopt because I was in my home diocese, and, surrounded by family and good friends, there were plenty of people to remind me of my humble origins if I became too big for my boots.' Pat Power sees himself as part of the pilgrim church, 'a people on the move, with a sense of adventure, supporting and encouraging one another, sometimes getting a bit lost or bloodied, sometimes questioning the path they have taken, but ultimately believing that Jesus is the way, the truth and the life.' The book is available from David Lovell Publishing for RRP \$24.95. Contact by phone 03 9859 0000 or email (publisher@davidlovellpublishing.com).

MERCY LENTEN PROGRAM 2016

Continuing the tradition from past years, MERCY is a weekly program produced by the Catholic Diocese of Wollongong, primarily for group use, based on the Sunday Scripture readings during Lent. Fr Ken Barker MGL, acclaimed author and Founder of the Missionaries of God's Love and Sr Hilda Scott OSB, Vocations Director, Jamberoo Abbey, to lead the reflections for Lent. Resident artist, Nelson Colo Matoma, is on board again and has painted seven beautiful original acrylic-based artworks for the program. The program is accompanied by a Triple CD resource that includes audio narrations of the Scripture readings by Jude Hennessy (Journey Catholic Radio) and audio narrations of the reflections by Fr Ken and Sr Hilda. The CD resource also contains the Sunday psalms for Lent beautifully put to contemporary music from the Cry Out CD by Tracey Coombes. As a bonus this year, the book and triple CD resource includes special liturgical resources (including music) for the Year of Mercy compiled by Diocesan Liturgy Coordinator, Paul Mason. Price \$8.80, contact Jennifer Raposio on 02 4222 2411 or [email](#) or [order online](#).

COLUMBAN LENTEN RESOURCE: THE GRACE OF PLACE

The Grace of Place is an online Catholic Lenten Resource that is useful for implementing 'Laudato Si' within your school and parish. It is suitable for Senior School Students, Teachers, Parishes, Religious Congregations, Youth, Social Justice Groups and individuals. This online resource explores having a heightened sense of place in the natural world, enabling us to grow in our reverence for God, and in our care for all creation. It connects the Gospel of each Lenten Sunday in 2016 with different aspects of

place using the process of God Revealing (information), God Inspiring (reflection and prayer), and God Challenging (action). [Web](#).



ACSJC Publications February 2016

ORDER NOW! – 2016 SOCIAL JUSTICE DIARY

The 2016 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](#).

SOCIAL JUSTICE STATEMENT 2015–2016: AVAILABLE AGAIN

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'. Due to overwhelming demand the original print run sold out, but the document has been reprinted and is now available.

PDF and Word versions of the Statement can be downloaded from the ACSJC website. On the ACSJC website you will also find 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](#).

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 February 2017

[Day of prayer against human trafficking](#)

27-Jan-2016: Australian bishops and Religious have called for a day of prayer, reflection and action against human trafficking next month.

[David Morrison named Australian of the Year](#)

27-Jan-2016: Former army chief David Morrison, who attended a Christian Brothers school in Canberra, has been named 2016 Australian of the Year, reports The Sydney Morning Herald.

[Pope tells Iran's president he has 'high hopes' for peace](#)

27-Jan-2016: Pope Francis met the President of Iran at the Vatican yesterday, urging the Middle Eastern leader to find peaceful solutions for the Middle East and work with him to combat terrorism, reports The Tablet.

[Refugee crisis challenges all our compassion and prejudice](#)

22-Jan-2016: We must try to understand IS as well as condemn it, look coolly at the interplay of interests and forces in the Middle East and the likely unintended consequences for people of our interventions, writes Andrew Hamilton SJ.

[Vatican offers to care for homeless woman after birth in piazza](#)

22-Jan-2016: A homeless woman was offered a place to stay at a Vatican women's shelter after she gave birth to a baby girl near the colonnade surrounding St Peter's Square, reports The Catholic Herald.

[Pope allows women to participate in Lent foot-washing rite](#)

22-Jan-2016: Pope Francis has overturned centuries of tradition that banned women from the Holy Thursday washing of feet service, reports Reuters on Yahoo7.

[How Catholics can invest in their faith – and make money](#)

21-Jan-2016: A new investment service in the US allows Catholics to invest based on their beliefs without compromising on performance potential – and make a positive difference in the process, reports Crux.

[Project Compassion to be launched next month](#)

21-Jan-2016: Next month Caritas Australia will launch its annual Project Compassion appeal, one of Australia's largest humanitarian fundraising and awareness-raising campaigns.

[Wendy Sharpe portraits of asylum-seekers](#)

20-Jan-2016: A series of portraits of asylum-seekers by renowned artist Wendy Sharpe is on show at Mary MacKillop Place Museum until March.

[Vatican seeks common ground with business leaders](#)

20-Jan-2016: Global business leaders sought common ground with the Vatican on a range of ethical issues at a conference that ended yesterday, the latest effort to improve relations strained by Pope - Francis' criticisms of global finance and capitalism.

[Reflections on the death penalty](#)

18-Jan-2016: Prominent barrister Julian McMahon, President of Reprieve Australia and board member of Jesuit Social Services, will speak on the death penalty in the world today, at the St Thomas More lecture in Canberra next month.

[Francis urges a united front against war, injustice](#)

18-Jan-2016: During a visit to Rome's main synagogue, Pope Francis has called on Christians and Jews to counter the conflict, war, violence, and injustice that open deep wounds in humanity, reports the Catholic News Agency.

[Cardinal Pell calls on rich to pay debt to future](#)

18-Jan-2016: Societies such as Australia were unwilling to admit they were living beyond their means and that immense national debts had to be contained, Cardinal George Pell told an international finance conference in Rome yesterday.

[The French friar fighting against the 21st-century slave trade](#)

24-Dec-2015: Xavier Plassat is a Dominican friar, a Frenchman who has worked for decades in the Brazilian Amazon and is renowned for his fight against slavery as it exists in our time. Vanity Fair reports.

[Philippine bishops take stand against use of fossil fuels](#)

23-Dec-2015: Church leaders in the Philippines have made clear their stand against the use of dirty fuel in a statement issued in the wake of the Paris Conference on Climate Change, reports ucanews.com.

[How US Catholics can lead fight against Islamophobia](#)

22-Dec-2015: US Bishop Dennis Madden, who has had broad experience dealing with Muslims from all over the world, believes American Catholics are uniquely equipped to push back against Islamophobia, writes Kevin Clarke in America.

[Trudeau to ask Francis for apology to Canadian indigenous](#)

21-Dec-2015: Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau said he would ask Pope Francis to formally apologise for more than a century of abuses at Church-run boarding schools set up to assimilate Canada's indigenous peoples, reports AFP/Yahoo.

[Pakistani family flees after being accused of blasphemy](#)

18-Dec-2015: A Pakistani Catholic family is now hiding in Punjab province, having been forced to flee from their Islamabad home after being accused of blasphemy, reports ucanews.com.

[From Paris with love and a passion for social justice](#)

18-Dec-2015: Asked why as a Catholic she felt it was important for her to go on the Climate March, Erin Kennedy says: "I wish that was a question we didn't have to ask."

[US senator asks Pope to defend gay US ambassador](#)

17-Dec-2015: A US senator has called on Pope Francis to personally intervene with a cardinal in the Dominican Republic who has made derogatory comments about the openly gay man who is the US ambassador to that country, reports AP/Crux.

[Which refugees would Jesus resettle?](#)

16-Dec-2015: Let us be clear: lurking under all the justifications for privileging Christians is a toxic fear and dislike of Muslims. The UNHCR guidelines for resettlement are there for a reason, writes Aloysius Mowe.

[Pope: Abolish death penalty, forgive debt, reform migration laws](#)

16-Dec-2015: Pope Francis has called for abolishing the death penalty worldwide, lifting the burden of debt on poor nations, global aid policies that respect life and revamped laws that welcome and integrate migrants, reports the Catholic News Service .

[Archbishop: Catholics should reject Trump's ban on Muslims](#)

14-Dec-2015: The threat of terrorism must be confronted sensibly and not by restrictions based on religion, said Archbishop William Lori of Baltimore, chairman of the US Bishops' Ad Hoc Committee for Religious Liberty.

[Pope hails climate agreement, urges special care for the poor](#)

14-Dec-2015: Pope Francis has commended world leaders for reaching an agreement in the recently-concluded Paris climate talks, urging the international community promptly put it into action, reports the Catholic News Agency.

[Sister Jane goes to Canberra to take a stand for refugees](#)

14-Dec-2015: Dressed in Advent's liturgical colour of purple, Sister Jane Keogh is "standing, sitting and walking in front of Parliament House" for the 26 days leading up to Christmas, reports The Canberra Times.

[Bp Long: Time for Australia to take stock of human rights](#)

11-Dec-2015: Australia must take stock of its human rights performance, according to the Australian Catholic Social Justice Council's chairman, Bishop Vincent Long, in a statement yesterday.

[Nun with a gun misses the mark on Catholic teachings](#)

11-Dec-2015: It is a mistake to dismiss the criticism of a Sister who posted a photo of her with a dead deer as coming from "liberals." For one Catholic theologian, there is something problematic about the proud display of a carcass from a deer one has just killed.

[If climate talks stall, Francis might gently intervene](#)

10-Dec-2015: If international climate talks really stall, don't be surprised if there could be an ever-so-slight intervention by Pope Francis, reports AP in Crux.

[Climate activists say human rights, financing pose obstacles](#)

09-Dec-2015: Human rights and who pays for poor countries to transition into greener energy stand as major hurdles in the way of a global accord on climate change, say Catholic and other church activists on the sidelines of the Paris summit.

[Poor and homeless invited to premiere of Pope's biopic](#)

04-Dec-2015: The world premiere of the first movie based on the life of Pope Francis has been held in the Vatican, in front of an audience of the poor and homeless, refugees, and the religious and lay people who help them.

[Sisters claim program for kids in detention suspended](#)

03-Dec-2015: A group of Catholic Religious who runs outings for children in immigration detention say the Australian Border Force has suspended the program, reports the ABC.

– courtesy cathnews.com



Social Justice Diary February 2016

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| 1 | Mon | World Interfaith Harmony Week begins READ MORE ↓ |
| 2 | Tue | Presentation of Jesus World Day of Prayer for Consecrated Life World Wetlands Day - ACSJC resources on the Environment |
| 3 | Wed | |
| 4 | Thu | |
| 5 | Fri | 1996: Signing of Cape York Peninsula Heads of Agreement |
| 6 | Sat | International Day of Zero Tolerance to Female Genital Mutilation Waitangi Day, Aotearoa New Zealand |

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| 7 | Sun | Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time |
| 8 | Mon | St Josephine Bakhita READ MORE ↓ Chinese New Year |
| 9 | Tue | |
| 10 | Wed | Ash Wednesday READ MORE ↓ |
| 11 | Thu | World Day of Prayer for the Sick 1990: Nelson Mandela released from prison |
| 12 | Fri | 1965: Commencement of the Freedom Ride in Australia - ACSJC resources on Justice for Indigenous People 2005: Sr Dorothy Stang, murdered in Brazil |
| 13 | Sat | 2008: Apology to Stolen Generations by Australian Government - ACSJC resources on Justice for Indigenous People |
| 14 | Sun | First Sunday of Lent |
| 15 | Mon | |
| 16 | Tue | |
| 17 | Wed | |
| 18 | Thu | |
| 19 | Fri | |
| 20 | Sat | World Day of Social Justice - ACSJC resources on Catholic Social Teaching |

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| 21 | Sun | Second Sunday of Lent International Mother Language Day READ MORE ↓ |
| 22 | Mon | |
| 23 | Tue | |
| 24 | Wed | |
| 25 | Thu | |
| 26 | Fri | |
| 27 | Sat | |
| 28 | Sun | Third Sunday of Lent |
| 29 | Mon | |