

ACSJC Monthly Briefing July 2016 No 180

From the Secretariat July 2016



Dear Friends,

Social Justice Sunday this year falls on 25 September.

The Australian Catholic Social Justice Council is preparing for the launch in September of the Australia Catholic Bishops' Social Justice Statement for 2016–2017.

This year's Statement is titled *A Place at the Table: Social justice in an ageing society*. It celebrates the value, dignity and significant contributions of older people to the life of the community.

The number of Australians aged 65 and over will more than double by the middle of the century. This has been rightly described as 'the great success story of human development'. Increasing numbers of older people have an excellent chance of enjoying good health and an active life for many years.

In solidarity with all generations, older people have a rightful place in the heart of community life. The Bishops confront the utilitarianism in our society that values people only for what they produce and contribute economically and that, at worst, can regard older people as burdensome or dispensable.

In a society in which older people are being asked to work beyond the traditional retirement age, the bishops call for the benefits of work to be shared equitably. We must be especially aware of the needs of those who enter retirement in poverty or are particularly vulnerable to economic hardship, social isolation or exploitation.

The Bishops consider the circumstances of those who are approaching the end of their lives and warn of the loneliness, ageism and abuse that older people can experience. In particular, the Bishops warn about implications of the current community debate on euthanasia.

They call for communities of mercy and love – where people reach out and minister to vulnerable older people, where bonds between generations are built up, and where no one is cast as being a burden or as rivals to younger generations.

To Order

Parishes, schools and groups can order printed copies (minimum of 10) from the ACSJC. Order form and cost details can be found on the ACSJC [website](#) or call (02) 8306 3499.

Social Justice Sunday – Complementary Resources

The ACSJC produces a range of complementary resources to assist parish communities, schools and social justice groups to celebrate Social Justice Sunday.

Among the resources that will be available on the ACSJC website over the coming months will be:

- Social Justice Sunday Liturgy notes
- PowerPoint and video presentations
- Educational resources

Other resources that are very useful in parishes and schools are the Social Justice Sunday Prayer Card and 'Ten Steps' leaflet. These can be ordered from the ACSJC Secretariat on (02) 8306 3499.

Promotion

A possible entry in your organisations newsletter could be:

We celebrate Social Justice Sunday on 25 September.

This year, the Australian Bishops' Social Justice Statement is titled: 'A Place at the Table: Social justice in an ageing society'.

The Statement celebrates the value and dignity of older people in Australian life. It challenges us to recognise their significant contribution to society and emphasises that this contribution should not be valued in mere economic terms. The Statement calls for justice for those who are most vulnerable and warns about a view of older people as burdensome or dispensable.

For further details about the Social Justice Statement, visit the Australian Catholic Social Justice Council website (www.socialjustice.catholic.org.au) or call (02) 8306 3499.

Any assistance you can give in spreading the word about Social Justice Sunday and the Bishops' Statement would be greatly appreciated.

John Ferguson
National Executive Officer



Current Issues/Resources July 2016

ELECTION STATEMENT: 'A VOTE FOR THE VOICELESS'

Australia's Catholic bishops have called for the voices of the thrown-away people to be heard in the long federal election campaign. The bishops' 2016 Federal Election statement is addressed to Catholics and all people of goodwill. 'Both sides of politics will state their economic credentials in a bid to win power', the bishops say. 'The economy of course is important and there does need to be sound management. But, as Pope Francis has pointed out, there is also a danger that the economy can become a kind of false god to which even human beings have to be sacrificed. This leads to what the Pope has called the throwaway culture – a culture of over-consumption where all kinds of things are thrown away, wasted, even human beings. That is why we bishops want to speak a word as part of this campaign – not in order to push an ideological line or simply to defend the Church's interests but to give a voice to the voiceless and make their faces seen, however briefly in a statement such as this.' The bishops' statement can be downloaded [here](#).

A prayer for the election can also be found [here](#).

ELECTION GUIDE 2016: NETACT

NetAct, the voice of Catholic social justice, welfare and educational agencies, has released a kit on social justice issues that could be considered by Australians as they consider how to cast their vote in the 2016 election. NetAct says: 'We trust that this Kit will assist you to consider which Parties/candidates would be most likely to work for structures and policies which would support these values and a sustainable

way of living on the earth. A real challenge for us all.’ The Kit is available [here](#).

ELECTION LETTER: CATHOLIC ALLIANCE FOR PEOPLE SEEKING ASYLUM

The Catholic Alliance for People Seeking Asylum has issued an open letter to key leaders of the Liberal, Labor and Green parties, calling on them to consider the voiceless people trapped in the harsh conditions of Australia’s immigration processes and encouraging Catholics to consider what policies need to be in place to ensure a more humane outcome for both those on Nauru and Manus Island, and those waiting in the Australian community. The letter says, ‘we urge you to consider this and work, as quickly as possible, to show compassion for those vulnerable people seeking protection on our shores.’ To find out more, visit [here](#).

UNHCR GLOBAL TRENDS: FORCED DISPLACEMENT IN 2015.

UNHCR, the Refugee Agency of the United Nations, has released its annual report on forced displacement of peoples worldwide. It reports that wars and persecution have driven more people from their homes than at any time since its records began. The report shows that a total of 65.3 million people were displaced at the end of 2015, compared to 59.5 million just 12 months earlier. The UN High Commissioner for Refugees says: ‘At sea, a frightening number of refugees and migrants are dying each year. On land, people fleeing war are finding their way blocked by closed borders.’ The report is available [here](#).

BOOK: ‘OFFSHORE: BEHIND THE WIRE ON MANUS AND NAURU’.

Madeline Gleeson’s book provides a comprehensive overview of the first three years of offshore processing since it recommenced in 2012. It explains why offshore processing was re-established, what life is like for asylum seekers and refugees on Nauru and Manus, what asylum seekers, refugees and staff in the offshore detention centres have to say about what goes on there, and why the truth has been so hard to find. The author is a lawyer and Research Associate at the Andrew and Renata Kaldor Centre for International Refugee Law at the University of New South Wales. Available from [NewSouth Books](#).

ONLINE RESOURCE: GLOBAL PEACE INDEX 2016.

The tenth edition of the Global Peace Index (GPI) finds that many countries are at record high levels of peacefulness, while the bottom 20 countries have progressively become much less peaceful. This creates increased levels of inequality in global peace, and the gap between the most-peaceful and least-peaceful countries continues to widen. For more information [click here](#).

BOOK: CHILDREN AND VIOLENCE: POLITICS OF CONFLICT IN SOUTH ASIA.

‘Children and Violence’ underlines the impacts of a variety of political violence on children in the region. It puts forward the argument that in South Asia, childhood is culturally constructed and contested, that its diverse conceptualisations emerge from historical and social crises in the region and are the product of particular power relations. Edited by Bina D’Costa (Senior Fellow, ANU) and published by Cambridge University Press. Kishali Pinto Jayawardena has contributed a chapter on Sri Lanka’s killing of children and there is a comprehensive analysis of regional developments by South Asian scholars.

ONLINE RESOURCE: GLOBAL SLAVERY INDEX 2016.

In 2016, it is estimated that 45.8 million people are in some form of modern slavery in 167 countries. This estimate draws on data from random sample, nationally representative surveys conducted by Gallup. The countries with the highest estimated prevalence of modern slavery by the proportion of their population are North Korea, Uzbekistan, Cambodia, India, and Qatar. Those countries with the highest absolute numbers of people in modern slavery are India, China, Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Uzbekistan. For more information [click here](#).

REPORT: 'WE WILL LOSE EVERYTHING'

A new report has just been issued by the Brisbane Archdiocesan Catholic Justice and Peace Commission. It presents findings on a fact finding mission undertaken by Mr Peter Arndt and Sr Susan Connelly rsj to the Indonesian provinces of Papua and West Papua in February. Based on over 250 interviews with community leaders in Jayapura, Merauke, Timika and Sorong, the report reveals how Papuans are becoming a small minority in their own land, living with unrelenting intimidation and brutality at the hands of the Indonesian Government's security apparatus together with rapidly growing economic and social marginalisation. There is a call for urgent action to stop the violence and to secure an international commitment to give the people of West Papua a genuine opportunity to freely determine their future. To download the report, visit [here](#).

CAMPAIGN: I SUPPORT PALESTINE AND I VOTE.

Australia Palestine Advocacy Network (APAN) is asking all supporters of Palestine to tell their candidates: I support Palestine and I vote! Our online platform sends a targeted email to your candidates telling them you support Palestinian Human Rights and asks them to take a moderate pledge to also support these rights if they are elected. Visit the [platform](#). Find out how to be more active: email contact@apan.org.au
APAN is also encouraging people to be more active. Email to find out how.

FUNDRAISING RAFFLE: HELP KEEP EUREKA STREET FREE.

For 25 years Eureka Street has been the destination of choice for Australians who enjoy conversations about politics, religion and current events with a hefty dose of ethical thinking. Each June and December we offer our readers the opportunity to contribute financially, which allows us to keep Eureka Street free: no paywalls, no logins, no limits on the number of articles you can access. The challenges facing Australia after 2 July are enormous. Our mission is to continue to promote a just society. And regardless of the outcome of the federal election, Eureka Street will be there, promoting a fair Australia, devoid of spin. For information and to buy tickets [click here](#).

WEBSITE AND RESOURCES: WAYAHEAD – MENTAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION NSW.

WayAhead plays a vital role in the development of mental health initiatives which increase community awareness and knowledge of mental health issues. It strives towards a community that embraces and maintains mental, social and emotional wellbeing for all people and we work towards a society free from prejudice and discrimination against people living with mental illness. [Website](#).

Book: 'Changing Minds' is a compassionate and insightful guide that will demystify mental health issues and help anyone concerned about themselves or loved ones. Leading psychiatrist Dr Mark Cross, from

the acclaimed ABC TV series 'Changing Minds', feels strongly that everyone should have easy access to information they can trust about common mental health problems. Cost: \$29.50. Available [here](#).

POPE FRANCIS SPEAKS OUT AGAINST THE DEATH PENALTY

Pope Francis has spoken strongly against capital punishment, calling it 'an offence to the inviolability of life and to the dignity of the human person ... It likewise contradicts God's plan for individuals and society, and his merciful justice. Nor is it consonant with any just purpose of punishment.' His Holiness reiterated the Church's strong opposition to the death penalty in a message sent in June to the 6th World Congress Against the Death Penalty in Oslo, Norway. The report on the Pope's message is [here](#). The video of his message is [here](#).



ACSJC Publications July 2016

SOCIAL JUSTICE STATEMENT 2016–2017 – ORDER NOW!

This year's Australian Catholic Bishops Conference Social Justice Statement is entitled 'A Place at the Table: Social justice in an ageing society'. The ACSJC is now taking orders for the Statement. An order form, letter from the President of the Bishops Conference and summary material are available on the ACSJC [website](#).

DISCUSSION GUIDES: DIGNITY AND WORK 2016

The Australian Catholic Social Justice Council has issued three short discussion guides that address critical issues concerning justice for Australia's most vulnerable workers or for those who confront the reality of unemployment. These vital aspects of work and dignity in our country address: the inadequate levels of income support offered to people who are unemployed; the risk that penalty rates will be cut for vulnerable workers; and the increasing intrusion of work demands into family time and weekends. We encourage you to promote these documents in your networks and publications. We hope that they will be a valuable resource for anyone who wants to be informed about the Church's commitment to justice and fulfilment in the workplace. The discussion guides can be accessed [here](#).

SERIES PAPER 78 – 'PUTTING PEOPLE FIRST: PASTORAL LETTERS FOR THE FEAST OF ST JOSEPH THE WORKER 2010-2015.'

In the latest Catholic Social Justice Series, the ACSJC has brought together a collection of the Pastoral Letters issued by Bishop Christopher Saunders. *Putting People First: Pastoral Letters for the Feast of St Joseph the Worker 2010-2015*, provides an invaluable record of the significant issues relating to work and justice in that five-year period: the global financial crisis; the Northern Territory 'intervention' and the future of remote communities; the Insecure Work inquiry of the ACTU; and the public outcry at the inadequacy of allowances for the unemployed and sole parents. The letters include succinct and accurate summaries of the arguments with sufficient, reliable statistics. Professor Paul Smyth provides an extensive introduction to the series paper. [LINK](#)

DISCUSSION GUIDE: 2016 WORLD DAY OF PEACE MESSAGE

The theme for the 49th World Day of Peace Message from Pope Francis is *Overcome Indifference and Win Peace*. 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’. He highlights the responsibilities we share, 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. The ACSJC has prepared a Discussion Guide for the papal message, which is available on our [website](#).

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. We have also reprinted the ‘Ten Steps’ leaflet that accompanies the Statement.

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



News Monitor July 2016

[CSSA program to help drought-stricken communities](#)

24-Jun-2016

The recent Federal budget slashed funding for programs assisting drought-affected communities. Catholic Social Services Australia has developed a proposal to take over the existing services that have been defunded, says Marcelle Mogg.

[Election must deliver more than some short-term promises](#)

23-Jun-2016

Two weeks out from a Federal election, may we all weigh up what is most important and precious to us as a people and as residents of this earth, writes Sister Clare Condon SGS.

[Townsville solar initiative impresses Vatican, could go global](#)

23-Jun-2016

Solar projects powering dozens of Queensland Catholic schools have so impressed Vatican officials that they believe the projects could be duplicated across the globe, offering massive power savings, reports *The Catholic Leader*.

[Brexit: The strong Catholic case for sitting on the fence](#)

23-Jun-2016

There are legitimate arguments for both sides. Ultimately, a judgment has to be made about whether, on balance, the EU contributes to the promotion of human dignity and the common good – when compared with the alternatives, writes Philip Booth.

[Welcome the marginalised: Pope invites refugees up on stage](#)

23-Jun-2016

Flanked by a group of refugees, Pope Francis has appealed to Christians at his weekly general audience to care for and welcome those whom society often excludes, reports the Catholic News Service.

[Homeless gatecrash Vinnies' Adelaide CEO Sleepout](#)

20-Jun-2016

An angry group of homeless people gatecrashed the Vinnies CEO Sleepout event in Adelaide's CBD on Friday, accusing participants of not understanding their plight, reports the ABC.

[Election dilemma: Trying to cast a vote for humane policy](#)

17-Jun-2016

I urge voters of goodwill to consider the desirability of a parliament which is not readily controlled by the government of the day, and thus make the new government enact a more humane policy on asylum-seekers, writes Fr Frank Brennan SJ.

[Bishop Vincent Long installed as Bishop of Parramatta](#)

17-Jun-2016

A Liturgical Reception and Solemn Mass of Installation celebrated the appointment of ACSJC Chairman Bishop Vincent Long Van Nguyen OFM ConV as the fourth Bishop of Parramatta at St Patrick's Cathedral last night.

[Australian orders announce joint divestment from fossil fuels](#)

17-Jun-2016

Four Australian orders have announced they are completely divesting from coal, oil and gas in what they say is the first joint Catholic divestment in the world, reports *The Guardian*.

[More US Catholics accept climate change, Pope's impact unclear](#)

16-Jun-2016

As the first anniversary of Pope Francis' eco-encyclical *Laudato Si'* approaches, new research shows that US Catholics are more likely than other Christians to accept global warming and believe they have a responsibility to combat it, reports *Crux*.

[Francis meets mother of only Argentine on US death row](#)

15-Jun-2016

In a further sign of his opposition to the death penalty, Pope Francis has received in private audience the mother of Victor Saldano, the only Argentinian on death row in the United States, reports *America*.

[Pope horrified by Orlando attack, condemns free flow of weapons](#)

14-Jun-2016

Pope Francis has condemned the massacre in the gay nightclub in Orlando and criticised the free flow of weapons around the world, echoing the words of Chicago Archbishop Blase Cupich, who earlier called for greater efforts on gun control.

[Archbishop urges politicians to forge 'genuinely human economy'](#)

09-Jun-2016

The Archbishop of Brisbane, Mark Coleridge, has challenged Australia’s political leaders to forge a “genuinely human economy” but warned it was not possible while they used tactics rather than developed policy, reports *The Catholic Leader*.

[Church needs to get political to fight slavery: Francis](#)

07-Jun-2016

The Church has a duty to be involved in politics when it comes to fighting global problems such as human trafficking, Pope Francis has told a summit in the Vatican, reports *Vatican Insider*.

[Family tax benefit changes target stay-at-home mums](#)

06-Jun-2016

Upcoming changes to Family Tax Benefit payments are unfairly targeting stay-at-home mums, according to the Catholic Commission of Employment Relations.

[Refugee Razia found a new sense of home in an Adelaide school](#)

03-Jun-2016

Razia Ali is an Afghani refugee who followed her father to Australia, graduated from Our Lady of the Sacred Heart College in Adelaide and forged a meaningful life in her new country, reports *The Southern Cross*.

– courtesy cathnews.com



Social Justice Diary July 2016

July 2016

1	Fri	2012: Commencement of the Fair Work Amendment (TCF Industry) Act 2011, ensuring fair pay and conditions for outworkers in the garment industry - ACSJC resources on Workplace Justice Tartan Day (Australasia)
2	Sat	International Day of Cooperatives READ MORE ↓

3	Sun	<p>Fourteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time</p> <p>National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Sunday - ACSJC resources on Justice for Indigenous People</p> <p>NAIDOC Week begins</p> <p>READ MORE ↓</p>
4	Mon	
5	Tue	1935: Birth of the Dalai Lama in Tibet – awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1989
6	Wed	
7	Thu	<p>Eid-al-Fitr, the Muslim breaking of the fast</p> <p>1945: Blessed Peter To Rot – killed in Papua New Guinea, recognised as a martyr</p>
8	Fri	
9	Sat	
10	Sun	<p>Fifteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time</p> <p>Apostleship of the Sea</p> <p>1985: Sinking of Greenpeace ship Rainbow Warrior in Auckland</p>
11	Mon	World Population Day
12	Tue	1971: Aboriginal Flag first flown in Adelaide - ACSJC resources on Justice for Indigenous People
13	Wed	
14	Thu	1995: Aboriginal Flag and Torres Strait Islander Flag proclaimed official flags of Australia - ACSJC resources on Justice for Indigenous People
15	Fri	
16	Sat	1945: First Atomic bomb detonated in New Mexico - ACSJC resources on Peacebuilding
17	Sun	Sixteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

18	Mon	1918: Birth of Nelson Mandela - ACSJC resources on Confronting Racism
19	Tue	
20	Wed	1969: First moon landing accomplished by Neil Armstrong, Edwin Aldrin and Michael Collins
21	Thu	
22	Fri	
23	Sat	
24	Sun	Seventeenth Sunday in Ordinary Time Bible Sunday
25	Mon	
26	Tue	1833: Emancipation Bill approved, abolishing slavery throughout the British Empire - ACSJC resources on Trade Justice
27	Wed	
28	Thu	
29	Fri	Schools Tree Day - ACSJC resources on the Environment
30	Sat	World Day Against Trafficking in Persons - ACSJC resources on Trade Justice International Day of Friendship
31	Sun	Eighteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time National Missing Persons Week begins National Tree Day - ACSJC resources on the Environment