



# ACSJC BRIEFING

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*From the Australian Catholic Social Justice Council, the social justice and human rights agency of the Catholic Church in Australia - [www.socialjustice.catholic.org.au](http://www.socialjustice.catholic.org.au)*

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## FROM THE SECRETARIAT

Dear Friends,

In mid-June, as the leaders of G8 nations prepared to meet in Gleneagles, the finance ministers of the developed countries agreed to cancel the debts of 18 of the world's poorest countries, including African and four Latin American nations. Aid and development groups welcomed this as an important initiative that should be extended to many other nations that are among the world's poorest.

As these developments were occurring, the Australian Catholic Social Justice Council and Catholic Social Services Victoria were in Melbourne to launch Fr Bruce Duncan's book: "Ending Hunger – How far can we go?" The publication was produced to raise awareness of the global commitment of countries like Australia to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) that aim to halve world poverty by 2015. This launch also coincided with the international Make Poverty History campaign for better aid, fair trade and full debt relief for impoverished nations.

### ENDING HUNGER

Launching "Ending Hunger", Cardinal Edward Cassidy called on Australians to support more strongly the MDGs. He said that the obligation to eradicate poverty arose from "the very essence of humanity. There is an ethical or moral responsibility involved."

"Do we see the hungry and poverty-stricken African, for example, as just one of 'the others' for whom we have no moral responsibility, or do we see that person rather as a 'brother or sister' in need? For me this is at the heart of the problem."

"This understanding of the neighbour as a brother or sister is not alien to our own Australian history and experience. This nation was built upon a deep sense of social justice and the need to help the 'underdog'. The extraordinarily generous response of the Australian people to the tragic consequences of the 2004 Boxing Day tsunami is surely to be explained by such an understanding", he said.

Cardinal Cassidy noted that Australia's official development assistance was surprisingly modest for a country enjoying a long economic boom, at only 0.28 per cent of gross national income. This is a long way short of the UN target of 0.7 per cent of gross national income. With other developed countries, Australia needs to double its overseas aid if we are to make serious reductions in the numbers of people suffering from hunger and the most desperate poverty.

### **ENDING HUNGER COMPARABLE TO ABOLITION OF SLAVERY**

Responding to the Cardinal was Mr Simon McKeon, executive chair of the Macquarie Bank's Melbourne office. Mr McKeon is involved with a number of community projects, and sits on the boards of World Vision Australia and MS Research Australia. He is the inaugural chair of Melbourne Cares, an organisation linking business and community groups to address social issues.

Mr McKeon argued strongly in support of the MDGs, noting that the tide of public opinion seemed to be turning in favour of a global effort to eradicate hunger, as evidenced by the recent remission of debts of some of the poorest countries and the G8 efforts to increase international aid substantially.

However he said that public opinion in Australia was only slowly becoming aware of the great moral issue of hunger overseas. He thought more informed conversation about the eradication of hunger was a precondition for action by governments. He considered the current campaign to eliminate hunger comparable in historical significance to the abolition of slavery in the 19th century.

In his view, the business world was not yet playing its full part in responding to development issues, but he believed it could, and that in time it would.

Author, Fr Bruce Duncan said "we are here because of our concern to promote the wellbeing of the poorest people on our earth, recognising that the UN Millennium Development Goals represent one of humankind's brightest hopes at this stage in history. I see them as a marvellous godsend, fleshing out the Gospel plea to feed the hungry and care for the afflicted".

He said that the good news – that there is no economic need for anyone in the world to be hungry – has not yet been taken up strongly in Australia as it has in Britain and some of the European countries. "This needs to change. This campaign to Make Poverty History aims precisely to raise public awareness that not only can we do this, but with our current phenomenal wealth, the advanced countries can provide the needed funding relatively easily."

He said "the generous response to the Asian tsunami demonstrates that there is immense good will in the Australian population towards others in great suffering. The challenge for us is to stimulate the public conversation about these issues, invite business people and all those with special expertise to help find practical solutions, and to encourage our political institutions to support the UN Millennium Goals robustly and generously."

### **MAKING POVERTY HISTORY**

Chair of the Make Poverty History campaign and national director of Caritas Australia, Mr Jack de Groot, said that making poverty history was about four things:

- Cancelling the debt of nations who are chained by outrageous realities that mean they spend more on debt repayment than on health or education;
- Increasing the volume and targeting of aid so it attends to the real needs of communities and does not serve the national interest of donor countries alone;
- Ensuring fairer trade that acknowledges that we are not all on a level playing field – particularly the poor; and
- Programs that achieve good governance in nations that have been victim to corruption.

In mid-July, the G8 summit agreed to a doubling of aid for Africa by \$25 billion a year by 2010, as part of an overall increase of \$50 billion for all developing countries.

Following this commitment, Mr de Groot highlighted the lagging efforts of Australia to meeting its own commitments to the MDGs. "Australia stands out among the 22 OECD developed countries in deciding not to make a substantial new aid commitment to meet the Millennium Development Goals. Until last week, Japan and USA were the only other OECD countries (with Australia) to resist pressure to announce any substantial increase to match the generous commitments made already by European governments."

"Australia has been the OECD's leader over the last six years in economic growth rates and budget surpluses. We have enjoyed 14 years of continuous growth and 9 years of Commonwealth surpluses. We have the resources to make the necessary commitments" he said.

Calling for Australia to raise its efforts in meeting its commitments at the UN Poverty Summit ('Millennium Summit Plus Five') in September, Mr de Groot said, "Australia has the chance to demonstrate that it will rise to this global challenge. This would mean joining our OECD partners in announcing a timetable to reach 0.5 per cent of Gross National Income, up from 0.28 per cent now – as recommended by the OECD. With this increase, Australia could avoid sliding to 19th ranking among the OECD donors as a proportion of its Gross National Income in 2010."

### **WHAT YOU CAN DO TO MAKE POVERTY HISTORY**

The overwhelming response to the Asian tsunami shows how Australians are truly sensitive to issues of hunger, poverty and distress. To ensure that the generous response to the tsunami victims is not just an isolated event we need:

- inspired leadership from our politicians and public figures;
- to spread the knowledge that we have the resources relatively quickly to lift millions of people out of hunger and destitution; and
- a broader conversation about the MDGs.

Ending Hunger suggests writing to your local parliamentarian and the Prime Minister to congratulate them on Australia's generous response to the tsunami disaster. Tell them how strongly you support Australia endorsing the MDGs to help millions of other people escape destitution. Urge the Prime Minister to demonstrate Australian commitment by personally attending the 'Millennium Summit Plus Five' meeting in New York in September 2005. Especially encourage the government rapidly to double our overseas aid, and to set a timetable for Australia to meet its aid target.

Contact details for federal parliamentarians can be found at:

<http://www.aph.gov.au/whoswho/index.htm>

Addresses delivered at the launch of Catholic Social Justice Series No.53 can be found at:

[http://www.socialjustice.catholic.org.au/Content/issues/ending\\_hunger.html](http://www.socialjustice.catholic.org.au/Content/issues/ending_hunger.html)

Other helpful links:

<http://www.makepovertyhistory.com.au>

<http://www.jubileeaustralia.org>

<http://www.caritas.org.au/education/mph.htm>

<http://www.css.org.au/>

John Ferguson

National Executive Officer

- *John Ferguson (National Executive Officer)*

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## **LATEST PUBLICATIONS**

(orders Tel: 02 9956 5811 or download an order form from the ACSJC website:

<http://www.socialjustice.catholic.org.au/CONTENT/PDF/TEMPLATE-ORDERFORM.pdf>)

### **2005 SOCIAL JUSTICE SUNDAY STATEMENT – ORDER NOW!**

This year's Australian Catholic Bishops Conference Social Justice Sunday Statement is entitled "Jesus, Light for the World – Living the Gospel Today". The ACSJC is now taking orders for the Statement. An order form is available on the ACSJC website: <http://www.socialjustice.catholic.org.au>

### **ACSJC STATEMENT FOR JUBILEE SUNDAY:**

To highlight the ecumenical celebration of Jubilee Sunday (26 June), the ACSJC released a Statement which is available on the ACSJC website at: [http://www.socialjustice.catholic.org.au/Content/issues/statement\\_for\\_jubilee\\_sunday,\\_26\\_june\\_2005.html](http://www.socialjustice.catholic.org.au/Content/issues/statement_for_jubilee_sunday,_26_june_2005.html)

### **PASTORAL LETTER: THE MINIMUM WAGE IN AN AGE OF PROSPERITY AND WEALTH**

The Pastoral Letter issued by Bishop Christopher Saunders for the Feast of St Joseph the Worker is available and can be downloaded from the ACSJC website: <http://www.socialjustice.catholic.org.au>

### **SERIES PAPER: TRADE JUSTICE**

Catholic Social Justice Series No. 54 – Sr Suzette Clarke rsc and Dr Patricia Ranald consider the imposition of unjust trade agreements, indiscriminate trade liberalisation and privatisation on many poor communities, particularly in the third world, and emphasises the rights of all to adequate access to food, a livelihood, water, health and education. (Cost \$6.60 plus postage) (postage rates listed below)

### **SERIES PAPER: ENDING HUNGER – HOW FAR CAN WE GO?**

Catholic Social Justice Series No.53 – Fr Bruce Duncan CSsR reveals how easily attainable is the central goal of the Millennium Development Goals, endorsed at the UN Millennium Summit in September 2000, to reduce the extent of hunger and the most acute poverty by half by 2015. The document praises the leading role of Australia in responding to the tragedy of the Indian Ocean tsunami and calls on Government to increase its commitment to these goals. (Cost \$6.60 plus postage) (postage rates listed below)

*(Postage rates for Catholic Social Justice Series Papers: 1 copy \$1; 2-3 copies \$1.45; 4-5 copies \$2.45)*

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## **CURRENT ISSUES/RESOURCES**

### **COMMISSION FOR AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC WOMEN – INTERFAITH FELLOWSHIP**

The Commission for Australian Catholic Women has established a Young Catholic Women's Interfaith Fellowship for young women to be trained and mentored in interfaith relations. It will be held at the Australian Catholic University in Canberra in Semester 1, 2006. The Fellowship will cover: Graduate Certificate in Interfaith Relations; Interfaith Engagement; Media training; Skilling in liaison with government and community groups; Mentoring. Applications are due by August 15th 2005. Further details can be found at <http://www.cacw.catholic.org.au/> or call (02) 6201 9864

### **REFUGEE & MIGRANT SUNDAY**

Information and resources for Refugee and Migrant Sunday 2005 are now available at the website of the Australian Catholic Migrant & Refugee Office. (refer: [http://www.acmro.catholic.org.au/news/2005\\_ref\\_sunday.htm](http://www.acmro.catholic.org.au/news/2005_ref_sunday.htm))

### **UNIYA RESEARCH PAPERS**

"View on Nauru - Between a mined-out rock and a hard place" by Helen Fraser & Minh Nguyen focuses on a country once ranked among the world's wealthiest owing to its rich but now depleted phosphate resources. Continued dependency on phosphate export revenue has reduced this island state to near bankruptcy. Nauru is a desperate country in need of international assistance. Access this paper at: [http://www.uniya.org/research/view\\_nauru.html](http://www.uniya.org/research/view_nauru.html)

"View on Malaysia" by Victoria Mence examines several key factors that have shaped the direction of Malaysia's political and economic development since independence and Australia's complex relationship with this important regional neighbour. Read full report at:

[http://www.uniya.org/research/asia\\_pacific.html](http://www.uniya.org/research/asia_pacific.html)

### **HREOC ART & ESSAY COMPETITION**

HREOC has launched two competitions recently - the "Human Writes" personal essay competition, and the "Rights in Perspective" art competition. Young people aged 11 to 18 currently living in Australia are eligible to enter. Visit <http://www.humanrights.gov.au/youthdialogue/index.html> for further details.

### **PUBLICATION – FOLLOWING THEM HOME**

David Corlette's book, "Following them Home, The fate of the returned asylum seekers" explores the lands that asylum seekers flee and in many cases, to which they are returned. Included are the untold stories of Australia's returned asylum seekers. While the government investigates how it wrongly detained and deported its own citizens, this book is a timely reminder of the treatment suffered by non-citizens seeking protection. (refer: <http://www.safecom.org.au/following-them-home.htm>)

### **PUBLICATION – ANOTHER COUNTRY**

A collection of works by writers in detention (and edited by Rosie Scott and Tom Kenelly) whose escape from tyranny in their own countries has made them strong enough to speak out eloquently against injustice here. (refer: <http://www.safecom.org.au/another-country.htm>)

### **BROCHURE – "CHANGING CLIMATE, CHANGING CREATION".**

With support from the Uniting Church and Catholic Earthcare, ACF and the NCCA have produced a brochure which is being distributed to churches across the country. Christian groups everywhere are getting active on climate change. The Changing Climate, Changing Creation brochure encourages Australian Christians to: write to or visit their federal MP and ask what they are doing to address the threat of climate change; find out more about reducing energy and water usage and waste at home; take action on climate change within churches and small groups.

Copies of the brochure can be accessed at the following website:  
<http://www.acfonline.org.au/asp/pages/document.asp?IdDoc=2414>

### **ISSUES PAPER – "THE REALITY OF INCOME INEQUALITY IN AUSTRALIA"**

The Society of St Vincent de Paul has released the first in a new Social Policy Issues series dealing with income inequality. Contrary to recent assertions made by the Government and certain researchers, the paper uses ABS data to show that income inequality in Australia is growing. Assertions that income inequality is moderating are based on the use of averages and percentages, which disguise an unequal growth in income reflected in absolute terms, especially at the lower levels.

(<http://www.vinnies.org.au/index.cfm?state=national&section=socialj&id=689>)

### **ANTI-POVERTY WEEK 2005**

The organisers of the annual Anti-Poverty Week (16-22 October) are encouraging individuals and organisations to plan now for activities in October 2005. The Week focuses on poverty around the world, including Australia. Everyone is encouraged to organise activities during the Week or join in some being organised by other people. The activities can be large or small, and activities at local levels are especially welcome. The website <http://www.antipovertyweek.org.au> includes basic fact sheets, promotional material and links to sources of information and ideas about ways of reducing poverty and hardship. To notify planned activities, or obtain further information, please contact us at 1300 797 290 or [apw@antipovertyweek.org.au](mailto:apw@antipovertyweek.org.au)

**ACOSS Action** - Email your Member of Parliament in a minute.

If proposed payment changes for single parents and people with disabilities go ahead, at least 300,000 Australians could be worse off after July 2006. At least 150,000 people who apply for payments after July 2006 plus their 150,000 children will have less money to live on. Register your concern over this critical issue by going to <http://www.acoss.org.au> entering your postcode and sending your local Member of Parliament and Senators a letter asking them not to reduce the incomes of the poorest Australians.

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## **AUGUST NOTICES**

**AUGUST 1 - 7: PUBLIC ADDRESSES, "TRADE JUSTICE"** (Qld). Sr Suzette Clark rsc of the Australian Catholic Social Justice Council will be in the Brisbane Archdiocese as a guest of the Brisbane Catholic Justice & Peace Commission to present talks on trade justice. Since Pope Paul VI, Catholic Social Teaching has promoted fair trade over free trade to protect the rights of people in the least developed countries of the world. Opportunities for information, discussion, prayer, reflection and action on this important issue at a number of venues:

Aug 1: St Thomas' Anglican Church Hall, Lawrence Street, North Ipswich, 7.00 p.m. (Meal provided, entry by donation, RSVP to Rev Bill Redman on 3281 3271 for catering purposes)

Aug 2: Edmund Rice Conference Room, Xavier Province Centre, 70 Kate St, Indooroopilly, 9.00 a.m. – 3.30 p.m. (Bookings and enquiries to 3327 2200 by 28th of July, cost \$100)

Aug 3: Justice Place, 5 Abingdon St, Woolloongabba, 7.00 p.m.

Aug 5: The O'Callaghan Centre, Aspley Parish, Robinson Road West, Aspley, 7.15 p.m. for 7.30 p.m. (Supper afterwards)

Aug 7: Our Lady of Perpetual Succour Church, Moorindil St, Tewantin, 11.00 a.m. (following 10.00 a.m. Eucharist, shared lunch to follow at 12.30 p.m.)

For further info contact Peter Arndt on (07) 3891 5911 or e-mail [petercjpc@uq.net.au](mailto:petercjpc@uq.net.au)

**AUGUST 1: PUBLIC MEETING, "Oil Gas & Greed in the Timor Sea"** (ACT). ANU Law Students for Social Justice present a chance for you to learn more about East Timor's natural resources and what you can do to make sure East Timor gets a fair go in the Timor Sea. Speakers include Ian Melrose, Vanessa Hearman, John Clarke via satellite as Alexander Downer. For further info call 0408 416 062 or 0422 545 763. 6.30pm, Law Theatre, Faculty of Law, Australian National University, Fellows Road, Acton, ACT. (refer: <http://www.active.org.au/canberra/calendar/?display=zoom&event=1122>)

**AUGUST 2: SYMPOSIUM, "EQUITY IN SOURCING REVENUE: THE EFFECT ON THE ECONOMY AND THE COMMUNITY"** (Vic). The Centre for Public Policy University of Melbourne and Prosper Australia are running a half-day joint symposium on tax. It aims to bring together socially concerned people who are keen to identify taxation policies which cause hardship and who wish to see the incidence of homelessness and poverty reduced. The present method of drawing in revenue from any source - provided that it does not produce too much of an outcry - often means that the poor are severely affected. 8.30am at St Hilda's College, College Crescent, Parkville. Further information and registration form: <http://www.public-policy.unimelb.edu.au/events/equity.html>

**AUGUST 2: PUBLIC MEETING, "TIMOR SEA JUSTICE CAMPAIGN"** (NSW). Addresses from Fr Frank Brennan, Sr Susan Connelly and satellite address from John Clarke as Alexander Downer. 6.00pm, the LHMU auditorium, Level 1, 187 Thomas St, Haymarket, Sydney. (refer: <http://www.active.org.au/sydney/calendar/?display=zoom&event=2927>)

**AUGUST 3: PUBLIC LECTURE, "THE US OCCUPATION OF IRAQ: WITHDRAWAL OR QUAGMIRE?"** (NSW). Dr Phyllis Bennis, representative of the United for Peace and Justice anti-war coalition USA will address this forum of the Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies. 12.30pm Education Lecture Theatre 351, Education Building (A35), The University of Sydney. (refer: <http://www.arts.usyd.edu.au/centres/cpacs/seminars.htm>)

**AUGUST 3 – SEPTEMBER 7: COURSE, "BUILDING BRIDGES: RECONCILIATION THROUGH UNDERSTANDING"** (NSW). A six-week course on Wednesday evenings involving dialogues with Indigenous presenters who share their knowledge, personal and community experience and expertise. 7.30pm each Wednesday, Parramatta Migrant Resource Centre, 15 Hunter Street Parramatta (Opposite end of Hunter Street to St Johns Cathedral). Registration: Parramatta College on 9687 2072 (refer: <http://www.antar.org.au/>)

**AUGUST 7: RALLY, "HIROSHIMA DAY RALLY: NO WAR, NO NUCLEAR WEAPONS"** (Vic). Anti-war rally organised by the Melbourne Stop the War Coalition in conjunction with Nuclear Free. Commencing at 1.00pm at State Library, cnr Swanston & Latrobe Sts, Melbourne CBD. (refer: [http://www.melbourne.indymedia.org/calendar/event\\_display\\_detail.php?event\\_id=1124&day=7&month=8&year=2005](http://www.melbourne.indymedia.org/calendar/event_display_detail.php?event_id=1124&day=7&month=8&year=2005))

**AUGUST 9: PUBLIC FORUM, "FAIR GO FORUM IN CITY"** (NSW). SAVE Australia in association with the Sydney Mechanic School of Arts invites you to the inaugural community education forum on immigration detention, mental health and refugee rights. Speakers include David Bitel and Maqsood Alshams. 6.00 – 9.00pm Sydney Mechanic's School of Arts Building, Norman Self Room, Level 3, 280 Pitt Street, Sydney. Call (02) 9266 0766 for more details.

**AUGUST 9: PUBLIC FORUM, "ASIO'S SECRET RAIDS"** (Vic). A public forum about the raft of legislation that gives ASIO broad powers and impacts on your freedoms. Hosted by the Federation of Community Legal Centers, Liberty Victoria, Civil Rights Network and the Justice4Jack Thomas Collective. Speakers include Rob Stary, Criminal Lawyer defending those who were raided by ASIO, Les Thomas, brother of Jack Thomas, Waleed Aly, Islamic Council of Victoria. 7.30pm Brunswick Uniting Church (CNR of Sydney Rd. and Merri Rd.) Call 0400 526 313 for further information.

**AUGUST 11: LAUNCH, "ANOTHER COUNTRY, WRITERS IN DETENTION"** (NSW). The Bridge for Asylum Seekers Foundation invites all to attend the North Shore launch of 'Another Country', edited by Thomas Keneally and Rosie Scott. Meet Christine Rau, Tom Keneally and Rosie Scott, Cheikh Kone and Kate Maclurcan. Signed copies of 'Another Country' will also be available at a special discounted price. It will also include the launch of 'Seeking Refuge'- a challenging new book on the refugee issues facing Australia & the world, from the University of Wollongong Press. 7.30pm Mosman Community Centre, cnr Short St & Myahgah Rd. \$20/ \$10 concession. Call 9953 4664. (refer: <http://www.chilout.org/events/index.html>)

**AUGUST 11 – 12: CONFERENCE, "INDIGENOUS SOCIOECONOMIC OUTCOMES: ASSESSING RECENT EVIDENCE"** (ACT). The Centre for Aboriginal Economic Policy Research is running this multidisciplinary conference at the Australian National University. The conference will consider the latest evidence on Indigenous economic status, social status, and family and community life in Australia and to discuss the implications of such data for government policy. The conference venue is the Shine Dome, Gordon Street, Canberra. Call (02) 6125 8211 or visit <http://www.anu.edu.au/caepr/conference.php>

**AUGUST 12: PUBLIC MEETING, "TRAFFICKING IN WOMEN: WHERE TO FROM HERE?"** (Vic). Pru Goward Sex Discrimination Commissioner and Jennifer Burn Anti-Slavery Centre Uni of Technology Sydney will address this gathering. 1.00 – 5.00pm, Fitzroy Town Hall, Napier Street, Fitzroy. Event organized by Project Respect. For further info call 9416 3401 (refer: [http://www.melbourne.indymedia.org/calendar/event\\_display\\_detail.php?event\\_id=1146&day=12&month=8&year=2005](http://www.melbourne.indymedia.org/calendar/event_display_detail.php?event_id=1146&day=12&month=8&year=2005))

**AUGUST 13: FUNDRAISER FOR CHILOUT AND THE ASYLUM SEEKERS CENTRE** (NSW). A night of rock, blues, gyp rok, breaks and distraction. Raising money for ChilOut and the Asylum Seekers Centre. From 8.00pm, The Gaelic Club 64 Devonshire Street, Surry Hills, Sydney. \$15, \$10 Concession. Bookings: 02 9209 4614 <http://www.thegaelicclub.com.au> (refer: <http://http://www.chilout.org/events/index.html>)

**AUGUST 14 – 17: CONFERENCE, "INTERNATIONAL ENGAGING COMMUNITIES CONFERENCE"** (Qld). The United Nations and Queensland State Government will host this conference exploring all issues related to community engagement and addressing the experiences, challenges and research which affect all citizens, governments and organisations alike. Speakers include: Prof Mick Dodson; Mr Darryl Pearce; Mr Tom Calma; Ms Chandra Roy; Ms Henrietta Marrie. Brisbane Convention & Exhibition Centre. (refer: <http://www.engagingcommunities2005.org>)

**AUGUST 18: SEMINAR, TRAINING SEMINAR FOR REFUGEE AND MIGRANT SUNDAY** (Vic). A seminar about creating awareness and better resourcing church leaders, theology students and the community. It will include theological reflection on refugee issues and question the role and responsibility of Christians to refugees and migrants. Keynote speaker Arnold Zable, Author of "Theological Reflection" and Merrill Kitchen, Principal, Churches of Christ Theological College. 9.00am – 12.30pm, Whitley College, Melbourne University, 271 Royal Parade, Parkville. \$10, \$8 concession. For more info call (03) 9650 6811 or email vsanyu@ncca.org.au (refer: <http://www.chilout.org/events/index.html>)

**AUGUST 22: PUBLIC ADDRESS, "THE GLOBAL COMMON GOOD IN A DIVIDED WORLD"** (NSW). Address by Fr David Hollenbach SJ, Professor of Catholic Theology at Boston College teaching theological ethics and Christian social ethics. Chair: Professor Peter Sheehan AO, Vice-Chancellor, ACU. Respondents: Prof Frank Brennan SJ AO, Institute of Legal Studies, ACU and Rev Dr Gerald Gleeson, Professor of Philosophy at Catholic Institute of Sydney. Co-sponsored by Uniya and the ACU. 6.00 for 6.30pm, North Sydney Campus, 40 Edward Street, North Sydney. (refer: [http://www.uniya.org/news/news\\_david\\_hollenbach.html](http://www.uniya.org/news/news_david_hollenbach.html))

**AUGUST 23: PUBLIC ADDRESS, "HUMANITARIAN CRISES, REFUGEES AND THE TRANSNATIONAL GOOD: GLOBAL CHALLENGES AND CATHOLIC SOCIAL TEACHING"** (ACT). Address by Prof David Hollenbach SJ. Chair: Professor Peter Camilleri, Rector, Canberra Campus, ACU. Respondents: Prof Frank Brennan SJ AO, Institute of Legal Studies, ACU and Mr Francis Sullivan, CEO, Catholic Health Australia. Co-sponsored by CHA and ACU. 6.00 for 6.30pm, Canberra Campus, ACU, 223 Antill Street, Watson ACT. (refer: [http://www.uniya.org/news/news\\_david\\_hollenbach.html](http://www.uniya.org/news/news_david_hollenbach.html))

**AUGUST 23: FILM NIGHT, "CHILDREN OF TIBET"** (SA). Film about the journey of three young Tibetan refugees who escape by foot across the Tibetan terrain and over the Himalayas in winter, told in their own words. It is a story of courage and hope. Proceeds donated to the Australian Refugee Association. 7.15pm, Mercury Cinema. Contact: Global Education Centre- 1st floor, Torrens Building, 220 Victoria Square, Adelaide Phone: 8221 6744. (refer: [http://www.ruralaustraliansforrefugees.org/template.php3?area=news&content=20050712\\_311](http://www.ruralaustraliansforrefugees.org/template.php3?area=news&content=20050712_311))

**AUGUST 24: PUBLIC LECTURE BY VICKI WALKER** (ACT). The David Hunter Memorial Lecture will be given by Vicki Walker, Coordinator, Aboriginal Catholic Ministry Melbourne. 6.30 – 8.30 pm, Australian Centre for Christianity and Culture, 15 Blackall St, Barton, ACT. Hosted by ANTaR and ACT Journey of Healing. Further information: (02) 6295 9470 (refer: <http://www.antar.org.au/>)

**AUGUST 24: PUBLIC LECTURE, "IDEAS LECTURE"** (Qld). The Ideas Festival is bringing Canadian John Ralston Saul to Brisbane to present his ideas. John Ralston Saul is an internationally respected commentator on politics, globalism, democracy and economics. A critic of the Davos World Economic Forum, his recent provocative work argues that globalism, with all its failures, and despite its achievements, is dead. 6.00pm, Cremorne Theatre QPAC, Brisbane. \$15 (refer: <http://ideasfestival.com.au>)

**AUGUST 25: OPEN DAY, "YOUTH OFF THE STREETS"** (NSW). Fr Chris Riley invites you to attend the Annual Open Day of "Youth Off the Streets". A special opportunity to view the innovative programs, including tours, workshops and a behind the scenes look at our programs. 10.00am at 74-98 Kenyons Road Merrylands NSW. RSVP by 11th August on (02)8332 5000 or via email [lian-necb@youthoffthestreets.com.au](mailto:lian-necb@youthoffthestreets.com.au). (refer: <http://www.youthoffthestreets.com.au/events/index.html>)

**AUGUST 25: PUBLIC ADDRESS, "HUMAN RIGHTS AND WOMEN'S RIGHTS: UNIVERSAL STANDARDS IN A MULTICULTURAL WORLD?"** (Vic). Address by Prof David Hollenbach SJ. Chair: Professor Gabrielle McMullen, Pro-Vice-Chancellor ACU. Respondents: Prof Frank Brennan SJ, and Professor Neil Ormerod, ACU. Co-sponsored by Jesuit Theological College & ACU. 6.00pm for 6.30pm, ACU, Melbourne Campus, 115 Victoria Parade, Fitzroy. For further information telephone (03) 9953 3306. (refer: [http://www.uniya.org/news/news\\_david\\_hollenbach.html](http://www.uniya.org/news/news_david_hollenbach.html))

**AUGUST 27: PUBLIC LECTURE, "TURNING THE TIDE ON TAMPA"** (Vic). An update on recent refugee policy decisions, presentation from a Psychologist working in the refugee and detention field, social action responses and gain skills & information to put these into practice. Bookings essential. 1.00pm - 4.00pm, Asylum Seeker Resource Centre, 67 Jeffcott Street, West Melbourne. Call 0408 567 957 (refer: [http://www.ajustaustralia.com/whatshappening\\_events.php](http://www.ajustaustralia.com/whatshappening_events.php))

**AUGUST 29 – 30: CONFERENCE, "UN INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF MICRO-CREDIT CONFERENCE 2005"** (Vic). The United Nations Association of Australia (Victoria) is convening this conference to consider how the strategies of micro-credit and microfinance are an important means in the broader strategy to achieve the first of the eight Millennium Development Goals agreed upon by world leaders at the Millennium Summit in 2000 - to halve the proportion of people in the world who live on less than one dollar a day and halve the proportion of people who suffer from hunger. The Conference will be held at the Sofitel Hotel in Melbourne. Details of conference program, plenary and invited speakers, the on-line registration form and accommodation booking form are now available at <http://www.icms.com.au/microcredit2005>. For further information call (03) 9682 0244

**AUGUST 29 – 31: CONFERENCE, "SEEK JUSTICE, COME TO THE EDGE"** (WA). Catholic Health Australia is convening its 2005 National Conference at the Sheraton Perth Hotel from 29-31 August. Keynote speakers include Fr Mark Raper SJ, Prof Ian Hickie and Mrs Sue Gordon AM. For further information call (02) 6260 5980 or visit <http://www.cha.org.au/>

**AUGUST 31: PUBLIC LECTURE, "OUR SCHAPELLE, CORNELIA AND VIVIAN: RECENT MEDIATIONS ON THE BOUNDARIES OF AUSTRALIAN HOSPITALITY"** (Vic). Dr Sara Wills examines extraordinarily clear manifestation of racialised boundaries and considers a new project on Australian migrant hospitality, and asks whether they reveal that the 'long, slow death of White Australia' (to quote Tavan) - and of (white) multiculturalism - has quite yet come to pass. 1.00 – 2.00pm, Upstairs seminar room, Australian Centre, The University of Melbourne, 149 Barry Street, (refer: [http://events.unimelb.edu.au/eventid\\_1914.html](http://events.unimelb.edu.au/eventid_1914.html))

**SEPTEMBER 8 – 9: CONFERENCE, "HUMAN RIGHTS AND MENTAL HEALTH"** (ACT). SAVE Australia is convening the third National Conference on Human Rights and Mental Health – Human Rights and Australia's Mental Health Policy. There is an important relationship between mental health and powerful social, legal, health, justice, immigration and government institutions – all of which have a profound influence over people's individual human rights. The conference aims to make a timely contribution to significant contemporary Australian debate on mental health and human rights. Parliament of Australia, Canberra ACT. For further info call 0422 085 222. The confirmed program, detailed speakers list and registration details can be found at: <http://www.save.org.au/events/Conf2005.pdf>

**SEPTEMBER 14 – 16: CONFERENCE, "LIGHT TOMORROW FOR TODAY"** (ACT). The Catholic Women's League of Australia is holding its National Biennial Conference in September. Register now as places are limited. The Conference will be opened by Apostolic Nuncio in Australia, His Excellency Most Reverend Ambrose de Paoli following an opening Mass at St Christopher's in Manuka to be celebrated by Archbishop Francis P. Carroll. The theme 'Light tomorrow with today' will be reflected in the topics delivered by speakers including Prof Hilary Charlesworth, Bishop Eugene Hurley, Sr Miriam Duggan MD, Colin Creighton, Sr Josephine Mitchell. The conference will be held at "The Chifley on Northbourne". Registrations for the Conference will close on 1st August 2005. Call 02 6293 2107 for further details.

*(email news of your forthcoming social justice event by the last week of each month to: [admin@acsjc.org.au](mailto:admin@acsjc.org.au))*

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## **JULY NEWS MONITOR**

**AGENCY SAYS AUSTRALIA-MALAYSIA TIES MUST GO BEYOND TRADE:** The Uniya Jesuit Social Justice Centre said that it is essential that Australia's relationship with Malaysia moves beyond issues of trade and security if Australia is to become an effective regional neighbour with Malaysia.

**ACU RESEARCHER SAYS UNI FEES BLOCK POOR STUDENTS:** Higher university costs are deterring poor students, according to a study conducted by an Australian Catholic University researcher, who found that a lower proportion of students from low socio-economic backgrounds are taking on tertiary studies.

**CATHOLIC WELFARE APPLAUDS 'OVERDUE' FAMILY LAW CHANGES:**

Catholic Welfare Australia appeared before the Federal House of Representatives Legal & Constitutional Affairs Committee on Family Law reform, applauding the focus on the views of children involved.

**CARITAS ACCEPTING DONATIONS FOR NIGER'S STARVING:** Caritas Australia advised that it is now accepting donations for the people of Niger in Western Africa who are suffering from severe food shortages.

**STUDY SAYS CATHOLICS LEAD IN TOLERANCE OF GAYS:** A new Australia Institute study found that Catholics are among the least homophobic people in Australia, with figures showing they are almost twice as tolerant as Baptists but only slightly ahead of faithful from the Anglican and Uniting Churches.

**CATHOLIC HEALTH CONCERN ABOUT INFORMED FINANCIAL CONSENT:** In the wake of a government report, Catholic Health Australia insisted that patients have a right to a reasonable indication of possible out of pocket medical and specialist fees.

**QUEENSLAND DIOCESE COMPLAINS ABOUT NEO-NAZI INTIMIDATION OF REFUGEES:** The Social Justice Commission of the Toowoomba Diocese lodged a complaint with the Human Rights and Equal Opportunities Commission about the activities of the White Pride Coalition in Toowoomba.

**COMMISSION APPEALS FOR SUPPORT FOR MAN FACING DEPORTATION:** Brisbane's Catholic Justice and Peace Commission is calling for support for a Brisbane father of four who faces deportation by the Immigration Department.

**KIWI RELIGIOUS LEADERS DEFINE "ROBUST SOCIETY":** In the lead up to the country's election, New Zealand's religious leaders have issued a joint statement urging voters to make the most of the opportunity to determine the future shape of New Zealand society.

**BROTHERS COMMIT TO CATHOLIC PRINCIPLES IN IR NEGOTIATIONS:** The Christian Brothers in Queensland have stressed their commitment to observing the principles of Catholic social teaching when negotiations are conducted with employees in its schools.

**NUN SAYS OUTBACK RAIN HAS BOOSTED MORALE:** Rockhampton Diocese pastoral worker, Sr Mary Kiely SJG, said that last month's rain had a huge impact on the morale of the families she works with in western Queensland, but there is still years of rebuilding ahead.

**AUSTRALIA ISOLATED AS RICH COUNTRIES COMMIT TO CAMPAIGN:** Australians are among the top five nations in the world for private donations to assist the poor, but the historic commitment by G8 leaders to address global poverty with more aid and debt cancellateion left Australia isolated, according to Caritas Australia director Jack de Groot.

**CATHOLIC VOICE IN NEW WELFARE REFORM CONSULT:** The Church will be represented on the Federal Government's new Welfare Reform Consultative Forum by Catholic Welfare Australia Executive Director Frank Quinlan.

**PAX CHRISTI STANDS FIRM ON NUCLEAR WEAPONS:** As it welcomes a member of its international committee on a visit from Brussels, the peace organisation Pax Christi Australia reaffirmed its opposition to nuclear weapons, ahead of next month's 60th anniversary of the Hiroshima bombing.

**CATHOLICS STRUGGLING AGAINST 'TIDE OF MATERIALISM':** British Catholic families feel in danger of being swept away by a "tide of materialism" and want the Church to do more to counter it, according to a report released by the Bishops of England and Wales.

**BISHOP WELCOMES INQUIRY'S EXPOSURE OF IMMIGRATION DETENTION INADEQUACIES:** Migration Committee chair Bishop Joseph Grech, is optimistic following the Palmer Inquiry's finding that Australia's Detention Centres are "ill-equipped to deal with the mental health and well-being needs of detainees".

**CHURCH CASTS DOUBT OVER BETFAIR BENEFITS:** The Catholic Church in Tasmania says the cost of social problems stemming from problem gambling will far outweigh any revenue benefits from the London-based online betting exchange Betfair.

**COMMISSION URGES GOVT TO RE-NEGOTIATE "STOLEN WAGES" PACKAGE:** Brisbane's Catholic Justice and Peace Commission urged the Queensland Government to undertake further consultation with Indigenous communities on the Indigenous Wages and Savings Reparations Project which was established in 2002.

**JESUIT PAPER REMINDS AUSTRALIA OF RESPONSIBILITY TO NAURU:** The Sydney-based Uniya Jesuit Social Justice Centre released a research paper that highlights Australia's responsibilities as former colonial administrator of the tiny Pacific island of Nauru.

**VATICAN CALL TO PUNISH PROSTITUTION CLIENTS:** The Vatican is calling for clients of prostitutes to not only face legal action but to also receive counseling and other help to stem what it called a form of "modern day slavery."

**AUCKLAND BISHOP'S SOLIDARITY WITH LOCAL MUSLIMS:** Bishop Patrick Dunn of Auckland wrote to Mr Javed Khan, president of New Zealand's Federation of Islamic Associations, after vandals smashed windows and doors, and sprayed graffiti on the city's mosques in the wake of last week's London bombs.

**CATHOLIC AGENCY DISAPPOINTED WITH G8 PLEDGES:** Campaigners from CAFOD, the Caritas agency of the Catholic Church in England and Wales, have vowed to fight on despite what they describe as 'disappointing' pledges made by the G8 at the Gleneagles summit on ending global poverty.

**MINISTER TELLS CHURCHES TO STAY OUT OF IR FIGHT:** Workplace Relations Minister Kevin Andrews urged church leaders to refrain from participating in the debate on the Government's industrial relations changes, "until they know the facts".

**CATHOLIC HEALTH WORRIED ABOUT CONSUMER RIGHTS:** Catholic Health Australia called on the Federal Government to safeguard privately insured patients from "falling prey to extra imposed waiting periods when switching health funds".

**LOBBY CALLS AUSTRALIA'S AID BUDGET A 'DROP IN THE BUCKET':** The Australian Political Ministry Network (PolMin) said that Australia's status as the driest inhabited land on earth puts it in a good position to work with the world's poorest people in accessing clean, safe water.

**AGENCIES ANTICIPATE WELFARE DEMAND BOTTLENECK:** South Australia's Catholic welfare agencies have commended the State Government for bumping up mental health and disability funding in the 2005 Budget, but warn commitment well beyond the 2006 state election is needed to meet a bottleneck in demand.

**CHURCH JOINS RALLY TO END POVERTY:** The two British cardinals took a leading role in Saturday's rally in Edinburgh, which called on the G8 meeting there later this week to cut debt and end unfair trade practices with the developing world.

**CATHOLIC WELFARE SOUNDS ALARM ON UNDIAGNOSED MENTAL ILLNESS:** Catholic Welfare Australia told the Senate Select Committee into Mental Health that staff training, and improved coordination of resources, are needed to stem the tide of Australians with an undiagnosed mental illness seeking help from welfare agencies.

**PELL VOICES WAGES CONCERNS:** Cardinal George Pell of Sydney warned the Prime Minister to exercise caution when using his new powers in the Senate, particularly with respect to the proposed industrial relations legislation.

**KIWI BISHOPS URGE GOVT ACTION AGAINST ZIMBABWE CRICKET TOUR:** New Zealand Catholic Bishops' Conference President Bishop Denis Browne wrote to Foreign Minister Phil Goff in an effort to persuade him to encourage a cancellation of the scheduled New Zealand Black Caps cricket tour of Zimbabwe.

- courtesy Church Resources' CathNews, stories in detail at <http://www.cathnews.com/news/507>

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## **AUGUST SOCIAL JUSTICE CALENDAR - ASYLUM SEEKERS AND REFUGEES**

Asylum Seekers are people who apply to the government of a country for recognition as refugees and for permission to stay because they claim fear of persecution in their own country on the grounds of race, religion, political opinion or nationality, or membership of a particular social group. Once the government has recognised that they have a valid refugee claim under the 1951 Geneva Convention, they are granted refugee status and are allowed to remain in that country.

Refugees are those persons who, owing to a well founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, are outside the country of their nationality, and are unable or unwilling to avail themselves of the protection of that country.

All members of the human family have equal dignity and inalienable rights as human beings. Australia is party to the 1951 Geneva Convention and its 1967 Protocol, and hence our refugee policy must be informed by, and consistent with, its international treaty obligations. According to the Geneva Convention, each person has the right to apply for asylum in another country, regardless of the means of travel to that country. As a signatory to the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees and its 1967 Protocol, Australia has an obligation to protect refugees who have sought asylum in this country.

### **STEPS TOWARDS WELCOMING ASYLUM SEEKERS**

- Speak of Asylum Seekers as people
  - Offer financial or other support or voluntary services for asylum seekers' assistance centres
  - Be a mentor or friend to a person with a temporary protection visa in your workplace, school, neighbourhood or local church
  - Be alert to any use of manipulative language in the media.
- From the ACSJC's Ten Steps Towards Welcoming Asylum Seekers

### **PRAYER**

*Lord, no one is a stranger to you  
and no one is ever far from your loving care.  
In your kindness watch over refugees and asylum seekers,  
those separated from their loved ones,  
those who are lost,  
and those who have been exiled from their homes.  
Bring them safely to the place where they long to be,  
and help us always to show your kindness to strangers and those in need.*

- ACSJC Prayer Card

**AUGUST 25 - WORLD MIGRATION DAY:** As a signatory to the 1951 Convention on the Refugee, Australia has an obligation under international law to process the claims of asylum seekers and to assist in the resettlement of refugees. Refugees are the world's most vulnerable people who have been forced from their homelands because of violence, poverty and persecution. As the "fair-go" nation it is encouraging to see more and more Australians demonstrating a spirit of openness and compassion towards the world's people who are most in need.

**AUGUST 26 - TAMPA RESCUES ASYLUM SEEKERS:** In 2001, the MV Tampa rescued 433 asylum seekers from a sinking vessel. The Australian Government banned these people from entering Australian shores and sent troops on to the ship to prevent disembarkation.

**AUGUST 28 - REFUGEE & MIGRANT SUNDAY:** Migration has become a widespread phenomenon in the modern-day world and involves all nations, either as countries of departure, of transit, or of arrival. It affects millions of human beings, and presents a challenge that the pilgrim Church, at the service of the whole human family, cannot fail to take up and meet in the Gospel spirit of universal charity. This Day should be a time of special prayer for the needs of all who, for whatever reason, are far from home and family; it should be a day of serious reflection on the duties of Catholics towards these brothers and sisters.

Among those particularly affected are the most vulnerable of foreigners: undocumented migrants, refugees, asylum seekers, those displaced by continuing violent conflicts in many parts of the world, and the victims - mostly women and children - of the terrible crime of human trafficking. Even in the recent past we have witnessed tragic instances of forced movements of peoples for ethnic and nationalistic pretensions, which have added untold misery to the lives of targeted groups. At the root of these situations there are sinful intentions and actions that go contrary to the Gospel and constitute a call to Christians everywhere to overcome evil with good.

John Paul II, World Day of Migrants & Refugees 2003

**RESOURCES** - ACSJC's Ten Steps Towards Welcoming Asylum Seekers and Prayer Card

#### **WEBSITES**

Australian Catholic Migrant and Refugee Office <http://www.acmro.catholic.org.au>  
Australian Catholic Social Justice Council  
<http://www.socialjustice.catholic.org.au>

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