



## No. 90 – May 2008

*From the Australian Catholic Social Justice Council,  
the social justice and human rights agency of the Catholic Church in Australia*

<http://www.socialjustice.catholic.org.au>

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### FROM THE CHAIRMAN

Dear Friends

Below is the text of a Pastoral Letter issued to mark the Feast of St Joseph the Worker (1<sup>st</sup> May), which I invite you to circulate in your parish and local communities. The formatted letter can be downloaded from: [www.socialjustice.catholic.org.au](http://www.socialjustice.catholic.org.au)

#### **Migrant Workers in Australia - Our responsibility as a global citizen**

On this Feast Day of St Joseph the Worker we celebrate the value of work in fostering the dignity of the worker, the life of families and the well-being of the community. At a time when Australia is facing great skills shortages and many communities are struggling to fill job vacancies, it is worth considering the circumstances of migrant workers who come to our nation to help 'fill the gap'. Despite their great contribution, some of these people are among our most vulnerable workers.

These workers are important not only for their contribution to the Australian economy. Work in Australia can offer them the chance to support families and establish savings in their own countries as well as obtain experience and

training - opportunities that they would not otherwise have. A just and well-run migrant worker scheme can be an important aspect of Australia's role as a good global citizen.

#### **An increasing reliance on migration**

Australia's traditional reliance on migrant workers is set to expand dramatically over the coming decades. Researchers are warning that as 'baby boomers' retire and the labour force participation of working-age citizens reaches its limits, Australia will not have the labour to meet growing demands for services, to build infrastructure or to staff expanding industries. It is estimated that over the next 20 years the overall annual immigration intake will need to increase by at least 30%, from around 160,000 to 230,000 people.<sup>1</sup>

It is likely that a greater emphasis will be placed on the recruitment of migrant workers on short-term visas. Since 1996, a range of visas for skilled and semi-skilled workers has been introduced and greatly expanded. One such visa is the Temporary Business (Long Stay) visa 457. Currently there are 57,000 people working under this visa, with total numbers including family members amounting to around 105,000 people.<sup>2</sup>

The 457 visa allows skilled migrants to work in Australia for up to four years. They must be paid an award wage or a minimum salary of around \$40,000. While there are regional concessions that allow for a lower rate of pay, employers of migrant workers must ensure Australian wages and conditions are not undermined. They must also demonstrate a commitment to employing and training local workers. This is important in protecting the rights of both Australian and migrant workers.

However, there are significant concerns about the treatment of some workers on the 457 visa, particularly in lower-skilled jobs. Because Australia is likely to have more such workers in

future years, it is important to be vigilant with regard to their working conditions and human rights. This need for vigilance is heightened because of the growing consensus among industry bodies and some trade unions that there should be a new visa to allow workers from our region to come to Australia to work in seasonal jobs, like fruit picking, which are lower paid and lower skilled.

### **Reported abuses of temporary workers**

There have been numerous media reports over the past two years alleging abuses of the 457 system. A 2007 Parliamentary Inquiry heard some serious allegations of exploitation: claims of underpayment, unpaid overtime, poor communication in unsafe working conditions, workplace injuries and deaths, racial abuse and threats, and unfair termination leading to deportation.

Industry bodies have emphasised that of the 10,000 businesses using the program, only a few hundred have been accused of abuses and only a small number of employers would be 'doing the wrong thing'.<sup>3</sup>

There is no doubt that a majority of businesses provide worthwhile work and treat workers with dignity and respect. However, inadequacies in the monitoring and enforcement of the program and the reluctance of migrant workers to report abuses would suggest that the exploitation may be more widespread and that all allegations should be taken seriously.

There are stories of some workers being deported without notice or good reason. One community group claims two workers were taken to the airport and sent home without any notice:

*They were asked to put on their work uniform and they assumed they were going to an alternative workplace, but the flight was one to the Philippines. Essentially they were tricked into going to the airport and sent away.<sup>4</sup>*

A worker who had grounds to complain said,

*I am frightened and feel intimidated in raising these matters directly with my employer ... I wish to remain in Australia and only ask to be paid properly and treated with dignity and*

*respect. I want to be treated like a human being and not forced to eat scraps from the rubbish bin, or insulted, pushed and jostled in the kitchen for no apparent reason.<sup>5</sup>*

There have been allegations of migrant workers suffering serious injury or illness being denied pay and medical coverage, and being forced to rely on the support of their families overseas. Some have been threatened with deportation if they complain. Others have been sacked while on sick leave.<sup>6</sup>

Some lower-skilled workers, most seeking to improve the lot of their families back home, are financially vulnerable and can be placed under pressure to accept exploitative arrangements. There are reports of overseas labour hire agents charging workers 'processing fees' of up to \$10,000 in addition to travel costs, of employment contracts banning union membership, and of unauthorised wage deductions.<sup>7</sup> Some of these workers are forced into sub-standard employer-provided accommodation and charged inflated rents as well as other 'costs' which are deducted without the workers' approval. It is alleged that one worker was sacked after he had paid off a \$10,000 'debt' to his employer and was then replaced immediately by another worker from China.<sup>8</sup> In another case, two workers were dismissed and their employer used their ATM cards to empty their bank accounts of the \$30,000 each had earned.<sup>9</sup>

There is no doubt that many migrant workers, particularly those who are highly skilled, enjoy excellent pay and conditions. The concern is for the more vulnerable, who lack clear information about their rights, have little or no access to assistance when problems arise and are isolated from support networks in the host community.

### **A call to justice for migrant workers**

These reports reveal weaknesses that need to be addressed, particularly when Australia is considering hosting many more migrant workers, possibly in lower-skilled sectors.

The reports raise a number of questions. How will the Australian community balance the desire to sustain its economic success with our obligation to treat vulnerable workers

with justice? How will we show our gratitude to migrant workers for the vital role they are playing in the Australian economy? Do we also recognise that many are working to support families in extreme poverty?

The Church has called on host nations to protect the rights of migrant workers.

*In the modern world, where there are still grave inequalities between rich countries and poor countries, ... the immigration of people looking for a better life is on the increase ... their arrival in developed countries is often perceived as a threat to the high levels of well-being achieved thanks to decades of economic growth. In most cases, however, immigrants fill a labour need which would otherwise remain unfilled in sectors and territories where the local workforce is insufficient or unwilling to engage in the work question.*

*Institutions in host countries must keep careful watch to prevent the spread of the temptation to exploit foreign labourers, denying them the same rights enjoyed by nationals, rights that are to be guaranteed to all without discrimination.*<sup>10</sup>

In an immediate and practical sense, this is a call on Government to protect Australian wages and conditions of work, to improve monitoring and compliance with working visa conditions and to protect vulnerable migrant workers from exploitation. It means ensuring workers are aware of their rights and assured of adequate assistance and protection when they need it.

Pope Benedict XVI has challenged developed countries like Australia to go much further than this in affording basic dignity to migrant workers. He has called us 'to protect the dignity of the person' and to be less concerned about being 'competitive' and 'productive'. On behalf of the migrant worker he calls us to be 'witnesses of charity'.<sup>11</sup>

In this spirit of charity, Australia can go much further to develop programs that ensure that the dignity of migrant workers is protected and that benefits flow both to communities in Australia and the workers' countries of origin. The wages migrant workers send to their families

have an important role in terms of international development. The assurance of decent wages as well as skills development would be a vital support to nations in our region enduring the effects of poverty and civil unrest, not to mention the depletion of natural resources or the threat posed by rising sea levels. As a good global citizen, Australia should also work harder to help such countries manage the loss of strengths and skills when their sons and daughters leave their communities to seek work here.

Reflecting on the life of Saint Joseph, who knew the true value of work and braved the upheaval and challenges of migration for the well-being and future of the family, we remember today the circumstances of vulnerable migrant workers. Let us also give thanks for the hard work of generations of migrant workers. Australia would not be the prosperous and vibrant community it is without their contribution.

**Most Rev Christopher Saunders, DD**

Bishop of Broome

Chairman, Australian Catholic Social Justice Council

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> P McDonald, G Withers (2008) 'Population and Australia's Future Labour Force', Policy Paper # 7, The Academy of Social Sciences in Australia, Canberra, pp.1-2.

<sup>2</sup> Department of Immigration and Citizenship (2007), Inquiry into temporary business visas: Answers to questions on notice from hearing held on 1 June 2007, p.24; Commonwealth of Australia (2007) *Official Committee Hansard*, Joint Standing Committee on Migration, 1 June 2007 Hearings, p.81.

<sup>3</sup> Commonwealth of Australia (2007) *Temporary visas ... permanent benefits*, Report of the Joint Standing Committee on Migration, p.118.

<sup>4</sup> Filipino Australian Affiliation of North Queensland (2007) Submission to the Joint Standing Committee on Migration.

<sup>5</sup> Liquor, Hospitality and Miscellaneous Union (2007) Submission to the Parliamentary Joint Standing Committee on Migration's Inquiry into Temporary Business Visas.

<sup>6</sup> N O'Malley, 'A nice little earner' *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 4/9/2006; M Bachelard, N O'Malley, 'Foreign workers forced onto illegal contracts' *The Age*, 10/10/2006; ABC News 'Filipino worker unfairly sacked over illness: union' 20/1/2008.

<sup>7</sup> Commonwealth of Australia (2007) *Temporary visas ... permanent benefits* p.97.

<sup>8</sup> M Bachelard, 'Workers forced to pay boss \$10,000' *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 6/9/2006

<sup>9</sup> ABC News, '457 visa workers mull futures after payout' 18/12/2007.

<sup>10</sup> Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace (2004) *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, Libreria Editrice Vaticana, Citta del Vaticano, nn.297, 298.

<sup>11</sup> Pope Benedict XVI (2007) Message of His Holiness Benedict XVI to the Participants in the 9<sup>th</sup> International Youth Forum, Rocca di Papa, 28-31 March 2007.



### **PLEASE NOTE - ACSJC NEW CONTACT DETAILS** For written correspondence and other postage:

Australian Catholic Social Justice Council  
PO Box 7246  
ALEXANDRIA NSW 2015

The street location is: 24 - 32 O'Riordan  
Street, Alexandria  
Phone: (02) 8306 3499  
Fax: (02) 8306 3498

**MEDIA RELEASE - 'BISHOP SAYS AUSTRALIA MUST ASSUME GREATER RESPONSIBILITY FOR MIGRANT WORKERS' 30 April 2008.** Media release issued on the launch of the Pastoral Letter marking the Feast of St Joseph the Worker (<http://www.acsjc.org.au/content/mediareleases.html>)

**EUREKA STREET - 'MAINTAINING THE RAGE AGAINST WORKCHOICES'.** Dr Tim Battin, senior lecturer in politics at the University of New England, argues in this edition of *Eureka Street* that the worst aspects of the WorkChoices legislation 'constitute the proper context from which an assessment should be made of any legislation claiming to repeal or ameliorate the Howard Government's IR laws'. Broadly speaking, he says there are 'some worrying signs that the Labor Government will interpret - or has already interpreted - the 2005-07 grassroots campaign against WorkChoices, involving unions, churches, and community groups, in the most conservative light possible'. To access this feature article in *Eureka Street*, visit <http://www.eurekastreet.com.au/article.aspx?aeid=6723>

**NATIONAL COUNCIL OF CHURCHES - PRAY FOR ZIMBABWE.** The Anglican Church, Catholic Church, Uniting Church and National Council of Churches in Australia are supporting a call by the religious leaders of Zimbabwe for immediate international action to prevent an imminent crisis in Zimbabwe. 'We express our deep concern over the deteriorating political, security, economic and human rights situation in Zimbabwe following the 29 March 2008 national elections and the failure of the Zimbabwean

Electoral Commission to release the results of the Presidential election' the religious leaders say. 'We support the appeal this week from religious leaders in Zimbabwe which: warns the world that if nothing is done to help the people of Zimbabwe from their predicament, we shall soon be witnessing atrocities similar to that experienced in Kenya, Rwanda and Burundi; calls for the immediate end to political intimidation...; calls on the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission to release the true results of the presidential poll...; and commends the people of Zimbabwe for exercising their democratic right peacefully...'

The statement calls on all churches in Australia to pray and increase our support for the people of Zimbabwe and on the Australian Government to provide additional emergency assistance in response to the deteriorating humanitarian situation in the country. (refer: [http://www.ncca.org.au/media\\_releases/080424\\_australian\\_church\\_leaders\\_commit\\_to\\_pray\\_and\\_urge\\_action\\_on\\_deepening\\_zimbabwe\\_crisis](http://www.ncca.org.au/media_releases/080424_australian_church_leaders_commit_to_pray_and_urge_action_on_deepening_zimbabwe_crisis))

**REFUGEE WEEK 2008 - 'A PLACE TO CALL HOME'.** Refugee Week will take place from 15 - 21 June and coincides with UN World Refugee Day on 20 June. The Refugee Council of Australia would like to invite you to start thinking and planning how you, your school, your community or your workplace could participate in the week. The week provides an opportunity to encourage all Australians to think about our common obligations to people who have no secure home, as well as to acknowledge the 700,000 refugees and humanitarian migrants over the past 60 years who have made Australia their home. For more information about how to present refugee related stories within this event download our resource kit from [www.refugeecouncil.org.au](http://www.refugeecouncil.org.au). For more info contact the Refugee Council on: NSW (02) 9211 9333 or Victoria (03) 9348 2245

**APPROACHING CONFERENCE, 'RIGHTS, RECONCILIATION, RESPECT, RESPONSIBILITY'.** The '4Rs' conference will be held at the University

of Technology Sydney from 30 September to 3 October 2008. Organisers say the conference comes at a critical time for Australia, when the opportunities and desire for change abound, yet older fears still persist. The 4Rs explore the internal debates and the relationships between crucial social, political and cultural questions, with their relevance to public policy, community development and societal cohesion. The conference will be designed around the four themes and their interaction-human rights, Indigenous advancement, inter-communal relations, and active citizenship. For further information, registration details or to respond to the call for papers, visit the conference website (<http://www.shopfront.uts.edu.au/news/4Rs.html>) or contact 0422 085 222; [maqsooda@save.org.au](mailto:maqsooda@save.org.au)

**WORLD YOUTH DAY COMMITTEE CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS.** The organisers of World Youth Day Sydney 2008 (WYD08) are offering volunteers the exciting opportunity to help thousands of pilgrims enjoy the activities of WYD08 as well as help Sydney celebrate the arrival of the Holy Father, Pope Benedict XVI. Volunteers will help in many areas including operations and crowd management, customer service, language and translations, staffing, hospitality & catering, accommodation, production, communications, liturgy and evangelization. Volunteers can either work during the event week, 14 - 20 July, or in roles available preceding WYD08. All volunteers must be over the age of 18. WYD08 is taking applications now. For more information and to apply, visit [www.wyd2008.org/volunteer](http://www.wyd2008.org/volunteer) or call (02) 9390 5997.

## Latest Publications

Orders: phone (02) 8306 3499, fax (02) 8306 3498 or download an order form from the ACSJC website: <http://www.socialjustice.catholic.org.au/CONTENT/PDF/TEMPLATE-ORDERFORM.pdf>

### **PASTORAL LETTER - FEAST OF ST JOSEPH THE WORKER 2008**

The Pastoral Letter for the Feast of St Joseph the Worker, entitled, 'Migrant workers in Australia - Our responsibility as a global citizen', considers the rights and protections Australia should ensure an increasing number of workers coming to this nation to help meet growing skills shortages in the labour market. Available for download in regular and 'three-column' versions at: <http://www.socialjustice.catholic.org.au>

### **ORDER NOW! - 2008 SOCIAL JUSTICE DIARY**

The 2008 Diary focuses on the theme of poverty and affluence. It includes the dates of significant events, anniversaries and special days which celebrate particular aspects of social justice and highlight the theme. It 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: \$6.60 (inc. GST), plus postage. To download an order form, go to: [http://www.socialjustice.catholic.org.au/content/publications/social\\_justice\\_calendar.html](http://www.socialjustice.catholic.org.au/content/publications/social_justice_calendar.html)

### **DISCUSSION GUIDE - WORLD DAY OF PEACE MESSAGE 2008**

On 1 January, the Holy Father delivered his World Day of Peace message. The theme of his message is *The Human Family, A Community of Peace*. The ACSJC discussion guide consists of a brief overview of the Pope's message, some points for reflection and prayer. A helpful resource for group and classroom discussion. Download at: <http://www.socialjustice.catholic.org.au>

### **SERIES PAPER - 'CONFRONTING THE DEATH PENALTY'**

The latest paper in the Catholic Social Justice Series consists of four essays by authoritative writers on the moral, legal and personal aspects of the death penalty. It considers capital punishment in the light of the attacks of September 2001, the international 'war on terror' and the moral and political problems thrown up as we see capital punishment rigorously applied in countries close to us. (\$6.60 a copy, plus postage. Postage rates: 1 copy \$1; 2-3 copies \$1.45; 4-5 copies \$2.45)

See above for order contact details, or download an order form from: <http://www.socialjustice.catholic.org.au/CONTENT/PDF/TEMPLATE-ORDERFORM.pdf>



# This Month's Notices

**1 MAY. WOMEN'S RECONCILIATION NETWORK EVENT: 'LOOKING AHEAD: A NEW HORIZON' (NSW)** Come and join with other women through story, song, art and verse to continue the journey of reconciliation with the Elders, and living out our Network's Vision to: 'Open our hearts to the experiences of others, accept our traditional wisdoms, acknowledge the past, heal ourselves and teach others'. Bring some memento from the Day of the Apology. This can become a piece in the montage creation to record the significant moment of our shared history. Kindly bring your favourite food for a shared lunch. 10am - 3:00pm, Redfern Community Centre, 29-53 Hugo Street, Redfern. Contact: (02) 9960 4079; Web: <http://www.nswrecon.com/>

**2 MAY. POLITICS IN THE PUB: 'NEW GEOPOLITICAL CHALLENGES: FOOD, OIL, WATER!' (NSW)** Speakers include Dr Diarmuid Maguire, Govt and International Relations Department, University of Sydney, and David Woolbridge, Woolhara Councillor, NSW Greens. 6:00 - 7:45pm, Gaelic Club, Level 1, 64 Devonshire Street, Surry Hills, Sydney. Telephone: (02) 9358 4834. Web: <http://www.politicsinthepub.org/>

**3 MAY. PUBLIC RALLY AGAINST THE PRIVATISATION OF NSW ELECTRICITY (NSW)** Join concerned workers and families who want to stop the NSW Government from selling the electricity supply to private companies. The rally will be held outside the NSW ALP Conference. 9:30am, Darling Harbour, Convention Centre (near the Olympic Monument), Sydney. Telephone: (02) 9881 5999 for further information or copies of the leaflet for distribution.

**4 MAY. OXFAM WALK AGAINST WANT (TAS)** Hobart: Follow the 5km route through historic Battery Point to Sandy Bay and return, or continue the 10km route to Nutgrove Beach, then join in the post-walk activities. Walk begins at 11:00am from the Parliament House Lawns, Hobart. Registration essential. Launceston: Follow the Cataract Gorge walkway to the First Basin and return or continue

to Duck Reach for the 10km challenge. The woof against want route is to Heritage Forest. Walk begins at the Regatta Grounds, Park Street. Registration essential. Telephone: 1800 034 034; Email: [tasenquiry@oxfam.org.au](mailto:tasenquiry@oxfam.org.au); Web: <http://www.oxfam.org.au/walk/wheretowalk/tas/>

**4 MAY. OXFAM WALK AGAINST WANT (WA)** Walk begins at 10:30am from Mandurah Hall Park, Mandurah. Venue may change closer to the date. Registration essential. Telephone: (08) 9851 7322; Email: [anneb@oxfam.org.au](mailto:anneb@oxfam.org.au); Web: <http://www.oxfam.org.au/walk/wheretowalk/wa/>

**4 MAY. 2008 YOUTH HARMONY FESTIVAL (NSW)** Attractions include food stalls, music, dancing, games, sporting activities, drumming and kite making workshops. There will also be exhibitions and stalls from the Australian Muslim Community, the Spanish and Latin American Association, and the Greek Community of NSW. 10:30am - 4:30pm, Tumbalong Park, Darling Harbour, Sydney. Organised by the Community Relations Commission, NSW Government. For more information, please telephone (02) 8255 6725 or email: [fadi.nemme@crc.nsw.gov.au](mailto:fadi.nemme@crc.nsw.gov.au). Web: <http://www.crc.nsw.gov.au>

**6 MAY. REFLECTIONS ON THE COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN 2008 (VIC)** Susan Brennan, President of the World YWCA will discuss her recent visit to the UN Commission on the Status of Women. Hosted by the Human Rights Forum, University of Melbourne. 1:00 - 2:00pm, Room 316, Alice Hoy Building, University of Melbourne. Web: <http://www.law.monash.edu.au/castancentre/events/>

**6 MAY. PUBLIC LECTURE: 'POVERTY AND DEVELOPMENT IN CAMBODIA AND LAOS' (QLD)** Oxfam Queensland is hosting an information and discussion evening on the development challenges and solutions to poverty at the village level in Cambodia and Laos. The guest speaker is Lee FitzRoy, Cambodia-Laos Program Coordinator for Oxfam Australia. 6:00pm - 8:00pm, University of Queensland Library Sem-

inar Room, Duhig Building, St Lucia Campus.  
Email: [jessie.wells@uq.edu.au](mailto:jessie.wells@uq.edu.au);  
Web: [http://www.uq.edu.au/events/event\\_view.php?event\\_id=4209](http://www.uq.edu.au/events/event_view.php?event_id=4209)

**6 MAY. FORUM: 'TEMPORARY MIGRATION: OPPORTUNITY FOR WHOM?' (NSW)** Presented by Catalyst Australia. The Minister for Immigration and Citizenship, the Hon. Chris Evans MP, will be addressing this event, along with some of our leading thinkers on migration policy. Free event, but registration essential. 9:00am - 3:15pm, Level 1, 280 Pitt Street, Sydney. To RSVP, please contact (02) 9264 1134 or email: [catalyst@catalyst.asn.au](mailto:catalyst@catalyst.asn.au)

**7 MAY. SEMINAR: 'LIVING THROUGH A NATIONAL EMERGENCY. A VIEW OF THE INTERVENTION FROM THE GROUND.'** (ACT) Speakers include Bill Fogarty, Doctoral Scholar, Centre for Aboriginal Economic Policy Research, Australian National University, and Marisa Fogarty, Doctoral Scholar, School for Social and Policy Research, Charles Darwin University. 12:30 - 2:00pm, Humanities Conference Room, First Floor, A.D. Hope Bldg #14 (opposite Chifley Library), The Australian National University, Canberra. Enquiries to the Centre Administrator on (02) 6125 0587 or email [admin.caep@anu.edu.au](mailto:admin.caep@anu.edu.au). Web: <http://www.anu.edu.au/caep/events08.php>

**8 MAY. SEMINAR: 'THE ROLE OF THE INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL COURT'** (NT) This seminar will focus on the role of the International Criminal Court in increasing respect for International Humanitarian Law. Speaker: Professor Tim McCormack, Foundation Australian Red Cross Professor of International Humanitarian Law, University of Melbourne, and Foundation Director of the Asia-Pacific Centre of Military Law. He also provided Law of War advice to the Defence Team of David Hicks from 2003 to 2007. 5:30pm, Northern Territory Supreme Court, State Square, Darwin. Web: <http://www.refugeecouncil.org.au/newsevents/index.html>

**8 MAY. SEMINAR: 'CHINA AND THE WORLD. HOW GLOBAL WARMING CHANGES THE EQUATION'** (NSW) China, the most populous nation in the world, is producing an ever larger share of the world's industrial goods and has recently surpassed the United States as the largest

emitter of greenhouse gases. China's environmental problems have subsequently become a global problem and an understanding of what is happening within this crucial country is more important than ever. Professor Orville Schell, Director of the Arthur Ross Centre on US China, UNSW, will discuss this topic with a panel of speakers. 6:00pm - 7:30pm, UNSW International. Free event, but bookings essential. Please contact (02) 9385 1000 or [pvcinternational@unsw.edu.au](mailto:pvcinternational@unsw.edu.au) to reserve your place. Web: <http://www.unsw.edu.au/events/db/2008/05/global.html>

**9 MAY. POLITICS IN THE PUB: 'NEW THINKING FROM THE NON-WEST: IRAN, AFRICA, LATIN AMERICA'** (NSW) Speaker: Raewyn Connell, author of the new book *Southern Theory: The Global Dynamics of Knowledge in Social Science*. Discussant: Michael Pusey, Sociology Department, University of New South Wales. 6:00 - 7:45pm, Gaelic Club, Level 1, 64 Devonshire Street, Surry Hills, Sydney. Telephone: (02) 9358 4834. Web: <http://www.politicsinthepub.org/>

**9 MAY. CANBERRA TAIZE PRAYER EVENING (ACT)** Canberra Taizé Group will hold a special evening of Taizé songs, Scripture reading and silent meditation to celebrate the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. Supper included. The evening is jointly presented by the Catholic Church of St Thomas the Apostle and the Anglican Church of St Stephen's. All are welcome. 8:00pm - 9:00pm, St Stephen's Anglican Church, cnr Marconi and Kett Streets, Kambah, Canberra. Telephone: (02) 6287 3079 or (02) 6231 8468; Email: [nicol@velocitynet.com.au](mailto:nicol@velocitynet.com.au)

**11 MAY. FREE MOVIES AT MACQUARIE SCREENING: 'SYRIANA'** (NSW) First, watch the politically charged thriller *Syriana*, which unfolds against the intrigues and corruption of the global oil industry. From the players brokering back-room deals in Washington to the men toiling in the oil fields of the Persian Gulf, the film's multiple storylines weave together to illuminate the human consequences of the fierce pursuit of wealth and power. (Rated MA: Restricted to 15 years and over. Strong violence and coarse language). Afterwards, join Dr Greg Pemberton from Macquarie University's Centre for Policing, Intelligence and Counter Terrorism to discuss oil

wars both past and present. 6:00pm, Macquarie Theatre, Macquarie University, Balaclava Rd, North Ryde. Telephone: (02) 9850 6079; Email: [emma.norton@mq.edu.au](mailto:emma.norton@mq.edu.au); Web: <http://www.pr.mq.edu.au/events/index.asp?ItemID=3306>

**12 - 18 MAY. LAW WEEK 2008: 'REACHING OUT' (VIC)** Discover the rich culture of our law and justice system and celebrate the vital role it plays in our society. There are a range of free events on offer from exploring the art and architecture in Melbourne's grand legal precinct, to learning about human rights, or finding about laws affecting you and your neighbours. Coordinated by Victoria Law Foundation and the Law Institute of Victoria. Telephone: (03) 96048155; Email: [contact@victorialaw.org.au](mailto:contact@victorialaw.org.au); Web: [www.victorialaw.org.au](http://www.victorialaw.org.au)

**13 MAY. PUBLIC LECTURE: 'THE KNOWLEDGE ECONOMY AND ABORIGINAL HEALTH DEVELOPMENT' (VIC)** The university sector has a key role in developing Indigenous health knowledge, as the basis for innovation, workforce development and evidence-based policy and practice. However, if this role is to be fulfilled, universities need to change their approach to development of the health workforce, research and health information systems, and capacity exchange with Indigenous communities. Speaker: Professor Ian Anderson, Professor of Indigenous Health, University of Melbourne, and research director of the Cooperative Research Director in Aboriginal Health. 6:00pm - 7:00pm, Sunderland Lecture Theatre, Ground Floor, Medical Building (bldg 181), cnr Grattan Street and Royal Parade, Parkville. Enquiries: (03) 8344 5888 or email: [j.powell@unimelb.edu.au](mailto:j.powell@unimelb.edu.au). RSVP to [mdhs-rsvp@unimelb.edu.au](mailto:mdhs-rsvp@unimelb.edu.au). Web: <http://events.unimelb.edu.au/event/4571/>

**13 MAY. LAUNCH OF THE 2<sup>ND</sup> EDITION OF 'NEW LAW, NEW LAND HANDBOOK' BY NSW LAWYERS HUMAN RIGHTS COMMITTEE (NSW)** You are invited to attend the launch of the latest edition of this accessible legal information resource for new migrants and new refugees in NSW. The handbook will be distributed to many organisations in English, Arabic, Farsi and Chinese, whose work with the community is extremely valuable. Speakers include Dr McAdam, University of New South Wales, and Geoff

Mulherin, Director, Law and Justice Foundation. 6:00pm, Level 2, Law Society Building, Phillip Street, Sydney. RSVP essential by 12 May to [aorourke@lawsocnsw.asn.au](mailto:aorourke@lawsocnsw.asn.au). Web: <http://www.refugeecouncil.org.au/newsevents/index.html>

**15 MAY. MIGRATION AND GRIEF SEMINAR (NSW)**

The Seminar is organised by the National Association of Loss and Grief in partnership with the Northern Sydney Central Coast Health Promotion. It is suitable for service providers in health, education, family care, counselling, community, justice, faith, police, housing, migrant, welfare, volunteer, local council and multi-cultural services. Cost: \$75. Inclusive of light lunch and refreshments. Registration must be completed by 9 May. 9:15am - 4:00pm, Isabel Menton Theatre, Mary Mackillop Place, 7 Mount Street, North Sydney. For further information, please contact (02) 9926 7354 or email: [athakker@nsccahs.health.nsw.gov.au](mailto:athakker@nsccahs.health.nsw.gov.au). Web: <http://www.nalag.org.au>

**16 MAY. GLOBAL NIGHT SHIFT: A FORUM ON CHILD LABOUR (NATIONAL)** The Global Night Shift is one national event held simultaneously in six cities. In Perth, Melbourne, Brisbane, Sydney, Canberra and Adelaide, thousands of young people will unite with the vision to end child slavery. These forums will aim to answer some of these questions and provoke debate about this problem which receives very little media attention but which in many cases is directly linked to our consumer habits in Australia.

**ADELAIDE:** Learn about the cause from passionate speakers and Aussie musicians including TZU and The Lost Show. Start time TBA. Queens Theatre, Playhouse Lane, Adelaide.

**BRISBANE:** Learn about the cause from passionate speakers and Aussie musicians. Start time TBA. RNS Showgrounds, Brisbane.

**CANBERRA:** Speakers include Jennifer Burn, UTS Anti-Slavery Project Director, and Cameron Neil, FAIRTRADE Certification Analyst. 6:00 - 9:00pm, The Shine Dome, Gordon Street, Canberra.

**MELBOURNE:** Learn about the cause from passionate speakers and Aussie musicians including Evermore and The Hampdens. Start time TBA. Waterfront City, Docklands, Melbourne.

Tickets are \$20 each through Ticketmaster. PERTH: Learn about the cause from passionate speakers. The event will also feature short films and Aussie musicians. 7:00pm - 11:00pm, Perth Concert House, Concert Hall, 5 St Georges Terrace, Perth. Tickets are \$30 from [www.bocsticketing.com.au](http://www.bocsticketing.com.au).

SYDNEY: Learn about the cause from passionate speakers and Aussie musicians including Van She. Start time TBA. Clancy Theatre, University of New South Wales.

For further information, please contact: [end-childslavery@theoaktree.org](mailto:end-childslavery@theoaktree.org). Web: <http://www.endchildslavery.com>

**16 MAY. ASYLUM SEEKERS CENTRE QUIZ NIGHT (NSW)** Join us and our wonderful MCs Tony Squires and HG Nelson to help raise funds for the Asylum Seekers Centre's humanitarian work. The theme is 'Carnivale Surprise- South of the Border.' There is a prize for the most colourful table. Recommended minimum donation of \$55 per person (tax deductible), including nibbles. Participants will be seated in tables of 10. 7:00pm for a 7:30pm start, North Sydney Leagues Club, 12 Abbott Street, Cammeray. Download a booking form here: <http://www.refugeecouncil.org.au/docs/news&events/quiz%20night-%20ASC.pdf> Booking forms and payments can be faxed to (02) 94381926, posted to ASC, 14 Vista Street, Greenwich NSW 2065, or emailed to: [ascquiz-night08@gmail.com](mailto:ascquiz-night08@gmail.com)

**17 MAY. BAREFOOT ECONOMY GREEK FUNDRAISING NIGHT (NSW)** Barefoot Economy is an independent, home grown, not for profit organisation based in Sydney, Australia. Its vision is, through economic development, to create a better world, free of poverty where everyone has equal opportunity and the right to self-determination. The fundraising evening includes a lavish greek feast, beverages, Greek music, dance and more. Cost: \$100. Smart casual dress. Bookings essential. Tickets can be purchased online, by telephone 0412 254 261, by fax ((02) 9314 1901 or via email. 7:00pm, The Athenian Restaurant, 11 Barrack Street, Sydney. Telephone: 0417 211 487, 0412 254 261 or 0417 488 328; Email: [anna@barefooteconomy.org](mailto:anna@barefooteconomy.org); Web: <http://www.barefooteconomy.org/event.htm>

### **19 MAY. MELBOURNE WALK FOR JUSTICE (VIC)**

The Public Interest Law Clearing House (PILCH) Vic is conducting the Melbourne Walk for Justice to raise money for PILCH and its various legal assistance schemes. The walk commences at 7:30am on the steps of Parliament House, cnr Spring Street and Bourke Street, and will finish at Flagstaff Gardens. Cost: \$20. Registration essential. Contact: [Rachel.brown@pilch.org.au](mailto:Rachel.brown@pilch.org.au) for a registration form and further information. Web: <http://www.refugeecouncil.org.au/newsevents/index.html>

**21 MAY. STARTTS' FREE CLINICAL MASTER-CLASS EVENING: 'MINDFULNESS: A PRACTICE OF RECONNECTION IN HEALING OF TRAUMA' (NSW)** This Professional Development Programme, conducted by the NSW Service for the Treatment and Rehabilitation of Torture and Trauma Survivors, is aimed at skilled professionals and students currently working in the field. Guest speaker: Timothea Goddard, Director of Openground. A multicultural dinner (\$5 donations encouraged) will be provided along with tea and coffee. Registration essential. 6:00pm - 8:30pm, STARTTS, Large Group Room, 152-168 The Horsely Drive, Carramar. Telephone: (02) 9794 1900; Web: <http://www.startts.org.au>

**21 MAY - 7 JUNE. EXHIBITION: 'MOVING PICTURES- IMAGES OF RECONCILIATION' (VIC)** Combining images from established artists who have previously created work on the theme of reconciliation with fresh images from up-and-coming artists. Artists include Wayne Qulliam, Treaahna Hamm, Lee Darroch and Vicki Couzens. Emerging artists include Jarrod Atkinson, Reko Rennie-Gwaybilla and Karen Clarke-Edwards. Organised by the Manningham City Council. Free entry. 11:00am - 5:00pm, Tuesday to Friday; 2:00am - 5:00pm, Saturday. 699 Doncaster Road, Doncaster. Telephone: (03) 9840 9367; Email: [gALLERY@manningham.vic.gov.au](mailto:gALLERY@manningham.vic.gov.au); Web: <http://www.reconciliation.org.au/events/show/201>

**23 MAY. PUBLIC SEMINAR: OBSERVATIONS ON THE RECENT DEBATE SURROUNDING CHURCH/ STATE RELATIONS IN AUSTRALIA (NSW)** The seminar will be given by Dr Steven Chavura, Department of Politics and International

Relations, Macquarie University. 3:00 - 4:00pm, Building W6A, Room 107, Macquarie University, Balaclava Rd, North Ryde. Telephone: (02) 9850 8869.

Web: <http://www.pr.mq.edu.au/events/index.asp?ItemID=3332>

**23 MAY. PUBLIC SEMINAR- 'BRINGING SOCIETY BACK IN: TERRORISM AND THE POLICY OF DASHED EXPECTATIONS' (QLD)** Dr David Wright-Neville (Monash) will present a research paper entitled 'Bringing Society Back In: Terrorism and the Politics of Dashed Expectations'. Against the default position of many scholars and policy makers who locate terrorism within the eschatology of Islam, this paper looks at 'home-grown' terrorism among Diasporic communities in the West. More particularly, it argues that contemporary Islamist terrorists in the West usually learn their anger - and the techniques for expressing it - not from religious texts but from social environments marked by high levels of alienation, frustration and humiliation. 3:00pm - 4:30pm, General Purpose North 3 Building, St Lucia Campus, University of Queensland. For further information, please email: [s.kaempf@uq.edu.au](mailto:s.kaempf@uq.edu.au); Web: [http://www.uq.edu.au/events/event\\_view.php?event\\_id=4033](http://www.uq.edu.au/events/event_view.php?event_id=4033)

**23 MAY. PUBLIC SEMINAR: 'THEATRE, CONFLICT AND COMMUNITY BUILDING IN THAILAND' (TAS)** Dr Richard Barber, a founding member of Makhampom, will present a seminar about the work of the group in Burmese refugee camps in Northern Thailand and among communities displaced by the Islamic insurgency in Southern Thailand. Makhampom has been invited by international NGOs to use theatre for social healing in these areas. Richard's presentation will both explain and illustrate how theatre can bring together communities disrupted by political conflict, and reflect on the issues and problems faced by NGOs working in such contexts. 3:00pm, Flexible Learning Space, Studio Theatre, University of Tasmania (Hobart Campus). Telephone: (03) 6324 3058; Email: [barbara.hatley@utas.edu.au](mailto:barbara.hatley@utas.edu.au); Web: <http://www.utas.edu.au/events/whatson.html>

**24 MAY. JESUIT SOCIAL SERVICES' ANNUAL FUNDRAISING DINNER (VIC)** Guest speaker: The Hon. Jenny Macklin MP, Minister for Families, Housing, Community Services and Indig-

enous Affairs. The Victoria Police Show Band will also be providing entertainment. Tickets: \$150. RSVP by 16 May. 7:00pm, Melbourne Town Hall. For bookings, please contact the Central Office on (03) 9427 7388; Email: [betty.munckton@jss.org.au](mailto:betty.munckton@jss.org.au); Web: <http://www.jss.org.au>

**25 MAY. FREE FAMILY BBQ AND CONCERT FOR RECONCILIATION (SA)**

A community concert and BBQ to celebrate reconciliation. Entertainment includes music by Kineman Karma, face-painting, rap music and rappathon and speakers. Organised by Ngoppon Together [Walking Together]. 1:00pm - 4:00pm. Edwards Square, Murray Bridge. Telephone: (08) 8531 1899; Email: [anne@lmnc.com.au](mailto:anne@lmnc.com.au)

**26 MAY. PUBLIC LECTURE, 'THEOLOGY AND PUBLIC POLICY DISCOURSES IN SOUTH AFRICA' (ACT)** Professor Nico Koopman of the Global Network for Public Theology will deliver this public lecture of the Public and Contextual Theology Strategic Research Centre of Charles Sturt University. Rev Professor James Haire will chair the event. 7:00pm at GNPT office Canberra, George Browning House followed by the Public Lecture at the Australian Centre for Christianity and Culture, 15 Blackall Street, Barton ACT.

**26 MAY. NATIONAL SORRY DAY (SA)** This event will commemorate 10 years of National Sorry Day. Come and enjoy free entertainment, with a smoking ceremony, Kurna Welcome and speakers paying respects to the Stolen Generations and their families. Organised by the Journey of Healing Associations, South Australia. 10am - 2:30pm, Tarndanyagga (Victoria Square), Adelaide. Telephone: (08) 8362 1199; Email: [tmclc@ozemail.com.au](mailto:tmclc@ozemail.com.au); Web; <http://www.reconciliationsa.org.au/>

**27 MAY - 3 JUNE. NATIONAL RECONCILIATION WEEK (NATIONAL)**

Each year National Reconciliation Week celebrates the rich culture and history of the first Australians. It's the ideal time for all of us to join the reconciliation conversation and to think about how we can help turn around the disadvantage experienced by many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. The theme for National Reconciliation Week 2008 is: 'Rec-

conciliation: it's all our story'. For further information on events in your state, please contact: (02) 6273 9200; Email: [enquiries@reconciliation.org.au](mailto:enquiries@reconciliation.org.au); Web: <http://www.reconciliation.org.au/i-cms.jsp?page=97>

**29 MAY. FAIRWEAR 2008 'FABRIC OF SOCIETY' FUNDRAISING DINNER AND CELEBRITY ART AUCTION (NSW)** Involving and empowering garment workers, the FairWear Campaign

works to improve the precarious conditions and low rates of pay that these highly skilled women experience. Special guests include the Hon. Tanya Plibersek MP and the Hon. Verity Firth MP. Tickets: \$70. Each table is invited to sponsor an outworker to assist them in attending the dinner. 7:00pm, Paddington Town Hall, cnr Oxford Street and Paddington Rd, Paddington. Enquiries on 0403 128 013; Web: <http://www.fairwear.org.au>

## News Monitor

Vinnies shop staff in paid maternity leave first  
Staff in St Vincent de Paul Society shops across New South Wales became the first employees of a charity in the state to be offered 14 weeks' paid maternity leave.

Summit topics silenced: Riley  
Youth Off the Streets founder Fr Chris Riley said that he could not get a mention for the subject of child abuse at the 2020 Summit and accused summit facilitators of pushing their own agendas.

Roadside bomb kills Sri Lankan human rights priest  
A well-known Sri Lankan human rights defender and Catholic priest, Fr MX Karunaratnam, was killed by a bomb allegedly detonated by government soldiers who in turn blame Tamil rebel forces.

2020 Summit "humbling": Archbishop Wilson  
The President of the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference, Archbishop Philip Wilson, said he was privileged to attend Prime Minister Kevin Rudd's 2020 Summit that took place in Canberra over the weekend.

More freedom, more isolation in Christmas Island detention: Msgr Murphy  
There is more freedom and better conditions for detainees at the new \$500 million immigration detention centre on Christmas Island but also more isolation, said ACBC spokesman, Monsignor John Murphy, who has visited the remote Indian Ocean site.

Take politics out of welfare: Quinlan  
The current government welfare system is full of politically-driven anomalies while the community sector is being overwhelmed by red tape and bureaucracy, Catholic Social Services head, Frank Quinlan, said ahead of the 2020 Summit.

Leadership goes beyond funding: Vic Catholic agencies tell Summit  
Government leadership should extend beyond providing funding and must foster community understanding, Victoria's Catholic social agencies said in a submission to this weekend's 2020 Summit.

Stop tinkering, dump breaching legislation: CSSA  
Catholic Social Services chief, Frank Quinlan, called on the Federal Government to stop tinkering at the edges and to implement a major overhaul of legislation that allows people's welfare payments to be cut for up to eight weeks.

Soaring world food prices threaten crisis: Caritas  
Caritas Australia backed a call from World Bank chief, Robert Zoellick, to put "our money where our mouth is" over rising food prices that threaten crisis from the Caribbean to Africa and Asia, including East Timor.

CRA calls for reversal on indigenous rights  
Australia must reverse its opposition to the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of

Indigenous Peoples, Catholic Religious Australia (CRA) head, Fr Mark Raper SJ said.

South African bishops call for international mediation on Zimbabwe

South Africa's Catholic bishops have accused Zimbabwe President Robert Mugabe of failing to respect the democratic process and called for international mediation to end the political stalemate over the country's disputed national elections.

Vietnamese Christian prisoner tortured to death

A Vietnamese Catholic from a Montagnard village died in prison after being arrested and

tortured by police, the Montagnard Foundation International alleged.

Adelaide to provide homes for homeless

The Vinnies' run Frederic Ozanam Housing Association will become the preferred housing provider for the Archdiocese of Adelaide under a preliminary agreement that could see parish properties leased or sold to provide affordable housing.

- Courtesy CathNews from Church Resources.  
Click on story titles for more detail, or go to <http://cathnews.com>



## Social Justice Calendar

**1 Thu** St Joseph the Worker  
International Workers Day  
Save the Rhino Day

**3 Sat** World Press Freedom Day

**4 Sun** The Ascension  
World Communications Day  
Week of Prayer for Christian Unity commences

**8 Thu** World Red Cross and Red Crescent Day  
War ends in Europe, 1945

**10 Sat** Nelson Mandela's inaugural address as President of South Africa, 1994

**11 Sun** Pentecost Sunday  
Mothers Day

**12 Mon** International Day for Nurses  
(Anniversary of Florence Nightingale's birth)  
Doctors for Doctors Day

**13 Tue** Int. Conscientious Objectors Day

**15 Thu** UN International Day of Families

**17 Sat** World Telecommunication Day  
Death of Fr Ted Kennedy, 2005

**20 Tue** Timor-Leste becomes fully independent, 2002

**21 Wed** World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development  
Murder of Australian Josephite Sister Irene McCormack in Peru, 1991

**22 Thu** International Day for Biological Diversity.  
Theme: Biodiversity and Agriculture

**24 Sat** Mary Help of Christians, Patron of Australia (Solemnity)  
Foundation of World Council of Churches, 1948

**25 Sun** Corpus Christi  
Bringing Them Home Report released, 1997  
Week of Solidarity with the Peoples of Non-Self-Governing Territories Fighting commences  
Africa Day

**26 Mon** National Sorry Day

**27 Tue** Referendum allows Federal Government to grant citizen rights to Indigenous Australians, 1967  
National Reconciliation Week begins  
Week of Prayer for Reconciliation begins

**29 Thu** Torres Strait Is. flag launched, 1992  
International Day of UN Peacekeepers

**31 Sat** The Visitation  
World No Tobacco Day

*Notes on the above dates are available in the printed ACSJC Social Justice Diary (cost \$6.60, to order go to [http://www.socialjustice.catholic.org.au/content/publications/social\\_justice\\_calendar.html](http://www.socialjustice.catholic.org.au/content/publications/social_justice_calendar.html), or call 02 8306 3499)*

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Website: <http://socialjustice.catholic.org.au>. ACSJC Briefing is sent by email at the beginning of each month (except January). To subscribe or unsubscribe, go to the front page of the website Comments and contributions are also welcome.