



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

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FROM THE SECRETARIAT

Dear Friends,

Social Justice Sunday is approaching and the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Catholic Council is preparing for the great Dreaming from the Heart assembly in Alice Springs in October this year. These and other events are of importance – particularly over the coming months as Church communities consider their part in the work for dignity and justice for the Indigenous peoples of Australia.

THE MESSAGE STICK

For over a year the parishes, schools and communities of the Catholic Church have participated in the "Pass It On" Message Stick Relay. The relay has been organised by NATSICC and the Aboriginal Catholic Ministries of the dioceses of Australia.

The relay itself is a response to the call of Indigenous Catholics to the church and the nation to renew their responses to the challenges the Pope identified in his 1986 address to the Aboriginal and Islander peoples of Australia.

The nine "Pass It On" message sticks were launched at a Mass in St Mary's Cathedral in Sydney in May 2005. The Mass was celebrated by Cardinal George Pell and members of the Bishops Committee for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Each Message Stick bears in symbol the messages of Pope John Paul's address.

The Message Sticks are now coming to the end of a long pilgrimage to Alice Springs where, in two months, the NATSICC 2006 Dreaming from the Heart Assembly and the 20th Anniversary celebration of the landmark address of Pope John Paul II will take place (2-7 October). There will also be a pilgrimage, "Campfire in the Heart", which will visit the Altunga and Santa Teresa communities north-east and south-east of Alice Springs. This pilgrimage has been organised by the Aboriginal Catholic Ministry Melbourne, who can be contacted on (03) 9480 3849.

More information on the significance of the Message Sticks and the progress of the relay can be found at the following websites:

http://www.natsicc.org.au/message_stick_relay.htm and

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

2006 "DREAMING FROM THE HEART" ASSEMBLY

The National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Catholic Council has now released the Registration Booklet and program for the Dreaming from the Heart Assembly. The Booklet can be downloaded from the NATSICC website and you can register for the Assembly on-line (refer:

http://www.natsicc.org.au/alice_springs_2006.htm)

In issuing the invitation to the 7th National Assembly and 20th Anniversary Celebration, the Chairperson of NATSICC, Melissa Brickell said, "We acknowledge Country and are most thankful, to the local Arrernte people for the passage to host the Assembly here for the first time in the breathtaking beauty of Alice Springs.

"Pope John Paul II in 1986 was harmony to the ears. We listened to what we already knew in our hearts, that who we are as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders is fundamental to who we are as Catholics. His Holiness' address provided strong support for us to contribute our cultural richness and diversity to the life of the Catholic Church and reinforced the need for Australia to address the injustices and suffering of Indigenous peoples, with an open heart and mind toward peace and reconciliation for all in Australia...

"Our Message Sticks have passed through Australian parishes, schools and communities for over 12 months now, calling us to take up the challenges of the late Pope's message; and inviting us to gather again in Alice Springs to share in reconciliation with one another the moving Spirit within us all.

"The Assembly and Celebration provides an opportunity for us all to gather together and again share faith, spirituality and God's love for us, through the message of the late John Paul II which invigorates the theme of this significant gathering. Let's celebrate with joy and enthusiasm all that is sacred to us through our songs, stories, paintings, dances, languages and our warm spirituality, and strong connections to faith and the Mother Earth," Ms Brickell says.

The NATSICC National Assembly will finish with an 'all invited' celebration of Pope John Paul II's visit to Alice Springs in 1986 at the original location - Blatherskite Park on Saturday 7th October 2006.

2006 SOCIAL JUSTICE SUNDAY STATEMENT

As you would be aware from last month's Briefing, the subject of the Australian Catholic Bishops' 2006 Social Justice Sunday Statement is Pope John Paul II's 1986 address to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples of Australia.

In the Statement, The Heart of Our Nation, the Bishops ask, "As we mark the 20th anniversary of that remarkable day in 1986, what can we say we have

achieved... and what is still left to be done in taking up the challenges that Pope John Paul II placed before us all?" The Statement will explore four important issues addressed by the Holy Father in Alice Springs: the preservation of Indigenous cultures, the relationship between Indigenous and other traditions, the importance of and care for the land, and the need to move towards true reconciliation.

You can now place your order for the Social Justice Sunday Statement with the ACSJC. Visit the ACSJC website (<http://www.acsjc.org.au>) for details on how to place an order. Associated material, including liturgy notes, teachers' resources and other information, will soon be available on the website.

Place your order now.

An Ecumenical Social Justice Sunday resource is also being produced by the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Ecumenical Commission and the Social Justice Network of the National Council of Churches of Australia. A CD entitled "Make Indigenous Poverty History" will include liturgical resources, information sheets, audio-visual material and suggestions for action concerning the impact of poverty on Indigenous people and communities. More information will be placed on the ACSJC website soon.

Social Justice Sunday is celebrated on Sunday 24 September – one week before the NATSICC Dreaming from the Heart Assembly commences in Alice Springs.

Any assistance you can give in spreading the word about Social Justice Sunday and the NATSICC Dreaming from the Heart Assembly would be greatly appreciated.

As these important events approach, let us pray for peace and the spirit of reconciliation in the life of our nation and draw inspiration from the words spoken by Pope John Paul II twenty years ago. What part can we play in fostering genuine dialogue which seeks to heal wounds of the past and present?

John Ferguson
National Executive Officer

A KIMBERLEY PRAYER FOR PEACE

*Father in Heaven,
God of Peace,
Save us from all kinds of trouble.
We want to sit down quietly,
without fear or worry.
We believe in Jesus,
we trust in Jesus.
He will help us.
Praise to you O Lord.*

(Prayer taken from the Missa Kimberley)

CURRENT ISSUES/RESOURCES

POPE BENEDICT CALLS FOR CEASEFIRE

With fighting in its 19th day, Benedict XVI has called for an immediate ceasefire between Israel and Hezbollah.

"In the name of God, I appeal to all those responsible for this spiral of violence, so that they immediately put down their weapons on all sides," the Pope told pilgrims and tourists at his summer residence in Castel Gandolfo, as they gathered for the recitation of the midday Angelus.

Pope Benedict commented on the hundreds of dead, the many wounded, the huge number of homeless people and refugees and the destruction of houses, towns and infrastructure.

"Meanwhile, hatred and the desire for revenge grow in the hearts of many," he said.

"I ask governing leaders and international organizations not to spare any effort to obtain this necessary halt to hostilities and so to be able to begin to build, through dialogue, a lasting and stable concord for all the people of the Middle East." <http://www.zenit.org/english>

CARITAS MIDDLE EAST CRISIS APPEAL

Caritas Australia has launched a Middle East Crisis Appeal aimed at supporting victims of the current conflict. It has joined with its partner agencies in Jerusalem and Lebanon to call for an immediate ceasefire and to get urgent access to those that have been directly affected by the violence. Caritas Jerusalem and Caritas Lebanon are active in distributing medical aid kits, food and assisting with the many people who have been displaced by the violence. Caritas Australia is accepting donations which can be made via: phone 1800 024 413; post: cheques or money orders to GPO BOX 9830 in your capital city; and online: http://www.caritas.org.au/howtohelp/donate_online.htm

REFUGEE & MIGRANT SUNDAY – 27 AUGUST

The Australian Catholic Migrant and Refugee Office (ACMRO) has released materials for the observance of Refugee and Migrant Sunday. Included is: Pope Benedict XVI's message for 2006; a message from Bishop Joseph Grech, who is responsible for Migrant and Refugee matters on the Bishops' Commission for Pastoral Life; liturgy notes based on the Year B texts of the 21st Sunday of Ordinary Time (August 27th); and - for schools only - a poster.

Monsignor John Murphy, Director of the ACMRO, highlights a number of issues raised in the 2004 Vatican Instruction of the Love of Christ Towards Migrants. Among these is the instruction to 'promote a culture of welcome capable of accepting the truly human values of immigrants over and above any difficulties caused by living together with people who are different'. Call the ACMRO for further information on (02) 6201 9848 or visit <http://www.acmro.catholic.org.au/>

AFTINET FUNDRAISER

The Australian Fair Trade & Investment Network (AFTINET) is holding a fundraising dinner on Wednesday August 16 at the Marigold Restaurant in Sydney's Chinatown. Sharan Burrow, President of the ACTU and President of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions is speaking. The MC will be Julian Morrow, from the ABC's Chaser's War on Everything. During the evening, a cartoon by Bruce Petty and a painting by Rachel Szalay will be auctioned. Bring along colleagues, friends and family for an enjoyable night to support the great work that AFTINET does in its work for trade justice. Details below in the August Notices section. \$55 per person. To book call: (02) 8898 6500 (refer: <http://www.aftinet.org.au/>)

THE AUSTRALIAN HUMAN RIGHTS REGISTER 2005

The Human Rights Register, facilitated by the Catholic Commission for Justice, Development & Peace, Melbourne, is an annual NGO audit of human rights developments. The register records individual reports and accounts of developments and violations and analyses them in the light of the human rights conventions that Australia has ratified. It focuses on individual instances within Australia and contains reports from community legal centres, non-government organisations and the national media. The register is used as a catalyst to draw attention to the state of human rights in Australia. To download the report visit: <http://www.humanrightsregister.org>

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL "MESSAGE IN A BOTTLE" CAMPAIGN

Amnesty International Australia needs your help to send a BIG Message to our Senators: do not abandon refugees. The Australian Government's recently proposed changes to the Migration Act would see children being placed again in detention. Australia would be turning its back on refugees. The Bill will probably be brought before Federal Parliament soon after the resumption on August 8th. Add your name to the Amnesty International Australia "Message in a Bottle" campaign and help stop this inhumane policy. You can also give the campaign a big boost by starting your own bottle and asking friends to add their names. Please help us collect 10,000 names in two weeks. (refer: <http://www.amnesty.org.au/>)

RESOURCES ON EAST TIMOR

The Australia – East Timor Association recently held a seminar on "Humanitarian Responses to the East Timor Crisis". Two books were launched at this event.

"New Nation: United Nations Peace-Building in East Timor" by Geoffrey C. Gunn & Reyko Huang was launched by the Timor Leste Ambassador to Australia H.E. Hernani Coelho Da Silva. (Publication details: Date Sept 2006, Macau, ISBN 99937-706-1-2, 209 pp., soft back with colour photos and cover, limited print run). Copies available for \$35.00 (includes packaging and handling). This book covers the 1999-2006 period of the UN Missions in East Timor. It looks at the role of the UN in state-building and the issues of peace-keeping and reconciliation amongst others. Make cheques out to "Australia-East Timor Association" or "AETA" C/- PO Box 703, Leichhardt, NSW 2040.

"Independent Women: The story of women's activism in East Timor" by Irena Cristalis & Catherine Scott was launched by Mary Waterford from the Blue Mountains East Timor Sister's Project. (Publication details: Date 2005, CIIR, London, U.K., ISBN 1 85287 317 5, 198 pp., soft back with colour photos and cover) Copies available for \$40.00 (includes packaging and handling). This book was written by a Dutch freelance journalist and CIIR aid worker in East Timor who formerly edited the Timor Links newsletter. It has comparative chapters on women in Mozambique, Namibia and Cambodia. Make cheques out to "AETA" PO Box 703, Leichhardt NSW 2040.

A video of the Seminar is also available: "Humanitarian Responses to the East Timor Crisis 2006" VHS Video. Filmed by Mandy King and Fabio Cavadini. Three hours, unedited. Speakers include James Isbister, Peter Jennings, Mike Smith, Nernani Coelho Da Silva, Tim Anderson, Mary Waterford, Justice John Dowd, Stuart Rees, Bernadette Connole, Maire Sheehan, Dimitrios Thanos, Carlos Pereira. Unedited copies of 3 hour length on VHS video available from AETA for \$20.00 includes packaging and postage PO Box 703, Leichhardt, NSW 2040. Email inquiries should be sent to AETA c/- <jefferson.lee@bigpond.com>

MARGARET DOOLEY YOUNG WRITERS AWARD

Eureka Street magazine this week opened the second annual Margaret Dooley Young Writers Award, a competition open to all Australian writers under the age of 40. The award asks writers to submit two pieces of reasoned ethical argument, based on humane values – a tradition kept alive by Eureka Street magazine for the past 15 years in Australia. The winning essays will be published in the December edition of Eureka Street, and the writer will receive a \$2000 cash prize as well as further opportunities to write for this iconic magazine. Entrants must submit two previously unpublished articles that offer the following: ethical reflection directed to a non-specialist audience on any serious topic, appeal to humane values, clear argument and elegant expression, and a generosity and courtesy of spirit animating forceful argument. Entries close 5th October 2006. For more information on how to enter, contact (03) 9427 7311 or visit: <http://www.margaretdooleyaward.com>

SOCIAL ACTION OFFICE QLD – "PATCHWORK PROJECT"

The Social Action Office (SAO) of the Conference of Leaders of Religious Institutes, Queensland is running a community project to monitor the impact and lived experience of the new industrial relations, individual contracting and welfare to work environments. You can participate in the project by joining a 2 hour workshop of story sharing and recording in your organisation, group or workplace or by simply reflecting on and writing up a short story of change and sending it back to SAO. For more information contact: (07) 3891 5866 or visit: http://www.sao.clriq.org.au/ir_campaign/ir_patchwork.html Visit the SAO website: <http://www.sao.clriq.org.au/>

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>)*

This year's Australian Catholic Bishops Conference Social Justice Sunday Statement is entitled "The Heart of Our Country – dignity and justice for our Indigenous brothers and sisters". The ACSJC is now taking orders for the Statement. An order form is available on the ACSJC website:
<http://www.socialjustice.catholic.org.au>

SERIES PAPER: CATHOLICS AND NATURE: TWO HUNDRED YEARS OF ENVIRONMENTAL ATTITUDES IN AUSTRALIA

Concern for the environment has played a significant role in the Catholic Church in Australia since the 19th century. Fr Charles Rue SSC traces the development of environmental thought in Australian Catholicism.

(\$6.60 a copy, plus postage – postage rates listed below)

SERIES PAPER: FROM MONEY TO MEANING: YOUNG PEOPLE AND WORK

Catholic Social Justice Series No.56 – the Australian Young Christian Workers addresses the issue of young people and casual work.

(\$6.60 a copy, plus postage – postage rates listed below)

PASTORAL LETTER: THE VOICE OF VULNERABLE WORKERS IN THE CHANGING WORLD OF WORK

The Pastoral Letter issued by Bishop Christopher Saunders for the Feast of St Joseph the Worker in 2006 is available and can be downloaded from the ACSJC website: <http://www.socialjustice.catholic.org.au>

ACSJC BACKGROUND PAPER: STOLEN WAGES – AN OPPORTUNITY FOR JUSTICE?

This background paper provides basic information on the circumstances facing many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander individuals and families seeking wages they were not paid for years of work. The paper is available on the ACSJC's website:

http://www.socialjustice.catholic.org.au/Content/pdf/2006_1_23stolen_wages_-_an_opportunity_for_justice.pdf

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

AUGUST NOTICES

AUGUST 1: PUBLIC MEETING, "PACIFIC CALLING CAMPAIGN" (NSW). The Edmund Rice Centre presents an evening of sharing, solidarity and action. The campaign is a partnership of organisations and individuals who recognise Australia's ecological debt to our low-lying Pacific neighbours. It involves research, education and advocacy. A hearty vegetable soup is provided. 6.00 pm, Edmund Rice Centre, 9 Alexandra Ave, Croydon NSW. For more information or to RSVP to the event contact (02) 9745 9700 or email jillf@erc.org.au. (refer: <http://www.erc.org.au>)

AUGUST 1: SCREENING, "SOPHIE SCHOLL" (NSW). The Edmund Rice Centre presents this screening as part of its JUSTFilm series. The Centre regularly screens films that support and encourage a social justice conversation. Sophie Scholl is a film about resistance to the Nazis in World War II. Dendy Newtown Cinema, 261–263 King Street, Newtown. Tickets \$15. Bookings: (02) 9550 5699. More information about the film is at <http://www.sophieschollmovie.com>.

AUGUST 1: SCREENING, "SCARED SACRED" (NSW). This event in support of the Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies. This film, directed by Velcrow Ripper, has been an audience favourite at festivals all over the world and won numerous awards including the Special Jury Prize at the Toronto International Film Festival. Part proceeds go to the Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies. 6:00pm, the Chauvel Cinema, Cnr Oxford St & Oatley Rd, Paddington. Email teri@gilscinefilms.com.au. Web: <http://www.scaredsacred.org>.

AUGUST 1: SCREENING, "PAPUA IN SEARCH OF JUSTICE" (NSW). Amnesty International Australia, supported by Indonesian Solidarity, presents this premiere screening. This production documents human rights abuses in Abepura, Papua. You are invited to attend this free film event, which is followed by a discussion with John Barr. 6:30pm – 8:00pm, The World Bar, 24 Bayswater Rd, Kings Cross. Drinks and finger food are provided. RSVP via email: nswaia@amnesty.org.au or phone (02) 9217 7670.

AUGUST 1: PUBLIC EVENT, "Achieving Social Justice for Indigenous Australians – The Right to Self-Determination and the Need for a Treaty" (VIC). Monash University is hosting this event. Presenters: Prof Larissa Behrendt, Brian Walters SC and Mark Liebler AC. 5.45pm for a 6.00pm start. Venue: Blake Dawson Waldron, Level 39, 101 Collins Street, Melbourne. Contact Human Rights Law Resource Centre, fax (03) 9225 6686; Email hrlrc@vicbar.com.au. (refer: <http://www.law.monash.edu.au/castancentre/events>)

AUGUST 1: ABC RADIO, "HEZBOLLAH" (National). Rear Vision presents this program at 8.35pm. For two weeks violence and death have dominated the lives of people in Lebanon and northern Israel. The Israelis and America lay the blame for the violence squarely at the feet of the 'terrorist organisation' Hezbollah. Rear Vision looks at Hezbollah's history and tries to build a more complete picture of this organisation and its followers. <http://www.abc.net.au/rn/rearvision/>.

AUGUST 1 – 4: CONFERENCE, "CRISIS INTERVENTION IN A CHANGING WORLD" (VIC). Presented by the Critical Incident Stress Management Foundation Australia Inc. Keynote speakers include Tim Costello, AO, Atle Dyregrov PhD (founding Director of the Center for Crisis Psychology in Bergen, Norway), Gary Raymond APM (Chief Inspector, NSW Police Force), Patricia Tritt RN,MA (Director of Emergency Medical Services and Trauma for HealthONE, Denver, Colorado). Venue: The Carlton Crest Hotel, 65 Queens Road, Melbourne. Information: CISMFA, PO Box 554, Carlton South 3053; Tel (03) 9663 7999; email debbie.rogers@cismfa.org.au. (refer: <http://www.cismfa.org.au>)

AUGUST 1 – 31: THEATRE, "HONOUR BOUND" (NSW). The Sydney Opera House presents this production directed by Nigel Jamieson and choreographed by Garry Stewart. Since September 11, 2001, Australia's engagement in the 'war on terror' has raised important questions about the balance between the pursuit of our national security and our human rights. This world premiere focuses on the experiences of Terry Hicks and his son David who has been held in Guantanamo Bay for four years without trial. It integrates Terry's personal testimony as a father and draws on letters, internal Pentagon papers and the accounts of former detainees. The Playhouse, Sydney Opera House. Tel (02) 9250 7777; TTY (02) 9250 7347; email bookings@sydneyoperahouse.com (refer: <http://www.sydneyoperahouse.com/boxoffice>)

AUGUST 2: SCREENING, "KANINYA" (VIC). Melbourne International Film Festival screens *kaninyi*; a story told by an Aboriginal man, Bob Randall, who lives beside Uluru in Central Australia. Bob tells the tale of why Indigenous people are now struggling in a modern world and what needs to be done for Indigenous people to move forward. Information: <http://www.melbournefilmfestival.com.au/>. *Kaninyi* will be screening in mainstream cinemas in August. (refer: <http://www.kaninyi.com>)

AUGUST 2: ABC RADIO, "A Perspective from Palestine" (National). Radio National presents "Encounter" at 7.00pm. Palestinian Legislative Council member Dr Bernard Sabella argues that Palestinians and Israelis must find 'a joint vision for the future'. He holds to a line that neither armed struggle nor military force will bring a solution. (refer: <http://www.abc.net.au/rn/relig/enc/default.htm>)

AUGUST 2: SEMINAR, "GOOD NEIGHBOUR, BAD NEIGHBOUR: WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE? AUSTRALIA'S RELATIONS WITH INDONESIA" (VIC). A Jesuit Seminar Series for 2006 will focus on Australia's relationship with Indonesia. Speakers are Richard Woolcott AC, Assoc Prof Damien Kingsbury and Prof Frank Brennan. 7.30–9.30, Xavier College, Barkers Rd, Kew. All welcome. Entry free but donations (suggested \$5/10) welcome. Bookings not required. For further information contact (02) 9356 3888 or reception@uniya.org (refer: http://www.uniya.org/news/news_seminars06.html).

AUGUST 2: SPIRITUALITY IN THE PUB – "THE GETTING OF WISDOM: ETHICS AND LIFE" (NSW). With Kate Englebrecht and Simon Longstaff. Bellevue Hotel, 159 Hargrave Street, Paddington. Information: (02) 9387 3152. (refer: <http://www.catalyst-for-renewal.com.au/news.htm>)

AUGUST 3: PUBLIC LECTURE: "WHY INDIGENOUS POLICY NEEDS TO BE BASED ON EVIDENCE AND NOT HYPERBOLE" (ACT). Presented by the Centre for Aboriginal Economic Policy Research (CAEPR); delivered by Dr Boyd Hunter, Fellow, CAEPR. To be followed by the launch of CAEPR Research Monograph No. 26 by Professor Larissa Brehrendt, University of Technology, Sydney, titled Assessing the evidence on Indigenous socioeconomic outcomes: A focus on the 2002 NATSISS, edited by Dr Boyd Hunter. 5:30pm, Lecture Theatre 3, Manning Clark Centre, Union Court, ANU. This lecture is free and open to the public. Enquiries: (02) 6125 0587 or admin.caepr@anu.edu.au (refer: <http://www.anu.edu.au/caepr/events.php>)

AUGUST 4 & 5: INFORMATION SESSION FOR PEOPLE WILLING TO SHARE PROFESSIONAL, TECHNICAL AND TRADE SKILLS (VIC). PALMS Australia is interested in meeting teachers, doctors, nurses and other professional, technical, and trades people willing to share their skills for 1–3 years in Asia, Africa or the Pacific. Information Sessions will be held at St Francis' Pastoral Centre, 326 Lonsdale St, Melbourne, on Saturday August 4 at 2:00 pm or Sunday 5 at 2:00 pm. If you are unable to attend, or would simply like more information about volunteering, please contact Brendan Joyce on (02) 9642 0558 or brendan@palms.org.au.

AUGUST 5: Seminar, "BUILDING BRIDGES WITH ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER PEOPLES – ACHIEVEMENTS AND CHALLENGES" (NSW). A Mercy Panel Day is being hosted by the Sisters of Mercy in North Sydney. Keynote speaker: Larissa Behrendt, Professor of Law and Director of Research at Jumbunna Indigenous House of Learning, UTS. Panel: Louise Campbell (Aboriginal education officer), Graeme Mundine (Executive Secretary natsiec), Julie Smith (Biamunga co-coordinator). Facilitator: Margaret Hinchey rsm. McQuoin centre, Monte Sant' Angelo Mercy College, Miller St, North Sydney. On-site parking available. 9.30am – 12.45pm. All welcome; morning tea will be provided. RSVP for planning and catering purposes; please phone 0428 134 750 by 28th July 2006.

AUGUST 6: SCREENING, "KANINYI" (QLD). The Brisbane International Film Festival screens Kanyini. Information: <http://www.biff.com.au>. Kaninyi will be screening in mainstream cinemas in August. Information: <http://www.kaninyi.com>.

AUGUST 6: RALLY, "Hiroshima Day Rally and March" (qld). Queen's Park, Cnr Elizabeth & George Sts, Brisbane, 2.00 P.M. Organised by Rally for Peace. Information: (07) 3855 9497.

AUGUST 6: RALLY, "Hiroshima Day rally" (VIC). State Library, Swanston St, City at 1.00 pm.. Organised by Nuclear Free Australia & Stop the War Coalition. Information: 0417 506 150.

AUGUST 6: RALLY, "Hiroshima Day March and Rally" (nsw). Hyde Park North at 1.00 pm. Authorised by the Hiroshima Day Committee. Phone (02) 9698 2954. Refer: (refer: <http://www.HiroshimaDaySydney.org>)

AUGUST 6: FORUM WITH ISRAELI REFUSENIK (NSW). Speakers: Rotem Mor (a conscientious objector in 2002 and jailed for refusing to continue service in the Israeli army) and Phil Reiss (hospitalised by an Israeli 'rubber bullet' at a non-violent demonstration in the West Bank). 5.00 pm, LHMU Auditorium, 187 Thomas Street, Haymarket. More information at <http://www.StopWarCoalition.org>

AUGUST 7: SEMINAR, "YOUTH IN BOUGAINVILLE: Their Situation, Involvement in Peacebuilding & Images of Peace" (NSW). The Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies presents a seminar presented by Yuko Miyazawa. 12.30–2.30 pm, Room 107, Mackie Building, Arundel St, University of Sydney. Tel (02) 9351 7686 or email cpacs@arts.usyd.edu.au. (refer: <http://www.cpacs.usyd.edu.au>)

AUGUST 7: FORUM, "CORPORATE LEGAL MANOEUVRES AND THE IMPORTANCE OF HUMAN RIGHTS" (VIC). What will outrage the public? What are the emerging risks and liabilities? Speakers: Brian Walters SC (President, Liberty Victoria; Vice President, Free Speech Victoria) and Richard Meeran (Special Counsel, Slater and Gordon; 2003 Distinguished Visiting Fellow at the Castan Centre for Human Rights). presented by Futureye. 11.00 am to 2.00 pm, Futureye boardroom, Level 2, 388 Bourke St, Melbourne. Non-member NGO tickets \$82.50 each (including morning tea and lunch). Information: (03) 9642 2088; email info@futureye.com (refer: <http://www.futureye.com>)

AUGUST 8: SEMINAR, "GOOD NEIGHBOUR, BAD NEIGHBOUR: WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE? AUSTRALIA'S RELATIONS WITH INDONESIA" (NSW). A Jesuit Seminar Series for 2006 will focus on Australia's relationship with Indonesia. Speakers: Duncan Campbell, Prof Adrian Vickers and Prof Frank Brennan. Venue: Edmund Rice College Hall, 112 Mount Keira Rd, West Wollongong. All welcome. Entry free but donations (suggested \$5/10) welcome. Bookings not required. For further information contact (02) 9356 3888 or reception@uniya.org (refer: http://www.uniya.org/news/news_seminars06.html).

AUGUST 8: SPIRITUALITY IN THE PUB – THE JOHN ROFFEY LECTURE (SA). Dr Barbara Hardy OA. Stanley Bridge Tavern, Onkaparinga Road, Verdun. Info: (08) 8388 5957. <http://www.catalyst-for-renewal.com.au/news.htm>.

AUGUST 8: LAUNCH, "SEEKING ASYLUM ALONE" (NSW). A Just Australia, the Public Interest Advocacy Centre and Australians against Racism cordially invite you to the launch of Seeking Asylum Alone: Australia, a study of Australian law, policy and practice regarding unaccompanied and separated children by Dr Mary Crock. Author Thomas Keneally AO will be launching the report at 11.30am at the Conservatorium of Music, Macquarie Street, Sydney. Please RSVP to anna@ajustaustralia.com or phone 9745 9726. (refer: <http://www.ajustaustralia.com>)

AUGUST 9: THE HON. JULIE BISHOP ADDRESSES THE NATIONAL PRESS CLUB (ACT). 11.45–1.30, National Press Club, 16 National Circuit, Barton ACT. Information: (02) 6121 2199; email npc@npc.org.au (refer: <http://www.npc.org.au>)

AUGUST 9: SCREENING, "SILMA'S SCHOOL" (NSW). Save–Australia Inc and the Ausnews Global Network present a special screening of 'Silma's School' at NSW Parliament House Theatre 2.00 pm – 5.00 pm. Screening opened by the Hon Dr Meredith Burgmann MLC; Q&A afterwards with Silma Ithram (founder of Noor AL Houda Islamic College) and the director Jane Jeffes. Silma's School is the story of one woman's struggle for the survival of her school – and for justice. The film received a standing ovation at last year's Sydney Film Festival, sold out in London and was a finalist in the New York Festivals' Television Award. Admission: \$20 (including refreshments – support to continue the work of SAVE & AGN). Advance booking essential by Tuesday, 8th August, 2006; seats are limited. Strictly no booking at the door. Further information: SAVE–Australia Inc 04 2208 5222. Contact Ausnews Global Network, PO Box A2208, Sydney South 1235.

AUGUST 10: PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT EVENING, "CLIMATE CHANGE: WHO IS MY NEIGHBOUR?" (QLD). Presented by Qld Churches Together and Friends of the Earth, on implications of climate change. 4.00–8.00 p.m., Trinity Place, Holy Trinity Anglican Church, 68 Hawthorne St, Woolloongabba, \$20. Contact QCT on (08) 3369 6792 or email qctadmin@tpg.com.au.

AUGUST 10: OPEN DAY AT YOUTH OFF THE STREETS (NSW). Youth Off The Streets are once again welcoming everyone to their services in Merrylands. This is a great opportunity to learn more about them, and to interact with their teachers, staff and young people from their services. If you are interested in attending their Open Day, please call Shan Short on (02) 8332 5010. (refer: <http://www.youthoffthestreets.com.au>)

AUGUST 10 & 13: INFORMATION SESSION FOR PEOPLE WILLING TO SHARE PROFESSIONAL, TECHNICAL AND TRADE SKILLS (NSW). PALMS Australia is interested in meeting teachers, doctors, nurses and other professional, technical, and trades people willing to share their skills for 1–3 years in Asia, Africa or the Pacific. Thursday 10th August 6:00pm or Sunday 13th August 2:00pm, The Fair Trade Coffee Company, 33 Glebe Point Road, Glebe. Contact Brendan Joyce on (02) 9642 0558 or brendan@palms.org.au.

AUGUST 11 – 12: NATIONAL ACCESS TO JUSTICE AND PRO BONO CONFERENCE 2006 (VIC). Topics include: Indigenous legal aid; a National Legal Aid Scheme – a report card; Legal help in the bush; Legal costs in legal aid work; Terra Australis – access to justice following the hue and cry; Collaborative justice – concept and reality; Family relationship centres; The proposed Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities; Raped and beaten – then robbed: the reality of victim's compensation; Bailing out – a report on the erosion of the right to bail; Black and blue – the legal system and indigenous offenders; Pro bono practice; Civil justice; Tort law reform; How do people find legal help – discrimination against disabled Australians; How will 'WorkChoices' affect justice for individual litigants? Grand Hyatt Melbourne, 123 Collins Street, Melbourne. Information: email justiceprobono@meetingplanners.com.au; phone (03) 9417 0888; fax (03) 9417 0899. (refer: <http://www.justiceprobono2006.com.au>)

AUGUST 14: PUBLIC LECTURE: "POLITICS, PROGRESS AND SEDITION – DID JUANITA NIELSEN DIE FOR SOMETHING?" (NSW). Guest speaker at the Juanita Nielsen Lecture: Dr Jocelyne A Scutt, barrister, human rights lawyer, writer and filmmaker. In July 1975, Juanita Nielsen, publisher of the independent paper 'Now', disappeared because she stood up to rapacious developers. Her murderers were never brought to justice. Thirty-one years on, the responsibility to stand up and to refuse to be silenced remains with every one of us. Please RSVP: (02) 9230 3551 or email linda.wilhelm@parliament.nsw.gov.au.

AUGUST 15: SCREENING, "THE CLAY BIRD" (VIC). This event is in support of ESDO (Environmental and Social Development Organisation) of Dhaka, Bangladesh. The Clay Bird, winner of the 2002 Cannes Film Festival International Critics Prize for Best Film, tells the story of a family torn apart by religion and war. Kaleide Theatre, RMIT Union Building 8, 260 Swanston St. Email zac.rudge@gmail.com or ring 0415 775 036.

AUGUST 16: PETER GARRETT MP ADDRESSES THE NATIONAL PRESS CLUB OF AUSTRALIA (ACT). 11.45–1.30, National Press Club, 16 National Circuit, Barton ACT. Information: (02) 6121 2199; email npc@npc.org.au; Web <http://www.npc.org.au>.

AUGUST 16: TRADE JUSTICE DINNER FOR AFTINET (NSW). The Australian Fair Trade and Investment Network (AFTINET) presents a dinner on Wednesday August 16 (6.30 pm for 7pm start) at Marigold Restaurant, Level 5, 683 George St, Sydney. Delicious four-course Chinese banquet with vegetarian options. MC: Julian Morrow, from the ABC's Chaser's War on Everything; speaker: Sharan Burrow, President, Australian Council of Trade Unions and President of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions. Auctions: cartoon by Bruce Petty, painting by Rachel Szalay. Raffle prizes of fair trade products and wine. Price: \$55 per person. Seats are limited, so please book your ticket(s) as soon as possible, and tell your friends and colleagues. Bookings close August 9. Phone (02) 8898 6500. (refer: <http://www.aftinet.org.au>)

AUGUST 16: MIEGUNYAH PUBLIC LECTURE, "THINKING ABOUT TORTURE" (VIC). Can torture justifiably be thought to be a 'lesser evil' that we may sometimes be obliged to commit for 'the common good'? The lecture will reflect on answers that have recently been given to that question. Presented by Professor Raimond Gaita, Professor of Moral Philosophy at King's College London and Foundation Professor of Philosophy at the Australian Catholic University. Copland Theatre, Economics & Commerce Building, University of Melbourne, 6.30 to 7.30pm. RSVP. Enquiries: (03) 8344 5142/3; email office@philosophy.unimelb.edu.au (refer: <http://www.philosophy.unimelb.edu.au>)

AUGUST 16: SPIRITUALITY IN THE PUB – "How well does our society Love? How well do we respond to needs of others?" (NSW). With Christine Gilfeather & tba. Sutherland RSL Club. Information: (02) 9520 0617 or (02) 9548 2475.

AUGUST 16: SEMINAR, "GOOD NEIGHBOUR, BAD NEIGHBOUR: WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE? AUSTRALIA'S RELATIONS WITH INDONESIA" (NSW).

A Jesuit Seminar Series for 2006 will focus on Australia's relationship with Indonesia. Prominent people in this area will be brought together to tease apart the qualities of a good and bad neighbour and suggest ways forward for better relations. Speakers: Sidney Jones, Prof. Peter King and Prof. Frank Brennan. Venue: Eugene Goossens Hall, ABC Centre, 700 Harris St, Ultimo, 7.30–9.30. All welcome. Entry free but donations (suggested \$5/10) welcome. Bookings not required. For further information contact (02) 9356 3888 or reception@uniya.org (refer: http://www.uniya.org/news/news_seminars06.html).

AUGUST 16: SPIRITUALITY IN THE PUB – "WE MUST CHOOSE TO

MATTER" (NSW). Jim Carty sm & Maree Harris rsj. The Blue Gum Hotel, cnr Pacific Highway and Unwin Rd. Information: (02) 9869 1035 a/h. (refer: <http://www.catalyst-for-renewal.com.au/news.htm>)

AUGUST 16: SPIRITUALITY IN THE PUB – "WHAT ON EARTH DOES THE PUB HAVE TO DO WITH SPIRITUALITY?" (VIC). With Fr Andy Hamilton.

Colac Central Hotel Motel, 10 Murray St, Colac. Information: (03) 5231 3376. (refer: <http://www.catalyst-for-renewal.com.au/news.htm>)

AUGUST 18 – 19: FESTIVAL, "40 YEARS FREEDOM DAY FESTIVAL" (NT).

The 40 Years Freedom Day Festival, Recognising Land, Vision, Determination and Hope, will be held at Kalkaringi, NT. The cost of the Festival is \$10 Adult (18 years and over). All people coming to the Festival must register. Festival Highlights: The 40 Years Freedom Day Concert; The Vincent Lingiari Memorial Lecture; Community BBQ; art exhibitions, displays and creative workshops; tours of the Wave Hill walk-off story. To register on-line, visit <http://www.freedomday.info/registrationForm.html>

AUGUST 19 – 20: INFORMATION SESSION FOR PEOPLE WILLING TO SHARE PROFESSIONAL, TECHNICAL AND TRADE SKILLS (QLD). PALMS

Australia is interested in meeting teachers, doctors, nurses and other professional, technical, and trades people willing to share their skills for 1–3 years in Asia, Africa or the Pacific. 2:00pm, St Mary's Parish, 20 Merivale St, South Brisbane. Contact Brendan Joyce on (02) 9642 0558 or brendan@palms.org.au.

AUGUST 21: SPIRITUALITY IN THE PUB – "DO I LOVE WITHOUT A

HIDDEN AGENDA?" (NSW). Cameron Cutts (L'Arche) & tba. Union Hotel, Pacific Highway & West Street, North Sydney. Information: (02) 9958 5963. (refer: <http://www.catalyst-for-renewal.com.au/news.htm>)

AUGUST 21: SPIRITUALITY IN THE PUB: "WHAT ARE AUSTRALIAN

VALUES?" (NSW). With Geraldine Doogue and Wendy McCarthy. Braidwood Servicemen's Club, Corner Coronation Ave & Victory Street, Braidwood NSW. Information: (02) 4842 2829.

AUGUST 22: SEMINAR, "GOOD NEIGHBOUR, BAD NEIGHBOUR: WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE? AUSTRALIA'S RELATIONS WITH INDONESIA" (SA).

A Jesuit Seminar Series for 2006 will focus on Australia's relationship with Indonesia. Prominent people in this area will be brought together to tease apart

the qualities of a good and bad neighbour and suggest ways forward for better relations. Speakers: Dr John Bruni, John Martinkus and Prof Frank Brennan. Venue: St Ignatius' Parish, 137 William St, Norwood, 7.30–9.30 pm. All welcome. Entry free but donations (suggested \$5/10) welcome. Bookings not required. For further information contact (02) 9356 3888 or reception@uniya.org (refer: http://www.uniya.org/news/news_seminars06.html).

AUGUST 23: FORUM, "ASYLUM: BENCHMARKING AUSTRALIAN VALUES?" (NSW). Presented by Dr Frank Brennan S.J. (Australian Catholic University) and Dr Eileen Pittaway (UNSW). Centre for Refugee Research, Catholic Institute of Sydney, 99 Albert Rd Strathfield. 7.00 to 9.00pm. Refreshments: 6.15pm. Donation :\$7. For catering RSVP Kathy Moroney, kmoroney@ncca.org.au or (02) 9299 2215 by Friday 18/08/06. (refer: <http://www.cis.catholic.edu.au/>)

AUGUST 23: SPIRITUALITY IN THE PUB, "EFFECTIVE DIALOGUE WITH OTHER FAITHS: FREEDOM, ACCEPTANCE, RESPECT" (VIC). With Sherene Hassam & Joe Camilleri. 'The Dev' Hotel, Cnr Bay & New Streets, Brighton, 7.30-9.00 pm. Info: 9776 2705. (refer: <http://www.catalyst-for-renewal.com.au/news.htm>)

AUGUST 24: SPIRITUALITY IN THE PUB, "ETHICS AND WEALTH CREATION" (NSW). With Robert Fitzgerald & Sandy Cornish. Newport Arms Hotel, cnr Beaconsfield and Kalinya Sts, Newport. Information: (02) 9973 1192. (refer: <http://www.catalyst-for-renewal.com.au/news.htm>)

AUGUST 25 – 26: 2006 NATIONAL CONFERENCE, UNITED NATIONS ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA (NSW). Holme Centre University of Sydney. The Conference will be celebrating the 60th anniversary of the World Federation of UN Associations (WFUNA) and will be co-chaired by the world president of WFUNA and the federal president of the UNAA. The Governor of NSW has kindly agreed to open the Conference. For more information, visit the conference website: <http://www.unaansw.org.au/conference/index.php>.

AUGUST 28: PUBLIC LECTURE, "REFORMING AUSTRALIAN INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS" (VIC). This lecture at the University of Melbourne will consider the significant changes in Australia's industrial relations over the past 100 years. The present Work Choices legislation marks a radical departure in philosophy from the past. The Lecture will review the new legislation in historical context and consider its economic and social outcomes. It will be given by Emeritus Professor Joe Isaac, Professorial Fellow in the Department of Management, former Professor of Economics at the University of Melbourne and later at Monash University and Deputy President of the Australian Conciliation and Arbitration Commission from 1974 to 1987. 6:30pm – 8:00pm, Theatre A, Elisabeth Murdoch Building. Enquiries: (03) 8344 7725; email rjwilson@unimelb.edu.au (refer: <http://www.management.unimelb.edu.au>)

AUGUST 28 – 30: CATHOLIC HEALTH AUSTRALIA CONFERENCE, "LEADING AT THE EDGE". Keynote speaker, Margaret Wheatley, writes, teaches, and speaks about radically new practices and ideas for organizing in chaotic times. She is President Emeritus of The Berkana Institute, a charitable global foundation serving life and affirming leaders around the world. Conference

secretariat: CHA National Office, PO Box 330, Deakin West, ACT, 2600. Phone 02 6260 5980; email secretariat@cha.org.au. For details and brochure, see CHA's website: <http://www.cha.org.au>

AUGUST 30: SPIRITUALITY IN THE PUB, "MARGINALISED COMMUNITIES – ANSWERS PLEASE!" (NSW). With Anne Cummins & Sarah Kelly. The Pine Inn, 19 Parramatta Rd, Burwood. Information: 0418 242 932.

AUGUST 30 – 31: ASSOCIATIONS FORUM NATIONAL CONFERENCE (NSW). All charities, associations, institutes, clubs, and societies are invited to attend this event. The Association Forum covers 19 key topics including the Australian Council of Social Service perspective, professional associations, managing a not-for-profit business, international trends, and observations of Australian NFPs. Keynote speakers: Peter Hendy, ACCI; Andrew Johnson, ACOSS; Andy Friedman, PARN, UK. Venue: Sofitel Wentworth Hotel, Sydney. Contact: PO Box 810, Artarmon NSW 1570; Phone (02) 9904 8200; Fax (02) 9411 8585 email: support@associations.net.au (refer: <http://www.associations.net.au>)

JULY NEWS MONITOR

BISHOP HIGHLIGHTS ASYLUM SEEKER AND TRAFFICKING CONCERNS: Sandhurst Bishop Joseph Grech has called for attention to be paid to the human trafficking issue and to the government's proposed changes to asylum seeker laws in the lead up to this year's Refugee and Migrant Sunday next month.

ASIAN AND AFRICAN MIGRANTS "ABANDONED" IN LEBANON, VATICAN SAYS: 22,000 Sudanese and Iraqi refugees as well as thousands of migrant workers are trapped in Lebanon, according to the Vatican agency for pastoral care of migrants.

WTO TALKS COLLAPSE INDICATIVE OF INDUSTRIALISED NATIONS FAILURE, INDIAN JESUIT SAYS: A renowned Indian Jesuit and social activist, Fr Cedric Prakash, slammed the collapse of the six-party talks in Geneva, which included Australia, as an indicator of the refusal of industrialised countries to put agriculture and trade of developing countries on the World Trade Organisation's agenda.

STUDENTS TAKING LEAD FOR MIDDLE EAST PEACE: A Catholic student group has joined with Jewish, Muslim and Baha'i students in calling for an interfaith "prayer chain for peace" in the Middle East.

IRISH JURY ACQUITS O'REILLY: Australian Catholic activist Ciaran O'Reilly and four Catholic Worker colleagues were acquitted of causing criminal damage to a US navy jet that they had disabled at Shannon Airport in the lead-up to the Iraq war.

PRIEST SAYS COFFEE GROWERS BIG LOSERS IN TIMOR UNREST: A Timorese priest said that coffee growers are the biggest losers as a result of the recent violence, leaving many small growers at the peak of coffee harvest season this month with no other source of income.

CANADIAN BISHOPS WARN AMNESTY OVER ABORTION: It will be difficult for Catholics to continue working with Amnesty International if it adopts a policy of supporting abortion as a human right, said the Canadian bishops.

CARITAS LEBANON SLAMS MILK FACTORY ATTACK: A milk factory and food storage facilities were targeted in the Israeli offensive, overwhelmed Caritas Lebanon officials say.

FRANCISCANS TO ESTABLISH BANGKOK HUMAN RIGHTS CENTRE: The Australian Franciscans have played a key role in developing a proposal announced for a Franciscans International office for the Asia-Pacific region in Bangkok.

BISHOP CONDEMNS NSW COOPERATION IN BODY PARTS TRADE: Sydney Auxiliary Bishop Anthony Fisher attacked a business arrangement between the NSW Government and an Australian company to develop and market human tissue products.

CARITAS SAYS MIDDLE EAST VIOLENCE ILLEGAL AND IMMORAL: Calling for an immediate ceasefire between Israel and Lebanon, Caritas International said that "indiscriminate bombings and hostage taking are against all moral and humanitarian laws and principles."

LOW UNEMPLOYMENT SHOULD PAVE WAY FOR TRAINING PLACES SAYS CSSA: Welcoming the latest unemployment figures, Catholic Social Services director Frank Quinlan called on the government to act on its promise to fund more training places for those who remain unemployed.

AVOID IPOD "SELF-INDULGENCE", WARNS FAMILY GROUP: Households are spending an average of \$12 a week more on digital goods than on electricity, gas and visits to doctors and dentists, according to the director of Sydney's Marriage and Family Office.

PAX CHRISTI RAPS PROFITEERS IN PALESTINIAN OCCUPATION: The international Catholic peace movement, Pax Christi, joined a British campaign against major companies whose businesses provide support for Israel's occupation of Palestine.

KOREAN BISHOPS WARN AGAINST US FTA: In a message for the Church's Farmers' Sunday, Korean bishops and farmers have warned against the destruction of the local farming sector as a result of a Free Trade Agreement with the US.

BRENNAN RUBBISHES RETURN TO PATERNALISM: In a NAIDOC week talk to mark the 20th anniversary of John Paul II's visit to Alice Springs, Jesuit lawyer Frank Brennan argued that government partnership with a national representative Indigenous body - not paternalism - is the key to realising Indigenous aspirations.

NUN SAYS BAXTER DETAINEES IN QUEENSLAND FOR PSYCHIATRIC CARE: Adelaide's Glenside Psychiatric Hospital is refusing to treat four Baxter detainees, resulting in their transfer to Queensland away, from their support networks, according to a Catholic sister working with refugees.

BENEDICT CALLS FOR GLOBALISATION OF SOLIDARITY: Emphasising that "the vast problem of poverty and marginalisation is an urgent challenge", Pope Benedict called on political leaders to weave "a network of understanding and solidarity among peoples."

CATHOLIC STUDENTS NOT IMPRESSED BY BIG BROTHER: A group of Catholic students slammed the Ten television Network's failure to axe the controversial Big Brother reality-TV program as a "cop out to youth" and called for a national debate on young people and sex.

ABORIGINAL WOMEN WANT CHILD PROTECTION, SAYS JOSEPHITE NUN: Maintaining the mother-child bond is an essential part of ensuring protection for aboriginal children, according to Josephite Sr Joan Healy.

NEW WELFARE-TO-WORK RULES SPELL DISASTER: CATHOLIC SOCIAL SERVICES: The new welfare-to-work rules, which came into effect at the weekend, could have disastrous consequences, according to Catholic Social Services.

- courtesy Church Resources' CathNews, stories in detail at <http://www.cathnews.com/news/607>

AUGUST SOCIAL JUSTICE CALENDAR

AUGUST 4 NATIONAL ABORIGINAL & ISLANDER CHILDREN'S DAY
National Aboriginal and Islander Children's Day is an annual event celebrated on August 4th each year since 1988. The aim of NAICD is to demonstrate how important children are to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. Through focussing on a different theme each year NAICD draws attention to the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and major issues being pursued on their behalf.

AUGUST 9 INTERNATIONAL DAY OF THE WORLD'S INDIGENOUS PEOPLE

AUSTRALIAN ABORIGINAL LAW

Aboriginal law had existed in Australia for more than 40,000 years when the British arrived. This law was passed down from generation to generation under the guidance of the elders. It dealt with the land, which is sacred in Australian Aboriginal belief, and the people's relationships with each other. Although Aboriginal people did not mine or farm the land, they took their shelter, food and clothing from it. This meant that they needed to move around within a large district so that the plants and animals which they needed had time to regrow and multiply before they returned to that same place. Their beliefs and their stories

were full of messages about how the land must be respected and about how it was part of them, not something separate from them. Because of this way of life and these beliefs, no individual 'owned' land.

BRITISH LAW AND THE LAND

In British law, land is something which is owned by people and many believe that it should be used to produce as much as possible. The British believed that you could show that you owned the land by the fact that you farmed it. Because Aboriginal people did not have farms as the British did, the British thought that the land was not really being used and that no one really owned the land in Australia; that it was just as if it was uninhabited. From the point of view of the settlers, land was needed for farms. They believed that people could own land, livestock and property, that trespassing is against the law and that taking an animal owned by someone else is stealing.

These were two completely different ways of seeing the world. As the colonists began to develop the land conflicts soon arose between the original inhabitants and the new settlers. Many colonists took the law into their own hands, and numerous massacres that took place in colonial times.

AUGUST 16 WAVE HILL STATION

Wave Hill Station is located approximately 600km south of Darwin in the Northern Territory. From the late 19th century it was run by the British pastoral company, Vestey's. Vestey's employed the local Indigenous people, the Gurindji, to work on Wave Hill, but working conditions were intolerable and wages were inadequate when compared to those of non-Indigenous employees. In 1966 Vincent Lingiari, a member of the Gurindji who had worked at Wave Hill, and had recently returned from a period of hospitalisation in Darwin, led a walk-off of Indigenous employees of Wave Hill as a protest against the work and pay conditions.

While there had been complaints from Indigenous employees about conditions on Wave Hill over many years, including an inquiry during the 1930s that was critical of Vestey's employment practices, the walk-off had a focus that was aimed at a wider target than Vestey's. Before 1968 it was illegal to pay an Indigenous worker more than a specified amount in goods and money. In many cases, the government benefits for which Indigenous employees were eligible were paid into pastoral companies' accounts, rather than to the individuals.

The protesters established the Wattie Creek Camp and demanded the return of some of their traditional lands. So began the seven-year fight by the Gurindji people to obtain title to their land. The protest eventually led to the Commonwealth Land Rights Act (Northern Territory), 1976. This Act gave Indigenous Australians freehold title to traditional lands in the Northern Territory and, significantly, the power of veto over mining and development on those lands.

REFLECTION

As our stories are beginning to be heard and the new green shoots of the burnt tree are slowly breaking through, there is also a deep and humble responsibility to be observed.

"WE have to be worthy keepers of our New Dreaming, just as our Ancestral Dream Keepers were strong and trustworthy in their belief that the true spirit of the land came from the Great Spirit of all creation."

- Elizabeth Pike, Hope Built on the Dreaming, 2004, NATSIEC Prayer Diary

AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC SOCIAL JUSTICE COUNCIL Leo XIII House, 19 MacKenzie Street, PO Box 1615, North Sydney NSW 2059. Tel: (02) 9956 5811, Fax: (02) 9954 0056, Email: admin@acsjc.org.au 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.