



ACSJC BRIEFING

No. 80 - June 2007

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

If you cannot read the email version, go to: <http://www.socialjustice.catholic.org.au/briefing>

IN THIS ISSUE

- [From the Secretariat](#)
- [Current Issues](#)
- [Latest Publications](#)
- [June Notices](#)
- [May News Monitor](#)
- [June Social Justice Calendar](#)

FROM THE SECRETARIAT

Dear Friends

At this time of year, we have the opportunity to renew our efforts for national reconciliation and for unity among Christians. A range of significant events provide us with ways we can heal the wounds of the past and foster a shared future. A 10-day period of prayer and activity includes:

- National Reconciliation Week (27 May to 3 June – visit: <http://www.reconciliation.org.au/i-cms.jsp?page=97>)
- National Sorry Day, this year marking the 10th anniversary of the landmark report *Bringing Them Home*, on the separation of Indigenous children from their families (26 May – visit: <http://www.nsd.org.au/>).
- The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity and Prayer for Reconciliation (20 May to 3 June – visit: <http://www.ncca.org.au/>).

Anniversary of the referendum

We have just celebrated the 40th anniversary of the 1967 referendum, which gave Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people equal rights under the Constitution. Unlike any other referendum in terms of results, over 90 per cent of Australians voted 'yes' to include the original inhabitants of this land in the national census and to give Government powers to make laws with particular regard for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. No longer were the Indigenous peoples regarded officially as simply being part of Australia's 'flora and fauna' – a situation that seems abhorrent to us today.

That result was a momentous one. It was the culmination of many individuals and communities, Indigenous and non-Indigenous, working together over a long period for change. Just as many people have been working in solidarity since that time to advance the process of national reconciliation.

Over the past 40 years there have been significant achievements in terms of native title, the provision of specific programs and services, self-determination, the acknowledgement of past wrongs endured by individuals and communities, and the fostering of respect for traditional culture, identity and spirituality. Like the referendum result itself, these achievements have had a practical as well as symbolic significance in the reconciliation sought for Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians. But much more needs to be done.

Australians know that much more needs to be done – even if they are only now becoming more aware of the conditions of inequity and injustice endured by Indigenous citizens.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people fare much worse than the community as a whole on almost every social and economic indicator. The challenges are stark and there is no shortage of reports and studies confirming this. Here are just a few that we can access and disseminate among our networks throughout Australia:

- Statistics provided by Reconciliation Australia: <http://www.reconciliation.org.au/i-cms.jsp?page=310>
- 'Indigenous Health in Australia' by the Fred Hollows Foundation: <http://www.hollows.org/content/TextOnly.aspx?s=146>
- Australian Medical Association 2007 Report Card, 'Institutionalised Inequity. Not Just a matter of money': <http://www.ama.com.au/web.nsf/doc/WEEN-73EYGV>
- 'Social Justice Report 2005' from the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner of the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission: http://www.hreoc.gov.au/social_justice/sjreport05/index.html
- Productivity Commission Report, 'Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage – Key Indicators 2005': <http://www.pc.gov.au/gsp/reports/indigenous/keyindicators2005/index.html>

- The National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Ecumenical Commission's 'Make Indigenous Poverty History' campaign:
http://www.ncca.org.au/natsiec/indigenous_poverty/MIPH_overview
- Policy Briefing 'Close the Gap' by Oxfam Australia:
<http://www.oxfam.org.au/campaigns/indigenous/reports.html>

The reality of life for our Indigenous sisters and brothers when compared with other Australians is epitomised in the 17 year gap in life expectancy. That 17 year gap among Australians is greater than the gap between our life expectancy and that of countries such as Pakistan – countries we often refer to as third world nations. To mark the 40th anniversary we are invited to do something about closing this gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians. The Oxfam campaign listed above suggests very practical steps we can take in raising this important issue with our political leaders.

The work for National Reconciliation goes on

The 40th anniversary provides a great opportunity to review the progress towards national reconciliation, to identify where Australia has not responded adequately or where there have been disappointments and backward steps, and to reinvigorate our commitment.

Confirming what the reports listed above tell us, but from personal experience, are the stories of community leaders who struggled for the rights of their people for years prior to the 1967 referendum.

In her address to the Sydney Institute on 22 May, Ms Jackie Huggins AM, Co-Chair of Reconciliation Australia, spoke of the impact of the result and of the many people working for change.

“We children didn’t quite fathom the significance of what happened on 27 May 1967. I do remember the shrieks of joy after the results were announced, laughter and a mass of tears.

“It’s a time that also gave me my earliest memories of the struggle that Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people have fought together, recognising that if a group of us is not free in this country, nor are the rest of us.”

Jackie Huggins says reconciliation must always encompass recognition, justice and healing.

“Recognition that as the First Peoples of this country, we have existed here over 70,000 years and are one of the oldest, surviving cultures on the planet. That we have maintained and cared for land and for people.

“Justice is about overcoming all the social disadvantages that can be summed up in one stunning statistic which says our children can expect to die on average 17 years earlier than the children of other Australians. I have absolutely no doubt that we can only meet this enormous challenge if we work together as Indigenous and non-Indigenous people who care about it. That we work together with trust and with respect.

“Healing because that is really our fundamental goal as human beings. And we will only achieve it in this country if we achieve reconciliation. And it ain’t gonna happen if the spiritual side of reconciliation gets neglected. You can have so called practical reconciliation where you give a Blackfella a house, a car or a job but if the symbolic is not addressed then we will never achieve Reconciliation in this country. By the symbolic, I mean all the many things that have to do with building a respectful relationship.”

She expresses optimism that more non-Indigenous Australians are getting involved in reconciliation, not just because they feel that something ‘should’ be done about Indigenous disadvantage, but also because something ‘can’ be done about it. (The full speech can be downloaded at: <http://www.reconciliation.org.au/i-cms.jsp?page=110>)

It is a source of great encouragement that someone who has been engaged in this cause over many years believes that there is once more a mood for national reconciliation in Australia."

How can we respond to the challenges together?

This optimism challenges us to rise above the often negative or divisive portrayals of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in the media or underpinning political debate.

Rarely a week goes by without the media or politicians highlighting issues to do with Indigenous health and education, community leadership, native title claims, crime and incarceration, stolen wages, failing welfare, calls for reparation and challenges to community life, cultural identity and reputation. What is our response when these critical issues are cast into the spotlight, often in a sensationalised fashion? It can be so easy for issues to be regarded as having ‘nothing to do with me’ or for the issues and the individuals and communities themselves to be seen as simply a ‘problem to be solved’.

But remember Jackie Huggins’s reflection on the community feeling behind the ’67 referendum: “if a group of us is not free in this country, nor are the rest of us.”

The long period of economic growth and prosperity Australia has enjoyed only heightens the need for all people to stand in solidarity to address the challenges together. The national prosperity means that practical initiatives (like an additional \$1.8 billion over four years to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander primary health, called for by the AMA) are easily affordable and would be money well spent.

These practical initiatives are very important. But standing together, recognising the importance of culture, respect for traditions, acknowledging past wrongs and ensuring decision making processes are inclusive is also important. Reconciliation is not just about ‘what we do’ but ‘how we do it’ together.

All of us have a role to play in addressing with compassion and determination the deep underlying causes of the challenges facing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

As Christians we are called to truly share with our Indigenous sisters and brothers in the life of the Church. How do we support Indigenous people in our local church? Do we acknowledge and draw upon the gifts of Indigenous culture in the worshipping community and other Church activities?

Respecting and sharing the gifts of culture and tradition

Last September, the Catholic Bishops received the kind invitation of Mrs Elsie Heiss, Coordinator of Aboriginal Catholic Ministry in Sydney, to launch the 2006 Social Justice Sunday Statement, *The Heart of Our Country*, at Reconciliation Church at La Perouse in the Archdiocese of Sydney.

Launching the Statement, Mr Tom Calma, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner said, “We are here today because we see the importance of justice and we are prepared to take action to ensure that there is true social justice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, now and into the future. Importantly, *we sometimes have to look to the past to assist us with the present and the future.*” (refer: <http://www.acsjc.org.au/Launch-Addresses.shtml>)

Dr Brian McCoy SJ added to Tom Calma’s words when he spoke of a Kukatja desert saying: ‘*marlakarti nyawa, kurranyu nyinama*’ (‘look back if you want to go forward’). Fr McCoy said that this saying reveals a valuable Indigenous insight of relevance to the process of reconciliation. “To be human is to be intimately connected with one’s past. *Marlakarti nyawa* means more than ‘let’s have a quick look, see what happened in the past and then move on’, as some of our political and community leaders sometimes propose. It means to look within and deeply engage our past. It is to allow the meaning of what is past to be revealed within our present. It is to recognise how our past has shaped and moulded us, and how it has made us the people we are today. Only then, when we honestly and deeply know how our past continues to live within the present, can we *kurranyu nyinama*. Only then, can we safely, honestly and purposefully move forward.”

This wisdom can also be received as an important gift helping us deal with the significant issues of life when the fast pace of modern society often has the effect of limiting us to the ‘here and now’ or can distract us through consumerism with the false offer of a ‘quick fix’ to the challenges of life.

The Bishops’ Statement also speaks of *dadirri*, a quality Miriam-Rose Ungunmerr, from the Daly River in the Northern Territory describes as “inner, deep listening and quiet, still awareness”. She says this is a special quality of her people and “perhaps the greatest gift we can give to our fellow Australians”.

The Catholic Bishops of Australia have suggested that “the acceptance of this gift from our Indigenous sisters and brothers will assist us as a Church and as a nation to recover that part of our Christian tradition that we call ‘contemplative’ and ‘reflective’. This may be the antidote we desperately need to overcome our culture of ‘busyness’.”

The Bishops ask, “are we prepared to receive these gifts with respect and joy? They have the potential to strengthen the culture of both the giver and the receiver.”

As Jackie Huggins said of the process of National Reconciliation: “it ain’t gonna happen if the spiritual side of reconciliation gets neglected.”

In this context, the Bishops’ Statement also emphasises the vital work of Aboriginal Catholic Ministries and Councils in dioceses around Australia; ministering to the needs of Indigenous Catholics and building the bridges of understanding and mutual respect between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people. The establishment of the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Catholic Council in 1989 is celebrated, as is its formal recognition by the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference since 1992.

Building bridges of understanding and solidarity

The Bishops have invited us, in our parish communities and many other aspects of Church life, to build the bridges of understanding and solidarity.

Among the suggestions are:

- providing encouragement, support and resources to keep strong the elements of culture and history that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people wish to preserve
- acknowledging the local Indigenous people who cared for the land on which our churches and other buildings stand, for example, with a plaque or an acknowledgement at the beginning of meetings
- celebrating or observing important occasions like Aboriginal Sunday, NAIDOC Week and the Week of Prayer for Reconciliation
- where a parish has no Indigenous members, making links with Indigenous people and appropriately acknowledging Indigenous culture
- creating a place where open and respectful dialogue can take place with our Indigenous brothers and sisters.

There are many other suggestions in the 2006 Social Justice Sunday Statement, which can be downloaded at:

http://www.acsjc.org.au/CONTENT/publications/documentation/documentation_sjs01.html

On Pentecost Sunday, Archbishop Philip Wilson, President of the Australian Catholic Bishops’ Conference, issued a Pastoral Letter on the 40th anniversary of the 1967 referendum.

On the day when we celebrate the gift of the Holy Spirit and mark the beginning of the Church’s mission to share a renewed life with all humanity, Archbishop Wilson said it was significant that we are also remembering the landmark referendum which was “a granting of recognition – too long denied – of the place of Indigenous Australians in the Commonwealth of Australia” and “rightly seen as a turning point in our national history”.

While recognising the great achievements of the past 40 years, the Archbishop said, “We cannot gloss over the reality of continuing injustices, the stark social and economic inequalities, and also the lost opportunities to progress the cause of reconciliation. In a land of plenty, and after a sustained period of strong economic growth, statistics relating to Indigenous health, life expectancy, infant mortality, income and incarceration paint a picture of serious and persistent disadvantage.”

Archbishop Wilson continued, “Pope Benedict XVI has recently reminded us that Christians are called to ‘*assume their specific political and social responsibilities,*’ to address the scandal of injustice and inequality, and ‘*to work courageously within our world to bring about that renewal of relationships which has its inexhaustible source in God’s gift.*”

The Pastoral Letter can be accessed at:

<http://www.acbc.catholic.org.au/bishops/confpres/20070524169.htm>

In addition to the information and web links provided above, there are other resources listed in this briefing that have been produced by Church agencies and community groups.

May the Holy Spirit, who primed the disciples for the ministry of spreading the Good News, continue to inspire each one of us to work with our Indigenous sisters and brother to address the inequities that remain in this land of plenty.

John Ferguson
National Executive Officer

CURRENT ISSUES/RESOURCES

WEBSITE – NATSICC

The National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Catholic Council promotes and celebrates the cultural identity of Indigenous peoples across the nation by living and expressing in all its endeavours the spirituality of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Catholic peoples – “Through this expression and recognition of our cultural identity we will find our rightful place within the Catholic Church in Australia.” The NATSICC website has information on its state and territory representatives, resources, past and future events and NATSICC reference groups. (refer: <http://www.natsicc.org.au/>)

RECONCILIATION KIT – ‘ONE PEOPLE, ONE PLACE, ONE FUTURE: BREAKING THE SILENCE’

The Brisbane Archdiocesan Journey of Healing and Reconciliation working group has produced a Reconciliation Kit for use in churches, schools and community groups. The resource includes background information, homily notes, prayer and liturgy resources, key issues on reconciliation, timelines, personal accounts and an acknowledgement protocol. In his foreword to the Kit, Bishop Joseph Oudeman says, “Having recommitted ourselves to the process of reconciliation in our land and having reflected on what the [2006] Social Justice Statement identified as the key challenges of John Paul II’s [1986] message, it is important that we make every effort to take action to advance the cause of reconciliation during the coming year.” The Reconciliation Kit can be downloaded at: <http://www.uq.net.au/cjpc/2007kitmay.pdf>

CAMPAIGN – ‘MAKE INDIGENOUS POVERTY HISTORY’

The Make Indigenous Poverty History Campaign continues in 2007 with 40 Days of Action for 40 Years of Inaction. To see how you can get involved in this campaign of the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Ecumenical Commission and to obtain a wide range of resources go to <http://www.ncca.org.au/natsiec/indigenouspoverty>

HREOC PUBLICATION – ‘BRINGING THEM HOME’

As part of the 10th anniversary of the tabling of the ‘Bringing Them Home’ report on May 26, the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission is producing a magazine style publication of stories, poems and photographs from Indigenous people across Australia who were removed from their families. HREOC is interested in receiving written and artistic submissions from Indigenous people that outline the experiences of people removed from their families. For more information visit: <http://www.humanrights.gov.au/bth/>

RESOURCES – NATIONAL RECONCILIATION WEEK

The theme for 2007 is ‘Their Spirit Still Shines’. National Reconciliation Week offers people across Australia the opportunity to focus on reconciliation, to hear about the culture and history of Australia’s Indigenous people, and to explore new and better ways of meeting challenges in our communities. National Reconciliation Week is a time for us to renew our commitment to reconciliation and to think about how we can help turn around the continuing disadvantage experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians. Visit the Reconciliation website for more info and resources: <http://www.reconciliation.org.au/i-cms.isp?page=97>

ARTICLE – ‘PROCHOICE AMNESTY MEANS NO CHOICE FOR MEMBERS’

Amnesty International's board has called for abortion to be decriminalised globally. The human rights organisation has thus abandoned its long-held ‘neutral’ policy that states: ‘Amnesty International takes no position on whether or not women have a right to choose to terminate unwanted pregnancies; there is no generally accepted right to abortion in international human rights law.’ In his article in Jesuit Publications’ *Eureka Street*, Chris Middleton SJ, a supporter of Amnesty for many years, considers the implications of this decision for the human rights organisation on both global and national levels as well as the dilemmas it raises for church organisations supporting Amnesty campaigns. (refer: <http://www.eurekastreet.com.au/article.aspx?aeid=2836>)

RESOURCES – WEEK OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY

The resources for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity have their origin in the experience of Christian communities in the South African region of Umlazi, near Durban, a region deeply affected by unemployment and poverty, but most of all by HIV/AIDS. Adapted for use in Australia, these resources will enable the churches to worship together locally, to witness to their unity in Christ, to pray for the greater visible expression of that unity, and to explore options to fulfil that prayer, such as those found in the NCCA Covenanting document. (refer: http://www.ncca.org.au/departments/faith_and_unity/weekofprayer)

BOOK – ‘A PATH IS MADE BY WALKING IT’

Sr Patricia Pak Poy RSM is the editor of this work reflecting on the Australian network to ban landmines. The book is published by David Lovell Publishing. Contributors to the book include Alexander Downer, Cornelio Sommaruga, David Atwood, Judith Blyth, Ian Buckley, Geoffrey Cameron, Ada Cheung, Judith Gardam, Janette Gray, Andrew Hamilton, David Johnson, Michael Kelly, William Maley, Katharine Massam, Patricia Pak Poy, Peter Phillips, Paul Power, John Rodsted, John Scott-Murphy, Eric Sidoti, Jody Williams, Mark Zirnsak. For contact information visit: <http://australia.icbl.org/aboutus.htm>

KEYNOTE ADDRESSES ON INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS

Australia’s workplace relations system was the focus of a forum on the Feast of St Joseph the Worker, May 1, hosted by the Brisbane Archdiocesan Justice and Peace Commission and the Queensland Religious Institutes Social Action Office. Keynote addresses were delivered by Dr Tim Battin of the University of New England, Joe de Bruyn of the Shop Distributive and Allied Employees Association and Patrick McKendry of the National Retail Association. Information on the forum and copies of the addresses are available at: <http://www.uq.net.au/cjpc/>

STUDY/ACTION KIT FOR REFUGEE WEEK

The Refugee Council of Australia has produced an action kit for Refugee Week, which will be observed 17–23 June. The kit explores the circumstances of asylum seekers travelling to Australia and includes a guide to working ethically and responsibly with refugees and asylum seekers. There are suggested activities for the school room, workplace and for public debate. The resource can be accessed at: <http://www.faithdoingjustice.com.au/resources/too-for-act.php>

NATIONAL INITIATIVE – ‘AUSTRALIA FAIR’

In the lead-up to Australia Day 2007, a new national initiative from the Australian Council Of Social Service has highlighted the overwhelming support by Australians of ‘a fair go for all’ and called on Australians to encourage decision makers to make this a reality. *Australia Fair* provides the tools to enable people to get involved in creating a fair go for all Australians. Typing in a postcode on the site takes individuals to links to email their local Member of Parliament, write to their local newspaper editor, start or join a local discussion group or call local talkback radio stations. For more information visit: <http://www.australiafair.org.au/public/Default.aspx>

GRADUATE CERTIFICATE/GRADUATE DIPLOMA IN HUMAN RIGHTS

These unique postgraduate courses offer an interdisciplinary approach to the study of human rights, giving students an understanding of the legal framework that impacts on human rights and social justice issues. They cover a wide range of topics, including terrorism, the rights of indigenous peoples in the South Pacific and the philosophy of human rights. There are also opportunities to undertake research in areas of special interest or in an applied research programme. Expert teachers include Prof. Frank Brennan SJ AO and Prof. Raimond Gaita. Courses start on 23 July 2007 and will be taught in intensive mode over four Saturdays at our North Sydney campus. For further information, email Michael Dean at ils@acu.edu.au or see the website, <http://www.ils.acu.edu.au>.

GET-UP! COMPETITION – ‘OZ IN 30 SECONDS’

As the election draws close Australians will be bombarded with over 100 million dollars in advertising from political parties. Concerned that political ads may present an overly narrow view of Australian life and with a good deal of spin, GetUp! is calling on all people with digital video cameras and creative flair to create, rate and air television ads that promote a better, fairer, more progressive Australia. To find out more about this competition, visit: <http://www.ozin30seconds.org/>

LATEST PUBLICATIONS

(Orders: phone (02) 9956 5811 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 2007

The Pastoral Letter for the Feast of St Joseph the Worker, entitled “Keeping Time – Australian families and the culture of overwork”, considers the pressures experienced by a growing number of workers trying to juggle the demands of the jobs with the needs of their families. Available for download in regular and ‘three-column’ versions at:

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

DISCUSSION GUIDE – WORLD DAY OF PEACE MESSAGE 2007

On 1 January, the Holy Father delivered his World Day of Peace message. The theme of his message is *The Human Person, The Heart 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: CHOICE FOR WHOM? A DISCUSSION OF THE 2005 INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS LAWS

Catholic Social Justice Series No 58. At a time when Australia’s industrial relations laws are undergoing radical change, Dr Tim Battin offers an analysis of the theory underpinning the 2005 industrial relations legislation, and measures that rationale against the precepts of Catholic social teaching. (\$6.60 a copy, plus postage – postage rates listed below)

(\$6.60 a copy, plus postage. Postage rates for Catholic Social Justice Series Papers: 1 copy \$1; 2-3 copies \$1.45; 4-5 copies \$2.45)

MAY NOTICES

30 APRIL – 26 AUGUST. EXHIBITION & TALKS, ‘BROKEN LINKS: THE STOLEN GENERATIONS IN QUEENSLAND’ (QLD). A moving exhibition marking the 10th anniversary of the ‘Bringing them home’ Report. The history of Indigenous child removal is portrayed through the records and documents held in Queensland collecting institutions and the personal stories of five Aboriginal Queenslanders. Hear their stories and discover more about the Stolen Generations in a series of free talks including: Dr Pamela Croft at 12.30 – 1.00pm 22 June; Dr Mark Copland at 12.30 – 1.30pm 18 July, 12.30pm-1.30pm; Sharon Kinchela at 12.30 – 1.00pm 3 Aug. All talks are held in the Philip Bacon Heritage Gallery, level 4, State Library of Queensland, Stanley Place, South Bank. Bookings are free. (refer: <http://www.slq.qld.gov.au/whats-on/exhibit/cur#links>)

30 MAY. SEMINAR, ‘RIGHTS IN RESETTLEMENT’ (VIC). The Refugee Health Research Centre, Latrobe University together with Foundation House present a seminar on ‘Rights in Resettlement: Refugees Perspectives on Expectations and Realities’ by Dr Apollo Nsubuga-Kyobe. 5.30pm to 6.30pm, Foundation House, 6 Gardiner Street, Brunswick, Melbourne. For more info call (03) 9479 5874 (refer: <http://www.refugeecouncil.org.au/newsevents/index.html>)

31 MAY. PUBLIC EVENT, ‘TRUTH VS. SPIN’ (VIC). Part of a new series of events ‘Re-forging Australia’s Future’ series is hosted by Social Policy Connections – an independent, ecumenical organisation promoting debate on social issues from an ethical perspective. Speakers include Prof. Rob Watts of the School of Global Studies Social Sciences and Planning of RMIT and Matthew Ricketson, media and communications editor with The Age. Dialogue and discussion will be facilitated by Rev. Dr. Stephen Ames, Anglican priest and Canon of St.Paul’s Cathedral. Cost: \$15, or \$12 for members of Social Policy Connections, Pensioner or student concession \$10. 5.30pm for 6.00 – 7.30pm, Mercy Theatre, ACU National, Young St (entry from 115 Victoria Pde) Fitzroy. For bookings & inquiries call (03) 9428 0799 or 0432 991 085

1 JUNE. DEBATE, NATIONAL SECURITY VS HUMAN RIGHTS: WAS THE BALANCE RIGHT IN THE CASE OF DAVID HICKS? (NSW). A debate chaired by Leigh Sales, author of *Detainee 002* as part of the Sydney Writers’ Festival. Sydney Town Hall, 8pm-9.30pm. Bookings \$20/\$15 Phone 9250 1988. Further information at: http://www.swf.org.au/component/option,com_events/Itemid,141/

2–3 JUNE. YOUTH FORUM, ‘RECONCILIATION’ (NSW). During Reconciliation Week 2007 ReconciliACTION will be holding a National Youth Forum and Arts Showcase at the University of Technology, Sydney. The event will bring together Indigenous and non-Indigenous young people from across Australia to participate in discussions about reconciliation, to learn about Indigenous cultures, to develop their skills, and to be entertained! The Forum is part of a program of events being organised across the country to mark the 40th anniversary of the 1967 Referendum. Forum to be held at University of Technology, Sydney, Building 6 (Design, Architecture and Building Faculty) Harris Street (5 minutes from Central Station, off Broadway). Cost \$10 for waged (\$5 for students and those on low income). Lunch included. To register, or for more info contact 0403 977 213 or email sylvie@reconciliation.org.au. (refer: <http://www.reconciliation.org.au>)

3 JUNE. PEACE WALK, ‘INTERNATIONAL CHURCH ACTION FOR PEACE IN PALESTINE AND ISRAEL’ (ACT). On 3 June 2007, people in towns and cities around the world will walk and advocate for peace and justice in Palestine – Israel. The Canberra Peace Walk will recognise the shared humanity and human rights of all those who have suffered in this long-running conflict. The Walk will call for the end of Israeli occupation of Palestine and the beginning of a just and sustainable peace. The walk is being led by the Canberra Ecumenical Working Group on Palestine and Israel and is supported by the ACT Churches Council, Christian World Service, Canberra parishes and community groups. For more info go to <http://www.icappi.org.au> and click on Canberra Newsletter, under Latest News.

3 JUNE. PRAYER SERVICE, ‘INTERNATIONAL CHURCH ACTION FOR PEACE IN PALESTINE AND ISRAEL’ (NSW). To mark ICAPPI week in Sydney, the NSW Ecumenical Council, in co-operation with the Melkite Catholic Eparchy, will hold a service of prayer and reflection. People of all faiths and denominations are welcome. The service will be held at the Melkite Catholic Centre, 80 Waterloo Rd, Greenacre, at 2:30pm. Following this service, an olive tree will be planted in the grounds of the Melkite Church, as a symbol of the commitment of all those involved to work for a just peace in the Middle East. For more info call (02) 9299 2215. (refer: <http://www.icappi.org.au>)

5 JUNE. PUBLIC MEETING, ‘IRAQ – WHERE TO NOW?’ (NSW). The Marrickville Peace Group invites you to public meeting with the US Consul General, Stephen Smith, to discuss US foreign policy in the middle east. Dr. Alison Broinowski will discuss Australia's dependence on the US. Dr Stuart Rees of the Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies will chair the meeting. Entry is by gold coin donation. 7.30 - 8.30pm Marrickville Town Hall, Marrickville Road, Marrickville. For further info call 0415 734 137. (refer: <http://www.active.org.au/sydney/calendar/?display=zoom&event=4279>)

6 JUNE. PUBLIC MEETING, ‘PALESTINE: 40 YEARS OF OCCUPATION’ (NSW). The Coalition for Justice & Peace in Palestine is holding a public meeting to recognise that for 40 years Israel has defied world opinion and continued to occupy Palestinian land and denied Palestinians the basic freedoms of movement, housing, education, employment, security and peace. Speakers: Paul Lynch, Member for Liverpool; Randa Abdel-Fatteh, author & lawyer; Binad Al Ahmed, Palestinian-Australian teacher; Prof. John MacDonald, UWS & Birzeit University; Bishop Patrick Power, Auxillary Bishop of Canberra & Goulburn. 6.30pm, Jubilee Room NSW Parliament, Macquarie St. Sydney. RSVP by 1 June on events@coalitionforpalestine.org or 0432 917 474 (refer: <http://www.active.org.au/sydney/calendar/?display=zoom&event=4280>)

8–11 JUNE. FESTIVAL, ‘THE DREAMING’ (QLD). The Dreaming is a vibrant annual ceremony time along with the most comprehensive showcase of Indigenous arts from across the country and around the world. The three day and four night festival will have performing arts venues, Ceremony grounds, traditional healing, galleries, rituals, campfire story circles and a mass of stalls, workshop avenue and food outlets. Located in between the Brisbane Valley and Queensland's Sunshine Coast Hinterland, The Dreaming takes place in a rural valley surrounded by natural bushland. The festival is about an hour and a half drive from Brisbane, or 40 minutes from Caloundra. For more info visit:
<http://www.thedreamingfestival.com/>

9 JUNE, FORUM, ‘COMMON GOOD’ (NSW). The focus of the Winter Catholic Social Teaching forum for young adults is ‘the common good’. Speakers include: Ms Sandie Cornish of the Loyola Institute; Bishop Christopher Toohey of the Bishops Commission for Justice and Service; and the Hon. Tony Abbott MP. Event organised by the Justice and Peace, Marriage and Family, and Life Offices of the Archdiocese of Sydney. 11.30am – 4.30pm, St Mary's Cathedral College Hall. For further info contact (02) 9390 5283, (02) 9390 5368 or lifeoffice@sydney.catholic.org.au

12 JUNE. SEMINAR, ‘CLIMATE, FAITH, CHANGE’ (NSW). ‘Faiths waking up to climate changes’ is the first of a three part seminar presented by the Faith Ecology Network and sponsored by the Ethnic Communities’ Council of NSW and the Dept. of Environment and Climate Change. Dr Mark Diesendorf of the NSW Institute of Environmental Studies will speak and Geraldine Doogue will chair the session. Donation at the door. 7.00 – 9.00pm, Auburn Town Hall, 1 Susan St, Auburn. For more info call (02) 9352 8021

13 JUNE. SEMINAR, ‘PEACE, JUSTICE AND COMPASSION FOR THE WHOLE WORLD’ (ACT). Speakers Paul O'Callaghan, Executive Director of the Australian Council for International Development, will speak on ‘Social Justice - Australians as Global Citizens’ and Prof. John Langmore, President of the UN Association of Australia, will speak on the topic of ‘Impediments to Economic and Social Development’. Event chaired by Bishop George Browning. 7.30pm at St John's Church Hall, 43 Constitution Ave, Reid, Canberra. For more info call (02) 6257 1786 or 0416 376 499. (refer: www.ces.org.au)

13 JUNE – 18 JULY, LECTURE SERIES, ‘WHATEVER HAPPENED TO RECONCILIATION?’ (VIC). ACU National School of Philosophy public lectures to be held at the Christ Lecture Theatre on ACU National's Melbourne Campus (St Patrick's), will feature a different high-profile speaker each Wednesday evening for six weeks in June and July from 6.30 to 8.30pm. Free and open to the public, bookings not required. Dates are as follows: 13 June, Prof. Peter Sutton; 20 June, Prof. Mick Dodson; 27 June, Prof. Raimond Gaita; 4 July Prof. Paul Patton; 11 July, Prof. Frank Brennan; 18 July, Prof. Robert Manne. For more information contact jasmin.chen@acu.edu.au. (refer: http://www.acu.edu.au/acu_national/news_events_calendar/events)

15 JUNE. ADDRESS, ‘FINDING THE PROMISE OF MABO’ (QLD). Prof Larissa Behrendt will present the Mabo Oration 2007, ‘The Promise of Mabo: Law and Social Justice for the First Australians’. Event presented by the Anti-Discrimination Commission Queensland. A guest performance by singer/songwriter Kev Carmody. \$16.50 including all fees. 5.30 to 7.30 pm at the Playhouse, Brisbane. For bookings visit www.qtix.com.au (refer: www.adcq.qld.gov.au)

15 JUNE. SYMPOSIUM, 'THE FAIR GO FORUM' (NSW). Speakers at this symposium addressing current trends, thoughts and ideas about race, ethnicity and what it means to be Australian will include: Patrick Dodson, Peter Manning, Sev Ozdowski and Keysar Trad. Sessions will include: 'A Fair Go for All – What does it mean in 21st century Australia?'; 'Changing Images of the Australian Nation: Justice and the fair go principle'; 'Building Cohesive Communities'. Event sponsored by the Edmund Rice Centre, UTS Sydney, Islamic Friendship Association of Australia and Don Chipp Foundation. Cost: \$55, concession \$35. 9.00am – 5.00pm, UTS Haymarket Campus, Building 5, Large Lecture Room 1.11. For more info call (02) 9745 9700. Register online at: http://www.erc.org.au/index.php?module=announce&ANN_user_op=view&ANN_id=46

15 JUNE. MUSIC PERFORMANCE, 'SWOON IN JUNE' (QLD) Classical Music in romantic Candlelight for the Refugee Claimants Support Centre 7.30pm St Mary's Catholic Church, South Brisbane, \$ 20 or \$18.50 pre-paid. Alto Melissa McCabe, soprano/pianist Wendy Brown and flautist Katie O'Dea have formed a group called the Belles of St Mary's. Baritone Deon Payne will also perform. More information on 3392 0669, or email joalb@bigpond.net.au or web <http://www.unaa.org.au/praxis.php/category/view/4>

17–23 JUNE. REFUGEE WEEK, (ALL STATES). In 2007, Refugee Week will be celebrated from Sunday, June 17 to Saturday, June 23, to coincide with World Refugee Day (June 20) The Refugee Council of Australia is working with agencies across Australia to promote Refugee Week in 2007. This year's theme "The Voices of Young Refugees" gives us all a wonderful opportunity to explore, discuss and increase our understanding and awareness of what it means to be a young refugee. For events in your area visit <http://www.refugeecouncil.org.au/newsevents/refugeeweek.html>

18 JUNE. FORUM, 'AUSTRALIAN FAITHS: BUILDING COMMUNITY TOGETHER' (NSW). The forum organised by the Australian Partnership of Religious Organisations aims to facilitate communication and building of understanding about religions in Australia, identify opportunities for strengthening relationships between faith communities, develop strategies to deal with crises and help ensure social and religious harmony, provide recommendations that will inform policies and programs across government agencies and faith communities. Cost: \$160 (inc. GST). 8.30am – 5.00pm, Mercure Hotel Sydney, Airport, 20 Levey Street, Wolli Creek, Sydney. For program and registration details, visit: http://www.fecca.org.au/APRO_Forum.cfm

19 JUNE. SEMINAR, 'CLIMATE, FAITH, CHANGE' (NSW). 'Our Transport' is the second of a three part seminar presented by the Faith Ecology Network and sponsored by the Ethnic Communities' Council of NSW and the Dept. of Environment and Climate Change. Dr Chris Riedy of the UTS Institute of Sustainable Futures will speak and Cate Faerhmann of the Nature Conservation Council will chair the session. Donation at the door. 7.00 – 9.00pm, Auburn Town Hall, 1 Susan St, Auburn. For more info call (02) 9352 8021

19 JUNE – 21 AUGUST. MULTIFAITH TRAINING PROGRAM IN PASTORAL CARE (ACT). The Pastoral Care Board of the ACT in association with The Australian Centre for Christianity and Culture and The Canberra and Region Centre for Spiritual Care and Clinical Pastoral Education Inc. is running a 10 day program over 10 weeks. The course on pastoral care in a multifaith context includes certification for an introductory unit of Clinical Pastoral Education from the NSW College for CPE and certification for an introductory unit of

Multifaith Pastoral Care. The unit will be run on Tuesdays. All candidates for the course will need to be present on June 19th at 9.30am at The Pavilion, Australian Centre for Christianity and Culture, Blackall Street, Barton, ACT. For more info call (02) 6244 2261 or (02) 4473 7570.

20 JUNE. FORUM, 'GROWING PEACE IN BLACKTOWN' (NSW). Christian and Muslim speakers will discuss how their respective traditions and teachings promote peace. The forum aims to foster peace and understanding among all people. An initiative of the Columban Centres for Christian-Muslim Relations and Peace, Equality and Justice in partnership with Blacktown City Council and Blacktown Migrant Interagency. 7.00 – 9.00pm, Bowman Hall, Campbell St. Blacktown. Free event. For more info call (02) 9352 8021 or (02) 9839 6067.

24 JUNE. WORLD REFUGEE DAY EVENT (QLD). Cultural performances on stage, ethnic food stalls, fashion parades, sports tournaments (soccer, volleyball, races), live bands, circus performances, rides/jumping castles, art and craft stalls, refugee art exhibition, workshops. This event is being run by VoRTCS and St Vincent de Paul with Multicultural Affairs Queensland and Brisbane City Council at Annerley Soccer Club fields. For more information 0409 341 873 or worldrefugeeday@refugeetutoring.org.

25-26 JUNE. CONFERENCE, 'FIFTH NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON HUMAN RIGHTS AND MENTAL HEALTH' (VIC). A conference organised by S A V E – Australia Inc in association with Melbourne Catholic Migrant & Refugee Office. Knox Lecture Theatre, Cardinal Knox Centre, 383 Albert Street, East Melbourne, Expressions of Interest: director@save.org.au or by mail: PO Box 20622 World Square 2002. Details, 0411 485 442 or gemma.hogan@save.org.au or 0412 013 053 or alison.wilson@save.org.au

26 JUNE. SEMINAR, 'CLIMATE, FAITH, CHANGE' (NSW). 'Our Buildings' is the final in a three part seminar presented by the Faith Ecology Network and sponsored by the Ethnic Communities' Council of NSW and the Dept. of Environment and Climate Change. Dick Clarke of the Building Designers Association of NSW will speak and Silma Ihram, Islamic Education Consultant will chair the session. Donation at the door. 7.00 – 9.00pm, Auburn Town Hall, 1 Susan St, Auburn. For more info call (02) 9352 8021

26–28 JUNE. CONFERENCE, 'QUESTIONING COSMOPOLITANISM' (VIC). The second biennial conference of the International Global Ethics Association will consider the part we all have to play in addressing problems of global governance, management of the environment, maintenance of peace, equitable global distribution of social goods and resources, humanitarian assistance, intercultural tolerance and understanding, and the protection of human dignity around the world. Every individual in advanced industrial societies is not only a citizen of their state but, in a sense, also of the world. Speakers include Prof. Jiwei Ci of the University of Hong Kong, Prof. Nigel Dower of the University of Aberdeen, Prof. Carol Gould of Temple University in Philadelphia, Prof. Andrew Linklater of the University of Wales, and Prof. Thomas Pogge of the Australian National University. Conference venue: Hotel Ibis, 15 Therry St, Melbourne. For further info call (03) 9244 3973 or visit <http://www.deakin.edu.au/arts/icg/igeao8conf/index.php>

28 JUNE. FILM SCREENING, 'KANYINI' (NSW). As part of the annual Guringai Festival celebrating Aboriginal Culture and Heritage in Northern Sydney, Pittwater Council is hosting a film screening of 'Kanyini'. Avalon RSL, 6.30pm. Bookings: 9970 1169. Further information:

http://www.pittwater.nsw.gov.au/community/aboriginal_and_torres_strait_islanders/guringai_festival

30 JUNE. FUNDRAISER EVENT, 'JRS WINTER SOLSICE BALL' (NSW). The Jesuit Refugee Service is holding its Winter Solstice Ball at Darling Harbour in Sydney to help fund its important work.. For further info contact (02) 9356 3888 or dstreet@nine.com.au (refer: <http://www.faithdoingjustice.com.au/whatson.php>)

2–6 JULY. IMMERSION PROGRAM, 'PERTH AND POVERTY' (WA). The Edmund Rice Centre for Social Justice in Fremantle is running a poverty immersion is an invitation to make sense of Australian poverty, and to walk a mile 'in their shoes'. Participants will explore the paradox of poverty in rich countries. Why and how can this happen? What does it look like, especially through the eyes of the poor? Whose problem; whose responsibility; what might appropriate responses begin to look like? For program information and to make a booking, contact (08) 9432 2400, or ercdeputy@powerdsl.com.au Applications close on 18 June (refer: <http://www.ercfremantle.org>)

9–12 JULY. INDIGENOUS THEOLOGY CONFERENCE, 'CHRIST AND CULTURE' (QLD). A national Indigenous theology and spirituality conference organised by the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Ecumenical Commission of the NCCA. The conference program will seek to celebrate and encourage further development of Australian Indigenous theology and spirituality. A highlight of the conference will be the keynote addresses and workshops by a number of leading Indigenous Christian thinkers. Together we will experience a wide range of stimulating workshops and other activities. The Conference will be held at the Australis Noosa Lakes, Noosaville, Queensland. Registration is now open. Visit <http://www.ncca.org.au/natsiec/conference2007> for details.

11–13 JULY. CONFERENCE, 'BUILDING COMMUNITY CAPACITY AND SOCIAL RESILIENCE' (NSW). The theme for the 2007 conference is 'Social Policy through the Life Course: Building Community Capacity and Social Resilience'. This theme encapsulates two interrelated issues in social policy. The first concerns life-course transitions, including the diverse challenges and opportunities which people experience within their age, gender, social, economic and cultural contexts. The second focuses on identifying the interconnections between social investment policies, services and programs which build both community capacity and social resilience for individuals situated within their social networks. University of New South Wales. For more information contact (02) 9385 7802 or aspc2007@unsw.edu.au or visit <http://www.sprc.unsw.edu.au/ASPC2007/index.htm>

MAY NEWS MONITOR

Vatican goes solar

It was announced that the Vatican's Paul VI Centre is to get a green makeover with the installation of a giant rooftop garden of solar panels that will power all of the building's heating, cooling and lighting needs year-round.

Mercies, Joeys issue challenge on Indigenous progress

Questioning what has been achieved since the 1967 referendum relating to Indigenous Australians, leaders of the Mercy and Josephite congregations challenged Australia to ensure that Aboriginal people enjoy "a standard of living commensurate with citizenship in a developed country".

ACU a leader in "golden age" employment

The Australian Catholic University was described as one of a number of major employers that woken up to the potential of older workers, according to a Swinburne University academic.

1967 Aboriginal referendum hopes dashed

After the 1967 Federal referendum that recognised Australia's Aborigines as citizens, indigenous people "expected good things to follow, but they didn't", a Brisbane Murri leader said.

National strategy needed to fight child poverty

With child poverty in Australia now at a level of 14.9 per cent, Australia needs a national anti-poverty strategy, Vinnies CEO said.

"Five minutes to midnight" for Amazon, bishop warns

German-born Bishop Erwin Krautler of Xingu in Brazil's Amazon basin warned that unchecked forest clearing threatens to turn the region into "a huge sugar cane field" for ethanol production.

Green pope said save Amazon

Addressing 40,000 young people in Brazil, Pope Benedict called for "greater commitment" to fighting environmental devastation in the Amazon basin that threatens indigenous peoples in the region.

Caritas welcomes budget aid increase

Catholic reactions to the Federal Budget continued with Caritas Australia welcoming an increase in overseas aid programs. However Vinnies said that the budget fails to address the needs of "rent-poor" Australians.

Bishops back Zimbabwe cricket boycott

Development agency Caritas yesterday joined the nation's Catholic bishops in a call to Cricket Australia to cancel this year's tour of Zimbabwe.

LA church to provide sanctuary for illegal immigrants

Our Lady Queen of Angels Church in Los Angeles joined a Hollywood Lutheran Church in announcing that they will offer sanctuary to undocumented immigrants under threat of deportation.

Budget focus on disadvantaged education welcomed

National Catholic Education Commission chair, Msgr Tom Doyle, welcomed Treasurer Peter Costello's budget focus on the needs of the most disadvantaged students and commended the doubling of English language tuition assistance.

Budget should be statement of values: Vinnies chief

The federal budget should be a statement of values for Australia, according to St Vincent de Paul Society chief Dr John Falzon in a statement made beforehand. He said the budget should also alleviate housing stress and ensure that climate change costs are shared equitably.

Benedict identifies environment as key challenge

Speaking to the Pontifical Academy of Social Sciences, Pope Benedict identified the environment as well as respect for human dignity and recognition of spiritual values as three major challenges for humanity today.

Indonesian church goes organic

Nuns, priests and a seminarian joined a group of Catholic farmers in southern Java, Indonesia, to promote organic food crops and assist the farmers to commercialise their products.

Church leaders challenge G8 on Africa

British Cardinal Cormac Murphy-O'Connor and an international group of bishops challenged Group of Eight leaders to redouble their aid efforts for Africa.

Climate change sceptics melt under spotlight, Columban priest reports

Australian Columban ecologist Fr Charles Rue, who was one of 80 invitees to a Vatican climate change conference, said that sceptics shot themselves in the foot during the event with "their litany of objections" and the "absurdity" of their positions.

- courtesy Church Resources' CathNews, stories in detail at <http://www.cathnews.com/news/705>

JUNE SOCIAL JUSTICE CALENDAR

3 SUN Trinity Sunday (Solemnity); Death of Pope John XXIII, 1963; High Court Decision in Mabo Case, 1992; Catholic and Anglican Martyrs of Uganda, 1886; Day of Prayer for Catholic and Anglican Reconciliation

4 MON International Day of Innocent Children Victims of Aggression; Tiananmen Square Massacre, 1989; Day of Social Communications

5 TUE World Environment Day - Theme: Climate Change

10 SUN Corpus Christi – The Body and Blood of Christ (Solemnity); Myall Creek Massacre, 1838; Alcoholics Anonymous established in New York, 1935

11 MON Assent for Racial Discrimination Act, 1975: Government ratified; International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination; Neville Bonner became the first Aboriginal Australian to hold a seat in Federal Parliament, 1971

12 TUE World Day Against Child Labour; Aboriginal Flag first flown in Adelaide, 1971; Barunga Statement presented to P.M. Hawke by Aboriginal leaders, 1988 – call for self-management, land rights, land compensation, respect for Aboriginal identity, an end to discrimination and the granting of full civil, economic, social and cultural rights for Indigenous Australians

15 FRI The Sacred Heart of Jesus (Solemnity)

16 SAT International Day of the African Child

17 SUN 11th Sunday in Ordinary Time; World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought

19 TUE Equal pay for women in Australia, 1969

20 WED UN World Refugee Day

22 FRI Destruction of the Berlin Wall, 1989

23 SAT UN Public Service Day

24 SUN Birth of John the Baptist (Solemnity)

26 TUE International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Drug Trafficking; International Day in Support of Victims of Torture

29 FRI Peter and Paul, Apostles (Solemnity)

30 SAT Closure of ATSI Regional Councils, 2005; Introduction of unemployment benefits in Australia, 1945

Notes on these 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, or call 02 9956 5811)

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.