



No. 85 – November 2007

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

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

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FROM THE SECRETARIAT

Dear Friends,

The last few months have produced some interesting and sometimes troubling research on life in Australia. For this month's briefing, I would like to bring you two important examples.

THE AUSTRALIA FAIR REPORT: UPDATE ON THOSE MISSING OUT

Although we hear every day that Australia is becoming richer and more prosperous, it may come as a shock to hear that the proportion of those living in poverty is increasing.

Research from the Social Policy Research Centre at the University of New South Wales showed that in 2004, 10% of people in Australia were living below the poverty line - that is, they were living on less than 50% of median disposable household income (the standard used by the OECD).

By 2006, that proportion had risen to 11.1% of the population, or 2,210,000 people, including 412,000 children.

This information comes from a new report released by *Australia Fair* at the end of national Anti-poverty. The report is the initiative of a number of organisations and individuals who are committed to fairness in Australian society. The report is titled *Australia Fair: Update on those missing out*.

The report also shows that poverty rates have been rising in each of the years 1994, 1999, 2004 and 2006.

What does this mean? To take one example: in 2006, a single pensioner needed an additional \$37 a week to bring herself or himself over this poverty line. Bear in mind, too, that this OECD standard of poverty is the most stringent used in international research. In the UK, Ireland and the rest of Europe, the poverty line is considered to be 60% of median household income. By that standard, a single pensioner in Australia in 2006 fell \$93 short of the poverty line each week.

The Australia Fair document also identifies groups most likely to be affected by poverty. Thus, 44.7% of unemployed households were below the poverty line that is used, as were 46.9% of single adults over 65 years, 40.7% of households whose main income is social security and 16.4% of lone parent families.

The report also shows that there are major differences between poverty levels in capital cities and the rest of each State. Poverty is generally significantly higher outside capital cities.

You can download this report [here](#).

RESEARCH ON THE EFFECTS OF THE WORKCHOICES LEGISLATION

In May this year, the Chairman of the ACSJC, Bishop Christopher Saunders, issued a Pastoral Letter titled *Keeping Time - Australian families and the culture of overwork* in which he called for the regular release of 'the full range of data on the terms and conditions of individual agreements' issued under the new industrial relations laws. Now there is research that provides at least some of the information being called for.

That research comes from the Workplace Research Centre of the University of Sydney, which has issued *Australia@Work: The Benchmark Report*. This is the first result of a five-year project that looks at the working lives of 8,343 people from all around Australia, and will follow them for the next four years. *Australia@Work* has some important new information on the effect of Australian Workplace Agreements on working conditions in this country.

According to the report, 'Employees in [lower skilled] occupations (e.g. labourers and sales assistants) are receiving worse outcomes, in terms of pay and hours, under AWAs. It appears that AWAs are being used as a tool for reducing employees' conditions to the statutory minima.'

The report says that AWAs tend to offer limited scope for negotiation. 'Almost half (46 per cent) of employees covered by an AWA feel that they do not have the opportunity to negotiate their pay with their employer; more than 200,000 AWAs in operation in 2007 have not provided opportunities for individual negotiation ... The WorkChoices environment has enabled the creation of more of these types of AWAs.'

Young, low-paid and vulnerable employees are most likely to be on AWAs, which tend not to offer the best pay outcomes of the four workplace arrangements encountered in Australia. (The other arrangements are the award system, collective agreements and common law contracts.)

Australians tend to work long hours, often unpaid. According to *Australia@Work*, over a fifth of all workers work 50 hours or more per week, and two-fifths of full-time employees work unpaid hours.

The *Australia@Work* report can be downloaded [here](#).

John Ferguson
National Executive Officer



Current Issues / Resources

PRE-ELECTION RESOURCES

Visit the ACSJC website for pre-election information and resources. Included is information about the Australian Catholic Bishops statement 'A Vote for Us All' and the ACSJC leaflet 'A Vote for Social Justice'. (<http://www.socialjustice.catholic.org.au>)

Other pre-election resources include:
NetAct Election Kit - 'Voting for Our Values': www.scan.org.au/netact.html
Centre for an Ethical Society - Election Questions: www.ces.org.au

QLD Social Action Office - 'Refresh Australia!': http://sao.clriq.org.au/refresh_australia/index.html

'Australia Fair!': <http://www.australiafair.org.au/public/Default.aspx>

ACCER PAPERS - A CATHOLIC PERSPECTIVE ON INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS

Two new papers have been posted on the website of the Australian Catholic Council for Employment Relations. One is a speech delivered by Mr Brian Lawrence, Chair of ACCER, at a recent H R Nicholls Society

Conference. The address is entitled, 'Minimum Wages in Australia: A Catholic Perspective'. The second is a short paper ideal for parish and community discussion groups, 'A Faith Perspective on Industrial Relations in Contemporary Australian Society'. These papers can be downloaded at: <http://www.accer.asn.au/docs/papers/index.html>

CSSA PAPER - 'THE OBLIGATION IS MUTUAL'
Catholic Social Services Australia has released a paper calling for a new approach to the mutual obligation policy which underpins current approaches to welfare payments. The paper sets out five guiding principles for income support policies which will contribute to a dialogue with all people concerned with social well-being and human dignity. These include: a review the adequacy of income support payments; the separation of compliance from assistance; replacing 'Work for the Dole'; providing better support to parents; and using evidence to inform policy change. The paper claims that governments should do more to ensure that the state's responsibilities are met under the mutual obligation and argues that the role of governments should be as

an enabler rather than an enforcer. A copy of the paper is available at: http://www.catholicsocialservices.org.au/publications/discussion_papers

ACU/MONASH 'SPIRIT OF GENERATION Y' STUDY

The Spirit of Generation Y project (2003-2006), conducted by Monash University, the Australian Catholic University and the Christian Research Association have found that fewer than half of Australians born between 1976 and 1990 identify with a traditional religion. Monash sociology lecturer Dr Andrew Singleton said social forces such as secularisation, consumer capitalism and individualism were significant in shaping contemporary religion and spirituality among Generation Y. The study explores Generation Y's world views and values, sense of meaning and purpose in life, ways in which they found peace and happiness, involvement in traditional religions and alternative spiritualities, and the influences that shaped Generation Y's outlook and lifestyle. A summary of the study is available at the ACU website: <http://dlibrary.acu.edu.au/research/ccls/spir/sppub/sppub.htm>



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>

ORDER NOW! - 2008 SOCIAL JUSTICE DIARY

The 2008 Diary focuses on the theme of poverty and affluence. It includes the dates of significant events, anniversaries and special days which celebrate particular aspects of social justice and highlight the theme. It provides a social justice program for the full year. Information and ideas for prayer and reflection are included.

This is an essential resource for teachers and parishes. Cost: \$6.60 (inc. GST), plus postage. To download an order form, go to: http://www.socialjustice.catholic.org.au/content/publications/social_justice_calendar.html

SERIES PAPER: TRAUMA AND FORGIVENESS: LESSONS FROM EAST TIMOR AND SOUTH AFRICA

Catholic Social Justice Series Paper No.60. Dr Mark Byrne considers the attempts of nations to heal the wounds left by violence by seeking "transitional justice" and setting up truth commissions. (\$6.60 a copy, plus postage - postage rates listed below)

2007 SOCIAL JUSTICE SUNDAY STATEMENT

This year's Australian Catholic Bishops Conference Social Justice Sunday Statement is entitled "Who Is My Neighbour? Australia's role as a global citizen". The ACSJC is now

taking orders for the Statement. An order form is available on the ACSJC website. A pdf and Word version of the Statement is also available at: <http://www.socialjustice.catholic.org.au>

Prayer Card & Leaflet: Ten steps towards Australia becoming a global citizen
Now available. Call (02) 9956 5811

Ecumenical resource: 'In Whose Interest? Australia as a global citizen'
Now available. Call (09) 9956 5811

Social Justice Sunday Statement Summary and Liturgy Notes
Now available at: www.socialjustice.catholic.org.au

SERIES PAPER: TO EACH AS ANY HAVE NEED: JUSTICE AND HEALTHCARE
Catholic Social Justice Series Paper No.59.
Dr Elizabeth Hepburn IBVM highlights critical

issues of justice in healthcare in the light of a duty to care for the sick and frail that goes back to the roots of Judaic tradition and to the earliest Christian communities. (\$6.60 a copy, plus postage - postage rates listed below)

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>

(\$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)



This Month's Notices

1 NOVEMBER. FUNDRAISER, 'FRIENDS OF MALIANA' (NSW). The Leichhardt Council's 'Friends of Maliana' fund-raising dinner will be held at NSW State Parliament House Dining Room. Speakers include Abel Guterres (Timor Leste Consul-General) and Paul Cleary (Author of 'Shakedown') with Xanana Gusmao & Jose Ramos-Horta via satellite. Charles Firth (of the Chaser) will be MC. Bookings essential: (02) 9367-9351 or shanem@lmc.nsw.gov.au.

1 NOVEMBER. CONFERENCE, 'KURDISH WOMEN SETTLEMENT' (VIC). This conference aims to discuss the impact of pre-migration experiences on the settlement of migrant and refugee women, focusing on the experiences of Kurdish women. The situation of Kurdish women in Kurdistan, the impact of being a refugee on family life, and the importance of empowering migrant women are some of the themes that will be addressed by the conference presenters. Cost: Individuals \$25, organisations \$50 paid on entrance. Lunch,

tea and coffee will be provided. 9.00am - 3.30pm, The Victoria Room, Level 4, Queen Victoria Women's Centre, 210 Lonsdale Street, Melbourne. Contact: (02) 9379 5679 or kurds@optusnet.com.au (refer: <http://www.ras.unimelb.edu.au/events.html>)

2 NOVEMBER. LAUNCH, 'SUCCESSFUL STRATEGIES IN INDIGENOUS ORGANISATIONS' (NSW). The Jumbunna Indigenous House of Learning and the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies is celebrating the launch of major reports involving 16 nation-wide case studies of organisations and partnerships for the management of protected areas. To be launched by Mr Tom Calma, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner. 5.00 for 5.30pm, The Gallery Function Centre, Level 6, Tower Building, UTS, Broadway, Sydney. RSVP to Elyce.Newton@uts.edu.au or (02) 9514 9630.

6 NOVEMBER. FUNDRAISER, MELBOURNE CUP LUNCHEON (NSW). The Jesuit Refugee Service Melbourne Cup Luncheon is to be held at Dockside - The Balcony Level, Cockle Bay Wharf, city side of Darling Harbour, Sydney at 12 noon. Only \$95 per guest including a lovely three course luncheon and drinks. A fabulous day out for a worthy cause. All proceeds will go to support the Jesuits in their mission to accompany refugees. To book, contact (02) 9356 3888 or ddeoliva@bigpond.com, or download an order form from the JRS website: www.jrs.org.au

7 NOVEMBER. SYDNEY PEACE PRIZE LECTURE (NSW). Delivered by Dr Hans Blix, Swedish diplomat, international human rights lawyer, weapons inspector and disarmament campaigner. Sydney Town Hall, 6.30 pm. Adults \$30, concession \$25. Bookings at Ticketek: 132 849 or www.ticketek.com.au. Web: http://www.sydneypeacefoundation.org.au/events.shtml#2006SPP_AwardCeremony

7 NOVEMBER. COURSE, 'ANTI-DISCRIMINATION - RIGHTS, ADVICE, STRATEGIES' (NSW). The Centre for Community Welfare Training is running a course to assist people to recognise when unfair treatment may be against the law and when it is not and give accurate advice to clients, consumers or members of the community about their rights under anti-discrimination law. Cost \$150. 9.30am - 4.30pm, Association of Children's Welfare Agencies, Level 4, 699 George St., Sydney. For further info contact: (02) 9281 8822 or visit: http://www.acwa.asn.au/about_ccwt.html

8 NOVEMBER. SYDNEY PEACE PRIZE AWARD AND GALA DINNER (NSW). In honour of Dr Hans Blix. 7 pm, Great Hall, University of Sydney. Contact Sydney Peace Foundation, (02) 9351 4468, email spf@arts.usyd.edu.au. Web: http://www.sydneypeacefoundation.org.au/events.shtml#2006SPP_AwardCeremony.

8 NOVEMBER. SYMPOSIUM: 'THE LIVING WAGE AND NATIONAL VALUES: REMEMBERING HARVESTER, 1907-2007' (VIC). On 8 November 1907, Justice Higgins handed down the decision that has come to be known as the Harvester Judgement. This centenary symposium, with expert speakers including

Prof. Sonya Michel of the University of Maryland, reviews a range of questions raised by this pivotal event in Australian history. Cost: \$50 (full), \$25 (concession). 9.00am - 5.30pm, Gryphon Gallery, 1888 Building, Grattan Street, University of Melbourne. For registration and program details visit: <http://www.historical-studies.unimelb.edu.au/events/livingwage.html>

9 - 10 NOVEMBER. 12th ANNUAL PUBLIC LAW WEEKEND (ACT). The 2007 Public Law Weekend asks the question, 'Is Australian society facing the Death of the Rule of Law?' The Centre for International and Public Law invites you to explore rule of law issues in the context of the Executive and Judicial branches, as well as in particular areas of public law. In addition the public law weekend will review some of the important High Court decisions of the year and hold an important book launch. The 2007 Geoffrey Sawer lecture will be part of the weekend. Weekend held at the National Museum of Australia, Canberra. For conference program and registration, visit: <http://law.anu.edu.au/cipl/events.asp>

9 - 11 NOVEMBER. NATIONAL CONFERENCE, 'RACISM IN A GLOBAL CONTEXT' (WA). Murdoch University and partners are hosting this Conference. Following on from the UN World Conference against Racism (WCAR) held in Durban South Africa, this unique three day conference will bring together a range of internationally respected academics and researchers, local and national government representatives, NGOs, Indigenous leaders, and groups and individuals from the community to review the themes and issues raised at WCAR, and to explore experiences and effects of racism. Cost: \$400 (full rate); \$250 (NGO); \$150 (student/unwaged). Venue: Murdoch University's South Street Campus, near Fremantle. For further info visit: <http://ncrgc.murdoch.edu.au/>

11 NOVEMBER. NATIONAL EVENT, 'WALK AGAINST WARMING' (National). The Climate Institute and Conservation Councils of Australia are organising these walks. Before going to the polls on 24th November, join friends, family and other Australians at Walk Against Warming, and show the next Australian Government you

support urgent action on climate change. Be the voice for our planet and our children's future. Visit the website to find walks in your area: <http://www.walkagainstawarming.org>

17 NOVEMBER. WORKSHOP, 'OUR ROLE AS GLOBAL CITIZENS' (NSW). The Catholic Community of North Sydney, Lavender Bay and Kirribilli, in association with the Loyola Institute will engage participants in sharing experiences and perspectives and reflecting together theologically about our role as a global citizen - in order to make a personal and collective response. The workshop will draw on the 2007 Social Justice statements 'Who Is My Neighbour?' and 'In Whose Interest?' and the 2006 report by the Jesuit Task Force, 'Globalisation and Marginalisation, our global and apostolic response'. 2.00 - 5.00pm, St Francis Xavier Parish Hall, 19 Mackenzie Street, Lavender Bay. To register, contact (02) 8918 4104, francest@sjparishnsw.org.au or 0408 443 000, sandie@loyola.org.au (refer: <http://www.faithdoingjustice.com.au/>)

18 NOVEMBER. WORKSHOP, 'YOU CAN DO IT' (VIC). A partnership between the YWCA, EMILY's List Australia (ELA), the Victorian Partnership in Equity Network and the Victorian Local Governance Association (VLGA) are running a workshop aimed at getting more Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander women involved in public life. The workshop aims to provide ATSI women with the tools to actively participate so they are able to advocate with and for the needs of the communities they serve. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women who want to take their leadership to a broader audience are welcome to participate. 1.00 - 5.00pm, 1-5pm, The Australian Italian Club, 117 Omeo Hwy, Bairnsdale. To register, contact julia.alice@gmail.com or (03) 9347 3308. (refer: <http://www.emilyslist.org.au/events/events.asp?id=234>)

18 NOVEMBER. ANTaR CELEBRATION, 'SEA OF HANDS' (NSW). Australians for Native Title and Reconciliation NSW will celebrate 10 years of community action in support of Indigenous people's rights with a Sea of Hands event at Victoria Park, Parramatta Road, Camperdown from 11.00am to 3.00pm. For further info or if you would like to help on the

day, contact (02) 9555 6138 or leigh@antar.org.au. (refer: <http://www.antar.org.au/content/blogcategory/0/125/>)

19 - 20 NOVEMBER. QUEENSLAND MULTICULTURAL SUMMIT 2007 (QLD). The Summit expects to attract over 300 delegates from a wide cross-section of senior public servants, business leaders, community sector decision makers, academics, and ethnic community leaders from throughout the State. It will explore the reality of our multicultural society and present the latest thinking themes about employment, language diversity, citizenship and integration, and diverse communities. To be convened at the State Library of Queensland. For program and registration details, visit: <http://www.qldmulticulturalsummit.org.au/>

21 - 23 NOVEMBER. CLINICIAN'S WORKSHOP ON REFUGEE SURVIVORS AND TRAUMA (NSW). A three-day workshop at Carramar. The workshop will explore practical approaches to advanced clinical practice with refugee survivors of torture and trauma. It will build on skills for clinical practice through reflecting on assessment, trauma impacts, and psychotherapeutic approaches within a cross-cultural framework. This workshop is designed specifically for clinicians. Cost: \$250. Contact Sejla Tukelija on 02 9794 1900 for further details.

22 NOVEMBER. WORKSHOP, 'INJURY IN INDIGENOUS POPULATIONS' (VIC). The Trauma Committee of the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons is running a workshop on injury in Indigenous populations - Towards a Safer Future - which will explore ways to improve care for injured patients. The workshop will provide a forum for the development of recommendations to health professionals, professional colleges, service managers and the broader community. Indigenous health experts from Australia, New Zealand and America will participate. Cost: \$125. 9.00am to 5.00pm, Royal Australasian College of Surgeons, 240 Spring Street, Melbourne. To register contact (03) 92767448 or lyn.journeaux@surgeons.org

22 - 23 NOVEMBER. ACOSS ANNUAL CONFERENCE (SA). The 2007 National Conference of the Australian Council of Social Service will have the theme 'Australia Fair: Taking steps towards a fair go for all'. Influential speakers from all sectors of society. Workshops on important issues. For registration and program details, visit: <http://www.acoss.org.au/Events.aspx?displayID=1>

23 NOVEMBER. PUBLIC LECTURE, 'THE HELL IN IRAQ: WHAT NOW?' (NSW). Mark Willacy, ABC TV author of 'A View from Hell - 4 years in the Middle East' and Noah Bassil, Deputy Director of the Middle East Centre at Macquarie University explore a way out of the Iraq quagmire. Politics in the Pub. 6:00pm, level 1, Gaelic Club, 64 Devonshire St, Surry Hills, Sydney. (refer: www.politicsinthepub.org)

24 NOVEMBER. MEETING, CANBERRA-GOULBURN COMMISSION FOR WOMEN (ACT). The Archdiocesan Commission for Women will be holding an open meeting to report on the Commission's progress and gather responses. Spiritual reflection will be led by Sr Liz West. Lunch and babysitting provided. 9.45am for 10am - 1.30pm at The Rheinberger Centre, corner Weston and Loch Street, Yarralumla. Registration essential. Contact 0431 249 289 or email kristyfirkin@hotmail.com

25 NOVEMBER. WORKSHOP, 'YOU CAN DO IT' (VIC). The workshop aims to provide ATSI women with the tools to actively participate in public life so that they are empowered and able to advocate with and for the needs of the communities they serve. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women who want to take their leadership to a broader audience or support others to do so are welcome to participate. 1.00 - 5.00pm, 1-5pm, The Rumbalara Football Netball Club, Mercury Drive, Shepparton. To register, contact julia.alice@gmail.com or (03) 9347 3308. (refer: <http://www.emilyslist.org.au/events/events.asp?id=234>)

26 NOVEMBER. 4TH ANNUAL DR ANDREW MCNAUGHTAN MEMORIAL LECTURE (NSW). Ms Kirsty Sword Gusmao, first lady of Timor Leste and Head of Alola Foundation Women's Charity, will deliver the annual memorial lecture.

Entertainment includes Sydney Timor Cultural Dance Group, Timor rock and folk legend Ego Lemos, Sonia Bennett and the 'Loosely Woven' Choir. There will also be the launch of the MAUBARA-MOSMAN Friendship City Partnership. 7.00pm, Mosman Civic Centre. Entry by donation, bookings. RSVP s.jackson@mosman.nsw.gov.au or (02) 9978 4061.

28 NOVEMBER. SEMINAR, 'LOOKING BACK AND LOOKING FORWARD' (VIC). The La Trobe University Refugee Health Research Centre seminar will consider the health and wellbeing of refugee youth after 2 years in Australia. Presenting is Prof. Sandy Gifford, Director of the RHRC at La Trobe. Free event. 5.00 for 5.30 - 6.30pm, Foundation House, 6 Gardiner St, Brunswick. (refer: www.latrobe.edu.au/rhrc/conferences.html)

29 NOVEMBER. CONFERENCE, 'HUMAN RIGHTS 2007 THE YEAR IN REVIEW' (VIC). The Castan Centre will be releasing its review, 'Human Rights and the Environment. Early Bird Registration to 5 Nov: Full \$150; NGOs \$70; Students \$40. 9.00am - 4.45pm, The CUB Malthouse, 113 Sturt Street, Southbank, Melbourne. Contact: 03 9905 3327 or castan.centre@law.monash.edu.au (refer: <http://www.law.monash.edu.au/castancentre/events/2007/conf-07-gen-info.html>)

1 DECEMBER. WORKSHOP, 'SOCIAL POLICY CONNECTIONS' (VIC). All members and supporters are invited to the Social Policy Connections AGM followed by a workshop to develop position statements on issues of fairness in Australian society, stewardship of our planet, global poverty and war and peace. The AGM is from 3.00 - 5.00pm at Yarra Theological Union, 98 Albion Road, Box Hill. Parking available. All welcome to stay for refreshment from 5.00pm. For room size and catering purpose please RSVP: 8th November on (03) 9428 0799, 0432 991 085 or spc.inc@optusnet.com.au

6 - 7 DECEMBER. CONFERENCE, 'THE CHALLENGE TO RESTORE FULL EMPLOYMENT' (NSW). The full employment Conference being convened by the Centre for Full Employment and Equity will incorporate the 9th Path to Full Employment Conference and the 14th

National Conference on Unemployment. This conference will be held at the University of Newcastle. For more information visit the CofFEE website at: <http://e1.newcastle.edu.au/coffee/conferences/2007/index.cfm>

6 - 8 DECEMBER. CONFERENCE, 'SHARING OUR STORIES, SHARING OUR STRENGTHS' (NSW). The NSW Service for the Treatment and Rehabilitation of Torture and Trauma Survivors (STARTTS) is convening a conference where members of different community groups with

refugee-like backgrounds can come together to learn from one another about living in Australia, developing community organisations and overcoming difficulties. Most speakers will be people who came to Australia because they were escaping persecution or violence. Cost: free for refugees and members of refugee community groups. Small fee for academics and government workers. Conference to be held at the University of Western Sydney, Bankstown. For further info call (02) 9794 1900 or visit <http://www.startts.org.au/default.aspx?id=337>



News Monitor

Columban warns against climate change skeptics

Columban environmental scientist Fr Charles Rue warned against climate change deniers who seek to sow doubt that leads to confusion.

Catholic Social Services says obligation is mutual

Catholic Social Services Australia's Executive Director Frank Quinlan, called for a new approach to the mutual obligation policy which underpins current approaches to welfare payments.

Catholic Health says vouchers will shorten hospital queues

Catholic Health Australia CEO Francis Sullivan said that both the Coalition and Labor must introduce a twofold voucher system to reduce waiting lists keep pressure off public hospitals

Vatican okays Iran's nuclear program if peaceful

The Vatican will support Iran's nuclear energy program - as long as it serves a "peaceful purpose" an official said.

Christian Brothers' provinces urged to go carbon neutral

The Christian Brothers' international Promoter of Eco-justice, Br Moy Hitchen, told the congregation's provinces that they must measure the amount of carbon emissions produced by their activities, and pay to offset them.

Loreto leader urges "sharp" approach to election

Australian Loreto Provincial Leader Sr Christine Burke said the election was a time for those who are not politicians to engage in the political process and to take seriously their responsibility as citizens.

Faith should not be a vehicle of hatred: Pope
Pope Benedict called on all leaders of all religions to denounce faith as a vehicle of hatred at an inter-faith gathering in Naples.

ACU professor exposes elderly mistreatment in hospitals

Australian Catholic Univerwasty Professor Tracey McDonald uncovered a disturbing picture of the poor treatment of elderly Australians whilst undergoing treatment in the hospital system.

Labor, Catholic Health on same page on waiting lists

The promise of a \$600 million injection to help slash waiting lists in Australia's ailing public hospitals, by future Prime Minister hopeful Kevin Rudd, was "very similar" to the scheme Catholic Health Australia been calling out for, according to CHA CEO Francis Sullivan.

Schools set up Amnesty pro-life alternative

Two Sydney Catholic schools have set up the Benenson Society, to enable Catholics to continue to campaign for human rights after they have left Amnesty International due to Amnesty's decision to promote abortion rights.

Catholics reject Sudanese refugee reduction

Church groups have rejected Immigration Minister Kevin Andrews' justifications to reduce the number of Sudanese refugees entering Australia.

Outrage as reality-TV project stoops to mocking disabled

The Australian Catholic Disability Council was outraged by a reality TV-style program which mocks and ridicules people with intellectual disabilities.

Vinnies puts homelessness, mental health on the agenda

A National response to mental health and homelessness was high on the agenda at "Breaking the Cycle", a Conference organised by the St Vincent de Paul Society, on Thursday 18th and Friday 19th October in Sydney.

\$2.5 million boost for homeless service

St Mary's House of Welcome will receive a \$2.5million injection from the Federal Government.

Australian anti-trafficking work on show in Rome

Australia's best practices in the work against trafficking in persons (TIP) was presented to an international gathering of women Religious, in Rome by Brisbane Good Samaritan Sr Pauline Coll SGS.

Group shares pre-election lobbying secrets

NetAct, a lobby group based at the Sydney office of Catholic Religious Australia, released its Federal Election 2007 Kit.

Columbans warn pro-GM food lobby eyes on Australia

The Columban Missionaries say the biotech industry which promotes GM food as a solution to global hunger was trying to get GM food crops into Australia.

Kimberley Catholic challenge to PM's Reconciliation credentials

The Broome Diocese hit out at the Prime Minister over the "posturing" that was intended to have Australians "believe that he was now on the same road to Reconciliation as people like Pat Dodson".

Australian Bishops concern over refugee cut

The Australian Catholic Bishops Conference was "deeply concerned" with the Federal Government's decision to cut the intake of African refugees.

Howard's IR laws "immoral": Manning

Religious leaders are pushing for more organised dealings with the federal government, as John Howard and Kevin Rudd court the Christian vote.

Aussie Catholic students call for bloodshed to end

The Australian Catholic Students Association (ACSA) was calling for prayers for a peaceful solution to the present crisis in Burma.

Bishop says Minister's actions fuelled racism

Adelaide Auxiliary Bishop Greg O'Kelly accused Federal Immigration Minister Kevin Andrews of helping to fuel racism in the community by cutting the intake of Sudanese refugees by 40 per cent.

Bishops urge Catholics to sever ties with Amnesty International

Amnesty International has taken a tragic turn and effectively created a human rights organisation which excluded Catholic members by imposing a new policy in favour of abortion, the Catholic Bishops of Australia said.



Social Justice Calendar

NOVEMBER 1 THU All Saints Day (Solemnity)

2 FRI The Commemoration of all the Faithful Departed (All Souls Day)

World Community Day

4 SUN 31st Sunday in Ordinary Time

6 TUE International Day for Preventing the Exploitation of Environment in War and Armed Conflict

9 FRI Wall separating East and West Berlin opened, 1989

10 SAT Nine Nigerian environmentalists and human rights activists hanged, 1995

11 SUN 32nd Sunday in Ordinary Time; Remembrance (Armistice) Day, commemorating the end of World War 1, 1918

12 MON Dili Massacre, 1991

13 TUE Death of Karen Silkwood, 1975, en route to a meeting at which she planned to expose unsafe practices in a US nuclear facility

16 FRI International Day for Tolerance

18 SUN 33rd Sunday in Ordinary Time

20 TUE Universal Children's Day; Anniversary of Declaration of Rights of the Child (1959) and Convention on Rights of the Child (1989)

21 WED World Television Day

25 SUN Christ the King (Solemnity); International Day for the elimination of Violence Against Women; Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief, 1981

27 TUE Inaugural Peace Prize, Sydney, 1988

29 THU UN International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People; Death of Dorothy Day, 1980, Founder of the Catholic Worker Movement

AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC SOCIAL JUSTICE COUNCIL 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.