



## No. 86 – December 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>

### IN THIS ISSUE ...

- From the Secretariat
- Current Issues/Resources
- Latest Publications
- This Month's Notices
- News Monitor
- Social Justice Calendar

### FROM THE SECRETARIAT

Dear Friends,

This is the last ACSJC Monthly Briefing for the year. The first Briefing for 2008 will be available in February.

#### Christmas wishes

As we enter the Season of Advent and prepare for the coming of Christ, the Prince of Peace, the Australian Catholic Social Justice Council and its Secretariat would like to take this opportunity to wish all our friends a blessed Christmas season and a New Year filled with new hope.

Thank you to all of our subscribers, Diocesan contacts, colleagues among Church and community organisations, and people who have been striving for social justice throughout the year.

As we review the momentous events of the past year and prepare for the one ahead, we might remember the words of Holy Father

Pope Benedict that were quoted in this year's Social Justice Sunday Statement:

*It is true, we are all here in passing, but it is precisely Jesus who makes us feel at home on this earth, sanctified by his presence. He asks us, however, to make it a home in which all are welcome. The surprising gift of Christmas is exactly this: Jesus came for each one of us (refer: [www.socialjustice.catholic.org.au/CONTENT/PDF/Statement\\_2007\\_final.pdf](http://www.socialjustice.catholic.org.au/CONTENT/PDF/Statement_2007_final.pdf))*

We are called, as Christians, to become more like God - the Creator who made us in his own image and likeness. In doing that, we remember especially at this time that God loves us so much that he sent his only son - he became one of us.

#### Federal Election

Representatives of the Australian Catholic Social Justice Council have just returned from the Second World Congress of Ecclesial Organisations Working for Justice and Peace. The Congress was convened in Rome by the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace. Around 400 Church delegates from around the world participated.

As a small band of us watched the progress of the Federal Election back home in Australia, we were reminded of just how fortunate we are to be living in a country where citizens have the right and duty to vote in free and fair elections.

We were reminded of the words of the Australian Catholic Bishops in their 2004 Social Justice Sunday Statement, *Peace Be With You*:

*Australians live in a land mercifully free of political violence. This has been achieved by the effort of numerous men and women in creating institutions and ways of acting that ensure participation and inclusiveness so that non-violent political change can occur.*

Noting the importance of democracy to the peace of our society, and how it should never be taken for granted, the Bishops added:

*Australians should strongly protest at the actions of any governments that repress dissent and suffocate the political process.*

*We encourage people to join or actively support political parties and "grass-roots" movements; to seek elected office; to keep the democratic process accountable at the local level; to encourage alternative voices regarding the future of Australia; always to engage in the political struggle with the tools of non-violence.*

(refer: [www.socialjustice.catholic.org.au/content/PDF/SJSS2004pdf.pdf](http://www.socialjustice.catholic.org.au/content/PDF/SJSS2004pdf.pdf))

How fortunate we are when we compare our situation to the dire circumstances that were being recounted at the Rome Congress by representatives of the Church in so many other parts of the world enduring repressive military and political regimes that add to already unbearable pressures of poverty and violence.

And yet, we know that there are some groups of citizens in our own prosperous nation who continue to suffer the ravages of poverty and who are unlikely to regard the Australian political process and institutions as adequately addressing their needs or representing their aspirations.

The circumstances faced by our Indigenous sisters and brothers remain an issue of utmost importance waiting for real and sustained political commitment and genuine reconciliation.

The results of the November election are now history. Time will tell what directions Australia will take over the years on issues of national importance - many of them issues of social justice.

At their recent meeting in Sydney, the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference urged the incoming government to reward the faith of the electorate with a commitment to governing in the interests of the common good.

The President of the Bishops' Conference, Archbishop Philip Wilson, said 'It is our hope, and the hope of many, that the Rudd Labor Government will grasp the opportunity to pursue policies which integrate the pursuit of economic prosperity with social justice and an overriding concern for life and the human dignity of all Australians.

'The measure of this will be particularly evident in policies which affect the most vulnerable, including our indigenous brothers and sisters, refugees and asylum seekers, people with disability and their carers, and vulnerable employees in the workplace', Archbishop Wilson said. ([www.acbc.catholic.org.au/bishops/pm/20071126932.htm](http://www.acbc.catholic.org.au/bishops/pm/20071126932.htm))

Let us join with the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference in praying for Mr Rudd and his colleagues - that Australia's new government will be guided by wisdom, justice and integrity.

May they govern 'for all of us' and with a special concern for the most vulnerable.

### **The ACSJC is moving!**

As from 17 December, our new address will be: 24-32 O'Riordan St, Alexandria, NSW 2015.

Our postal address - PO Box 1615, North Sydney, NSW, 2059 - will remain the same for now. So will our email address and website.

Our phone number is still to be advised, but if you ring our current number (02 9956 5811) you will be redirected to the new number. This arrangement will continue for some months after the move.

For many years we have shared this historic and beautiful North Sydney location with our friends and colleagues at Caritas Australia and the Bishops' Committee for Justice, Development, Ecology and Peace. However, the pressures on this building have become too great. We are fortunate to be able to continue sharing premises with Caritas Australia in a spacious and accessible building in Alexandria.

We are most grateful to Fr Anthony Smith SJ and the parish community of St Francis Xavier,

Lavender Bay, for accommodating us over the years.

We look forward to hearing from our friends and colleagues in our new home.

Best wishes,

John Ferguson  
National Executive Officer



## Current Issues / Resources

**YOUNG CATHOLIC WORKERS PUBLICATION: 'THE HOLY SPIRIT COMES'.** A comprehensive resource containing practical ideas and strategies to help young people and those working with them in parishes as well as dioceses and schools to prepare for Days in the Dioceses and for pilgrimage to WYD08. 'The Holy Spirit Comes' is the second of three publications that YCS and YCW are creating to assist you to make WYD08 a genuine experience of formation for young people. It follows on from the success of our first resource 'On Fertile Ground: Preparation and Formation Towards WYD08', and is endorsed by Bishop Joe Grech, the Australian Bishops' Delegate for Youth Ministry. Electronic copies are free of charge. Hard copies cost \$10 each, including postage and handling. They can be ordered by emailing [bethany@aycs.org.au](mailto:bethany@aycs.org.au) or through the YCW website: <http://www.ycw.org.au>.

**BOOK: 'MARY MACKILLOP EAST TIMOR 1994-2006: AN ACCOUNT OF A JOURNEY WITH THE EAST TIMORESE PEOPLE'.** An account of a journey: a history book, a story book, a book of photos. Share the story of our journey with the people of East Timor - the children, the anguish, the joy, the challenges. All profits go to the work of Mary McKillop East Timor (MMET). Available at \$25.00 per copy plus postage from MMET, PO Box 299, St Marys NSW 1790 or email [sc@mmitets.org.au](mailto:sc@mmitets.org.au).

**BOOK: 'YEARNING TO BREATHE FREE: SEEKING ASYLUM IN AUSTRALIA'.** Published by Federation Press, edited by Dean Lusher and Nick Haslam. This overview of the historical, social and political contexts that have shaped Australia's recent treatment of asylum seekers offers a clear-eyed view of the many

dimensions of the asylum seeker predicament, including its psychological and humanitarian consequences, and lays out an agenda for change in policy. Sir Gustav Nossal, the Rt Hon. Malcolm Fraser, Senator Lyn Allison, Phillip Adams, Professor Stuart MacIntyre, and Lindsay Tanner MP introduce the six sections. Julian Burnside QC, Dr Carmen Lawrence, Peter Mares, Pamela Curr, Michael Clyne, Linda Briskman, Derrick Silove, Michael Gordon, Arnold Zable and David Manne are among the contributors to the 20 chapters. Available from Federation Press; RRP \$39.95. Ph. (02) 9552 2200, Email: [info@federationpress.com.au](mailto:info@federationpress.com.au), Web: <http://www.federationpress.com.au>.

**BOOK: 'LIFE TO THE FULL: RIGHTS AND SOCIAL JUSTICE IN AUSTRALIA'.** Edited by James Franklin; foreword by Archbishop Philip Wilson, President, Australian Catholic Bishops Conference. This collection of 18 essays by different expert authors considers the full range of rights that go to make up a free society fit for a full human life. They apply to current Australian conditions the insights of Catholic social thinking, a perspective both older than the competing ideologies of socialism and capitalism and more in accordance with the real world of the new century. Available from Connor Court Publishing. RRP: \$29.95; web: <http://connorcourt.com/catalog1/>.

**ADDRESS: LAWYERS' ROLE IN DEFENDING AND CHALLENGING THE RULE OF LAW IN A DEMOCRACY** - Fr Frank Brennan's address to the Law Institute of Victoria, 29/11/07. The power of the State can be exercised capriciously and unaccountably when the "Don't ask; don't tell" approach to government is immune from parliamentary,

judicial or public scrutiny. It is the task of lawyers to make it more difficult for politicians to take this approach. (refer: <http://www.eurekastreet.com.au/article.aspx?aeid=3892>)

**DISCUSSION PAPER: 'NUCLEAR POWER: CURE OR CURSE?'**. Commissioned by Catholic Social Services Victoria and the Melbourne Catholic Commission for Justice, Development and Peace in collaboration with the Victorian

Council of Churches, the paper scrutinises the assumption that nuclear power might help reduce greenhouse gas emissions and hence combat climate change, and whether it is a clean and safe form of energy generation. It argues that nuclear power is no solution to climate change and remains an expensive, dangerous form of energy generation. (refer: <http://www.cathnews.com/news/711/175.php>)



## 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>

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

The latest paper in the Catholic Social Justice Series has been published. Titled *Confronting the Death Penalty: People, politics and principle*, it consists of four essays by authoritative writers on the moral, legal and personal aspects of the death penalty. It follows on from our 2000 publication by Dr Michael Costigan, *The Death Penalty: Why Catholics should oppose it* (CSJS No 40), and develops the topic in the light of the attacks of 9 September 2001, the international 'war on terror' and the moral and political problems thrown up as we see capital punishment rigorously applied in countries close to us.

Dr Michael Costigan examines the moral and historical dimensions of the death penalty, relating it to Catholic social teaching and the history of the debate around capital punishment. Fr Peter Norden SJ describes his experiences as a parish priest and former prison chaplain. One of his parishioners was Van Tuong Nguyen, the young Australian executed in Singapore in 2005. Brian Deegan, whose son Josh was killed in the Bali bombing in 2002, describes his conflict as he wrestles to reconcile grief and anger with justice and mercy. Professor Andrew Byrnes examines the legal implications of the death penalty in Australia and overseas, including the attitudes of Australian police, governments and political parties.

*Confronting the Death Penalty: People, politics and principle* is available from the ACSJC: order by phone or through our website. See below for prices and postage.

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

The 2008 Diary focuses on the theme of poverty and affluence. It includes the dates of significant events, anniversaries and special days which celebrate particular aspects of social justice and highlight the theme. It provides a social justice program for the full year. Information and ideas for prayer and reflection are included. This is an essential resource for teachers and parishes. Cost: \$6.60 (inc. GST), plus postage. To download an order form, go to: [http://www.socialjustice.catholic.org.au/content/publications/social\\_justice\\_calendar.html](http://www.socialjustice.catholic.org.au/content/publications/social_justice_calendar.html)

### **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. 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**

Ecumenical resource: *In Whose Interest? Australia as a global citizen*

Now available. Call (02) 9956 5811

**Social Justice Sunday Statement Summary and Liturgy Notes**

Now available at: [www.socialjustice.catholic.org.au](http://www.socialjustice.catholic.org.au)

**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>

(Catholic Social Justice Series papers and the Social Justice Diary: \$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)

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>

## This Month's Notices

**27 NOVEMBER-10 DECEMBER. 'HUMAN RIGHTS AND ARTS FILM FESTIVAL' (VIC, NSW, WA).** A range of films will be screened at the RMIT Capitol Theatre, 133 Swanston St, Melbourne (29 Nov-2 Dec), Chauvel Cinema, Paddington Town Hall, Cnr Oxford St & Oatley Rd, Sydney (6 Dec) and Film and Television Institute, 92 Adelaide St, Fremantle (9-10 Dec). Information: 0431 209 753; email: [janna@hraff.org.au](mailto:janna@hraff.org.au); web [www.hraff.org.au](http://www.hraff.org.au) or <http://hraff.org.au/HRAFF-Sydney-Festival-Overview.pdf>.

**1 DECEMBER. AFRICAN CULTURAL NIGHT (NSW).** Horn of Africa Relief and Development Agency invite you to the 'Horn of Africa Cultural Night'. Eat, dance, sing, and celebrate with your community. Raffle; food and refreshments. 6.00pm - 12.00 midnight, Auburn Council Town Hall, 1 Susan Street Auburn. RSVP Wednesday 28 November 2007 (for catering purposes only). Contact 0424 140 120, 0421 059 166 or 0414 969 718. Web: [http://www.ajustaustralia.com/whats happening\\_events\\_view.php?id=A2CBD400-40E8-4138-86507440154C26E1](http://www.ajustaustralia.com/whats happening_events_view.php?id=A2CBD400-40E8-4138-86507440154C26E1).

**1 DECEMBER. FRUITCAKE! THE RESONANTS CHRISTMAS CHORAL CONCERT AND PICNIC FOR FAMILIES (ACT).** A capella choir Christmas Concert. Picnic afterwards - bring your picnic rug and hamper. All proceeds to Anne's Legacy Quilting Group, making quilts for sick children. 15 Blackall Street, Barton (cnr Kings Ave). Tickets: Adult \$15, Family \$30, Child \$5 (under 5 years FREE). Web: [www.resonants.org.au/events.htm](http://www.resonants.org.au/events.htm) or email [tickets@resonants.org.au](mailto:tickets@resonants.org.au).

**1 DECEMBER. WORKSHOP: 'SOCIAL POLICY CONNECTIONS' (VIC).** 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 to 5.00pm at Yarra Theological Union, 98 Albion Road, Box Hill. Parking available. All welcome to stay for refreshment from 5.00pm. Please RSVP: (03) 9428 0799, 0432 991 085 or email [spc.inc@optusnet.com.au](mailto:spc.inc@optusnet.com.au)

**1 DECEMBER. TV SCREENING: 'MARTYRS OF EAST TIMOR' (NATIONAL).** Aurora Community

Television, Foxtel Digital and Austar Digital Channel 183, 1.00pm. This week we remember the day in 1975 when East Timor declared their independence, which led to terrible repression. In this film we remember some recent martyrs who gave their life in East Timor in solidarity with their persecuted people, by defending the rights of the poor, or for simply trying to bring healing and peace to others. [www.catholicchurchtv.com.au](http://www.catholicchurchtv.com.au).

**2 DECEMBER. PNG COMMUNITY CHRISTMAS CAROLS (ACT).** 2.00pm 15 Blackall Street, Barton (cnr Kings Ave). Contact: (02) 6125 8835 or [Deveni.Temu@anu.edu.au](mailto:Deveni.Temu@anu.edu.au).

**3 DECEMBER. PRESENTATION: 'UN CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES - WHAT DOES IT MEAN FOR YOU?' (NSW).** Presented by NSW Disability Discrimination Legal Centre for the International Day of People with Disability. 9.45am for 10.00 - 11.30, Parramatta City Library, Civic Place (off Macquarie Street), Parramatta. Morning tea provided; wheelchair accessible; Auslan Interpreters. Phone (02) 9310 7722; TTY (02) 9310 4320; Web [www.ddlcnsw.org.au](http://www.ddlcnsw.org.au); Email [info@ddlcnsw.org.au](mailto:info@ddlcnsw.org.au).

**3-5 DECEMBER. CONFERENCE: 'MOVING CULTURES, SHIFTING IDENTITIES' (SA).** Academics, students and the general public are welcome to attend all or part of this conference, which will examine issues of migration, transnational connection, displacement heritage, global space and cultural memory created by the movements of peoples between cultures in the modern world. Flinders University, Adelaide. Information: (08) 8201 2578 or (08) 8201 5137 or email [nenabierbaum@flinders.edu.au](mailto:nenabierbaum@flinders.edu.au). Web: <http://fhrc.flinders.edu.au/events/movingcultures.html>.

**4 DECEMBER. CHRISTMAS AFTERNOON TEA FOR THE FUTURE (NSW).** With the Edmund Rice Centre. Christmas is a good time to reflect on the year. It is also a time to celebrate what we have learnt and the actions we have taken as individuals and as a group. For our last meeting for 2007, bring along a plate of sustainable food to share if you can, and any poem, short article or interesting item

you wish to share with the group. 1:30pm, Edmund Rice Centre, 1st Floor, 9 Alexandra Ave, Croydon NSW. Information: (02) 9745 9700

**4-6 NOVEMBER. EXHIBITION: 'CARTOONS BY MICHAEL LEUNIG' (NSW).** City of Sydney Library, Kings Cross branch (Level 1, 50-52 Darlinghurst Rd, Kings Cross NSW). Information: (02) 9246 4530; email: [library@cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au](mailto:library@cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au).

**5 DECEMBER. PAUSE FOR PEACE END OF YEAR PARTY (ACT).** Australian Centre for Christianity and Culture invites you to celebrate at their end of year party. Bring a plate and some thoughts on Joy! 12.00noon - 2.00pm, 15 Blackall Street, Barton (cnr Kings Ave). Contact: (02) 6273 3615 or (02) 6281 5747.

**5 DECEMBER. INTERFAITH FORUM: THE WORLD FROM ISLAM - SPEAKER GEORGE NEGUS (QLD).** Aspley Uniting Church in cooperation with the Bald Hills Mosque. Opening prayers from Jewish, Christian and Muslim representatives and music from Sweet Chilli Peppers of Maleny. 7.30pm, Aspley Uniting Church. Admission \$10. Contact (07) 3263 8068 or [garththread@ecn.net.au](mailto:garththread@ecn.net.au).

**6 DECEMBER. SEMINAR: 'DIVERTING YOUNG OFFENDERS IN VICTORIA: THE VICTORIA POLICE CAUTIONING PROGRAM FOR JUVENILES' (VIC).** Presented by Shasta Holland, University of Melbourne. Shasta Holland is in the final stages of her PhD in Criminology and is also employed in the Research and Evaluation Unit within Corrections Victoria, Department of Justice. Enquiries: (03) 8344 9460; email [juliet.rogers@unimelb.edu.au](mailto:juliet.rogers@unimelb.edu.au); web <http://www.criminology.unimelb.edu.au/events/holland.html>.

**6-7 DECEMBER. INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE: 'RACISMS IN THE NEW WORLD ORDER' (QLD).** Organised by Centre for Multicultural and Community Development, University of the Sunshine Coast. Ramada Pelican Waters, Caloundra. (07) 3210 6194, (07) 5459 4632; email [cmcd@usc.edu.au](mailto:cmcd@usc.edu.au). Web [http://www.refugeecouncil.org.au/newsevents/Racism\\_registration.doc](http://www.refugeecouncil.org.au/newsevents/Racism_registration.doc).

**6-7 DECEMBER. CONFERENCE: 'THE CHALLENGE TO RESTORE FULL EMPLOYMENT' (NSW).** The Full Employment Conference is being convened by the Centre for Full Employment and Equity and will be held at the University of Newcastle. Information: <http://e1.newcastle.edu.au/coffee/conferences/2007/index.cfm>

**6-8 DECEMBER. CONFERENCE: 'SHARING OUR STORIES, SHARING OUR STRENGTHS' (NSW).** Convened by the NSW Service for the Treatment and Rehabilitation of Torture and Trauma Survivors (STARTTS): 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. 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>

**7 DECEMBER. PUBLIC LECTURE: 'ECOLOGICAL IMPACTS OF PRESCRIBED BURNING AND TIMBER HARVESTING' (VIC).** Speaker: Dr Trent Penman, University of Melbourne. 9:30 - 10:30am, Creswick Campus, Stage 2 Lecture Theatre, Water St, Creswick. Enquiries: (03) 5321 4301; email [fjc@unimelb.edu.au](mailto:fjc@unimelb.edu.au); web: [http://www.forestscience.unimelb.edu.au/seminar/index\\_fri.html](http://www.forestscience.unimelb.edu.au/seminar/index_fri.html).

**7-14 DECEMBER. 'chARTing RIGHTS: FREEDOM, RESPECT, EQUALITY AND DIGNITY' (VIC).** The Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission presents an exhibition of works from the Commission's Human Rights Community Arts Project. 9.30am - 5.00pm, Old Melbourne Gaol, Female Exercise Yard of the Watch House Russell St, Melbourne. Further details: [www.humanrightscommission.vic.gov.au](http://www.humanrightscommission.vic.gov.au).

**8 DECEMBER. 'FRIENDS OF THE EARTH CLIMATE CHANGE FESTIVAL' (VIC).** Speakers, workshops, stalls, food, kids' space, music. 1.00 - 5.00pm, Darling Gardens, Clifton Hill. Web: [www.foe.org.au/events](http://www.foe.org.au/events).

**8 DECEMBER. TV SCREENING: 'ST FRANCIS XAVIER' (NATIONAL).** Aurora Community Television, Foxtel Digital and Austar Digital Channel 183, 1.00pm. St Francis Xavier is the Patron Saint of Australia. Our documentary this week looks at his life and how he went from being a Spanish nobleman to meeting St Ignatius Loyola at the University of Paris and then onto found the Jesuits and then become one of the Church's greatest missionaries. [www.catholicchurchtv.com.au](http://www.catholicchurchtv.com.au)

**9 DECEMBER. UNVEILING OF THE PASTOR SIR DOUGLAS AND LADY GLADYS NICHOLLS MEMORIAL (VIC).** The Memorial, by artist Louis Laumen, commemorates the life and work of Pastor Sir Douglas and Lady Nicholls. 11.00am, Parliament Gardens, corner Nicholson and Albert Streets, Melbourne (enter via Nicholson Street gate closest to Parliament House). Light morning tea provided. RSVP: (03) 9658 9131 or [lisfle@melbourne.vic.gov.au](mailto:lisfle@melbourne.vic.gov.au) before 28 November.

**10 DECEMBER. PRESENTATION OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS MEDAL AND AWARDS 2007 (NSW).** Since 1987, the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission has recognised the contribution to Australian society of men and women committed to issues of human rights, social justice and equality through the annual Human Rights Medal and Awards. 12.00noon - 3.00pm, Grand Ballroom, Sheraton on the Park Hotel, Sydney. The Hon. John von Doussa QC will also deliver the annual Human Rights Day Oration. The ceremony includes a two course luncheon, beverages and entertainment. Standard ticket price \$60; concession tickets (\$35) available to registered not for profit organisations, senior citizens and students. Contact (02) 9284 9618 or go to [http://www.humanrights.gov.au/about/hr\\_awards/index.html](http://www.humanrights.gov.au/about/hr_awards/index.html)

**10 DECEMBER. MULTI-FAITH COMMEMORATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS DAY (QLD).** 7.15 - 9.00p.m., Multi-Faith Centre, Griffith University, Nathan Campus. RSVP by 4 December (07) 3735 7052 or [mfc@griffith.edu.au](mailto:mfc@griffith.edu.au)

**10 DECEMBER. A JUST AUSTRALIA AGM (NSW).** 6.30 - 7.30pm, 37-47 St Johns Road Glebe NSW. Phone: (02) 9571 7231; Email: [layla@ajustaustralia.com](mailto:layla@ajustaustralia.com); Web [http://www.ajustaustralia.com/whats happening events\\_view.php?id=0DAD9DE4-A414-4992-9475C04F2E3A0C60](http://www.ajustaustralia.com/whats happening events_view.php?id=0DAD9DE4-A414-4992-9475C04F2E3A0C60).

**10 DECEMBER. WELCOME AFRICAN REFUGEES - MULTICULTURAL MORNING TEA (NSW).** Performance by Pape Mbaye and Nguewell Percussion Group. Guest speakers: Tanya Plibersek MP, Federal Member for Sydney; Andrew Sankoh, Paul Power, CEO, Refugee Council of Australia; and Simon Rice, Human Rights lawyer. Sponsored by Redfern Legal Centre and South Sydney Community Aid Multicultural Neighbourhood Centre 10.00 - 11.30am, Alexandria Town Hall, 73 Garden St, Alexandria. Web: <http://www.sca.org.au>.

**11 DECEMBER. SEMINAR - 'AUSTRALIA'S YOUNG PEOPLE: WHAT DO THEY VALUE, WHAT WORRIES THEM AND WHAT ARE THE IMPLICATIONS FOR POLICY AND PRACTICE?' (NSW).** Speaker: Anne Hampshire, National Manager of Research and Social Policy, Mission Australia. Presented by Social Policy Research Centre, UNSW. 1.00 - 2.00pm, Level 3, Room 301, Mechanical Engineering Building, UNSW. RSVP (02) 9385 7817 or [megangriffiths@unsw.edu.au](mailto:megangriffiths@unsw.edu.au) by Friday 7 December 2007. Web: [http://www.sprc.unsw.edu.au/seminars/2007%20Program/Hampshire\\_flyer.pdf](http://www.sprc.unsw.edu.au/seminars/2007%20Program/Hampshire_flyer.pdf).

**11 DECEMBER. LECTURE: 'RECONCILIATION, GENOCIDE AND CRIMINAL TRIALS' (ACT).** The ANU presents Professor Larry May, Washington University. This is a paper about reconciliation in societies that have recently experienced genocide or other human rights atrocities. Professor May will try to refute the arguments of critics of international criminal trials. 1.00pm (Sandwiches served from 12.45pm), Phillipa Weeks Staff Library, Bldg 5, ANU College of Law, Fellows Road, The Australian National University. RSVP to: [celeste.ecuyer@anu.edu.au](mailto:celeste.ecuyer@anu.edu.au) by cob 7 December 2007. Enquiries to: 6125 3556 or [celeste.ecuyer@anu.edu.au](mailto:celeste.ecuyer@anu.edu.au). Web: [http://law.anu.edu.au/cipl/Lectures&Seminars/2007/Larry%20May11%20December\\_flyer.pdf](http://law.anu.edu.au/cipl/Lectures&Seminars/2007/Larry%20May11%20December_flyer.pdf).

**13 DECEMBER. THE UNIVERSITY OF MELBOURNE CHANCELLOR'S 2007 HUMAN RIGHTS LECTURE (VIC).** 'The Protection of Women and Children during Armed Conflict: Whose Responsibility?' Speaker: Radhika Coomaraswamy, United Nations Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict. Ms Coomaraswamy will speak about the challenges and complexity of protecting the innocent and vulnerable during times of international or civil violence. The lecture will address women and children's actual experience of armed conflict, and cover relevant international standards, norms and cases. 6.00 - 7.00pm, Carrillo Gantner Theatre, Sidney Myer Asia Centre, University of Melbourne. Enquiries: (03) 8344 1176. Email [community-relations@unimelb.edu.au](mailto:community-relations@unimelb.edu.au). Web: [http://events.unimelb.edu.au/eventid\\_4354.html](http://events.unimelb.edu.au/eventid_4354.html). RSVP: [community-relations@unimelb.edu.au](mailto:community-relations@unimelb.edu.au).

**13 DECEMBER. LAUNCH OF THE AUSTRALIAN CENTRE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION (VIC).** Professor Margaret Gardner, Vice Chancellor, RMIT University, will launch the Centre during Human Rights Week. Speakers: Don Watson, author and writer of the Paul Keating Redfern speech; Bryan Dawe, satirist and Reconciliation advocate. 6.00pm, Casey Plaza, RMIT University, Melbourne. Refreshments provided. Please RSVP: [humanrights@rmit.edu.au](mailto:humanrights@rmit.edu.au).

**14 DECEMBER DEDICATION OF ACC&C'S FIRST SHELTER (ACT).** Celebrate the opening and dedication of the first shelter at the ACC&C. After a short service, light refreshments will be served from the Pavilion and deck 3.30pm, 15 Blackall Street, Barton (cnr Kings Ave). Contact (02) 6273 8805 or 0411 094 185; web: [www.acc-c.org.au](http://www.acc-c.org.au).

**15 DECEMBER. TV SCREENING: 'BUSINESS ETHICS' (NATIONAL).** Aurora Community Television, Foxtel Digital and Austar Digital Channel 183, 1.00pm. This week in Australia we mark Human Rights Week. One important factor within human rights is economic development. We cannot share with the poor what we don't have. And that means that there is a morality about the way in which people, business and nations acquire their

wealth and share it. In this film from Loyola Productions we explore the growing area of business ethics. As we prepare for Christmas, this is a perfect time for us to consider these issues. [www.catholicchurchtv.com.au](http://www.catholicchurchtv.com.au)

**20 DECEMBER. LAUNCH OF CSJS PAPER 'CONFRONTING THE DEATH PENALTY' (QLD).** The Australian Catholic Social Justice Council and Corinda-Graceville Catholic Parish will launch the latest in the ACSJC's Catholic Social Justice Series, 'Confronting the Death Penalty: People, Politics And Principle' by Michael Costigan, Peter Norden SJ, Brian Deegan and Andrew Byrnes. The paper will be launched by the Archbishop of Brisbane, the Most Reverend John Bathersby DD STD. Respondent: Professor Andrew Byrnes, Professor of International Law, University of New South Wales. 12.00noon, St Joseph's Catholic Church, Oxley Rd, Corinda (cnr Oxley Rd and Clewley St), Qld. RSVP: (07) 3336 9351 or [emericka@bne.catholic.net.au](mailto:emericka@bne.catholic.net.au) by 17 December 2007.

**29 DECEMBER. TV SCREENING: 'CARITAS: RESPONSE IN SRI LANKA' (NATIONAL).** Aurora Community Television, Foxtel Digital and Austar Digital Channel 183, 1.00pm. This week we mark the third anniversary of the Tsunami which hit so many of our northern neighbours. In this film we look at how our support of the Catholic Aid agency, Caritas, reached out immediately to help our friends in the affected countries, and enables them to rebuild their lives. [www.catholicchurchtv.com.au](http://www.catholicchurchtv.com.au)

**16-18 JANUARY; 21-22 JANUARY. INTENSIVE COURSE: 'INTRODUCING ISLAM' (NSW).** This unit will provide an in-depth introduction to Islam, including historical background and information necessary for understanding the complex crosscurrents of Christian-Muslim Relations in contemporary society. Lecturer: Fr Patrick McInerney LSAI TheolM and Muslim guest lecturers. Catholic Institute of Sydney, 99 Albert Rd Strathfield. NSW 2135. Tel: (02) 9752 9500; Fax: (02) 9746 6022; Email: [cisinfo@cis.catholic.edu.au](mailto:cisinfo@cis.catholic.edu.au); web [www.cis.catholic.edu.au](http://www.cis.catholic.edu.au).

**16-18 JANUARY; 21-22 JANUARY. INTENSIVE COURSE: 'MISSION AND THE CATHOLIC SCHOOL' (NSW).** This unit introduces students to the various models of Catholic Education in Australia and the way in which these affect mission consciousness. It also aims to help teachers live creatively with the tensions between these models and the values and dictates of public education policy as they pursue the Church's mission in education. Lecturers: Dr Therese D'Orsa PhD, MA, MEd, BA, Dr Jim D'Orsa PhD, MEd, M Curriculum, BSC, Grad Dip Student Welfare. Catholic Institute of Sydney, 99 Albert Rd Strathfield. NSW 2135. Tel: (02) 9752 9500; Fax: (02) 9746 6022; Email: [cisinfo@cis.catholic.edu.au](mailto:cisinfo@cis.catholic.edu.au); web [www.cis.catholic.edu.au](http://www.cis.catholic.edu.au).

## News Monitor

### **Vatican supports Palestinian refugees "right of return"**

A Vatican official sparked headlines by saying Palestinians have the right to return to their homeland, a controversial issue which has dogged Israeli-Palestinian peace efforts.

**Pope says treat AIDS victims with compassion**  
Pope Benedict has reached out to AIDS victims saying he feels "spiritually close" to those who suffer from the disease.

### **Vinnies welcomes Rudd action on homelessness**

St Vincent de Paul Society National CEO Dr John Falzon welcomed Kevin Rudd's decision to address homelessness as one of his government's top priorities.

### **Study documents mixed Catholic record on Aborigines**

A Brisbane scholar has argued that while nuns and missionaries demonstrated concern for

Indigenous Australians, the hierarchy “failed Aborigines by paying lipservice to their plight”.

### **Catholic groups commend ALP on social inclusion**

Catholic Social Services Australia and Jesuit Social Service welcomed the ALP’s release of its Social Inclusion Agenda.

### **Commission urges Rudd to forge new indigenous partnerships**

Brisbane’s Catholic Justice and Peace Commission urged the new Prime Minister to commit to fresh partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, to end “gross Indigenous disadvantage”.

### **Writer praises Catholic schools work in GM awareness**

An international writer on Genetic Modification applauded the initiative of Catholic schools in bringing GM case studies into their curricula.

### **Pope urges 23 new cardinals to work for peace**

Pope Benedict has asked the new cardinals he consecrated at the weekend to make work for peace their priority.

### **Vinnies Christmas appeal aims to help renters**

As it launched its Christmas Appeal, the St Vincent de Paul Society in NSW was focusing upon the overwhelming pressures brought on by rising rent levels.

### **Caritas calls on parties to act on Indigenous health**

Caritas Australia urged Australia’s political leaders to work to close the 17 year gap in life expectancy between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians.

### **Inaction on China human rights abuses “reprehensible”: Deakin**

Outgoing Melbourne auxiliary Bishop Hilton Deakin slammed inaction by Australians over extensive human rights abuses in China, appealing for a “sense of purpose” in standing up for freedom of belief.

### **US bishops call Catholics to “political responsibility”**

In a statement characterised by commentators as a call for a “new Catholic action”, US bishops said that the Church must form the consciences of Catholics to bring their convictions into public and political life.

### **Racing chaplain urges compassion “like Archbishop Wilson”**

Victoria’s racing chaplain Fr Brendan Dillon said racing people pray that Cardinal Pell and WYD officials will follow the lead of Archbishop Philip Wilson, who issued a statement of solidarity with the racing fraternity.

### **New book responds to Abbott social justice slur**

A collection of 18 essays published during the month countered Tony Abbott’s recent dismissal of social justice as “socialism masquerading as Justice”.

### **Good Shepherd Sisters appeal for Indigenous scholarship support**

The Good Shepherd Sisters, in partnership with the Mary MacKillop Foundation, launched an annual Indigenous Reconciliation Scholarship program in a bid to nurture women’s leadership within the Aboriginal community.

### **Parish priest supports bid to save Scott Rush**

Fr Tim Harris of Corinda-Graceville Parish in Brisbane joined parishioners Lee and Christine Rush, in a bid to save their drug smuggler son Scott and fellow parishioner Michael Czugaj from the firing squad in Indonesia.

### **Spiritual support offered to struggling farmers**

South Australian churches are working alongside financial advisors to support farmers struggling to cope with the crippling drought.

### **Vinnies welcomes Labor commitment to homeless**

St Vincent de Paul Society National CEO, Dr John Falzon welcomed Labor’s commitment to halve the number of people turned away from homelessness services across Australia within five years.

## Caritas Election challenge on Millennium Development Goals

Caritas Australia CEO Jack de Groot said the major political parties have failed to live up to the Australian Government's commitment in 2000 to realise the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) to halve extreme poverty by 2015.

**Priest says Sudanese fears baseless**  
Racially based fears of the Sudanese community are unwarranted and unhelpful, according to the local parish priest in the Melbourne suburb that is home to Australia's largest concentration of Sudanese refugees.

- Courtesy Church Resources' CathNews, stories in detail at <http://cathnews.com/news/711>



# Social Justice Calendar

## DECEMBER 2007

- 1 World AIDS Day
- 2 International Day for the Abolition of Slavery
- 3 International Day of Disabled Persons
  - Battle of the Eureka Stockade 1874
- 5 International Volunteer Day for Economic and Social Development
- 6 St Nicholas (Santa Claus)
- 7 International Civil Aviation Day
- 8 Final Session of Vatican Council II 1965
- 10 Human Rights Day: Adoption of United Nations Declaration of Human Rights 1948
  - Prime Minister Paul Keating's Speech to launch International Year of the World's Indigenous People 1992
  - Death of Thomas Merton 1968
- 18 International Migrants Day
  - South Australian Parliament was first in the world to give women the right to vote 1894
- 21 Native Title Bill passed by the Senate 1993
  - Dissolution of the USSR and founding of the Commonwealth of Independent States including Russia 1991
- 23 Wik Decision 1996
  - Immigration Restriction Act (White Australia Policy) enacted 1901
- 25 Christmas Day
- 29 International Day for Biological Diversity
- 30 20th Anniversary of Sollicitudo Rei Socialis, John Paul II
- 31 Paid annual leave granted to workers in Australia 1946

## JANUARY 2008

- 1 World Day of Prayer for Peace
  - International Decade of the World's Indigenous Peoples (commenced 2005)
  - Foundation of the Commonwealth of Australia 1901
  - Native Title Act 1994
- 3 First loans by the Grameen Bank 1977
- 10 Islamic New Year
  - First oil strike in Texas ushers in the oil era, 1901
  - First UN General Assembly with 51 nations, 1946
- 15 Martin Luther King Jr born Atlanta USA 1929
- 18 International Week of Prayer for Christian Unity
- 20 World Day of Prayer for Migrants and Refugees
- 24 Feast of St Francis de Sales, Patron of Journalists
  - Papal Message for World Day of Communications published
- 25 Second Vatican Council promulgated by Pope John XXIII, 1959
- 26 Australia Day / Survival Day
  - Aboriginal Tent Embassy established in Canberra 1972
- 30 Mahatma Gandhi assassinated 1948

*Notes on these dates are available in the printed Social Justice Diary (\$6.60 - to order go to [http://www.socialjustice.catholic.org.au/content/publications/social\\_justice\\_calendar.html](http://www.socialjustice.catholic.org.au/content/publications/social_justice_calendar.html), or cal 02 9956 5811)*

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Website: <http://socialjustice.catholic.org.au> (some contact details to change soon – see ‘From the Secretariat’ for more information). 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.