

## 2010 Social Justice Sunday Statement – Summary

### Violence in Australia: A message of peace

In the 2010 Social Justice Sunday Statement, the Catholic bishops of Australia address the anger and violence in our society, and the effects on individuals, families and the community as a whole.

The Statement, *Violence in Australia: A message of peace*, considers how the Christian values of forgiveness and reconciliation can lead to peace and non-violent ways of addressing conflict and divisions. The call to be peacemakers can be especially challenging when so much of our culture encourages aggressive attitudes, convinces us of the need to succeed at all costs, or fosters the desire to ‘get even’.

Australia is essentially a peaceful country, with strong traditions of fairness and justice, but there are also deep roots of violence in our story: the dispossession of the Aboriginal peoples, the violence of our convict history, and the strand of racism that has been directed at immigrants at different stages of our history.

The Bishops draw on the Gospels, social teachings of the Church and examples of individuals and groups working for peace in the Australian context. They highlight the role we all share in making a difference for peace as individuals, as a community and as a nation.

They also make clear how radical and central are Jesus’ teachings about peacemaking in the Gospel, how discipleship of Jesus leads naturally to a desire to make peace, and how his power working in us makes that desire a reality. At the centre of the story of Jesus is the terrible violence he endured and his triumph over it in his resurrection. As followers of Christ crucified and risen, we are called to go into the world and to bring a peace that the world alone cannot give.

Peace and peace-building go beyond simply the absence of conflict. They are positive, constructive ways of living that require constant nurturing, and reflect the sacredness that is in the deepest part of our being. The 2010 Social Justice Sunday Statement gives practical suggestions and poses important questions that will help individuals and parish and other groups as they consider their part in bringing the peace of Christ to our world.

#### **Bulletin note**

The Bishops would welcome promotion of the Statement in the weeks leading up to Social Justice Sunday. A possible entry in your parish bulletin or newsletter could be:

*We celebrate Social Justice Sunday on 26 September. This year’s Social Justice Sunday Statement is titled: ‘Violence in Australia: A message of peace’.*

*The Statement considers how the Christian values of forgiveness and reconciliation can lead to peace and non-violent ways of addressing conflict and divisions. The bishops highlight the role we all share in making a difference for peace as individuals, as a community and as a nation.*

*For further details about the Social Justice Sunday Statement, visit the Australian Catholic Social Justice Council website ([www.acsjc.org.au](http://www.acsjc.org.au)) or call (02) 8306 3499.*

#### **Associated resources**

The ACSJC website ([www.socialjustice.catholic.org.au](http://www.socialjustice.catholic.org.au)) will have resources available for download free of charge before Social Justice Sunday. They will include Social Justice Sunday Liturgy Notes, a Power-Point presentation and teachers’ resources.

Prayer Cards and ‘Ten Steps’ leaflets can be ordered from the ACSJC on (02) 8306 3499 or by email: [admin@acsjc.org.au](mailto:admin@acsjc.org.au)