

ACSJC Monthly Briefing February 2015 No 164



From the Secretariat February 2015

Dear Friends,

As we issue this first briefing for 2015, two Australians on death row in Bali's Kerobokan Prison face death by firing squad.

Myuran Sukamaran and Andrew Chan are among nine Australians who were arrested in Bali in April 2005 for attempting to traffic heroin to Australia. In 2006, Myuran and Andrew were sentenced to death and, following a lengthy judicial process and unsuccessful appeals, both sought clemency from the President in 2011. Both recently had their appeals rejected.

The Indonesian Government recently resumed the execution of death row inmates as part of its 'tough on drugs' stance.

There can be no denying the serious nature of the offences and the devastating impact of drugs in communities in Indonesia and Australia. There is no question that there should be appropriate punishment when such crimes are committed. To oppose the death penalty is in no way to condone the actions of those who might face that penalty. However, state-sanctioned killing is not an appropriate means of punishing offenders or deterring those who would consider committing such crimes.

The death penalty is an affront to the sanctity of human life. Each and every life – even the lives of those who have done great evil – must be respected. Capital punishment undermines a society's respect for life and contributes to a culture of vengeance and death. It is cruel and unnecessary, since all societies have other means of protecting themselves from violence and restoring justice. And it denies those who have committed crimes the chance to repent and reform. [LINK](#)

As recently as October 2014, Pope Francis restated the Church's condemnation of the death penalty when meeting with International Association of Penal Law. He said that 'it is impossible to imagine that States today fail to employ a means other than capital punishment to protect the lives of other people from the unjust aggressor.' [LINK](#)

Andrew and Myuran are remorseful and have taken responsibility for their crimes. Over the past decade, they have turned their lives around and helped fellow inmates in Kerobokan to do the same. They have initiated education programs, provided counselling support and taken on leadership roles with the intention of supporting and reforming other prisoners. They, and all on death row, should be spared and be allowed to continue to contribute to the lives of fellow inmates and to the broader Indonesian community.

The 'Mercy Campaign' is a group of volunteers, including filmmakers, academics, students and volunteers, who are promoting the case for clemency for Andrew and Myuran. Professor Greg Craven, Vice-Chancellor of the Australian Catholic University, is a spokesperson for the Mercy Campaign. He recently highlighted the urgency of the situation on the ABC's *7.30 Report*.

'It won't happen this week, but it could happen in five weeks. We are looking literally at people who were in a pool of people who conceivably could be executed who are now in a very short queue of people ... who will be executed unless something happens,' he said.

Asked about the aims of the Mercy Campaign, Professor Craven said, 'First we have to understand what it is. This is not going to be a Hollywood movie. This is not going to be a nice thing. It is going to be horrible. These people are going to die in exactly the same way as the people in Martin Place and Charlie Hebdo died. Yes, the motivation will be different. Yes, you can have views about whether these people are worthy or not, but it will be like that.

'Secondly, I think that the Australian people need to make it clear to their government, by way of petition, by way of advocacy, by way of standing up, that they are behind the position that this is a bad thing and should not happen. And I think the Australian people need to make it clear to their government that they expect that position to be advocated with sufficient strength and sufficient sophistication to the Indonesian Government.'

[LINK](#)

On the Mercy Campaign's website, barrister Julian McMahon says, 'Unless clemency is granted, Myuran and Andrew will be taken out and shot dead.

'There is no doubt they are both guilty of a serious crime, attempting to export heroin from Indonesia to Australia. The only issue now in this case is whether they should spend decades in jail, or be shot. Their lawyers argue that decades in jail is punishment enough for their crime ...

'Our argument is essentially that rehabilitated prisoners who work and rehabilitate others deserve some mercy, deserve a long jail sentence instead of execution. Such rehabilitation is the best result a prison can deliver – it shouldn't end in execution.'

Please visit the Mercy Campaign website to find out more and to sign the petition calling for mercy for Andrew, Myuran and other prisoners on death row. [LINK](#)

John Ferguson
National Executive Officer



Current Issues/Resources February 2015

MERCY CAMPAIGN – DEATH PENALTY

The Mercy Campaign is seeking mercy for the lives of Myuran Sukamaran and Andrew Chan who were arrested in 2005 in Indonesia for trafficking drugs. Following a lengthy judicial process and unsuccessful appeals against the death sentence, both lodged appeals for clemency with the President. Recently, both had these appeals rejected. A spokesperson for the Campaign is Professor Greg Craven, Vice Chancellor of the Australian Catholic University. A recent ABC 7.30 Report interview with Greg Craven can be found [here](#). You can join the [Mercy Campaign](#).

AUSTRALIA WITHDRAWS FROM REGIONAL LEADERSHIP

Caritas Australia, the international aid and development agency of the Catholic Church, believes that the decision to cut Australian aid represents a significant turning away from six decades of Australia playing a constructive leadership role in our region and on the world stage. Treasurer Joe Hockey announced deep cuts of a further \$3.7 billion from the aid budget in today's Mid-year Economic and Fiscal Outlook (MYEFO). Caritas Australia CEO Paul O'Callaghan said that, together with the May budget cuts which took \$7.6 billion from Australia's overseas aid program, more than \$11 billion has been cut from the aid budget in the last year alone. Read the full [media release](#).

PROJECT COMPASSION 2015 – PUT YOUR COMPASSION INTO ACTION

On 15 February, Caritas Australia, the international aid and development organization of the Catholic Church, will launch its annual Project Compassion appeal – one of Australia's largest humanitarian fundraising and awareness-raising campaigns. Each year Project Compassion, which runs through the six weeks of Lent, brings hundreds of thousands of Australians together in solidarity with the world's poor. Caritas Australia CEO, Paul O'Callaghan, said Project Compassion was an extraordinary, ongoing demonstration of the faith, love and generosity of caring supporters, all in the name of justice and peace. To donate to Project Compassion, or for fundraising ideas, [click here](#) or phone 1800 024 413.

ACBC MEDIA RELEASE: SYMPATHY AND PRAYERS EXTENDED TO ALL AFFECTED BY SYDNEY SIEGE

The President of the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference, the Most Reverend Archbishop Denis Hart, extended the deepest sympathy and prayers of the Catholic Church in Australia to all people affected by the siege in Martin Place, Sydney. 'We pray for all who were held hostage during the siege, especially those who tragically lost their lives. May the surviving hostages quickly heal and find new peace in their lives.' Archbishop Hart expressed his faith that all Australians will be as one in condemning this tragic event, and that they will join together as people of goodwill to support each other. Read the media [statement](#).

ACSJC MEDIA RELEASE: HUMAN RIGHTS DAY: TIME FOR AUSTRALIA TO TAKE STOCK

On Human Rights Day (10 December), the Chairman of the Australian Catholic Social Justice Council called on Government to take stock of its human rights performance. "Recent developments in Indigenous affairs and immigration policy give cause for anyone concerned about human rights to ask, 'What's happening to our nation?'" Bishop Christopher Saunders said. "As always, the benchmark of a country's human rights performance is seen in how it treats the most vulnerable. Australia is failing the test for First Australians seeking to maintain connection with their traditional, ancestral homelands and for refugees and asylum seekers fleeing violence and persecution in their homelands," he said. Read the [media release](#).

JOINT STATEMENT: World day of prayer, reflection and action against human trafficking

The Australian Catholic Bishops Conference (ACBC) and Australian Catholic Religious Against Trafficking in Humans (ACRATH) support His Holiness Pope Francis in declaring Sunday 8 February 2015, the Feast of St Josephine Bakhita, as World Day of prayer, reflection and action against human trafficking. Bishop Eugene Hurley, Chairman of the Bishops Commission for Pastoral Life said, 'It is imperative that we begin a journey of personal change when we mark the 8 February. Human trafficking exists in Australia and on this planet because we allow it to exist. Let us together, commit to eradicate this affront to our

humanity.' Sr Anne Tormey rsm, President, ACRATH said, 'Following the call from Pope Francis and leaders of the Anglican, Orthodox, Jewish, Islamic, Buddhist and Hindu faiths, "to eradicate the terrible scourge of modern slavery in all its forms", today we join this global initiative. The life of St Josephine Bakhita reminds us of the assault to the dignity, and of the suffering endured by every trafficked person.' Read the [media release](#).

LANDMARK REPORT: BEYOND THE BOATS: BUILDING AN ASYLUM AND REFUGEE POLICY FOR THE LONG TERM

This report was developed from a high level roundtable on asylum and refugee policy convened by Centre for Policy Development (CPD), Australia21 and the Andrew and Renata Kaldor Centre for International Refugee Law (UNSW). Now that the acute phase of boat arrivals appears over, *Beyond the boats* urges all parties to use this opportunity to construct an overarching national asylum and refugee policy for the long term. Key recommendations include increasing Australia's humanitarian intake, phasing out mandatory detention apart from initial screening and establishing a regional Track II dialogue. Read the report in full [here](#).

CAMPAIGN: 'WE'RE BETTER THAN THIS'

We're Better Than This is a movement that has grown from a decision by ordinary Australians to do something about the extraordinary cruelty of our Government towards the hundreds of innocent children in detention/deterrence camps. It has the support of prominent Australians. The founders are a small group of professionals with experience in human rights, refugee advocacy, PR, film making, advertising, marketing and social media. Send a postcard or upload your own video. To find out more, visit the campaign [website](#).

STOP THE TRAFFIK (STT) CAMPAIGN: NOT MY CUP OF TEA

Tata Global Beverages is one of the largest tea companies in the world. They provide such iconic brands such as Tetley and are the major shareholder of the APPL tea plantations in Assam where there are ongoing reports of human trafficking out of the gardens occurring. Tata Global Beverages, one of the biggest tea companies in the world, can do something to stop this. Thanks to pressure from activists around the world, Tata has released a plan to address human trafficking but it doesn't go far enough to address STT requests. Tata has indicated that they are not breaking the law and this is true. This is yet another situation where the law is not enough to end human trafficking. STT are calling again on Tata to show leadership and address the matters raised. Read the full report and sign the petition [here](#).

DOCUMENTARY RESOURCE: 'WEST PAPUA: FORGOTTEN BIRD OF PARADISE'

This full version of the critically acclaimed undercover documentary, 'Forgotten Bird of Paradise', on the West Papua independence struggle, is available on YouTube. It was directed by English filmmaker Dominic Brown, who travelled in West Papua without the knowledge or authority of the Indonesian authorities. [View](#) the Documentary.

CATHOLIC EARTHCARE AUSTRALIA JOINS GLOBAL CATHOLIC CLIMATE MOVEMENT

The Global Catholic Climate Movement (GCCM) is the first of its kind of a global collaboration of Catholic organisations and leaders working toward a sustainable climate future. The GCCM was launched in

January and released a statement calling for prayer and action among the world's Catholic population, which was presented to Pope Francis during his trip to the Philippines. Read the GCCM [media release](#).

ANTAR CAMPAIGN: GOVERNMENT MUST ACT NOW ON NATIONAL CRISIS

Help ANTA by lobbying politicians to develop justice targets to reduce the over incarceration of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Both major parties have committed to developing much needed justice targets under the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) closing the gap framework, yet nothing has been done. The issue is yet to even be discussed as part of a COAG agenda! Help send a strong message that we must close the justice gap and ensure that another generation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people is not lost to the criminal justice system. Access ANTA campaign [resources](#).

DVD RESOURCE: EXPLORING PERSPECTIVES

The Women's Reconciliation Network ran a forum on constitution recognition at Ashfield Town Hall in Sydney in March 2014. A recording of the forum is now available in the DVD 'Exploring Perspectives: Conversations on Constitutional Recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People'. The Women's Reconciliation Network invites you to share this valuable resource in schools, tertiary institutions, community groups and learning circles. The 27-minute DVD includes presentations by: Kirsten Grey, Kamilaroi/Muruwari Woman, CEO NSW Reconciliation Council; George Williams AM, Professor of Constitutional Law UNSW; Nicole Watson, Birri Gubba Woman, Researcher, Jumbunna House of Learning UTS; and Jeff McMullen AM, Journalist and Film Maker. The DVD costs \$10. To purchase copies, contact Sr Helen Kearins at the ACSJC on (02) 8306 3499 or //admin@acsjc.org.au">email.

ONLINE RESOURCE: THE WAY OF PEACE - ANZAC CENTENARY EDITION 1915-2015

This is an online resource produced by the Columban Mission Institute's Centre for Peace, Ecology and Justice to enable Christian reflection and response during the time of the Anzac Centenary. It was launched on 4 October, the Feast of St Francis of Assisi. As violence and warfare continue to plague so many parts of the world today, this resource provides stimulus for you to be creative and active in responding to the Christian call to be peacemakers in the footsteps of the non-violent Jesus. For further information: //pej.cmi@columban.org.au">email or 02 9352 8000. Download [here](#).

MERCY SOWING SEEDS

The Seeds of Justice program offers students and teachers the opportunity to deepen their awareness of social justice and meet like-minded people from other schools. Over the last decade, Seeds of Justice, an initiative of Mercy Education, has coordinated two student camps and one staff conference each year for metropolitan schools in Victoria. In 2013 the scope of the project began to grow, stretching to encompass schools from regional Victoria, Western Australia and South Australia. Guest speakers are a feature of the camps, sharing their expert, firsthand experiences working within the field of social justice and then opening up the floor to the students to respond. Like to know more? [Click here](#).

SHUTTING DOWN COMMUNITY VOICES WILL WEAKEN GOVERNMENT'S ABILITY TO MAKE EFFECTIVE REFORMS

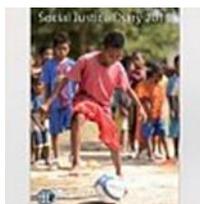
The Australian Council of Social Service expressed deep concern at the extensive funding cuts to community sector organisations announced recently. ACOSS believes this will severely weaken the Federal Government’s ability to engage with the community on the important reforms that lie ahead and deliver an inclusive growth agenda. “Cutting support for vital community expertise and voices is a major mistake. Community voices play a crucial role in providing on-the-ground advice and an important link connecting communities with government decision-making processes,” said ACOSS CEO Dr Cassandra Goldie. “We urge the Minister to work in partnership with us to enable everyone to participate in our society and have a strong social protection system for anyone who falls into hard times. This is the mark of a strong civil society and will be the measure by which the Government will be judged.” Read the full [media release](#).

EVALUATING NEW INCOME MANAGEMENT IN THE NORTHERN TERRITORY: FINAL EVALUATION REPORT

Income management involves restricting how people on income support spend a proportion of their welfare payments. The policy was first introduced in the Northern Territory during the Northern Territory Emergency Response in 2007 and was subsequently replaced with New Income Management in 2010. The Australian Government commissioned a team of researchers at the Social Policy Research Centre at UNSW Australia, the Australian National University, and the Australian Institute of Family Studies, to evaluate New Income Management in the Northern Territory to examine the impact of New Income Management. The evaluation involved a large scale longitudinal survey of people subject to income management, interviews with a variety of stakeholders and extensive analysis of a range of administrative datasets to examine the outcomes over time of people on income management. Read the Evaluation of New Income Management in the Northern Territory [Report](#).

80% OF AUSTRALIA’S COMMUNITY SERVICES UNABLE TO MEET DEMAND: ACOSS REPORT

The largest survey of Australia's community services sector released recently, reveals that 80% of frontline agencies are unable to meet current levels of demand with the resources they have. The biggest gaps in meeting demand are in the areas of greatest community need. The survey of almost 1,000 community service workers from around the country shows that 43% of services are simply unable to meet the needs of people coming to them for help. A further 37% can ‘almost’ meet demand. “Already 2.5 million people are living below the poverty line in Australia, including 603,000 children. Now is the time for us to work together as a community to turn this picture around. Australia’s community welfare sector, which contributes 5% to our nation’s GDP and employs nearly one million people, is working hard to meet this challenge ... We urge governments at all levels to work with us in the pursuit of evidence-based policies that will be effective, not ones based on short term budgetary imperatives that will cost us more as a community in the longer term,” Dr Goldie said. Read the full [report](#).



ACSJC Publications February 2015

ORDER NOW! – 2015 SOCIAL JUSTICE DIARY

The 2015 Social Justice Diary includes the dates of significant events, anniversaries and special days which celebrate particular aspects of social justice. The Diary 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: \$7.50 (including postage). To download an order form, [click here](#).

DISCUSSION GUIDE: 2015 WORLD DAY OF PEACE MESSAGE

The theme for the 48th World Day of Peace Message from Pope Francis is *No Longer Slaves, but Brothers and Sisters*. The Pope Francis speaks of the Ongoing scourge of human trafficking and the need to act to protect and defend its victims – labourers including children who are exploited by industry, migrants who are exploited during a dangerous journey, women and minors forced into prostitution or sold for arranged marriages, those trafficked for the sale of organs, for recruitment as soldiers, for illegal activities, for cross-border adoption. He says the effort to address trafficking is an ‘immense task, which calls for courage, patience and perseverance, deserves the appreciation of the whole Church and society’. The ACSJC has prepared a Discussion Guide for the papal message, which is available on our [website](#).

SOCIAL JUSTICE STATEMENT 2014–2015 – STILL TAKING ORDERS

This year’s Australian Catholic Bishops Conference Social Justice Statement is entitled ‘A Crown for Australia: Striving for the best in our sporting nation’. The ACSJC is still taking orders for the Statement. An order form is available [here](#).

Prayer Card & Leaflet: Ten Steps Towards Being a Good Sport.

Now available. Call (02) 8306 3499

Social Justice Statement Summary, Liturgy Notes, Community and Student Resources, PowerPoint Presentation and video, related multimedia resources – available [here](#).

Ecumenical resource: ‘Gambling and its Impact in Australia – Is nothing sacred?’. Download from the National Council of Churches [website](#).

BUILDING BRIDGES

The book, *Building Bridges: Social Justice Statements from Australia’s Bishops 1988 to 2013*, brings these Statements together in an attractive and readable format. The publication is fully indexed, making this an exceptional resource for education and research. It offers an invaluable insight into Catholic social teaching brought to life in an Australian context over the past 26 years. This collection is a vital resource for anyone interested in the Church’s teaching on justice. It is of special interest to schools and universities and to parish and diocesan groups.

Building Bridges is available from the ACSJC for \$35.00 per copy including postage anywhere in Australia. Order forms are available [here](#).

(Catholic Social Justice Series papers: \$7.50 a copy, including postage)



News Monitor February 2015

[ACRMO 'deeply disturbed' at events on Manus Island](#)

The Australian Catholic Migrant and Refugee Office said it was deeply disturbed at the unfolding events on Manus Island.

[US Catholic politicians urged to back immigration reform](#)

A group of American Catholic leaders was urging fellow Catholics in Congress to set aside partisan bickering and support the US bishops' efforts on behalf of immigration reform, calling it a sanctity of life issue.

[Leaders appeal to Indon president for clemency](#)

Catholic leaders urged Indonesia's President to commute the death sentences of five people set to be executed before the end of the year, amid a marked increase in capital punishment sentences.

[Pope promoted US - Cuba deal](#)

A personal appeal by Pope Francis played a key role in finalising a deal to open relations between the United States and Cuba for the first time in 53 years.

[Pakistani Christians condemn Taliban school massacre](#)

Pakistani Christians condemned a brutal Taliban attack on a school in Peshawar overnight that killed 141 people, 132 of them children.

[Vatican discusses Guantanamo closure with John Kerry](#)

The Vatican's Secretary of State discussed the continued functioning of the US detention centre at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, during a meeting with US Secretary of State John Kerry.

[Pope and bishops call for binding global climate agreement](#)

As United Nations leaders gathered at the climate summit in Peru last week, Pope Francis and bishops from around the world called for a global climate treaty and an end to the use of fossil fuels, said Catholic EarthCare Australia.

[US bishops say CIA torture 'violated God-given humanity'](#)

The US bishops' Committee on International Justice and Peace said acts of torture outlined in a Senate Intelligence Committee report "violated the God-given human dignity inherent in all people and were unequivocally wrong".

[Social Justice Council: 'What's happening to our nation?'](#)

The Australian Catholic Social Justice Council called on the Government to take stock of its human rights performance: "Recent developments in Indigenous affairs and immigration policy give cause to ask, 'What's happening to our nation?'"

[Asylum-seeker Bill 'unethical' and 'an all-time low'](#)

The Government's Migration and Maritime Powers Legislation Amendment Bill was secured by bartering children, was 'unethical', and represents 'an all-time low in Australian politics', said ACMRO.

[Aid cuts: Australia turns its back on the world, said Caritas](#)

Caritas Australia said an announcement by the federal government to further cut Australian aid represented a significant turning away from six decades of Australia playing a constructive leadership role in our region and on the world stage.

[Caritas calls for protection of foreign aid](#)

Caritas Australia expressed grave concerns at reports that Australia's overseas aid program may face more budget cuts in the Mid-Year Economic and Fiscal Outlook.

[Faithful pray for action on climate change](#)

Catholic Earthcare Australia joined faith communities in Sydney's Royal Botanical Gardens to pray for action on climate change, as part of a series of global prayer vigils coinciding with UN climate talks in Lima, Peru.

[Catholic groups focus on poor as UN climate talks open in Peru](#)

Ahead of the global summit for a climate treaty in Paris, the world community must first make progress in Peru.

[Francis: Syrian chemical weapons provided by foreign powers](#)

Pope Francis suggested the blame for thousands of civilian deaths to Syria lies with foreign powers which provided the Assad regime with chemical weapons.

[ACMRO speaks out on asylum-seeker Bill, Aussies record song](#)

The Australian Catholic Migrant and Refugee Office called on senators to safeguard and defend the human dignity of asylum-seekers, as a group of prominent Australians, including Broken Bay's new Bishop, record a song for child asylum seekers.

– Courtesy cathnews.com



Social Justice Diary February 2015

February 2015

1	Sun	Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time
2	Mon	<p>Presentation of Jesus</p> <p><u>World Interfaith Harmony Week begins</u> <u>World Day of Prayer for Consecrated Life</u> <u>World Wetlands Day</u></p> <p>READ MORE ↓</p>
3	Tue	
4	Wed	
5	Thu	<u>1996: Signing of Cape York Peninsula Heads of Agreement</u>
6	Fri	<p><u>International Day of Zero Tolerance to Female Genital Mutilation</u> <u>Waitangi Day, Aotearoa New Zealand</u></p>
7	Sat	
8	Sun	<p>Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time</p> <p><u>International Day of Prayer and Awareness against Human Trafficking</u></p>
9	Mon	
10	Tue	
11	Wed	<p><u>World Day of Prayer for the Sick</u> <u>1990: Nelson Mandela released from prison</u></p>
12	Thu	<p><u>1965: Commencement of the Freedom Ride in Australia</u> <u>2005: Sr Dorothy Stang murdered in Brazil</u></p>
13	Fri	<u>2008: Apology to Stolen Generations by Australian Government</u> - Read ACSJC Resources on <u>Justice for Indigenous People</u>
14	Sat	

15	Sun	Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time
16	Mon	
17	Tue	
18	Wed	Ash Wednesday READ MORE ↓
19	Thu	<u>Chinese New Year</u>
20	Fri	<u>World Day of Social Justice</u> - Read ACSJC Resources on <u>Catholic Social Teaching</u>
21	Sat	<u>International Mother Language Day</u>
22	Sun	First Sunday of Lent
23	Mon	
24	Tue	
25	Wed	
26	Thu	
27	Fri	
28	Sat	