

# ACSJC Monthly Briefing May 2016 No 178



## From the Secretariat May 2016

Dear Friends,

This year, the day usually given to the Memorial of St Joseph the Worker, 1 May, falls on the 6th Sunday of Easter, which takes precedence over the memorial according to the norms of the General Instruction on the Roman Missal and the General Norms for the Liturgical Year and Calendar.

So, while there is no Pastoral Letter for the Feast of St Joseph the Worker, we continue the Australian Catholic Social Justice Council's tradition of raising important issues concerning work and economic justice during the month of May. The following three issues are critical ones for people who are most disadvantaged because they struggle at the fringes of the labour market or are excluded from the market altogether.

The Church has always held a special concern for unemployed and vulnerable workers and their families. This concern was clearly stated by Pope John Paul II, in 1981, when he spoke on the broad subject of 'Human Work':

... the 'poor' appear under various forms; they appear in various places and at various times; in many cases they appear as a *result of the violation of the dignity of human work*: either because the opportunities for human work are limited as a result of the scourge of unemployment, or because a low value is put on work and the rights that flow from it, especially the right to a just wage and to the personal security of the worker and his or her family. [*Laborem Exercens* n.8]

He said that the Church's solidarity with poor and vulnerable workers is part of 'her mission, her service, a proof of her fidelity to Christ, so that she can truly be the "Church of the poor"'.

With this in mind, the Australian Catholic Social Justice Council raises three issues:

1. The inadequate levels of income support offered to people who are unemployed;
2. The risk that penalty rates will be cut for vulnerable workers; and
3. The increasing intrusion of work demands into family time and weekends.

These issues have been raised by the ACSJC and other Church and community organisations over many years. We continue to call on our political leaders to address these areas where the dignity of work continues to be devalued or denied to vulnerable members of our society.

### **CALLING FOR A 'NEW START' ON UNEMPLOYMENT ALLOWANCES**

The dignity of work is seen in the personal fulfilment that comes to the worker, the wages and conditions that meet the needs of families, and the wealth and relationships of solidarity that support the broader life of the community. The employment relationship involves more than the worker and employer – it involves all those who depend on the worker and the society that relies on the hard work and productivity of the worker. That is why society as a whole has a responsibility to address the causes of unemployment and share the burden carried by people who are denied the opportunity to work.

The Church regards the provision of unemployment benefits as a fundamental responsibility of society:

The obligation to provide unemployment benefits, that is to say, the duty to make grants indispensable for the subsistence of unemployed workers and their families, is a duty springing from the fundamental principle of the moral order in this sphere, namely the common use of goods or, to put it in another and still simpler way, the right to life and subsistence. [*Laborem Exercens* n.18]

For years now, Australia has been failing in this duty. Payments like the Newstart Allowance are falling far behind community living standards and a majority of recipients experience great poverty and hardship. The single rate of Newstart is \$263.80 – a paltry \$37 a day. The Allowance is less than 20 per cent of average weekly earnings and far less than half the National Minimum Wage, which itself is characterised as poverty inducing pay. There has been no significant increase in Newstart since 1994. Over that time, the Allowance has fallen in value from 54 per cent to just 40 per cent of the minimum wage.

Three-quarters of the 770,000 people on Newstart have been on the payment for more than a year. The poverty they experience impedes their chances of winning a job in a highly competitive market. Currently there are only around 170,000 job vacancies Australia-wide.

The Australian Council of Social Service estimates around 55 per cent of recipients are living below the poverty line. Most are in financial stress. Many are unable to pay bills and often people simply live in debt. In a recent survey of over 75,000 rental properties around Australia, Anglicare found only 21 properties were affordable for single adults on Newstart, and just one for recipients of Youth Allowance.

Agencies like Catholic Social Services Australia and the Society of St Vincent de Paul have been calling for an increase to Allowance rates for decades. We are calling on our political leaders to lift the base rate of Newstart and other Allowances and to index them to average wages. We owe job seekers a genuine job creation strategy supported by decent training and wage subsidies. This is not the time to ‘crack down’ on people whose right to the dignity of work has already been broken. Increasing punitive requirements or imposing waiting periods is not the way to go.

**Find out more:**

[ACOSS Poverty Report](#)

[Anglicare Rental Affordability Snapshot](#)

[2013 Pastoral Letter – Time for a New Start](#)

**CALLING FOR THE PROTECTION OF PENALTY RATES**

Wages paid for the toil of the working week is the main way Australians meet the cost of living, of starting and raising a family, paying taxes and saving for the future. The Church holds that the wages paid to workers are a key indication of the fairness of a society.

... wages, that is to say *remuneration for work*, are still a *practical means* whereby the vast majority of people can have access to the goods which are intended for common use ... Hence, in every case, a just wage is the concrete means of verifying the justice of the whole socioeconomic system and, in any case, of checking that it is functioning justly. [*Laborem Exercens* n.19]

Around 20 per cent of workers depend on the award safety net and associated conditions such as penalty rates, and hope that the annual adjustments to minimum wages undertaken by the Fair Work Commission will lift their wages to meet the higher costs of living. As has been the case with people relying on unemployment Allowances, however, workers reliant on minimum wages have seen their income slipping further and further behind average weekly earnings and, for some, below the poverty line.

A recent inquiry by the Productivity Commission recommended the reduction of weekend penalty rates and the Fair Work Commission is currently considering the possibility of reducing penalty rates for workers in the retail and hospitality sectors. The argument has been put that, for the sake of our 24/7 economy, penalty rates should be reduced or removed to free up weekend trade and to create more jobs. But the just functioning of the labour market is called into question where, for example, the two million people who work in retail and hospitality could end up shouldering the burden of their employer's profitability or the government's responsibility for creating jobs.

Penalty Rates are an important part of the safety net. They were introduced as a compensation for Sunday work in 1919 and extended to Saturdays in 1947. In 2005, when legislation threatened such basic entitlements of low-paid workers, the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference spoke strongly:

Our concern is that many workers, especially the poor and vulnerable, may be placed in a situation where they will be required to bargain away some of their entitlements. In particular, we refer to overtime rates, penalty rates and rest breaks.

They call for these entitlements to be protected.

It would be unacceptable for already struggling workers to be made to forgo penalty rates that are used to top up low rates of pay. For many, penalty rates comprise more than 30 per cent of their wages. It has been estimated that a reduction of Sunday rates to the level of Saturday rates would see a 17 per cent wage cut for restaurant employees and a 38 per cent reduction for retail workers.

And it's not just the workers who would be likely to suffer. Children could see their sports and other recreational activities cancelled because their parents have less disposable income. Alternatively they might see their parents even less as these workers seek additional irregular hours of work to make up for the shortfall in their pay.

Local economies are also vulnerable. The McKell Institute has found that a reduction or abolition of penalty rates for retail and hospitality workers in rural communities would see a loss of pay of between \$370 million and \$1.5 billion each year and a reduction of \$175 to almost \$750 million in disposable income, affecting discretionary spending and damaging the very industries that are calling for the cuts to penalty rates.

Organisations like the Australian Catholic Council for Employment Relations and the NSW-based Catholic Commission for Employment Relations are lobbying strongly against the reduction or removal of penalty rates for these low-paid workers. They maintain:

... an appropriate penalty should continue to be paid for the family time that is sacrificed by those workers who work on weekends, and not reduced. While penalty rates cannot remedy the negative

impacts of working unsociable hours, they can and should provide fair and just compensation for some of the detriment.

**Find out more:**

[Australian Catholic Bishops Statement of 2005](#)

[McKell Institute report](#)

[ACCER/CCER submission to the Fair Work Commission](#)

See what the [Justice and Peace Office of Sydney Archdiocese](#) has to say

**Lend your support:**

[‘Take the Time’ campaign](#)

[‘Protect Penalty Rates’ campaign](#)

**CALLING FOR THE DEFENCE OF THE ‘RIGHT TO REST’**

The Church says that work is a means to the ends of personal fulfilment, family formation and social engagement. It is not an end in itself. Work is for the benefit of humanity, not the other way around. Time for relaxation with family and friends is a social benefit of work that must be protected as a ‘right to rest’:

In the first place this involves a regular weekly rest comprising at least Sunday, and also a longer period of rest, namely the holiday or vacation taken once a year or possibly in several shorter periods during the year.’ [*Laborem Exercens* n.19]

We are a hard-working nation. An Australia Institute study estimates that over half of Australia’s workers are doing unpaid overtime – work that contributes \$128 billion to employers each year. Nearly half of all full-time workers feel overworked and want to work fewer hours, yet are failing to take leave to which they are entitled. On the other hand, one third of part-time workers and nearly half of all casual workers are seeking more hours, no matter how irregular those hours of work are. Households on less than \$40,000 per annum are far more likely to be seeking additional hours.

Anything that takes us away from family and intrudes on normal times of rest is a problem. But it is a particular problem for low-paid workers engaged on an irregular basis and having to work on weekends and public holidays. Think for example of those in the retail and hospitality sector who are regularly in the position of having to sacrifice time with family or friends.

Pope Francis says this intrusion of work undermines the ‘true moment of celebration’ that brings work to a pause and allows for personal reflection, the gathering of family and friends and important communal engagement in worship, recreation and cultural events:

The time for rest, especially on Sunday, is ordained for us so that we can enjoy what is not produced and not consumed, not bought and not sold. Instead we see that the ideology of profit and consumerism even wants to feed on celebration: it too is sometimes reduced to a ‘business’, to a way of making and spending money ... It harms true labour and consumes life.

We need to reject the notion that that the weekend can be sacrificed to a ‘24/7 economy’ or that Sunday is ‘just another day’ in the trading cycle. Most Australians work Monday to Friday between 8.00 am and 6.00 pm and Sunday remains predominantly a non-work day. It is the consensus of Australians that those having to work on weekends, particularly Sundays, should be compensated for their sacrifice

of common time. An Essential Media Poll has found that 81 per cent of people surveyed believe that employees working irregular hours should receive penalty rates. Around 70 per cent oppose cutting weekend and public holiday penalty rates. If workers are required to work irregular hours, they should be fairly compensated.

It is time for us to rediscover the importance of the Sabbath for our own good and the good of our families and community. In their 2012–2013 Social Justice Statement, the Australian Catholic Bishops said that the biblical notion of Sabbath offers an antidote to the frenetic competition for time that intrudes so much into family life. It is not simply a prohibition against working on Sundays, but involves the promotion of personal and family fulfilment through worship, relaxation and freedom from the demands of the working week.

Sabbath informs our concern for social justice for the most vulnerable workers. For on the Sabbath, people are freed from the bonds of being producers or consumers. We do not have someone looking over our shoulder or watching the clock. On this day we are not defined by what we do or what status we hold in the workplace. It is also a time of equity and justice; everyone shares the 'right to rest', not just those who can afford it.

**Find out more:**

[Bishops' Statement, The Gift of Family in Difficult Times](#)

[Pope Francis' words on Sabbath and the family](#)

Here is an interesting article, ['Recovering the Sabbath'](#) from *ABC Religion and Ethics*

[The Australia Institute paper, Workin' 9 to 5.30](#)

[The Essential Media Poll on penalty rates](#)

**Lend your support:**

['Save our weekends' campaign](#)



## Current Issues/Resources May 2016

### **JOINT STATEMENT: WHAT AUSTRALIA'S COMMUNITY SECTOR WANTS AND DOESN'T WANT IN THE FEDERAL BUDGET**

Community sector organisations have issued a united call for this year's Federal Budget to put reducing poverty and inequality at the heart of its purpose. This should be done by prioritising revenue raising measures to fund essential services and jobs growth, rather than by focusing narrowly on cuts to spending and unaffordable tax cuts in an election year. The joint statement can be found [here](#).

### **NATIONAL RECONCILIATION WEEK: OUR HISTORY, OUR STORY, OUR FUTURE**

National Reconciliation Week runs from 27 May to 3 June. Reconciliation Australia's website has reflections on the three aspects of the 2016 theme, 'Our History, Our Story, Our Future'. Reconciliation Australia says: 'As Australians, we are all here, woven into this country. As part of our reconciliation journey, there are truths to tell, stories to celebrate, and relationships to grow. Reconciliation is at the heart of our nations' future. Join us on our nation's reconciliation journey.' You can share your NRW

events and experiences on social media using the hashtag #NRW2016. Reconciliation Australia's website for National Reconciliation Week is [here](#).

### **25 YEARS AFTER THE ROYAL COMMISSION, WHAT HAS CHANGED?**

In 2016 we mark the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the handing down of the report of the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody. Since that report, tragically, the rate of imprisonment for Indigenous people has more than doubled. Recently one of the Royal Commissioners, Professor Pat Dodson, known as the 'Father of Reconciliation', addressed the National Press Club and called for a radical change in discriminatory legislation and state and federal policies: 'For our communities, the storyline is all too familiar: the minor offence, the innocuous behaviour, the unnecessary detention, the failure to uphold the duty of care, the lack of respect for human dignity, the lonely death, the grief, loss and pain of the family.' See his address [here](#).

### **PNG SUPREME COURT RULES AGAINST DETENTION OF ASYLUM SEEKERS ON MANUS ISLAND.**

Recently the highest court in Papua New Guinea, the Supreme Court of Justice, ruled unanimously that the detention of asylum seekers on Manus Island is unconstitutional. We do not yet know what this means for Australia's policy of offshore detention and processing for asylum seekers. However, Frank Brennan SJ has written about some implications of the judgement [here](#).

### **REPORT & PETITION: EDUCATION FOR ASYLUM SEEKERS**

In December 2015, the Refugee Council of Australia released the [report](#) –*Barriers to Education for People Seeking Asylum and Refugees on Temporary Visas*. A large number of the 30,000 people who arrived here seeking safety and protection face insurmountable barriers in pursuing this dream. The Refugee Council is calling for these groups to have the same rights to access education as every other Australian. A petition to the Education Ministers of Federal and State and Territory Governments is calling for equal access to education support. Sign the petition [here](#).

### **REFUGEE COUNCIL 'HUSHTAG' SOCIAL MEDIA CAMPAIGN**

The Refugee Council of Australia has launched a campaign for Twitter and Instagram users against provisions of the Border Force Act. The campaign says: 'In 2015, Section 42 of the Australian Border Force Act made it illegal for Detention Centre workers to talk about offshore refugee abuse. The penalty: two years in prison. Under the recent government's Pacific Solution, there have been over 100 alleged cases of sexual assault, child abuse – even death. Someone needs to speak up for the victims. Help us give the workers back their voice, by taking over Twitter.' To be part of the campaign, go to [this website](#) and tweet or share the 'hushtag' on your Twitter or Instagram account.

### **PETITION: BE FAIR, AUSTRALIA – AGREE TO TIMOR SEA BORDER NOW!**

Timor-Leste does not yet have permanent maritime boundaries with Australia. Timor-Leste seeks to settle its border with Australia in accordance with its rights under international law, so that the related resources of oil, gas, jobs and infrastructure can be distributed fairly. Timor-Leste wants to build a relationship with all of its neighbours including Australia, based on honesty, respect and equality, and by reaching a fair resolution to the border issue. East Timor's Prime Minister wrote to Malcolm Turnbull on 1 February 2016 asking for formal talks on a permanent boundary. The answer stands at 'No'. To find out more, visit [this website](#).

### **ASIAN HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION: JUSTICE FOR WEST PAPUANS**

The Asian Human Rights Commission has condemned the recent arrest of peaceful protestors in the

Timika district of West Papua in April this year. The Commission refers to ‘countless cases’ over the last year where security forces have forcibly broken up protests. It is also concerned at the lack of both accountability on the part of police and of any means for people to ‘challenge the police’s use of excessive force and abuse of power.’ The Commission says the presence of the Indonesian security forces in West Papua ‘has only resulted in rampant human rights violations against the Papuans’. It calls on the Indonesian government to observe the provisions of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. Read the full report [here](#).

#### **REPORT: HUMAN RIGHTS IN WEST PAPUA 2015**

The International Coalition for Papua reports on the situation of human rights, indigenous peoples’ rights and the conflict situation. It details in particular the demographic development and its causes as well as the ongoing violence by security forces that targets indigenous Papuans. The development of the human rights situation in West Papua during 2013 and 2014 shows a deterioration compared to the period covered by the ICP’s previous report. The two east Indonesian provinces of Papua and Papua Barat continues to be one of the regions of Asia most seriously affected by human rights violations and an unresolved long standing political conflict. To access the report, visit [this website](#).

#### **INTERFAITH CLIMATE CHANGE STATEMENT TO WORLD LEADERS**

On 19 April, the Interfaith Climate Change Statement to World Leaders was handed to Mogens Lykketoft, President of the UN General Assembly in a multifaith ceremony in New York. The Statement was signed by 270 religious leaders, 4970 individuals, and 176 religious groups from around the world. It calls on world leaders to urgently ratify the landmark Paris Climate Change Agreement; to reduce emissions to stop global temperature rise; to phase out fossil fuel subsidies and promote renewable energy investment to limit global temperature rise to no more than 1.5 degrees C above pre-industrial levels. Representing Australia at the ceremony was Philippa Rowland, from Catholic Earthcare Australia. A report and video of the ceremony can be seen [here](#) and the full text of the Statement is [here](#).

#### **2016 AUSTRALIAN FASHION REPORT: UPHOLDING THE RIGHTS OF MARGINALISED WORKERS**

On 24 April 2013 the Rana Plaza factory collapse occurred in Dhaka, Bangladesh, taking the lives of 1,136 garment workers. On the anniversary of this tragedy, Baptist World Aid Australia has launched the third edition of the Australian Fashion Report, showing how clothing brands monitor and are accountable for the conditions of the workers who produce the garments Australians buy. Three years after the tragedy, the report says, ‘the need remains pressing. There are presently 14.2 million people in forced labour exploitation and 168 million child labourers scattered across the global economy. Many of this number are forced to work in the farms and factories that feed the apparel industry.’ See Baptist World Aid Australia’s ‘Behind the Barcode’ campaign and the full [Fashion Report](#).

#### **PALMS ENCOUNTERS: SHORT TERM EDUCATIONAL TOURS**

A Palms Encounter is the perfect way to learn more about international volunteering. These cross-cultural experiences are designed to provide an insight into the daily life of people of another culture; an understanding of sustainable approaches to development, including ecological sustainability; and an insight into the life and work of development volunteers. Palms Encounters are designed to maximise benefits for participants and host communities, avoiding perpetuating negative or romanticised stereotypes of other cultures. The full Encounter program includes pre-departure preparation, an overseas Encounter Visit including support and guidance in-country and activities upon re-entry to

maintain the connections developed. An experienced development professional will guide your trip, providing food for thought and opportunities for deep reflections on your observations.

We welcome enquiries from work/school/community groups who would like to book a private Encounter. [Learn more about Palms Encounters](#) or [register here](#)

### **SHARE IN THE EXPERIENCE OF THE 2015 NATSICC ASSEMBLY**

The 2015 NATSICC Assembly attracted over 300 people to Kormilda College in Darwin. Delegates from every State and Territory in Australia enjoyed the keynote speeches, live music and displays of how Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Culture is complemented by Catholic Faith. The presentations and the delegate responses are online [here](#).

### **WORLD ELDER ABUSE DAY TOOLKIT**

World Elder Abuse Awareness Day (WEAAD) is on 15 June 2016. It is the main day in the year when the world voices its opposition to the abuse and suffering inflicted on older people, most often by their families. Seniors Rights Victoria has prepared a WEAAD 2016 Toolkit to help you mark the day. It contains lots of ideas, as well as marketing support and links to brandmarks, social media and web banners and merchandise such as posters, magnets, bookmarks and ribbons. To find out more about WEAAD, and to register your event or activity, please go to [this website](#). The toolkit can be downloaded [here](#).

### **ST COLUMBANS MISSION SOCIETY PRAYER BOOKS**

The St Columbans Mission Society has issued a series of beautifully photo-illustrated prayer books available for purchase individually or in sets of four and eight. There are eight books in the series, including prayers for those who mourn, general prayers, prayers in times of illness, prayers for cancer sufferers, thank you and giving thanks (Psalms). To order go to [this website](#).

### **TASMANIAN STUDENTS: ENTER THE TCJPC COMPETITION!**

The Tasmanian Catholic Justice and Peace Commission (TCJPC) will again be running a competition in secondary schools based on the Australian Bishops' 2015–2016 Social Justice Statement 'For Those Who've Come Across the Seas: Justice for refugees and asylum seekers'. The competition is open to all Secondary and College Students in Tasmania. There are two prizes: one for secondary students and one for university students. Entries may be either literary – a short story, poem or argument – or visual art – visual piece no larger than the size of A3 paper (including any framing). The competition closes on 23 September 2016, the last day of Term Three. For conditions and more information contact Paulette Marsh, Resource Officer for the TCJPC, on (03) 6208 6271 or email [tcjpc@aohtas.org.au](mailto:tcjpc@aohtas.org.au).



### **ACSJC Publications May 2016**

#### **SERIES PAPER 78 – 'PUTTING PEOPLE FIRST: PASTORAL LETTERS FOR THE FEAST OF ST JOSEPH THE WORKER 2010-2015.'**

In the latest Catholic Social Justice Series, the ACSJC has brought together a collection of the Pastoral Letters issued by Bishop Christopher Saunders. *Putting People First: Pastoral Letters for the Feast of St Joseph the Worker 2010-2015*, provides an invaluable record of the

significant issues relating to work and justice in that five-year period: the global financial crisis; the Northern Territory 'intervention' and the future of remote communities; the Insecure Work inquiry of the ACTU; and the public outcry at the inadequacy of allowances for the unemployed and sole parents. The letters include succinct and accurate summaries of the arguments with sufficient, reliable statistics. Professor Paul Smyth provides an extensive introduction to the series paper. [\[Link\]](#)

#### **DISCUSSION GUIDE: 2016 WORLD DAY OF PEACE MESSAGE**

The theme for the 49<sup>th</sup> World Day of Peace Message from Pope Francis is *Overcome Indifference and Win Peace*. Pope Francis' message is a heartfelt plea to us all to engage with the world around us, not to turn our backs on suffering and injustice, and 'not to lose hope in our human ability to conquer evil and to combat resignation and indifference'. He highlights the responsibilities we share, not simply as individuals but as a society. If we are to honour the spirit of this Jubilee of Mercy – and the presence of a God who cares about us and will not abandon us – we need to show genuine and practical concern for the most vulnerable among us. The ACSJC has prepared a Discussion Guide for the papal message, which is available on our [website](#).

#### **SOCIAL JUSTICE STATEMENT 2015–2016: AVAILABLE AGAIN**

This year's Australian Catholic Bishops Conference Social Justice Statement is entitled 'For Those Who've Come Across the Seas: Justice for refugees and asylum seekers'. Due to overwhelming demand the original print run sold out, but the document has been reprinted and is now available. We have also reprinted the 'Ten Steps' leaflet that accompanies the Statement.

PDF and Word versions of the Statement can be downloaded from the ACSJC website. On the ACSJC website you will also find a range of print and multimedia resources – [available here](#).

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)

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



#### **News Monitor May 2016**

##### [Turn deserts into forests, Pope advises](#)

25-Apr-2016

In an impromptu message for Earth Day, Pope Francis has called on people to transform deserts into forests, reports *CruX*.

##### [PNG bishops make surprise visit to West Papua](#)

21-Apr-2016

The Catholic Bishops Conference of Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands has made a surprise visit to West Papua ahead of an expected statement on West Papuan independence, reports the ABC.

##### [Indigenous activists burn two more Chilean churches](#)

21-Apr-2016

Mapuche indigenous activists have burnt two more churches in southern Chile as part of a bid to reclaim ancestral lands, reports *Global Pulse*.

[Pope flies home with 12 refugees after emotional visit to Lesbos](#)

18-Apr-2016

Pope Francis took three families of Syrian refugees back to Rome on Saturday after visiting the frontline of Europe's migrant crisis at a camp in Greece where migrants wept at his feet, kissed his hand and begged for help.

[Church and sanctuary to asylum-seekers](#)

13-Apr-2016

In open defiance of the Government, Church leaders around the country are invoking the historical concept of sanctuary by opening their doors to asylum-seekers at risk of being returned to offshore detention centres.

[Burundi government unhappy with Church peace role](#)

08-Apr-2016

A aid official has urged the government of Burundi not to threaten the Church, which he says plays an important role in sustaining society, reports *The Catholic Herald*.

[Government film on asylum-seekers 'sends wrong message'](#)

07-Apr-2016

A member of the Brisbane Catholic Justice and Peace Commission has criticised a government-funded film to deter asylum-seekers, saying it contains oversights and has cost taxpayers too much, reports *The Catholic Leader*.

[US Catholic groups support proposal for Clean Power Plan](#)

06-Apr-2016

Citing a moral obligation to care for the natural world, 30 US Catholic and faith-based institutions have made a submission to a federal appeals court in support of the Clean Power Plan, reports the Catholic News Service.

- courtesy [cathnews.com](http://cathnews.com)



## Social Justice Diary May 2016

May 2016

1	Sun	<b>Sixth Sunday of Easter</b> <b>St Joseph the Worker</b> <i>International Workers Day</i>
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		1991: Pope John Paul II's encyclical <a href="#">Centesimus Annus</a> ('The Hundredth Year') - <a href="#">ACSJC PDF Discussion Guide</a>
2	Mon	
3	Tue	<a href="#">World Press Freedom Day</a>
4	Wed	<a href="#">Yom ha-Shoah</a> , Holocaust Memorial Day
5	Thu	<a href="#">Blessed Edmund Rice</a>
6	Fri	1992: <a href="#">Introduction of mandatory detention of asylum seekers in Australia</a> - ACSJC resources on <a href="#">Refugees</a>
7	Sat	<a href="#">Fair Trade Fortnight begins</a> - ACSJC resources on <a href="#">Fair Trade</a> <b>READ MORE ↓</b>
8	Sun	<b>The Ascension</b> <a href="#">World Communications Day</a> <b>READ MORE ↓</b> <a href="#">World Red Cross and Red Crescent Day</a> <i>Mother's Day</i> <a href="#">Week of Prayer for Christian Unity commences</a> 1945: <a href="#">War ends in Europe</a>
9	Mon	
10	Tue	
11	Wed	
12	Thu	<a href="#">International Nurses Day</a>
13	Fri	<i>International Conscientious Objectors Day</i> - ACSJC resources on <a href="#">Peacebuilding</a>

14	Sat	<a href="#">World Fair Trade Day</a> 1971: Pope Paul VI's Apostolic Letter <a href="#">Octogesima Adveniens</a> ('A Call to Action') - <a href="#">ACSJC PDF discussion guide</a>
15	Sun	<b>Pentecost Sunday</b> <a href="#">Jubilee Sunday</a> <a href="#">International Day of Families</a> 1891: Pope Leo XIII's encyclical <a href="#">Rerum Novarum</a> ('On Capital and Labour') - <a href="#">ACSJC PDF Discussion Guide</a> 1931: Pope Pius XI's encyclical <a href="#">Quadragesimo Anno</a> ('On Reconstruction and the Social Order') - <a href="#">ACSJC PDF Discussion Guide</a> 1961: Pope John XXIII's encyclical <a href="#">Mater et Magistra</a> ('On Christianity and Social Progress') - <a href="#">ACSJC PDF Discussion Guide</a>
16	Mon	<i>World Debt Day</i> - ACSJC resources on <a href="#">World Poverty</a>
17	Tue	<a href="#">World Telecommunications and Information Society Day</a> 2005: <a href="#">Death of Fr Ted Kennedy</a>
18	Wed	
19	Thu	
20	Fri	2002: <a href="#">Timor-Leste Constitution came into force with Xanana Gusmao as first President</a>
21	Sat	<a href="#">World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development</a>
22	Sun	<b>Trinity Sunday</b> <a href="#">International Day for Biological Diversity</a> - ACSJC resources on the <a href="#">Environment</a>
23	Mon	<a href="#">International Day to End Obstetric Fistula</a>
24	Tue	<b>Mary Help of Christians, Patron of Australia</b> 2015: Pope Francis' Encyclical <a href="#">Laudato Si'</a> - ACSJC resources on the <a href="#">Environment</a>
25	Wed	<a href="#">Week of Solidarity with the Peoples of Non-Self-Governing Territories commences</a>
26	Thu	<a href="#">National Sorry Day</a> - ACSJC resources on <a href="#">Justice for Indigenous People</a> 1997: <a href="#">Bringing Them Home Report tabled in Parliament</a>

27	Fri	<a href="#">National Reconciliation Week begins</a> - ACSJC resources on <a href="#">Justice for Indigenous People</a> Week of Prayer for Reconciliation begins 1967: <a href="#">Referendum to change articles in the Australian Constitution that discriminated against Indigenous People</a>
28	Sat	
29	Sun	<b>Corpus Christi (The Body and Blood of Christ)</b> <a href="#">International Day of UN Peacekeepers</a> 1992: <a href="#">Torres Strait Islander flag launched</a>
30	Mon	
31	Tue	<a href="#">World No Tobacco Day</a>