

ACSJC Monthly Briefing October 2017 No 194



From the Secretariat October 2017

Dear Friends,

On Thursday September 7, we launched the Australian Catholic Bishops' 2017–2018 Social Justice Statement, *Everyone's Business: Developing an inclusive and sustainable economy*. Launching the Statement were Susan Pascoe AM, Commissioner of the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission, and Frank Brennan SJ AO, Chief Executive Officer of Catholic Social Services Australia.

Auntie Elsie Heiss, Aboriginal Elder and former member of the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Catholic Council and Sydney's Aboriginal Catholic Ministry, acknowledged the Traditional Owners, the Cammeraygal people and Elders past and present.

Bishop Vincent Long Van Nguyen, Chairman of the Australian Catholic Social Justice Council reflected on the Gospel passage in the Statement in the context of Australia's economic performance of the past quarter of a century.

'How is Australia managing with its current social, economic and civil circumstances?'

Commissioner Susan Pascoe spoke of the vital role of charities and other civil society organisations in giving voice to those who are marginalised and excluded from the mainstream – placing their rightful claim on the prosperity of the nation front and centre of economic planning. This is particularly important in a period when inequality is growing.

The Commissioner spoke in defence of the independent voice of Charities.

'The ACNC [Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission] Act has an object that the regulator will support the sustainability of an innovative, independent, robust and vibrant not-for-profit sector. It's worth dwelling on each of these descriptors: innovative, independent, robust and vibrant.

'Let me use the launch of this important Statement today to look at another of the descriptors of charities in Australia, and that's *independent*.

'The issue of independence is one attracting attention at the moment. Charities have always advocated for their mission or purpose and charity law supports their right to do so. However, there is debate around the levels of advocacy that charities should be allowed to engage in, potentially limiting their capacity to highlight the plight of those without a voice or to sound the alarm when institutional, economic or social arrangements begin to cause harm.

'It's pleasing in this context that the Bishops have raised their voice for the poor. They have taken the Parable of the Workers in the Vineyard to illustrate the Christian commitment to dignified work for all. At a time when they are somewhat beleaguered, and could lay low, they are speaking for the marginalised and the vulnerable and I applaud them for this. Thank you, Bishop Vincent, on behalf of your fellow Bishops.

'The Bishops are not alone. Other influential groups such as the Australian Council for Social Services, the Australian Council for International Development, and the Community Council for Australia, are also publicly advocating for full participation in Australia's economic and social arrangements and for the redress of disadvantage here and overseas. And individual agencies such as Catholic Social Services Australia, Oxfam, Caritas and Red Cross all add their independent commentary in service of the voiceless.'

Commissioner Pascoe emphasised the rightful place of the Bishops and other groups of civil society to call for a more equitable and sustainable economy. 'The Bishops have spoken. They are using their moral authority and their right in charity law to independently advocate on one of their core purposes.'

'The hard work of the document'

Fr Frank Brennan reviewed some major social and economic trends of the past 25 years since the Bishops released their report into the distribution of wealth in Australia – *Common Wealth for the Common Good*. He emphasised how the hard work of economic and social inclusion is still to be taken up, in an economy where the mantra of trickle-down economics has failed.

'How good to see our own Australian bishops putting front and centre the statement by Pope Francis in *Evangelii Gaudium* (#54):

... some people continue to defend trickle-down theories which assume that economic growth, encouraged by a free market, will inevitably succeed in bringing about greater justice and inclusiveness in the world. This opinion, which has never been confirmed by the facts, expresses a crude and naïve trust in the goodness of those wielding economic power and in the sacralized workings of the prevailing economic system. Meanwhile, the excluded are still waiting.

'This is as succinct and eloquent statement as we could hope to find when wanting to know what is necessary to build an inclusive and sustainable economy', he said.

'The hard work of the document is found in the five fundamental criticisms of the current economic system, the five key principles or criteria of Catholic social teaching that are central to the development of an inclusive and sustainable economy.'

Fr Frank commented on the five principles found in the Pope Benedict XVI's *Caritas in Veritate* and Pope Francis' *Laudato Si'*:

1. People and nature are not mere tools of production
2. Economic growth alone cannot ensure inclusive and sustainable development
3. Social equity must be built into the heart of the economy
4. Business must benefit all society, not just shareholders
5. The excluded and vulnerable must be included in decision making

He said that the Bishops have placed our Nation's challenges in the context of the international movement for inclusive and sustainable development – seen clearly in the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals.

'Here we are after 26 years of continual economic growth being seen rightly as an international player failing to pull its weight – dragging the chain on climate change, cutting our foreign aid budget, being

punitive and exclusive in our treatment of asylum seekers arriving on our shores, and being unable to demonstrate any clear narrowing of the gap of inequality.

‘As we try to live out the sustainable development goals, let’s recall that story of the 10-year-old little girl Elise Heiss with her Dad asking how it was that the whites lived in big houses while they lived on the fringes. He told his daughter: ‘There’s them, and there’s us. It’s about equality.’ The real call of *Everyone’s Business* is to move beyond them and us to admitting that there is only us. If we are truly to build an inclusive and sustainable economy, it can’t be just those in full time paid employment who are part of that economy. We take seriously the principles of neo-liberalism, letting the market decide. But we set limits on the market for the common good. ...

‘Let’s move beyond the thinking of them and us, to being only us. Let’s reject an economy of exclusion and inequality. I commend those who have put before us such a compelling mission for developing an inclusive and sustainable economy. This is truly everyone’s business.’

‘One of the most intriguing parables’

Bishop Vincent Long reflected the challenges of Jesus’ parable of the workers in the vineyard (Matthew 20:1–16). He said that many in today’s labour market know what it was like for the workers in Jesus parable ‘to go to a market place, hang around and hope to find work for a day or just an hour or so.

‘For those workers, the marketplace was a harsh, inhospitable place that did not fully serve the needs of the people or the community it inhabited. It embodied a society in which the most vulnerable struggle to find a place or are cast aside.

‘Through the parable, we can see aspects of our own society. We are reminded of the faces of the most vulnerable including the lowest paid, often in part-time work, those living on income support, those at risk of homelessness, and Indigenous Australians. They are affected by the move to short term contracts and casual employment, by minimum wages insufficient to support a family, and by the refusal of many employers to contribute to superannuation or to pay due wages.

‘But in his story, Jesus shows another way. He gives us a moral compass so that the economy serves the people and not the other way around. ...

‘The owner of the vineyard feels real solidarity with these labourers. He recognises that they are not units that are expendable, to be hired for the lowest bid. He sees them as co-workers with an inalienable dignity, members of his own community, engaged in a shared enterprise. He does not blame them for their inability to find work. He sympathises with them. He sees them but he also sees the faces of their children, who need bread and clothing.

‘This is a Statement that challenges us to see a world that exists beyond the columns of a spreadsheet. In this document, Australia’s Bishops are following the lead of Pope Francis. It is addressed to our political and business leaders, certainly, but also to every one of us, inviting us to help build a society that is at the service of all, particularly those who have been excluded from the circle of exchange and from the vast benefits of economic prosperity.’

Drawing on the imagery of Jesus’ parable, Bishop Vincent quoted from the Statement:

We envisage an alternative to market places that are harsh and inhospitable: the vineyard, lush and green, sustainable in its growth and inclusive in its economy.

Catholic Bishops' Statement and associated resources

There are many ways the message of the Bishops' 2017–2018 Statement can be promoted throughout the year ahead.

The Statement can be [downloaded](#) from the ACSJC website.

View this [short video](#) from the ACSJC website and consider passing it on to your local parish.

The [Ten Steps](#) leaflet has really practical suggestions as to how we can engage in work for a more inclusive and sustainable economy.

Our website also contains other resources that are ideal for prayer, worship, and personal reflection, and for discussion in classrooms and among groups.

John Ferguson

(National Executive Officer)



Current Issues/Resources October 2017

2017 ANTI-POVERTY WEEK

Anti-Poverty week will run from 15 to 21 October, coinciding with the United Nations International Day to End Poverty on 17 October. The aims of the Week are to: strengthen public understanding of the causes and consequences of poverty and hardship around the world and in Australia; and to encourage research, discussion and action to address these problems, including action by individuals, communities, organizations and governments. You can find ideas for activities [here](#) and information about what happened last year during Anti-Poverty Week [here](#). Promotional material to publicise the week throughout your networks can be found [here](#). If you would or any of your network would like hard copies of the national poster, the two sided A4 flyer or the postcard, please contact the Anti-Poverty Week team at: coordinator@antipovertyweek.org.au

CATHOLIC MISSION: 'World Mission Month 2017'

World Mission Day is celebrated every year in every country wherever there are Catholics committed to building a better world for all of God's people, a world where everyone has all they need to live a dignified and fulfilling life. It is the day on which we reflect on the urgency to proclaim the Gospel in our times. This year World Mission Day is Sunday 22 October 2017. Parishes will be holding the annual Catholic Mission World Mission Appeal. This year you are invited to support the Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary in Nha Trang, Vietnam as they work tirelessly to provide critical community resources such as clean drinking water and medical care to the country's 12 million forgotten farming families, living in the coastal mountain regions. Please give generously. To find out more, visit [here](#).

2017 WORLD DAY OF THE POOR

Renewing his message of solidarity with the world's poor, Pope Francis has issued a call for concrete deeds to mark the first World Day of the Poor, to be observed on 19 November 2017. The World Day of the Poor is an initiative Pope Francis promoted following the Jubilee of Mercy 'so that throughout the world Christian communities can become an ever greater sign of Christ's charity for the least and those most in need. The Pope writes, 'If we want to help change history and promote real development, we

need to hear the cry of the poor and commit ourselves to ending their marginalisation.’ The Holy Father’s message for the first World Day of the Poor can be accessed [here](#).

ACTU REPORT: ‘Rising Inequality – An Australian Reality’

The Australian Council of Trade Unions has just launched its report ‘Rising Inequality’ as part of its ‘Change the Rules’ campaign. It shows how inequality is the challenge of our time and that Australia will be a fully Americanised society of high inequality and dead end jobs, zero job security and poverty pay levels unless we change course. These are the economic conditions that breed high levels of crime, discrimination against minorities and a broad range of social problems. The ACTU calls for Australia to instead return to being a country in which families on a normal income can afford to buy a home, provide a good education for their kids and have a decent standard of living. Societies that pay their workers fairly and provide job security tend to have low crime levels, less social problems and are more inclusive. Access the report [here](#).

ACROSS SECTOR STATEMENT: ‘STRENGTHEN THE SOCIAL SAFETY NET. STOP TEARING IT APART.’

Leaders from the community sector, including the Australian Catholic Social Justice Council, Catholic Social Services Australia and the Society of St Vincent de Paul, have condemned repeated attacks by the federal government on people living in poverty. ‘We condemn this government’s latest attempts to dismantle Australia’s social safety net by cutting income support payments for people already living below the poverty line. We are a wealthy country and we should take pride in treating each other with dignity. We should take pride in maintaining and strengthening our social safety net for everyone when they need it most.’ This is a call on parliament to stop cutting the incomes of people who have the least, and to oppose legislation that demonises those the safety net is designed to support. To strengthen the social safety net, government should ‘begin by lifting allowance payments by at least \$55 per week to give people in need a helping hand, rather than pushing them over.’ To read and lend your support to the statement, visit [here](#).

REPORT: THE CONSEQUENCES OF WAGE SUPPRESSION

The Centre for Future Work at the Australia Institute has just released the report, *The Consequences of Wage Suppression for Australia’s Superannuation System*. Dr Jim Stanford shows how the record-slow pace of wage growth in Australia’s economy is not just making it difficult for families to balance their budgets, it also threatens severe long-run damage to Australia’s superannuation retirement system. This new report simulates the impacts of eight specific wage suppression strategies on workers’ superannuation balances – ranging from temporary wage freezes, to wage caps, to more dramatic actions (such as wage theft, reduced penalty rates, and termination of enterprise agreements). In every case, workers’ superannuation payments are negatively affected by the suppression below normal trajectories. The damage is then compounded over many years by the subsequent loss of investment income on foregone superannuation contributions. Access the report [here](#).

WORLD DAY OF PEACE STATEMENT

In a statement issued for the International Day of Peace, 21 September, the Network of Australians supporting the Catholic Nonviolence Initiative has called on Australians to read Pope Francis’ World Day of Peace message ‘[Nonviolence: a Style of Politics for Peace](#)’. ‘As President Trump and Supreme Leader Kim Jong-Un face each other off in a global game of deadly brinkmanship, Pope Francis continues to promote Gospel nonviolence as the response. ... Pope Francis urges that to be true followers of Jesus today also includes embracing the Gospel’s teaching about nonviolence. For Christians, nonviolence is

not merely tactical behaviour but a person's way of being, the attitude of one who is so convinced of God's love and power that he or she is not afraid to tackle evil with the weapons of love and truth alone. ... Peace starts within the self and is practised initially within families where skills of nonviolence are learned. Peace building is needed within, and across, all levels of the Church's endeavours. Read the statement [here](#). Find out more about the Catholic Nonviolence Initiative [here](#).

UN nuclear weapon ban treaty opens for signature

More than 50 heads of state, heads of government and foreign ministers have signed the landmark [Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons](#) on 20 September 2017 in New York during a high-level ceremony held in the margins of the annual opening of the United Nations General Assembly. With tensions continuing to grow between the United States and North Korea, the risk of the use of nuclear weapons – with all the devastating humanitarian consequences that would entail – is higher than ever. The signing of the treaty – which was formally adopted on 7 July – is a powerful way for states around the world to take a stand against nuclear weapons and offer the international community a way to rid the world of this inhumane and unacceptable weapon. Australia has not supported the treaty. The Vatican has – both signing and ratifying the treaty – and is planning an [international conference](#) on 10 – 11 November as a follow up to follow-up to July's adoption of the treaty. To find out more about efforts in Australia to get our Government to sign and ratify the treaty, visit the website of ICAN – the 'International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons- Australia', [here](#).

REPORT: 'Sustainable Development Goal 16: Progress Report, 2017'

On International Day of Peace, 21 September, the Institute for Economics & Peace issued a Progress Report which focuses on how to practically measure Sustainable Development Goal 16 - Peace, justice and strong institutions. The full objective of this goal is to 'promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels'. The report provides background on why SDG16 is important, its relationship to Positive Peace and some methodological foundations for the progress report. It provides summaries of the global performance of each of the 12 targets. It includes 163 country progress reports that provide summary figures on the data availability, relative performance of each SDG16 indicator relative to other countries and where available trend data on each indicator. Access the report [here](#).

REFUGEE COUNCIL: 'Australia should act immediately to assist the Rohingya and prevent genocide'

As the world received horrifying news of the attacks on civilians, rape and concerns of genocide emerging in Myanmar's Rakhine state, the Refugee Council of Australia called on Government to act immediately to resolve the escalating regional crisis. CEO Paul Power said, 'The Turnbull Government should act urgently to bring political pressure to cease the military crackdown on the Rohingya, through the delivery of emergency assistance and additionally, through the provision of refuge for people who have been forced to flee their homeland. ... Australia should be seeking to work with key states in the region to bring political pressure to end the attacks on the Rohingya and allow for independent investigators into the Rakhine State to examine what has occurred, and the perpetrators brought to justice. ... Australia has resettled just a handful of Rohingya refugees in recent years despite hundreds being either held in immigration detention on Manus, Nauru or in Australia and others enduring prolonged delays to their refugee applications. Australia's provision of an additional humanitarian intake for Rohingya would illustrate the nation's commitment to the Asia Pacific region and its intention to provide humanitarian leadership,' Mr Power said. To read the full statement, visit [here](#).

EDMUND RICE CENTRE: 'Australian Government playing fast and loose with the lives of Rohingya refugees'

Director of the Edmund Rice Centre Phil Glendenning has called on the Turnbull Government to immediately rule out any forced deportations or removal of Rohingya refugees from Australia or from Australian-run detention centres. 'The situation in Myanmar is absolutely appalling and has been described by the United Nations as "textbook ethnic cleansing". For the Australian Government to even be contemplating deporting or removing Rohingya people back to Myanmar is not only a complete abrogation of our international obligations, but also a complete denial of basic human decency. The Government has a responsibility to ensure that people who have sought safety and refuge in our country are not turned back to harm and deported to unsafe places. No reasonable person could claim that Myanmar is a safe place for Rohingya people at present. ... A major refugee crisis is playing out in our own region. It's time the Government showed regional leadership, proposed durable solutions to this crisis and led by example,' Mr Glendenning said. To read the statement, visit [here](#).

EDMUNDRICE CENTRE: 'The Responsibility to Protect'

The Edmund Rice Centre has identified further evidence that Afghan refugees and people seeking asylum should not be forcibly returned to Afghanistan, as part of its long-running *Deported to Danger* research project. The latest report, *The Responsibility to Protect*, challenges Australia's most recent deportations to Afghanistan and concludes that it would be impossible for Australian, European and other governments to guarantee the safety of Afghan returnees. Afghanistan is facing significant challenges, and the security situation has deteriorated substantially since a Memorandum of Understanding, which allows for the forcible deportation of Afghan citizens, was signed between Australia and Afghanistan in 2011. The report's revelations are especially relevant as the Manus Island processing facility will close by 31 October 2017 and the Turnbull Government has also announced that 7500 people seeking asylum in Australia have until 1 October to apply for protection or face deportation. Access the report [here](#).

RESOURCE: 'ENGAGE HEARTS AND MINDS: A TOOLKIT FOR REFUGEE ACTION'

The Catholic Alliance for People Seeking Asylum (CAPSA) has produced a toolkit that includes a range of resources to equip parishes, workplaces and local community groups to get involved in seeking justice for refugees and asylum seekers. The toolkit provides methods for shifting community attitudes towards people seeking asylum through activities including 'Circles of Silence', '#RightTrack Community Conversations' and 'meetings with members of parliament'. To download the toolkit, visit [here](#).

CONCERNED AUSTRALIANS: STATEMENT CALLING FOR THE END OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY INTERVENTION.

A large group of eminent Australians has issued a statement on the continuing damage caused by the discrimination, racism and lack of justice towards Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, exemplified by the continuation of the Northern Territory Intervention. The signatories support the recent demands by Northern Territory Elders for an immediate repeal of the Intervention measures, some of which were strengthened and extended for ten years in 2012, by the misleadingly renamed 'Stronger Futures' legislation. They call on the Australian government to heed the call for an immediate end to the Intervention policies, to respect and negotiate with Indigenous people in good faith, demonstrating proper duty of care and allowing all First Nations of Australia the right to self-determination. To read the statement, visit [here](#).

SIGN THE LAUDATO SI' PLEDGE

In June 2015, Pope Francis released his historic encyclical *Laudato Si'*. He calls 'every person living on this planet' to start a dialogue and begin to transform our hearts and communities to stop the warming of the planet and curb greenhouse gas emissions in order to combat the climate crisis. Following the second Anniversary of his encyclical, Pope Francis himself endorsed the Laudato Si' Pledge campaign. This is a global campaign by the Global Catholic Climate Movement and its member organisations to raise awareness of the encyclical's message and to encourage the Catholic community to take action with the urgency required by the climate crisis. To sign up, visit [here](#)

LAW COUNCIL: 'THE JUSTICE PROJECT'

The Law Council of Australia is undertaking a comprehensive national review into the state of access to justice in Australia. The Justice Project is focusing on justice barriers facing those with significant social and economic disadvantage, as well as identifying what is working to reduce those barriers. An overarching consultation paper and 13 issues papers relating to individual groups have been released and the Law Council is also taking the Project on the road to gather evidence. They are calling for submissions and stories from organisations and individuals that identify or work with the 13 identified priority groups. To find out more, access papers and to get involved, visit the Justice Project Website [here](#).



ACSJC Publications October 2017

SOCIAL JUSTICE STATEMENT 2017–2018 – ORDER NOW!

This year's Australian Catholic Bishops Conference Social Justice Statement is entitled 'Everyone's Business: Developing an inclusive and sustainable economy'. The ACSJC continues to take orders for the Statement. An order form, letter from the President of the Bishops Conference and summary material are available on the ACSJC website, [here](#). PDF and Word versions of the Statement as well as a range of print and multimedia resources are also available online.

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

SERIES PAPER 80 – 'THE HUMAN FACE OF HOMELESSNESS'

This paper is written by Liz de Chastel, Director of Social Policy, and Fr Frank Brennan SJ, Chief Executive Officer of Catholic Social Services Australia. In this paper they examine the realities of life for the more than 100,000 Australians who find themselves without accommodation. Homelessness has particularly severe impacts on children and on older people, especially older women; on people living with mental illness; and on Indigenous Australians. The Catholic bishops of Australia are making homelessness a particular focus of the Church's mission. This paper asks why so many people are homeless in our rich nation. It looks at some of the many ways in which the Catholic Church is working to help Australians who need suitable housing, and it asks what more the Church can do to respond to the call of Jesus regarding those most in need. To find out more and to order, visit [here](#).

PASTORAL LETTER – FEAST OF ST JOSEPH THE WORKER 2017

The Pastoral Letter for the Feast of St Joseph the Worker for 2015 is entitled *The Right to Work – Our shared responsibility*. Bishop Vincent Long Van Nguyen draws on the words of St Pope John Paul II, when he visited Australia in 1986, to argue for just wages and conditions of work, adequacy in the support and dignified treatment of people who are unemployed, and for the shared responsibility of the community to shoulder the costs and burdens of job creation ensuring the right to work for all. It is available for download [here](#).

DISCUSSION GUIDE: WORLD DAY OF PEACE MESSAGE 2017

The Australian Catholic Social Justice Council has issued a discussion guide for the annual Message for the World Day of Peace from Pope Francis. The theme of this year's Message is *Nonviolence: A Style of Politics for Peace*. In it Pope Francis confronts the global violence that amounts to 'a horrifying world war fought piecemeal'. He holds up the example of Jesus himself, who walked the path of nonviolence 'to the very end, to the cross, whereby he became our peace and put an end to hostility'. The Pope also reminds us of the many triumphs of nonviolent activism, including St Teresa of Calcutta and St John Paul II's heroic involvement in the downfall of European Communist regimes. The discussion guide is available in print and online [here](#).

SERIES PAPER 79 – 'Human Trafficking and Slavery: A response from Australian Catholics'

This paper is written by Christine Carolan, Executive Officer of Australian Catholic Religious Against Trafficking in Humans (ACRATH) and Sr Noelene Simmons SM, NSW Regional Co-ordinator for ACRATH. It describes the forms that slavery and related crimes take in the modern world, the Church's teaching on and response to slavery and other forms of exploitation, and the international and Australian laws that deal with slavery. It also describes the work of organisations committed to combating slavery and helping its victims – in particular, ACRATH's efforts to educate Australians, to advocate on behalf of victims, and to work with similar organisations here and overseas to shut down human trafficking and help its victims. The paper discusses particular problems faced by those who experience trafficking and exploitation, including people who may be subject to forced marriage. It also gives suggestions for people interested in supporting the work of ACRATH and similar organisations. To find out more and to order, visit [here](#).

BUILDING BRIDGES

The book, *Building Bridges: Social Justice Statements from Australia's Bishops 1988 to 2013*, brings the 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 October 2017

[US Bishops push Congress to combat climate change](#)

27-Sep-2017

US Bishops have called on the US Congress to create a commission to combat the harms of climate change and promote human dignity as a whole, CNA reports.

[Welfare payments fall short of poverty line](#)

27-Sep-2017

The St Vincent de Paul Society National Council, Mission Australia and Anglicare Australia have called on the Commonwealth Government to recognise that unemployment benefit payments are not enough to cover the cost of living.

[Share their journey urges Pope on refugee issue](#)

27-Sep-2017

Pope Francis will today launch a global campaign to promote the rights of refugees and migrants, Caritas Australia reports.

[New reforms 'erode' Victoria's youth justice system](#)

26-Sep-2017

The passing of the Youth Justice Reform Bill 2017 will erode the foundations of Victoria's youth justice system and prevent the rehabilitation of vulnerable youth, says Jesuit Social Services.

[Gender-neutral uniform decision 'prudent'](#)

25-Sep-2017

Gender dysphoria educator Fr Joseph Parkinson has called the move by a Catholic school to allow students struggling with gender identity to wear a gender-neutral uniform a wise decision, The Catholic Leader reports.

[Nuclear deterrence a 'tragic illusion': Holy See](#)

25-Sep-2017

Nuclear weapons are a force for instability and any claims they promote peace are chasing illusions, the Holy See's secretary for relations with states told diplomats seeking a nuclear test ban treaty, CNA reports.

[Liberal MP slams governments on asylum-seekers](#)

25-Sep-2017

Long-serving Liberal MP Russell Broadbent last week delivered a scathing assessment of successive governments' handling of refugees on Manus Island and Nauru at a book launch in Melbourne, The Age reports

[Caritas praised as 'real justice heroes' by young ISIS refugee](#)

25-Sep-2017

The Melbourne primary school student who won Australian Catholics magazine's Young Journalist of the Year Award has told her story of fleeing Iraq and being cared for by Caritas to SBS News.

[Aussies ration food to pay soaring power bills](#)

22-Sep-2017

Australians are having to choose between paying their medical bills and paying their electricity costs, according to the nation's consumer watchdog, the Herald Sun reports.

[Climate change the defining challenge of our time: Caritas](#)

21-Sep-2017

As well as responding to humanitarian crises occurring across the world due to drought and flood, Caritas Australia is seeking to care for our common home by addressing climate change, the aid organisation reports.

[First migrants and refugees director for Perth](#)

20-Sep-2017

The Archdiocese of Perth has appointed Deacon Gregory Lowe as the inaugural Director of the West Australian Catholic Migrant and Refugee Office (WACMRO) in Perth, The eRecord reports.

[Welfare policy demonises the poor](#)

19-Sep-2017

With discriminatory policy measures the government is again taking from those who have little and giving to those who have much, writes St Vincent de Paul National Council chief executive John Falzon in The Guardian.

[Financial stress leaving older Australians on the edge](#)

18-Sep-2017

More than 4500 elderly South Australians are spending a third of their income trying to keep a roof over their head, a new report has found, reports the Sunday Mail.

[Drug testing welfare recipients an 'absolute disgrace'](#)

15-Sep-2017

Mental health expert and former Australian of the Year, Patrick McGorry, has criticised the government's plans to drug test welfare recipients as an "absolute disgrace", The Guardian reports.

[Rough sleepers just the tip of homeless iceberg](#)

14-Sep-2017

A new report makes clear that rough sleepers are just the tip of Victoria's homelessness iceberg, reports The Age.

[Band-aid solutions 'won't end homelessness'](#)

13-Sep-2017

Throwing money at emergency accommodation and dispersing rough sleepers will do little to solve homelessness, a leading expert has warned, The Guardian reports.

[Elder abuse 'not on our radar'](#)

11-Sep-2017

Our society seems to be all care and no responsibility when it comes to fixing the growing elder abuse epidemic, writes Greysafe founder Michael Riley in The Age.

[Economy must benefit all Australians: Bishops](#)

08-Sep-2017

Australians are called to work for an economy that is based on principles of justice and equity – one that

is at the service of all, particularly the most vulnerable, says Parramatta Bishop Vincent Long OFM Conv., the ACBC Media Blog reports.

[Bishops urge leaders to tackle inequality](#)

07-Sep-2017

The Church has urged government and business to address “the growing inequality” in Australia by not allowing unfettered market forces to dictate wages, housing costs and power prices, The Australian reports.

[Social services body backs reforms to family support](#)

07-Sep-2017

The Victorian government's commitment to improving the way children and families receive support is welcome reform, according to Catholic Social Services Victoria

[Anti-slavery advocates head to Canberra](#)

04-Sep-2017

Members of an anti-trafficking group will walk the halls of Parliament House for four days this week to urge MPs to do more to combat human trafficking in Australia, the advocacy group reports.

[Care for creation means care for the poor](#)

01-Sep-2017

Catholic social teaching has developed over the past century as new problems – human, social, economic and environmental – come clearer into focus and call out for a faith-based response, CNS reports.

[Long condemns government over asylum-seeker cuts](#)

01-Sep-2017

Parramatta Bishop Vincent Long OFM Conv. yesterday condemned the Turnbull government's withdrawal of support for asylum-seekers who have come to Australia for medical reasons, the ACBC Media Blog reports.

- courtesy cathnews.com



Social Justice Diary October 2017

October 2017

		Twenty-Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time
1	Sun	<u>International Day for Older Persons</u>
		READ MORE ↓

		2005: Second Bali bombing: 20 people killed and more than 100 injured - ACSJC resources on Peacebuilding
2	Mon	International Day of Non-Violence - ACSJC resources on Peacebuilding 1869: Birth of Mahatma Ghandi
3	Tue	World Habitat Day
4	Wed	Feast of St Francis of Assisi World Space Week commences 1957: Launch of Sputnik 1 by the Soviet Union
5	Thu	World Teachers' Day
6	Fri	
7	Sat	
8	Sun	Twenty-Seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time
9	Mon	World Post Day
10	Tue	World Mental Health Day READ MORE ↓
11	Wed	International Day of the Girl Child 1962: Opening Session of Second Vatican Council
12	Thu	2002: First Bali bombing – 202 people killed and 240 injured - ACSJC resources on Peacebuilding
13	Fri	International Day for Disaster Reduction
14	Sat	

		Twenty-Eighth Sunday in Ordinary Time
15	Sun	<i>International Day of Rural Women</i> Anti-Poverty Week begins
16	Mon	<i>World Food Day</i>
17	Tue	<i>International Day for Eradication of Poverty</i> - ACSJC resources on World Poverty
18	Wed	
19	Thu	2001: Sinking of SIEV X - ACSJC resources on Refugees
20	Fri	
21	Sat	
		Twenty-Ninth Sunday in Ordinary Time
22	Sun	<i>World Mission Sunday</i>
23	Mon	
		<i>United Nations Day</i>
24	Tue	<i>World Development Information Day</i> Disarmament Week begins - ACSJC resources on Peacebuilding
25	Wed	
26	Thu	1985: Return of Uluru to the traditional owners, the Anangu people - ACSJC resources on Justice for Indigenous People
27	Fri	
28	Sat	
29	Sun	Thirtieth Sunday in Ordinary Time

30	Mon	
31	Tue	<i>World Cities Day</i>