

ACSJC Monthly Briefing December 2017 No 196



From the Secretariat December 2017

Dear Friends,

This is the last Monthly Briefing from the ACSJC before Christmas. Soon – if we haven't started already – we will all be planning our Christmas festivities and hoping to catch up with friends and family.

For Christians, this is the time to remember the birth of Our Lord and the beginning of his mission on earth. In the brief details about the birth of Jesus given in the Gospel accounts there is an enormous amount to reflect and pray about. Jesus is born in the humblest of circumstances; his birth is announced not to princes but to shepherds; and almost from his first moments on earth his life is in danger and his parents are forced to flee to Egypt.

So while Christmas reminds us of the glory and transcendence of Christ's Incarnation, it also reminds us of his mission to those who are most in need.

The last few weeks have been a terrible rebuke to our national ideals of a fair go for the underdog. We have seen a calculated and cynical waiting game played by our government, using the asylum seekers on Manus Island as pawns. These men have been detained for four years with no way of leaving except to return to the mortal danger they fled in the first place. The Australian government has watched its structures on Manus evaporate: the company that administered the camp [declined to renew its contract](#); the Papua New Guinea (PNG) [Supreme Court ruled](#) the detention of asylum seekers illegal; and it became clear that the PNG government wanted the camp off the naval base where it has been till now. Yet the Australian government did nothing as the humanitarian crisis approached.

The PNG government's proposal has been to move the men from the naval base to new quarters in Lorengau. The detainees had good reason to fear the move: many of them had been attacked in Lorengau and other places. Observers and journalists made it clear that the proposed new facilities were far from ready: in many cases they were actually dangerous and lacked basic amenities like power, water and sanitation.

So a siege developed. When the detainees refused to move, their electricity, water and sewage were cut off and the governments of Australia and PNG sat back to watch as [sickness and hunger took their toll](#). Australia haughtily [dismissed the offer](#) from New Zealand Prime Minister Jacinta Ardern to take some of the detainees who had been acknowledged as refugees. Meanwhile, criticism mounted from national and international agencies – for example:

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees [described the crisis](#) as 'manmade and entirely preventable' and a 'damning indictment of a policy meant to avoid Australia's international obligations'.

Twelve former Australians of the Year – people as diverse as journalist Ita Buttrose, Indigenous Senator Mick Dodson and Olympian Robert de Castella – [wrote an open letter](#) to the Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition stating that 'it is time to stop the unacceptable and internationally criticised

treatment of the refugees on Manus Island, who, though innocent of any crime, have been incarcerated and now abandoned there.’

The Australian Medical Association [expressed](#) ‘grave concerns about the health and wellbeing of the refugees and asylum seekers currently residing on Manus Island’ and called on the government to allow a delegation of Australian medical professionals to assess the situation independently. In [another open letter](#), 18 of Australia’s most senior medical experts also expressed grave concern about the refugees’ physical and mental health – and offered their services for free to conduct an authoritative review of the men’s health issues.

The [Refugee Council of Australia called on](#) the Australian Prime Minister to ‘guarantee the safety of all the innocent men sent to PNG by Australia and to take immediate steps to end the humanitarian crisis that our politicians have created ... With reports of violence erupting inside Australia’s Manus detention centre, and a number of men appearing to be in immediate need of assistance, we fear for the safety of all those involved’.

[Writing in the Parramatta Diocese’s Catholic Outlook](#), Bishop Vincent Long Van Nguyen, the Chairman of the ACSJC and Bishop Delegate for Migrants and Refugees, said: ‘The policy of offshore detention has cost Australia dearly. But it has cost the detainees and their families even more. I appeal to the government and political leaders to act in accordance with our honourable tradition. It is time to find an alternative and conscionable solution, including accepting New Zealand’s offer of resettlement and bringing the remaining detainees on Manus Island to Australia.’

As the waiting game continued, the detainees used their ingenuity to harvest rainwater and stockpile food (augmented by smuggled supplies from local people). It couldn’t last. Papua New Guinea authorities entered the camp on Saturday 25 August, arresting several dozen men, including journalist Behrouz Boochani, and transporting the others to the new facility.

The day after that, Catholics at Mass for the Feast of Christ the King heard the parable in the Gospel of Matthew (25:31-46) in which the King welcomes into heaven those who gave him food and water when he was hungry and thirsty, welcomed him when he was a stranger and visited him in prison. Those who did none of those things are cast out. They ask the King when they saw him hungry, thirsty, a stranger or in prison. He says: ‘In so far as you did it to one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did it to me’.

So we Australians have no excuse for asking when we saw Our Lord hungry, thirsty, a stranger or in prison. Among the least of Christ’s brethren are those in Australia’s hands on Manus and Nauru.

The Australian Bishops’ [Social Justice Statement for 2015–16](#) called for the closure of Australia’s offshore detention centres and reminded us of Pope Francis’ words:

‘We are a society which has forgotten how to weep, how to experience compassion – “suffering with” others: the globalisation of indifference has taken from us the ability to weep!’

This Christmas, let us make sure that a season of joy is also one where we globalise not indifference but compassion.

John Ferguson
(National Executive Officer)



Current Issues/Resources December 2017

BISHOP VINCENT LONG: AUSTRALIA HAS A RESPONSIBILITY THE MEN ON MANUS

Australia has a responsibility to assure the safety of the men who have been detained on Manus Island, says Bishop Vincent Long Van Nguyen, Bishop of Parramatta and Chair of the Australian Catholic Social Justice Council. 'The situation on Manus Island is turning into a humanitarian disaster and it is a direct result of our government's failed policy. As a nation that prides itself on its respect for the rule of law and its globally responsible citizenship, we must find a workable and principled solution.' Find out more [here](#).

AUSTRALIANS OF THE YEAR: DOCTORS NEED TO BE ALLOWED INTO MANUS

Twelve former Australians of the Year have written an open letter calling on the Prime Minister to allow medical professionals to access asylum seekers inside the recently closed Manus Island detention centre. Signatories to the statement include media doyenne Ita Buttrose, legal academic Professor Mick Dodson, anti- domestic violence campaigner, Rosie Batty and. social entrepreneur Simon McKeon. Find out more [here](#).

REFUGEE COUNCIL OF AUSTRALIA: THE SAFETY OF THE MEN ON MANUS MUST BE ASSURED

Following the closure of the Manus Island detention centre and the involvement of the Papua New Guinean police, the Refugee Council of Australia has called upon the Australian Government to guarantee the safety of the men on Manus. 'The Australian Prime Minister and his Immigration Minister are clearly responsible for the well- being of all involved. We are calling on the Australian Prime Minister to guarantee the safety of all the innocent men sent to PNG by Australia and to take immediate steps to end the humanitarian crisis that our politicians have created,' said Paul Power, Refugee Council CEO. Find out more [here](#).

EDMUND RICE 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 had 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](#).

QUEENSLAND BISHOPS CALL FOR GREATER CARE OF CREATION

Bishop Timothy Harris, Catholic Bishop of Townsville, and Bishop William Ray, Anglican Bishop of North Queensland, have issued a joint statement calling for the 'Care of Our Common Home: "Sister Earth".' 'As Christians and people of the world, every one of us has been called to care for the gift of creation both today and for future generations ... For Christians, this care for our common home, is not an optional or secondary aspect of our daily living, rather it is an essential part of our faith.' They highlight major social and environmental issues of North Queensland including major risks to the Great Barrier Reef, the Artesian Basin which is threatened by mega-mining developments especially in the Galilee Basin, increases in land-clearing across the state, and the environmental, social and economic fallout that occurs when there is a power imbalance between big business, government and local communities. The joint statement can be found [here](#).

RESOURCE: GREEN YOUR CHRISTMAS WITH A GLOBAL CATHOLIC CLIMATE MOVEMENT KIT

The Global Catholic Climate Movement has produced a resource kit to assist you to enrich your Advent by reflecting on and celebrating the good gift of creation. The kit contains: creation – themed Advent calendars; a list of the top 5 ways to 'green' your Christmas; Kids colouring pages featuring the Earth; and an Advent Novena for the Creator and creation. To download the kit, visit [here](#).

DECLARATION OF PONTIFICAL ACADEMY CLIMATE CHANGE WORKSHOP

Between 2 and 4 November, the Pontifical Academy of Sciences organised 'Health of People, Health of Planet and Our Responsibility Climate Change, Air Pollution and Health' workshop was held in Vatican City. At the conclusion of the workshop, a declaration was issued that found that the burning of fossil fuels releases hazardous chemicals into the air and that climate change caused by fossil fuels and other human activities poses an existential threat to humans. Within the declaration, possible solutions to the environmental crisis were outlined including the de-carbonisation of the world's energy system no later than the mid -century and that all nations should urgently implement the global commitments made in Agenda 2030 (including the Sustainable Development Goals.) Find out more [here](#).

OXFAM AUSTRALIA: JUSTICE REFORM MUST BE NATIONAL PRIORITY IN WAKE OF NT REPORT

On November 17th, responding to the final report of the Royal Commission into juvenile detention in the Northern Territory, Oxfam Australia Chief Executive Dr Helen Szoke said: The commission's inquiry has revealed 'systemic and shocking' failures in detention, care and protection systems in the Northern Territory – failures that have subjected children to appalling mistreatment and that have been 'ignored at the highest levels. The commission's report presents an historic opportunity for united leadership to be shown by federal and state governments to address the chronic over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in detention – and their disgraceful treatment within our justice system. Find out more [here](#).

SURVEY: INDIGENOUS AUSTRALIANS EXPERIENCE THE GREATEST AMOUNT OF DISCRIMINATION IN THE WORKPLACE

Thirty-eight per cent of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australian workers experienced discrimination or harassment over the past year, a survey by non-profit organisation Diversity Council Australia has found. Indigenous people only comprise 2.8 per cent of the total population yet they experience a greater level of disadvantage compared to their non-Indigenous counterparts. This year, Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull's report to parliament indicated the federal government was not on track to meet six of the seven targets in its 'Closing the Gap' initiative. Find out more [here](#).

REPORT: NT ROYAL COMMISSION CALLS FOR THE CLOSURE OF THE DON DALE JUVENILE DETENTION CENTRE

The Northern Territory royal commission into the protection and detention of children has recommended that the Don Dale detention centre be closed and that its high security unit be shut down immediately. The inquiry's final report, released on Friday November 17th, found 'shocking and systemic failures' over many years that were known about but ignored at the highest levels. 'The procedures and requirements of the law have simply not been followed in many instances. The systems failed to comply with the basic binding human rights standards in the treatment of children and young people,' the report said. 'Children and young people were subjected to regular, repeated and distressing mistreatment in detention and there was a failure to follow the procedures and requirements of the law in many instances,' the commissioners said. Among the 230 recommendations, the commission called for the age of criminal responsibility to be raised to the age of 12 and that the detention of under-14s be banned except for serious crimes. Find out more [here](#).

CALL FOR RENEWED SUPPORT FOR NATIONAL CONGRESS OF AUSTRALIA'S FIRST PEOPLES

As Australia prepared to take its seat on the UN Human Rights Council, the 'Redfern Statement Alliance Leaders' met to discuss its relationship with the Australian Government. In 2008 there was bi-partisan support for the National Congress of Australia's First Peoples to be an elected voice of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People. Co-Chair Jackie Huggins said, 'National Congress is an elected body with more members than some of the major political parties. Although our relationship has improved with Government, it has been through minor contract work and is ineffective.' Co-Chair Rod Little said, 'National Congress is strongly committed to the implementation of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.' The Redfern Statement Alliance Leaders call on Prime Minister Turnbull to invest in the National Congress as a lead Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community controlled organisation. Find out more [here](#).

DVD: GOSPEL LEADERSHIP IN TIMES OF CHAOS

The DVD of the Broken Bay Institute's 13th National eConference, *Gospel Leadership in Times of Chaos: the Hope of Pope Francis*, is now available for purchase on DVD for \$29.95, with free postage (in Australia). Prominent international and national speakers and panelists reflected upon these turbulent times and discussed them in the context of Pope Francis' unique style of leadership. Orders will take no longer than one week to process. The last week to order for Christmas delivery is Monday 11 December. Orders after this date will be delivered in the New Year. Visit [here](#) to order.

ICAN AWARDED NOBEL PEACE PRIZE

On 6 October, the Norwegian Nobel Committee announced its decision to award the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons the Nobel Peace Prize for 2017. The [Committee said](#), 'the organisation is receiving the award for its work to draw attention to the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of any use of nuclear weapons and for its ground-breaking efforts to achieve a treaty-based prohibition of such weapons.' Setsuko Thurlow, a survivor of the 1945 atomic bombing of Hiroshima, will jointly accept this year's Nobel Peace Prize with Beatrice Fihn on behalf of ICAN at the Nobel Peace Prize ceremony in Oslo on 10 December. To find out more about ICAN's work in Australia, visit [here](#).

POPE FRANCIS: THE POSSESSION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS IS AN IMMORAL ACT

On November 10–11, the Vatican hosted an international conference on the prospects for a world free

of nuclear weapons and for integral disarmament. The conference followed the historic treaty on the prohibition of nuclear weapons, which opened for signature on September 20. Continuing in the tradition of *Pacem in Terris*, the 1963 encyclical of Pope John XXIII, Pope Francis addressed delegates condemning for the first time not only the danger of these types of weapons, but also declaring that the possession of nuclear weapons is in itself an immoral act. Among the participants at the conference were eleven Nobel Peace Prize winners, key church leaders as well as advisors of different bishops' conferences and delegates from international (governmental) organisations, academic institutes and civil society. Find out more [here](#).

REPORT: 'POSITIVE PEACE REPORT 2017'

Why do some countries emerge from conflicts into peaceful societies, while others continue to exist in a highly fragile state? Understanding this question can help guide government expenditure to better create resilient societies, able to withstand internal and external shocks. The Positive Peace Report analyses the factors associated with changes in peacefulness and how they differ across different types of societies. The analysis is crucial to building a framework for creating higher rates of development, and more peaceful societies. The aim of fostering peaceful societies is more than just an ideal for humanity – there are real economic benefits to be gained from a more peaceful world. To download the report, visit [here](#).

REPORT: GLOBAL TERRORISM INDEX 2017

The Global Terrorism Index report 2017 is a comprehensive summary of the key global trends and patterns in terrorism over the last 17 years. The report includes: global results and trends; terrorism trends in Europe and other developed countries; characteristics driving terrorism recruitment; and the economics of terrorism. Measuring 163 countries and covering 99.7 per cent of the world's population, the 2017 report reveals that for the second year in a row global deaths from terrorism have declined. Significant declines in terrorism in four of the five countries most impacted by terrorism – Syria, Pakistan, Afghanistan and Nigeria – were also recorded this year. Find out more [here](#).

REPORT: 'AUSTRALIA'S WELFARE 2017'

The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare has just released its 13th biennial welfare report. While Australia continues to perform well in many measures of wellbeing – such as health, environmental quality and civic engagement – we don't do as well when it comes to other key measures such as 'work-life balance' and Indigenous disadvantage. The report provides an authoritative overview of the wellbeing of Australians, examining a wide range of relevant topics including home ownership across the generations, welfare spending and workforce participation, welfare services and areas of need, education and employment. Access the report [here](#).

HOMELESSNESS REPORT: THE 'COUCH SURFING LIMBO'

One of the most comprehensive reports ever on 'couch surfing' in Australia has found many young people living informally out of home are falling through the gaps. ('Couch surfing' refers to situations where a homeless person resorts to finding temporary shelter with family or friends – for example, sleeping on a someone's couch.) Laws and policies do not recognise youth couch-surfing as a form of homelessness. Many of the young people involved are too old for help from children's services, and too young to apply for assistance as adults. To download the report, visit [here](#).

FUNDRAISING: 2018 COLUMBAN ART CALENDAR AND CHRISTMAS PRAYER BOOK

The Missionary Society of St Columbians is an international Catholic missionary society that crosses

boundaries of culture and religion. The Society has recently launched its 2018 Columban Art Calendar and Christmas Prayer Book. The Columban Art Calendar is an iconic Catholic Calendar, well known for its traditional religious paintings and liturgical information. 2018 marks its 96th edition. The calendar and the prayer book are available for purchase individually or as a bundle for \$11 (exc. postage). Find out more [here](#).

FUNDRAISING: CARITAS AUSTRALIA'S GLOBAL GIFT

For many, the Christmas period is a crazy time of gift giving and searching for the perfect present, but each year many millions of those gifts are actually unwanted. In an age where most of us have more than we need, an unwanted gift represents a significant waste and serves as a profound symbol of the wealth gap between western countries and those living in poverty. But what if we could make sure our Christmas gifts had more meaning? What if they were guaranteed to bring joy and change lives globally? This year Caritas Australia is encouraging Australians to help to create a lifetime of change for some of the world's poorest communities by purchasing a Global Gift. Global Gifts can be purchased from as little as \$10 and come with a card for a friend or family member. To learn more or to purchase a Global Gift call: 1800 024 413 or visit [here](#).

RAFFLE: KEEP EUREKA STREET FREE

For 24 years, Eureka Street has been the destination of choice for Australians who enjoy conversations about politics, religion and current events and a hefty dose of ethical thinking. There is no cover charge, no paywalls. Eureka Street is free and open to all, compliments of the Australian Jesuits. Eureka Street is currently running its Christmas Raffle, to be drawn on 7 December 2017. 1st Prize: \$10,000 Visa Gift Card; 2nd Prize: \$2,500 Visa Gift Card; 3rd Prize: \$1,000 Visa Gift Card; 4th Prize: \$500 Visa Gift Card. A book of 5 tickets is \$25. Click [here](#) to purchase a ticket with your credit card.



ACSJC Publications December 2017

ORDER NOW! – 2018 SOCIAL JUSTICE DIARY

The 2018 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. A great Christmas gift. Diaries will be available from late November. Cost: \$7.50 (including postage). To download an order form, [click here](#).

SERIES PAPER 81 – 'AN ECONOMY THAT WORKS FOR ALL'

This paper examines Australia's economic policies and their effect on the most vulnerable and expands on themes in the Australian bishops' 2017–18 Social Justice Statement. 'An Economy that Works for All' discusses the serious effects of growing inequality, described by the International Monetary Fund as 'the defining challenge of our time'. Author Joe Zabar, of Catholic Social Services Australia, also summarises the history behind Australia's current economic policies and the responses of internationally recognised economists and institutions. He proposes ways in which marginalised and excluded Australians can be helped to share in the fruits of our prosperity. To find out more and to order, visit [here](#).

SOCIAL JUSTICE STATEMENT 2017–2018

This year's Australian Catholic Bishops Conference Social Justice Statement is entitled 'Everyone's Business: Developing an inclusive and sustainable economy'. PDF and Word versions of the Statement as well as a range of print and multimedia resources are available on the ACSJC website, [here](#).

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](#).

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. 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 December 2017

[We should welcome migrants and refugees: Francis](#)

28-Nov-2017

In his message for the celebration of the 2018 World Day of Peace, Pope Francis says migration should not be seen as a threat but an opportunity to build peace, Vatican

Radio reports.

[Australia falling behind on foreign aid: Caritas](#)

28-Nov-2017

Caritas Australia has expressed disappointment that the federal government did not use its foreign policy white paper to build on Australia's record as a significant middle power across a range of world issues.

[Doctors denied access to Manus refugees](#)

27-Nov-2017

Humanitarian organisation Médecins Sans Frontières has been denied access to asylum-seekers on Manus Island in order to assess their health and wellbeing, despite having been granted approval earlier in the week, The Guardian reports.

[Australia obligated to care for asylum-seekers: UN](#)

24-Nov-2017

The United Nations has called for calm after a group of asylum-seekers were detained by PNG police and dozens more removed from the decommissioned Manus Island detention centre, Sky News Australia reports

[Brennan appointed to religious freedom panel](#)

23-Nov-2017

Jesuit priest and lawyer Fr Frank Brennan has been appointed to a panel tasked with reviewing protections for religious freedom in the wake of the same-sex marriage vote, the ABC reports.

[Church groups condemn 'punitive' welfare reform bill](#)

15-Nov-2017

Church community service providers have banded together to condemn the Turnbull government's welfare reform bill

[Caritas joins push to help Rohingya](#)

15-Nov-2017

Caritas Australia has welcomed the announcement by Foreign Minister Julie Bishop of a Myanmar-Bangladesh emergency appeal, launched by Australia's leading aid agencies

[Gun control is 'a social justice issue'](#)

15-Nov-2017

Gun control is a social justice issue of concern to the Catholic Church, according to San Diego Bishop Robert McElroy, Crux reports.

[Homelessness a growing concern for older Australians](#)

15-Nov-2017

A growing number of Australians aged over 55 are facing homelessness, according to Mission Australia, ABC News reports

[Climate change requires a 'global response'](#)

14-Nov-2017

Global problems associated with climate change demand global cooperation, Pope Francis told heads of state from the Pacific Islands, Crux reports.

[Random drug tests won't work: Vinnies](#)

14-Nov-2017

The St Vincent de Paul Society has released a briefing paper that criticises the Turnbull government's proposal to randomly drug test Newstart recipients in trial locations in three states.

[UN urges Australia to take NZ refugee deal](#)

14-Nov-2017

As the Manus crisis continues, the United Nations refugee agency has urged the Australian government to accept New Zealand Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern's offer to take in 150 refugees, SBS News reports.

[UN tells Australia to change migration laws](#)

10-Nov-2017

Australia needs to stop rejecting refugees and change its migration laws to come into line with international standards, says the UN Human Rights Committee, News Limited reports.

[Build bridges with Indigenous Australians: Sr Anne](#)

10-Nov-2017

Outgoing Senior Australian of the Year Sr Anne Gardiner has urged non-Indigenous people to do more to open lines of communication with their Indigenous compatriots, ABC News reports.

[Brennan challenges politicians to break cycle of poverty](#)

10-Nov-2017

Catholic Social Services Australia has called on Australian politicians to decide whether to continue down a path of growing inequality or to ensure that a life of frugal dignity is within the grasp of all citizens, Melbourne Catholic reports

[Child slaves 'sold over and over and over'](#)

08-Nov-2017

"I'm the one. Put a face to it. I had a mother and father who loved me. Remember me when fighting human trafficking." Those words belong to Rani Hong, who was born in India and sold into slavery, Crux reports

[Jesuits join action against Adani coal mine](#)

08-Nov-2017

Jesuit Social Services in Melbourne has joined the Stop Adani Alliance and wants other community organisations to advocate against the Carmichael coal project, the organisation announced.

[US bishops urge ban on assault weapons](#)

08-Nov-2017

Leaders in the United States "must engage in a real debate about needed measures to save lives and

make our communities safer,” said the chairman of the US bishops’ domestic policy committee, CNS reports.

[Government must help refugees](#)

06-Nov-2017

It is time for Australia to deal with asylum-seekers and refugees according to this nation’s proud tradition and the best nature of its citizens, writes Parramatta Bishop Vincent Long OFM Conv. in Catholic Outlook.

[Council backs crackdown on aged care homes](#)

06-Nov-2017

The head of the Australian Catholic Social Justice Council has welcomed the government’s decision to crack down on wayward aged care facilities, The Catholic Weekly reports.

[Exploring the Churches' response to family violence](#)

05-Nov-2017

Church response to family violence is explored in the latest instalment of an investigation into domestic violence and religion by journalists Hayley Gleeson and Julia Baird, ABC News reports.

[ACTU calls for \\$80 increase to minimum wage](#)

03-Nov-2017

Minimum wage earners should get an extra \$80 per week to meet the rising cost of living, the Australian Council of Trade Unions says, reports news.com.au.

[Caritas calls for urgent action on climate change](#)

02-Nov-2017

The ambassador of Caritas Australia’s latest report on climate change in the Pacific has called on the Australian government to play a stronger role in the global move to a clean energy future, the aid organisation reports.

- Courtesy cathnews.com



Social Justice Diary December 2017

December 2017

1	Fri	World AIDS Day
2	Sat	International Day for Abolition of Slavery - ACSJC Resources on Trade Justice
3	Sun	First Sunday of Advent International Day of Persons with Disabilities 1874: Battle of the Eureka Stockade

4	Mon	
5	Tue	International Volunteer Day for Economic and Social Development World Soil Day - ACSJC resources on the Environment
6	Wed	St Nicholas (Santa Claus)
7	Thu	International Civil Aviation Day 1965: Vatican II Pastoral Constitution Gaudium et Spes ('Joys and Hopes')
8	Fri	
9	Sat	International Anti-Corruption Day International Genocide Prevention Day - ACSJC resources on Confronting Racism
10	Sun	Second Sunday of Advent Human Rights Day 1948: Adoption of United Nations Declaration of Human Rights 25th anniversary of Redfern Speech by Prime Minister Paul Keating at launch of International Year of the World's Indigenous People (1992) READ MORE ↓
11	Mon	International Mountain Day
12	Tue	1831: Founding of Sisters of Mercy by Catherine McAuley
13	Wed	First day of Hanukkah (Jewish Feast of Dedication)
14	Thu	
15	Fri	
16	Sat	
17	Sun	Third Sunday of Advent
18	Mon	International Migrants Day - ACSJC resources on Refugees 1894: South Australian Parliament the first in Australia to give women the right to vote

19	Tue	
20	Wed	<i>International Human Solidarity Day</i>
21	Thu	1991: Dissolution of the USSR and the founding of the Commonwealth of Independent States including Russia 1993: Native Title Bill passed by the Australian Senate - ACSJC resources on Justice for Indigenous People
22	Fri	
23	Sat	1901: Enactment of Immigration Restriction Act (White Australia Policy) - ACSJC resources on Refugees 1996: Wik High Court decision - ACSJC resources on Justice for Indigenous People READ MORE ↓
24	Sun	Fourth Sunday of Advent Christmas Eve
25	Mon	Christmas Day READ MORE ↓
26	Tue	2004: South Asia devastated by tsunami, killing 200,00 to 300,000 people
27	Wed	
28	Thu	
29	Fri	
30	Sat	1987: Pope John Paul II's encyclical Sollicitudo Rei Socialis
31	Sun	Feast of the Holy Family 1946: Granting of paid annual leave to workers in Australia - ACSJC resources on Workplace Justice