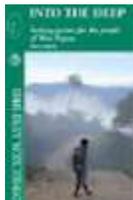


ACSJC Monthly Briefing April 2018 No 199



From the Secretariat April 2018

Dear friends,

We are coming to the time of the year when we are invited to think deeply about the culmination of Christ's life on earth – his final journey to suffering, death and resurrection.

The ACSJC has just published an important paper by Peter Arndt, the Executive Officer of the Catholic Justice and Peace Commission of the Archdiocese of Brisbane. Peter has taken a profound interest in the sufferings of the people of West Papua, and his journey has given him a perhaps unexpected perspective on the mission and suffering of Our Lord.

The paper is titled 'Into the Deep: Seeking justice for the people of West Papua' (Catholic Social Justice Series no. 82). In it, Peter tells of the thousands of Papuans who have been beaten, jailed, raped and murdered by Indonesian police and military. After more than 50 years of repression, they still believe that one day they can reclaim their country. Peter describes the many occasions when he has met West Papuan people and heard their stories, and has asked himself how he should respond as a Christian to their pain.

Peter's account begins with his meeting with Laurens, a man who had been brutalised by the authorities following a demonstration and who had been forced, despite his injuries, to swim for his life from the warship where he had been taken after his arrest.

'Often, I have thought about Jesus' experience of torture, his agonising death on the cross and how, in his suffering, he identifies with the pain and suffering of oppressed people like Laurens and his fellow Papuans,' Peter writes.

In his foreword to the paper, the Chairman of the ACSJC, Bishop Vincent Long, says:

'We cannot read Peter Arndt's account of the sufferings of the indigenous people of West Papua without being deeply moved. He shows how he has come to understand their indomitable desire for self-determination and to recognise how the Gospel calls him to walk beside his friends on their journey. Peter places his friends' experiences in the context of the Scriptures and looks deeply into the Church's teachings on justice, asking what he must do. He discerns the answer with clarity and courage.'

Peter says: 'The vast majority of Papuans are Christians and their faith sustains them in their resistance to Indonesian occupation. Many public acts of resistance take the form of prayer gatherings ... It's worth noting that, as much as their faith strengthens Papuans in their struggle, Indonesian soldiers and police often respond by denigrating and mocking their Christianity.' He tells of the courage of Christian Papuans – often Protestant – who would often travel long distances to stand beside Peter and his companions in case they were harassed by police or military.

Peter Arndt's commitment to justice for West Papuan people finds its roots in the idea of Christian solidarity. 'Until I started to walk with Papuans, I didn't really understand the meaning of solidarity,' he writes.

‘Solidarity, in the way Jesus exemplified it, is a radical commitment to others that even entails the possibility of losing one’s life. It emerges fundamentally from a heart that is in deep communion with the incomparable love of God.’

Peter’s conviction is that Christ is one with all those who suffer and are oppressed. Because of Christ’s identification with the suffering of his friend Laurens, Peter is compelled to accompany Laurens ‘in the midst of his torture and pain, to be immersed with him in the sea, battling for life, to be in jail with him and to share his daily life of intimidation, harassment, fear and uncertainty at the hands of a powerful and brutal security state.’

And, Peter continues, ‘It’s not a one-sided affair either. Laurens accompanies me too. Christ is with Laurens and me, calling me from the depths of Laurens’ anguish to be with my brother, to be with him and to assure him that he is not alone. However, Christ also calls Laurens to be with me and assure me that there is hope of freedom from all that burdens me too.’

In the final paragraph, Peter writes:

‘Into the deep we are called, into deep solidarity with Christ crucified and risen, into deep solidarity with each other in our suffering, into the deep waters of *Merdeka* – Freedom!’

This paper is a powerful reminder that Jesus’ mission to us, and especially to the most vulnerable and oppressed, is not some time in the future but here and now. This Easter, as we walk with Jesus in the Stations of the Cross and hear the stories of his passion, death and resurrection, we might remember Peter Arndt’s vision of Jesus suffering with all of us – especially the forgotten and marginalised – and calling us all to work for peace and justice.

On behalf of all of us at the ACSJC, I wish you a happy and fulfilling Easter season.

John Ferguson
National Executive Officer



Current Issues/Resources April 2018

EVERYBODY’S HOME CAMPAIGN

Australia’s housing system is broken. From people wanting to buy their very first house, to others struggling to just find a safe roof over their heads, it’s clear that the system just isn’t working for everyone. Crazy house prices and a system focused on property investment is locking a generation out of home ownership and creating more renters. Growing competition for rental properties are causing rents to skyrocket, so every-day workers can no longer afford to rent ordinary homes and don’t have the security they need. The supply of affordable or social rental properties is outstripping supply and a chronic shortage of social and affordable housing is forcing record levels of homelessness. The campaign provides an opportunity to work together to call on our government to bring balance back to the system. To find out more and join the campaign for a better, fairer housing system, visit [here](#).

2016 CENSUS OF POPULATION AND HOUSING: HOMELESSNESS

Census figures reveal a rise in the rate of homelessness in Australia. It has increased by 4.6 per cent over

the last five years. The latest estimates reveal more than 116,000 people were experiencing homelessness in Australia on Census night, representing 50 homeless persons for every 10,000 people. To find out more, visit [here](#).

REPORT: Housing affordability: re-imagining the Australian dream

Building an extra 50,000 homes a year for a decade could leave Australian house prices five to 20 per cent lower than they would be otherwise, and stem rising public anxiety about housing affordability, according to a new Grattan Institute report. Australia was once a place where housing costs were manageable, and people of all ages and incomes had a reasonable chance to own a home with good access to jobs. But home ownership rates are falling among all Australians younger than 65, especially those with lower incomes. The report highlights how government inaction over the past two decades has led to the current crisis and outlines the hard policy decisions that now need to be taken. To access the report, visit [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 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](#).

MEDIA RELEASE: TEACHERS LEARN HOW TO COMBAT HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Teachers from Sydney Catholic secondary schools have taken an important step forward in the move to slavery-proof supply chains of goods and services in the Sydney Archdiocese. The teachers recently participated in a human trafficking in-service run by ACRATH. Sr Noelene Simmons sm ran the in-service, assisted by Professor Jennifer Burn, Director of Anti-Slavery Australia and Professor of Law at the University of Technology Sydney. Both are members of the Sydney Archdiocesan Anti-Slavery Taskforce headed by former Australian ambassador to the Vatican, John McCarthy QC. The Taskforce has made recommendations, which include slavery proofing supply chains in the Archdiocese, including goods and services at all Catholic schools. The in-service is the first step in educating teachers on how supply chains relate to human trafficking. If your school would like more information or to arrange an in-service contact ACRATH at info@acrath.org.au. Read more [here](#).

ACRATH CAMPAIGN FOR SLAVERY-FREE CHOCOLATE THIS EASTER

Children as young as 12 years old are picking cocoa in West Africa to make the chocolate we eat. Some of these children are trafficked. Most are forced to pick cocoa from an early age for minimal or no wages, for long hours, in dangerous working conditions, without any possibility of attending school. Most of these children have never tasted chocolate and they never will. Australian Religious Against Trafficking in Humans (ACRATH) are campaigning to ensure that the chocolate we eat this Easter is slavery-free. More information about the campaign is available [here](#).

CAMPAIGN FOR STRONG LEGISLATION TO COMBAT MODERN SLAVERY

Alex Hawke, Assistant Minister for Home Affairs, has announced that the Turnbull government plans to introduce Modern Slavery legislation into parliament and hopes to have it enacted before the end of 2018. A number of NGOs, including the Be Slave Free Network, Freedom United, and STOP THE TRAFFIK Australian Coalition, are coordinating a campaign to ensure that this legislation is robust and effective.

The campaign aims to mobilise Australia's consumer power to help bring an end to modern slavery. In particular, these organisations want the law to set new standards for companies to report on modern slavery in their supply chains. More information is available here about the [campaign](#).

MEDIA RELEASE: Cuts to support system leave people seeking asylum in destitution

Thousands of people seeking protection while living in the Australian community are at risk of destitution and homelessness due to the latest government move to completely cut income support for people who need it the most. The government is planning to make cuts to the Status Resolution Support Service (SRSS) program that provides a basic living allowance (typically 89% of Newstart allowance, equating to just \$247 per week), casework support, assistance in finding housing, and access to torture and trauma counselling. The Refugee Council of Australia, Australian Council of Social Service and an alliance of close to 100 civil society organisations, including the Australian Catholic social Justice Council are calling on the government to urgently reverse their position to cut income support for people seeking asylum from 1 April 2018. To read more, visit [here](#). To support the call, visit [here](#).

REFUGEE WEEK – 17 TO 23 JUNE

Refugee Week is Australia's peak annual activity to raise awareness about the issues affecting refugees and celebrate the positive contributions made by refugees to Australian society. Celebrated since 1986, Refugee Week coincides with World Refugee Day (20 June). In 2018, Refugee Week will be held from 17 June to 23 June. The theme for Refugee Week 2018 is #WithRefugees. Today, more than ever, we need a global movement to demand the safety and rights of refugees are protected. In Australia, it is the responsibility of our Government, and each one of us to ensure people forced to flee from their homes can live with dignity and with hope. To find out more, visit the [Refugee Council of Australia](#).

ASYLUM SEEKER RESOURCE CENTRE: VISIT TO MANUS REPORT

In November 2017 the Asylum Seeker Resource Centre (ASRC) visited Manus Island to witness first-hand the humanitarian crisis facing 606 men abandoned by the Australian Government. What they found generated national coverage on the treatment of these men, while paving the way for other international organisations to send help. Read the official report [here](#).

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL: PUNISHMENT NOT PROTECTION

The recent Amnesty report on Australia's treatment of refugees and asylum seekers in Papua New Guinea details the circumstances of men on Nauru following the November 2017 raid on the detention centre when inmates of the camp were taken to three newer, but poorly resourced, centres. Australia remains responsible for their fate. It offload its responsibility onto PNG. The only option left for Australia is to end its harmful offshore processing policies and bring those who sought asylum in its territory back there, or allow and facilitate them to settle in other safe countries. Read the report [here](#).

NATIONAL ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER COUNCIL: NATSICC COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARDS

Every day, in Parishes, schools, organisations and ministries around Australia there are people working with and alongside Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Catholics to make a significant difference. They don't ask for accolades or want to be in the spotlight, but these people need to be acknowledged for all they do. The NATSICC Community Services awards want to celebrate the contributions of the unheralded and we need your help to do so! If you know of someone that has lived out the Gospel values in their lives and in their work, please consider nominating them for an award in any of the categories: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander:- Elder, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander:- Young

Adult (18y to 25yrs), Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander:- Adult (25yrs+), Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander:- Youth (up to 17yrs), Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander: Open. Nominations close 27 April. Find out more [here](#).

NEW REPORT: 'THE COST OF PRIVILEGE'

A report commissioned by Anglicare Australia and prepared by Per Capita finds that the cost of tax measures that benefit the wealthiest 20 per cent of Australians is over \$68 billion per annum. Anglicare Director Kasy Chambers says, 'That is greater than the cost of Newstart, disability support, or any other benefit ... the annual cost of Newstart [is] just under \$11 billion a year. Following the latest round of welfare cuts, these numbers tell us that something has gone badly wrong – we have become a country that cuts from the poorest to give to the richest.' To access the report, visit [here](#).

BOOK: THE VATICAN IN THE FAMILY OF NATIONS

Archbishop Silvano Tomasi was the Permanent Observer of the Holy See to the United Nations in Geneva. He is the author of this collection of statements delivered between 2003 and 2015, recently published under the title 'The Vatican in the Family of Nations: Diplomatic Actions of the Holy See at the UN and other International Organizations in Geneva'. The statements address contemporary issues from disarmament, migration, trade and intellectual property to discrimination and freedom of conscience. The book represents the official position of the Vatican on contemporary issues, offering new insight into the social doctrine of the Catholic Church and its contribution to the UN. For more information on the book and how to obtain, visit [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 in 2017. Find out more [here](#).



ACSJC Publications April 2018

SERIES PAPER 82 – ‘INTO THE DEEP’

In this paper, Peter Arndt examines the issues faced by the indigenous people of West Papua and discusses their claim for freedom and independence. Peter has visited West Papua on several occasions, has met and spoken with people working for freedom and justice, and has heard their accounts of oppression and brutality on the part of police and security forces there. He places the struggle of the West Papuans in the context of the message of the Gospel and Catholic social teaching. ‘That deep reflection on Gospel values and Church teaching is what makes this publication so inspiring. Peter places his friends’ experience in the context of the Scriptures and looks deeply into the Church’s teachings on justice and asks what he must do. He discerns the answer with clarity and courage’ (Bishop Vincent Long, Chairman, ACSJC). To find out more and to order, visit [here](#).

STILL TAKING ORDERS – 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. Cost: \$7.50 (including postage). To download an order form, go to: <http://www.socialjustice.catholic.org.au/publications/social-justice-diary>

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](#).

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 April 2018

Changing definition of charity ‘a folly’

A proposed bill to change the definition of “charity” in Victoria would threaten not only churches and religious groups, but their charities and businesses as well, faith representatives heard yesterday. Source: Melbourne Catholic.

Welfare reform package passes Senate

People who fail to meet job-seeking obligations could have their dole payments docked for up to a month under sweeping changes to Australia’s welfare system. Source: News.com.au.

Coalition urged to adopt housing plan

The Turnbull Government will today be urged to help create 500,000 social and affordable rental homes in a plan that includes tax incentives for superannuation to invest in affordable housing. Source: The Guardian.

Anti-slavery campaign moves to the classroom

Catholic secondary school teachers have taken an important step forward in the move to slavery-proof supply chains of goods and services in the Sydney Archdiocese. Source: ACRATH.

Political will needed to end homelessness

It’s hard not to get a feeling of deja vu when you see the homeless count from the 2016 Census, writes St Vincent’s Health Australia chief Toby Hall. Source: Sydney Morning Herald.

[PNG facing climate change disaster: Cardinal Ribat](#)

People of Papua New Guinea face severe threats from rising sea levels caused by climate change, the country's first cardinal said during a visit to Washington this week. Source: The Tablet.

[Homelessness problem getting worse](#)

Homelessness in Australia increased by 14 per cent between the 2011 and 2016 censuses, with 116,427 people now thought to have no permanent home. Source: The Guardian.

[Building bridges to peace](#)

Faith representatives from across Australia and the world gathered in Toowoomba on Friday and Saturday for the National Interfaith Peace Conference. Source: Toowoomba Diocese.

[Sister finds Tiwi women have 'stickability'](#)

Supporting Indigenous women in a remote Australian island community was the topic of a talk held in Rome yesterday to mark International Women's Day. Source: Vatican News.

[US bishops demand action on gun violence](#)

American bishops have issued a call for the US Congress to find "concrete proposals" in response to the "crisis" of gun violence across the country. Source: Crux.

[Timor Sea treaty a long time coming](#)

Today, the Timor Leste and Australian governments will sign a maritime boundary treaty at the United Nations Headquarters in New York. This day has been a long time coming, writes Fr Frank Brennan SJ. Source: Eureka Street.

[Coalition migrant plan will affect 110,000 kids](#)

The Turnbull Government's plan to make it harder for new migrants to claim government benefits will affect 110,000 children, Senate estimates has heard. Source: The Guardian.

[NT urged to fund youth justice recommendations](#)

Jesuit Social Services has called on the Northern Territory Government to commit funds to implement the recommendations made by the royal commission into youth detention and child protection. Source: ABC News.

[Cardinal Cupich backs student activists on gun control](#)

America's young people are "shaming the adult world into action" on gun violence, Cardinal Blase Cupich said yesterday. Source: NCR Online.

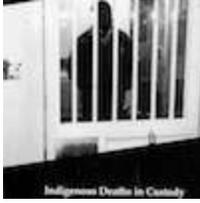
['Arrest a nun, not a Dreamer'](#)

Dozens of Catholics, including men and women religious, were arrested in Washington yesterday as they called on lawmakers to help young undocumented adults brought to the US as minors obtain legal status. Source: CNS.

[St Vincent's slams 'punitive' drug-testing trials](#)

St Vincent's Health Australia has criticised the Turnbull Government's decision to introduce legislation for a drug-testing trial of welfare recipients, saying it is punitive and risks harming people who need medical help. Source: SVHA.

- courtesy cathnews.com



Social Justice Diary April 2018

April 2018

1	Sun	<p>Easter Sunday</p> <p>READ MORE ↓</p> <p>1897: Death of Jandamarra, Aboriginal resistance leader of the Bunuba people (WA)</p>
2	Mon	<p>Easter Monday</p> <p>World Autism Awareness Day</p>
3	Tue	
4	Wed	<p>International Day for Mine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action - ACSJC Resources on Peacebuilding</p> <p>50th anniversary of the assassination of Martin Luther King Jr in Memphis, Tennessee, USA (1968)</p>
5	Thu	
6	Fri	<p>International Day of Sport for Development and Peace - ACSJC Resources on Sport</p>
7	Sat	<p>World Health Day</p> <p>International Day of Reflection on the Genocide in Rwanda - ACSJC Resources on Peacebuilding</p>
8	Sun	<p>2nd Sunday of Easter</p>
9	Mon	
10	Tue	

11	Wed	1963: Pope John XXIII's encyclical Pacem in Terris ('Peace on Earth')
12	Thu	International Day of Human Space Flight
13	Fri	
14	Sat	
15	Sun	3rd Sunday of Easter 1991: Signing of Aboriginal Deaths in Custody Royal Commission Final Report - ACSJC Resources on Justice for Indigenous People
16	Mon	
17	Tue	
18	Wed	World Heritage Day
19	Thu	
20	Fri	
21	Sat	
22	Sun	4th Sunday of Easter World Day of Prayer for Vocations International Mother Earth Day - ACSJC Resources on the Environment
23	Mon	World Book and Copyright Day
24	Tue	1945: Opening of First United Nations Conference with 45 nations attending
25	Wed	ANZAC Day - ACSJC Resources on Peacebuilding World Malaria Day
26	Thu	

		<p>1986: Nuclear plant accident in Chernobyl, Ukraine, causing thousands of deaths and widespread contamination in Europe</p> <p>1998: Murder of Bishop Juan Jose Gerardi Conedara in Guatemala</p>
27	Fri	
28	Sat	<p>World Day for Safety and Health at Work</p> <p>1841: Death of St Peter Chanel, first martyr from Oceania, in the New Hebrides Vanuatu</p>
29	Sun	<p>5th Sunday of Easter</p> <p>Day of Remembrance for All Victims of Chemical Warfare</p>
30	Mon	