



# ACSJC BRIEFING

No. 53 – December 2004

*From the Australian Catholic Social Justice Council, the social justice and human rights agency of the Catholic Church in Australia - [www.socialjustice.catholic.org.au](http://www.socialjustice.catholic.org.au)*

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## FROM THE SECRETARIAT

Dear Friends,

The Readings of Advent and Christmas offer us many images, all centred on the truth that God has become a human person and dwells among us, inviting us to a deeper awareness of the presence of God in our lives:

*The Virgin will conceive and give birth to a Son  
and they will call him Emmanuel,  
a name which means "God is with us". Matthew 1:23*

A recurrent image in these Readings is that of journey. Every journey begins with a decision. As we reflect on the meaning of Christmas, let us recall the many decisions made and journeys taken by the participants in the original Christmas event:

- Mary's decision to respond positively to the invitation to become a mother
- Her journey to be with her cousin Elizabeth, also pregnant through the intervention of God
- Joseph's decision to marry Mary and to become the father of her unborn child

- Mary and Joseph's journey to Bethlehem
- The Shepherds' decision to leave their flocks and visit the new born baby
- The Wise Men's journey from their homelands to Bethlehem
- Mary and Joseph's flight into Egypt with their new born son
- Their decision to leave Egypt and journey to Nazareth, where they make their home.

Making these decisions and journeys are characters who are non-conforming, ready to be different, able to let go and leave behind their comfort and security and prepared to take risks.

Our life journey can also show a willingness to challenge conformity, to be different, to let go of what makes us feel safe, to leave behind what is expected of us and to take risks.

May this Advent journey lead you into a deeper awareness of God being with you and those you love, and may the invitation of Christ enable you to carry the message of Christmas to those with whom you share these days.

Season's Greetings and best wishes for the year ahead,

Suzette Clark rsc  
 Marg Zucker  
 Yolanda de Haan  
 John Ferguson

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## **LATEST PUBLICATIONS**

*(Orders Tel: 02 9956 5811 or download an order form from the ACSJC website: <http://www.socialjustice.catholic.org.au/CONTENT/PDF/TEMPLATE-ORDERFORM.pdf>)*

### **2005 SOCIAL JUSTICE DIARY/CALENDAR – "SEASONS OF SOCIAL JUSTICE"**

The 2005 Diary/Calendar explores the Gospel challenge to live justly in today's society. A particular social justice theme is developed each month, providing a social justice program for the full year. Information and ideas for prayer and reflection are included. Ideal gift for Christmas and the year ahead. *Cost: \$6.60 (inc. GST), plus postage.*

*[http://www.acsjc.org.au/CONTENT/publications/social\\_justice\\_calendar.html](http://www.acsjc.org.au/CONTENT/publications/social_justice_calendar.html)*

### **OCCASIONAL PAPER: THE BEATITUDES AND JUSTICE**

Catholic Social Justice Series No.52 – by Fr Gerard Moore SM

Beginning with an explanation of the term "beatitude" – a declaration of something that is already true, even if not seen or comprehended – and pointing out the frequency and importance of these statements in ancient speech and literature, Gerard Moore enunciates their characteristics and explores the kind of "heart" they require of us in thorough, deep and thoughtful consideration of each beatitude in turn. The paper draws on examples from our daily lives and the sad, at times violent, world we live in, illustrating the importance of the beatitudes in terms of justice.

This paper is particularly valuable as a resource for small group discussion and personal reflection. Bishop Christopher Saunders says in the foreword to the paper, "I commend it to all who try, in the light of the teachings of Christ so beautifully expressed in the beatitudes, to practise the virtue of solidarity with our brothers and sisters, whatever our national, racial, ethnic, economic and ideological differences."

*Catholic Social Justice Series No.52 is now available. (Cost \$6.60 plus postage) (postage rates listed below)*

### **2004 SOCIAL JUSTICE SUNDAY STATEMENT & RESOURCES**

Australian Catholic Bishops' Statement: Peace Be With You: Cultivating a Culture of Peace.

The ACSJC is continuing to take orders for the Statement. A free electronic version of the 2004 Statement available at:

[http://www.acsjc.org.au/CONTENT/publications/documentation/documentation\\_js01.html](http://www.acsjc.org.au/CONTENT/publications/documentation/documentation_js01.html)

### **ECUMENICAL SOCIAL JUSTICE SUNDAY KIT: SECURITY AT ALL COSTS?**

A CHRISTIAN REFLECTION ON WHERE TO DRAW THE LINE.

Ecumenical Kit produced by the Social Justice Network of the National Council of Churches, now available (*cost: \$6.50 (plus postage: 1 copy \$1.45; 2-3 copies \$2.45)*)

### **LEAFLET & PRAYER CARD: TEN STEPS TOWARDS CULTIVATING A CULTURE OF PEACE**

Now available. Call (02) 9956 5811

### **OCCASIONAL PAPER: THE TIMOR SEA'S OIL AND GAS: WHAT'S FAIR?**

Catholic Social Justice Series No.51 – Fr Frank Brennan SJ considers the current negotiations between Australia and Timor-Leste concerning the resource sharing arrangements and maritime boundaries of the Timor Sea. (Cost \$6.60 plus postage) (postage rates listed below).

*(Postage rates for Catholic Social Justice Series Papers: 1 copy \$1; 2-3 copies \$1.45; 4-5 copies \$2.45)*

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## **CURRENT ISSUES/RESOURCES**

### **INFORMATION KIT: "INDIGENOUS HEALTH IN AUSTRALIA"**

The Fred Hollows Foundation is raising awareness about the health emergency faced by Indigenous communities throughout Australia. The thoroughly researched and accessible briefing papers provide accurate, relevant information on the current status of Indigenous health and its underlying causes. This information can be accessed at the following website:

<http://www.hollows.org/content/TextOnly.aspx?s=146>

### **CHRISTMAS CAROLS FROM TIMOR LESTE**

The Mary MacKillop Institute of East Timorese Studies is offering a CD recording of St Cecilia's Choir in Balide, Dili - both as a way of indulging in Timorese music and of supporting the young people whose voices it carries. The CD was produced in Sydney and is being used as a fund-raiser for the choir members themselves. Please buy! Great atmospheric music for Christmas! \$20 each (postage and handling: up to 2 CDs \$5; more than 2: \$10) Contact the Mary MacKillop Institute on (02) 9623 2847 or visit: <http://www.mmiets.org.au/>

### **NEW INTERNET RESOURCE: "PRAYERLINE"**

The 'Prayerline' resource is available for praying in solidarity with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women. It is a resource for the Decade to Overcome Violence in association with the Women's Network of the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Ecumenical Commission. It includes prayers and reflections to use each day of the worldwide 'On the Wings of a Dove' campaign, celebrating and praying in solidarity with Indigenous projects overcoming violence against women and children. (refer:

[http://www.ncca.org.au/dov/on\\_the\\_wings\\_of\\_a\\_dove/prayerline](http://www.ncca.org.au/dov/on_the_wings_of_a_dove/prayerline))

### **UNIYA RESEARCH PAPERS: "VIEW ON ASIA"**

Uniya Jesuit Social Justice Centre has recently released two Briefing Papers in its "View on Asia" series. The Papers considering the political and human rights situations on Vietnam and Burma are available at: <http://www.uniya.org/>

### **CARITAS AUSTRALIA'S SUDAN CRISIS APPEAL**

Caritas is coordinating an emergency appeal and needs donations to assist people displaced by the campaign of violence in Sudan. Please phone 1800 024 413 to make a donation. For further details, refer:

<http://www.caritas.org.au/emergencies/sudan.htm>

### **PASTORAL STATEMENT: "THE GIFT OF WATER"**

This Statement from Catholic EarthCare Australia, endorsed by the Bishops of the Murray-Darling Basin, considers the environmental, cultural, economic and social significance of the Murray-Darling Basin to many communities spanning four states and to the life of our nation. The beautifully presented statement reflects on the river system from the perspective of Christian faith – seeing its life-giving waters as a precious gift of God and seeing human beings as responsible before God for the stewardship of this gift. Cost: \$5.00 (\$4 for 7-20 copies; \$3 for 21+ copies). Visit the website of Catholic EarthCare for further details (<http://www.catholicearthcareoz.net>) or call: (02) 9956 5800

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# JANUARY-FEBRUARY NOTICES

**NOVEMBER 25 – DECEMBER 10: WORLDWIDE CAMPAIGN, "ON THE WINGS OF A DOVE".** The 16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence is an international campaign which began in 1991. Every year, all around the world, imaginative action by grassroots organisations and women's networks raises awareness, and inspires change, to overcome different forms of violence against women. (refer: <http://www.sites.ecosse.net/wcc.dov-women/news2.html>, [http://www.ncca.org.au/dov/on\\_the\\_wings\\_of\\_a\\_dove](http://www.ncca.org.au/dov/on_the_wings_of_a_dove))

**DECEMBER 1: PUBLIC MEETING, "SPIRIT OF EUREKA – THE STRUGGLE CONTINUES".** Historian Humphrey McQueen, Aboriginal Activist Gary Foley, Union Rep John Maitland, Lawyer and Civil Rights activist Rob Stary will speak. Paddy Crumlin, National Secretary, MUA will chair the meeting. 6.30pm refreshments and 7.30pm start, MUA Offices, 46 Ireland Street, West Melbourne.

**December 1 – 7: Exhibition, "Tais Timor woven art".** Traditional and contemporary textiles from East Timor on display at Ceramic Art, 120 Glenmore Rd, Paddington, Sydney. 10.30am to 5.30pm daily (closed Sunday). Many items suitable for gifts. Proceeds help the Timorese achieve economic security.

**DECEMBER 3: CONFERENCE, "HUMAN RIGHTS 2004: THE YEAR IN REVIEW".** This Castan Centre for Human Rights Law conference will focus on issues relating to sex discrimination, domestic violence and gender rights. It will also cover key issues of the year including the detention of 'enemy combatants' at Guantanamo Bay and legislation on racial vilification. 9.00am – 4.30pm, CUB Malthouse, 113 Sturt Street, Southbank, Melbourne. (Refer: <http://www.law.monash.edu.au/castancentre/index.html>)

**DECEMBER 3: FUNDRAISER/CD LAUNCH, "AUSTRALIAN DREAM".** The release of a CD of music by talented locals and refugee performers in Adelaide. CD \$20 – all proceeds to the Australian Refugee Association. 7.30pm at Nexus Multicultural Performing Arts Centre, corner of Morphett Street and North Terrace, Adelaide. Call (08) 8354 2951 or email [nmakhno@yahoo.com](mailto:nmakhno@yahoo.com). (refer: <http://www.active.org.au/adelaide/calendar/?day=3&month=12>)

**DECEMBER 4: ADDRESS, "FAITH, FAMILY AND PROFESSIONAL LIFE".** An Evening with Kate Mannix, Editor of Online Catholics. 3.00 – 5.30pm at St Joseph's Parish Hall, Newtown Parish. Corner of Bedford and Station Streets, Newtown, Sydney. Free. All welcome. RSVP preferred (by 3 Dec): Minh on mob. 0403181586 or [info@acmica.org](mailto:info@acmica.org)

**DECEMBER 4: SEMINAR, "JUSTICE FOR ACEH".** A seminar to commemorate 28 years since the peoples declaration of freedom. 9.00am Level 4, Tower Building, University of Technology, Broadway, Sydney. (refer: <http://www.active.org.au/sydney/calendar/?day=4&month=12>)

**DECEMBER 6: A MULTI-FAITH SHARING, "ECO-ETHICS AND VALUES".** Representatives of the Faith and Ecology Network and the Columban Centre for Peace, Ecology and Justice Centre are supporting the talks and discussions regarding an environmental ethical and values framework. Donation \$5. 6.15pm

for 6.30pm – 8.30pm, St Patrick's College Hall, Edgar Street, Strathfield, Sydney. Registration (optional) ph (02) 9488 8844 or [pej@accsoft.com.au](mailto:pej@accsoft.com.au)

**DECEMBER 6 – 8: CONFERENCE, "EDUCATION & SOCIAL ACTION CONFERENCE"**. This builds upon the tradition of previous conferences organised by the Centre for Popular Education at the University of Technology Sydney. The conference aims to: bring people engaged in different fields of social action and education together; be a forum where activists, workers, policy makers, artists and scholars alike are encouraged to participate; and encourage research and enquiry to promote practice that helps people strengthen democracy. Registration in main foyer of Building 10, University of Technology Sydney, 235 Jones St. Broadway, Sydney. For cost and registration details refer: <http://www.cpe.uts.edu.au/forums/2004conference.html>

**DECEMBER 7: ONE-DAY SYMPOSIUM, "SOCIAL CAPITAL: PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE SYMPOSIUM"**. Bringing together researchers, practitioners and interested parties to an important event in Wagga Wagga. Focusing on past, present and future conceptual and practical issues concerning social capital. For further info phone (02) 6933 4328 or email [rawilliams@csu.edu.au](mailto:rawilliams@csu.edu.au). (refer: <http://www.community-life.org.au/diary.php#event331>)

**DECEMBER 8 – 10: CONFERENCE, "A FUTURE THAT WORKS – ECONOMICS, EMPLOYMENT AND THE ENVIRONMENT"**. A three-day conference in Newcastle organised by the Centre of Full Employment and Equity and the Australian and New Zealand Society of Ecological Economists at the University of Newcastle. The aim of the Conference is to develop the nexus between labour market issues and environmental issues to advance the debate about social and environmental sustainability. Standard cost \$395, Concession \$210. (refer: <http://e1.newcastle.edu.au/coffee/conferences/2004>)

**DECEMBER 9: SEMINAR, "RESEARCHING ASYLUM SEEKERS' ACCESS TO HEALTH CARE: CHALLENGES, DILEMMAS AND SURPRISES"**. Dr. Ignacio Correa-Velez will consider refugee research at La Trobe. 5.00 – 6.00pm at the Victorian Foundation for Survivors of Torture, Parkville, Victoria. For further information contact Tulsi Bisht on (03) 9479 5861. (refer: [http://www.refugeecouncil.org.au/html/news\\_and\\_events/news\\_and\\_events.html](http://www.refugeecouncil.org.au/html/news_and_events/news_and_events.html))

**DECEMBER 10: PUBLIC EVENT, "HUMAN RIGHTS DAY, PITT STREET MALL"**. ChilOut is planning a lunch-time event in Sydney to raise awareness that it is six months on from the Human Rights Commission's deadline for releasing ALL children from detention. All welcome, between 12 and 2 pm, Pitt Street Mall, Sydney. (refer: <http://www.chilout.org/events/index.html>)

**DECEMBER 10: LUNCHEON EVENT: "17TH ANNUAL HUMAN RIGHTS MEDAL AND AWARDS"**. Julie McCrossin is MC, the Hon. John von Doussa QC will deliver the keynote address and Hugh Evans is special guest at the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission's luncheon ceremony. 12.00pm to 3.00pm at the Sheraton on the Park Hotel, Sydney. Tickets \$50, available at [http://www.humanrights.gov.au/hr\\_awards/](http://www.humanrights.gov.au/hr_awards/) or call (02) 9284 9618.

**DECEMBER 10: INTERFAITH DIALOGUE, "DESTINY OF MANKIND – ISLAM AND ITS ROLE IN THE SEARCH FOR GLOBAL PEACE".** A dialogue organised with Al-Ghazzali Center and supported by the Columban Mission. 7.30pm, ANZ Theatre, Maritime Museum, Darling Harbour, Sydney. Cost: \$15 (refer: <http://www.affinity.org.au/>)

**DECEMBER 11: EXHIBITION, "SIEV X".** Pat HOFFIE, Brisbane-based artist, is building a 19 metre X 4 metre vessel (made of cardboard and ply) in the Institute of Modern Art in Brisbane for an exhibition called Drift which will open at the IMA on December 11th. It is in part a commemoration to victims of the SIEV X (refer: <http://www.chilout.org/events/index.html>)

**DECEMBER 12: FUNDRAISER, "BRIDGE FOR ASYLUM SEEKERS FOUNDATION".** 1.30pm to 4.30pm, The Cat & Fiddle Hotel, 456 Darling St, Balmain, Sydney. Door charge \$10. All proceeds from the door and \$1 from CD sales on will be donated to the Foundation. (refer: <http://www.chilout.org/events/index.html>)

**DECEMBER 15: EVENT, "THE CHRISTMAS STORY"** The Grail Singers are leading a peaceful, reflective evening of carols and readings for Advent and Christmas at the Chapel of Mary MacKillop, Mount Street, North Sydney. The program, consisting of traditional and modern music, will be about an hour long (only a short walk from the station). 7.30 start. Free Entry.

**JANUARY 11 – 14: SUMMER COURSE AT THE BROKEN BAY INSTITUTE, "HUMANITY AND NON-VIOLENCE".** Internationally renowned Dr Gil Bailie is running this course at the Centre of Christian Spirituality at the BBI. He offers compelling insights into the Gospel, violence and the current state of religion and the Church, from an anthropological perspective. Cost, from \$200. Mount St Benedict's College, 447a Pennant Hills Rd, Pennant Hills, Sydney. Call (02) 9473 4570 or email [ccs\\_registrar@brokenbay.catholic.org.au](mailto:ccs_registrar@brokenbay.catholic.org.au). (visit: [www.ccs.catholic.edu.au](http://www.ccs.catholic.edu.au))

**JANUARY 12 – 18: SUMMER COURSES AT THE CATHOLIC INSTITUTE OF SYDNEY.** Courses include: Introducing Islam, Refugees and the Mission of the Church, The Catholic School and the Mission of the Australian Church. (refer: CIS [http://www.cis.catholic.edu.au/five\\_day\\_summer\\_school.htm](http://www.cis.catholic.edu.au/five_day_summer_school.htm))

**FEBRUARY 7 – 9: CONFERENCE, "TRANSFORMATIONS – CULTURE AND THE ENVIRONMENT IN HUMAN DEVELOPMENT".** An international conference looking at global and local trends in cultural diversity and sustainable development. Organised by the Federation of Ethnic Communities' Council of Australia. To be held at the Manning Clarke Lecture Theatres, Australian National University, Canberra. (refer: <http://www.fecca.org.au/transformations.html>)

*(email news of your forthcoming social justice event by the last week of each month to: [admin@acsjc.org.au](mailto:admin@acsjc.org.au))*

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## NOVEMBER NEWS MONITOR

**NUN SEES AFRICAN-STYLE FEAR IN PALM ISLANDERS:** A Franciscan nun who worked with traumatised Africans in a Kenya refugee camp, expressed serious concern for indigenous children on Queensland's Palm Island, who are "frightened to death" of the armed police patrolling the streets.

**BROOME DIOCESE WELCOMES PRISON INVESTIGATION:** The Justice, Ecology & Peace Office of Broome Diocese welcomed the announcement by Western Australia's Minister for Justice of an investigation into the provision of custodial services and facilities in the Kimberley Region.

**PAX CHRISTI AUSTRALIA CALL FOR END TO FALLUJA VIOLENCE:** Pax Christi Australia condemned the "heartless atrocities" suffered by Iraqis - particularly in the city of Falluja in the past month - at the hands of overwhelming military force.

**YOUTH CRUSADER WARNS ON CHILD SEX TRAFFICKING:** Young people who lose their souls in the child trafficking trade are victims of sexual abuse and the adults who abuse them in this way should be treated accordingly, says Youth Off the Streets founder Fr Chris Riley.

**JOINT EFFORT TO FIGHT TRAFFICKING OF WOMEN AND CHILDREN:** A consortium including the Australian Catholic University and the Brigidine Sisters is working to tackle the international trafficking of women and children in the sex industry in Australia.

**ST JOHN OF GOD HEALTH CARE COMMITS \$2.55M TO RURAL HEALTH:** St John of God Health Care announced their commitment of \$2.55 million over five years to assist in addressing the health disadvantage experienced in rural Australia.

**NEW PAPER UPDATES VIETNAM HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION:** The Sydney-based Uniya Jesuit Social Justice Centre published a research paper that highlights recent threats to minority groups in Vietnam but noted that its Government has been increasingly willing to discuss human rights issues.

**BRISBANE PRIEST CALLS HOMELESS YOUTH PROBLEM A 'SCANDAL':** The lack of emergency accommodation for homeless youths in Brisbane is a 'scandal', according to Brisbane youth advocacy priest Fr Wally Dethlefs of the Church Network for Youth Justice.

**VINNIES AND ACU ORGANISE LEARNING FOR THE HOMELESS:** Australian Catholic University, in partnership with St Vincent de Paul Society and willing business people, claimed to have found some of the "keenest, most grateful students ever", following Australia's first university courses for homeless people.

**CATHOLIC WELFARE SAYS FAMILY BREAKDOWN MORE THAN A LEGAL ISSUE:** Catholic Welfare Australia welcomed the release of the Federal Government's Discussion Paper that recommends compelling couples to visit a government "separation centre" for counselling in preparation for their legal separation.



**BISHOP MANNING CHALLENGES EMPLOYMENT RELATIONS LAW:** As the Federal Government prepared to introduce wide ranging industrial reforms, Bishop Kevin Manning of Parramatta issued a four-fold challenge with regard to employment relations in Australia.

**CATHOLIC SCHOOL PRINCIPAL APPOINTED TO GOVT INDIGENOUS BODY:** Miriam Rose Baumann, principal of St Francis Xavier Catholic School in the Northern Territory's Daly River, been appointed a member of the Federal Government's unelected indigenous advisory body that is set to replace the elected ATSIC.

- courtesy Church Resources' CathNews, stories in detail at <http://www.cathnews.com/news/411>

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## **DECEMBER SOCIAL JUSTICE CALENDAR**

### **DECEMBER 10 HUMAN RIGHTS DAY**

Human rights are often violated by violence.

Violence is a destructive force of immense proportion, which influences our lives at all levels: individual, societal and global. Violence refers to crime, exclusion, war, persecution, terrorism, detention without trial, slavery, environmental damage, bullying, discrimination, harassment, and victimization. It is often undertaken in the name of criminality, imperialism, nationalism, political expediency, power and control, and may be legitimised by the prevailing norms, values, belief systems, cultures and structures of relationships in our societies. Violence affects our humanity and our environment.

*For more information: [www.ncca.org.au](http://www.ncca.org.au)*

### **DECEMBER 10 THOMAS MERTON**

Merton was born in France in 1915, moved to the US and became a Catholic when a college student, and entered the Trappist Order in 1941. Although a member of a cloistered and contemplative order, Merton became the centre of a movement for non-violent social change, as well as a profound spiritual thinker.

### **DECEMBER 25 CHRISTMAS DAY**

The message the Angels sang on the night Jesus was born:

*Glory to God in the highest, and on earth, peace among people of good will.*

*During his life, Jesus advocated peace:*

*Blessed are the peacemakers for they shall be called the children of God.*

*Peace was the greeting and the gift of the risen Christ.*

The Hebrew word which we translate as "peace" is "shalom". It comes from a verb meaning "to bring completeness" or "to make whole", and speaks of a totally integrated life with full health of mind, body and spirit. It is about being attuned to and in relationship with our environment, one another and our God.

As we celebrate the birth of the Source of true and lasting peace, we can respond to his invitation to be peacemakers by promising to cultivate a culture of peace.

## **Promise for Peace**

*I promise:*

*To respect myself and others;*

*To communicate honestly and positively;*

*To listen carefully to the other, especially to those with whom I disagree;*

*To forgive others and to apologise and make amends when I hurt another;*

*To respect God's creation and treat the environment and all living things with respect*

*and care;*

*To pursue healthy activities and entertainment which promote a more joyful and less violent society;*

*To act courageously and to challenge violence in all its forms whenever I encounter it,*

*And to stand with others who are treated unfairly, even if it means standing alone.*

## **DECEMBER 31 A PEACE BLESSING**

As we come to the end of 2004, let us pray for peace within ourselves, our families, communities and friends, our nation and the world.

*May God banish from our hearts whatever might endanger peace.*

*May God transform us into witnesses of truth, justice and love.*

*May God enlighten the rulers of peoples*

*so that in addition to their solicitude for the proper welfare of their citizens, they may guarantee and defend the great gift of peace.*

*May God enkindle the will of all,*

*so that they may overcome the barriers that divide, cherish the bonds of mutual charity, understand others, and pardon those who have done them wrong.*

*May all peoples of the earth become as one,*

*and may the most longed-for peace blossom forth and reign always among them.*

- Pope John XXIII *Pacem in Terris*

## **JANUARY 1 WORLD DAY OF PEACE**

Pope John Paul II each year issues a Message for World Day of Peace:

[http://www.vatican.va/holy\\_father/john\\_paul\\_ii/messages/peace/index.htm](http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/messages/peace/index.htm)

## **REFLECTION**

*In the end, peace is not essentially about structures but about people. ... Gestures of peace spring from the lives of people who foster peace first of all in their own hearts. ... Gestures of peace are possible when people appreciate fully the community dimension of their lives, so that they grasp the meaning and consequences of events in their own communities and in the world. Gestures of peace create a tradition and a culture of peace.*

- John Paul II, World Day of Peace Message 2003, Par.9

What gestures of peace foster peace in my heart?

At Mass, do I offer the Sign of Peace as a gesture of peace?

### **ACTION**

Sadako Sasaki was two years old when the atomic bomb fell about two kilometres from her home in the city of Hiroshima. She was neither burned nor injured at the time, but ten years later became ill with leukaemia. When a friend sent a paper crane in the mail, she decided to make a thousand paper cranes. By the time she died, she had folded 644 paper cranes. For Sadako, the simple gesture of folding paper into a bird was symbolic of a prayer for peace.

Create a symbol that reminds you of peace.  
Place it where you will see it often.

### **ACTIVE NONVIOLENCE**

Violence may be emotional, verbal or physical. We think that it will solve our problems, but often violence generates more violence and makes the situation even worse. Active nonviolence is a powerful and effective process for addressing and resolving the conflicts in our lives and in our world. Active nonviolence seeks to resolve conflict in a humane and effective way, inviting us to respond rather than to react, to include rather than to dominate and exclude.

### **JANUARY 15 MARTIN LUTHER KING JR**

Martin Luther King Jr. was born on January 15, 1929 in Atlanta, Georgia, USA. During his lifetime, he was arrested thirty times for his participation in civil rights activities. King received numerous awards, including the 1964 Nobel Peace Prize, in recognition of his non-violent civil rights work. On April 4, 1968 Martin Luther King Jr was shot and killed.

*Let us not seek to satisfy our thirst for freedom by drinking from the cup of bitterness and hatred. We must ever conduct our struggle on the high plane of dignity and discipline. We must not allow our creative protest to degenerate into physical violence. Again and again we must rise to the majestic heights of meeting physical force with soul force.*

- Martin Luther King Jr

### **JANUARY 30 MAHATMA GANDHI**

Mohandas K. Gandhi was born in 1869 to Hindu parents in the state of Gujarat in Western India. In Southern Africa he worked ceaselessly to improve the rights of the immigrant Indians. It was there that he developed his creed of passive resistance against injustice, and was frequently jailed as a result of the protests that he led. Back in India, he was soon taking the lead in the long struggle for independence from Britain which came in 1947. He never wavered in his unshakable belief in nonviolent protest and religious tolerance. In January 1948, at the age of 79, he was killed by an assassin.

*Nonviolence is the greatest force at the disposal of humankind. It is mightier than the mightiest weapon of destruction devised by the ingenuity of humankind.*

- Mahatma Gandhi

## **RESOURCES**

- The Australian Catholic Bishops' Social Justice Sunday Statement 2004, Peace be with you: Cultivating a Culture of Peace (Available at: [www.socialjustice.catholic.org.au](http://www.socialjustice.catholic.org.au))
- ACSJC's Ten Steps Towards Cultivating a Culture of Peace and Prayer Card
- Ecumenical resource kit: Security at all costs? A Christian Reflection on where to draw the line. (Available from the ACSJC)

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[admin@acsjc.org.au](mailto:admin@acsjc.org.au) Website: <http://socialjustice.catholic.org.au> \*\* ACSJC Briefing is sent by email at the beginning of each month (except January). To subscribe or unsubscribe, go to the front page of the website Comments and contributions are also welcome.