



ACSJC BRIEFING

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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

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FROM THE SECRETARIAT

Dear Friends,

This month the Australian Catholic Migrant and Refugee Office is convening a national conference on the pastoral care of immigrants, refugees and asylum seekers. The theme of the conference to be held in Sydney is "One in Jesus Christ". It will celebrate the great contribution of the Church in Australia to our culturally diverse community and promote future directions for the pastoral care of 'people on the move'.

Migrants Chaplains, the Religious Orders, parishes and Church personnel have made a significant contribution to the life of multicultural Australia. As the conference organisers have said:

"As approximately 40% of Catholics in Australia were either born overseas or one of their parents immigrated, then the pastoral care of people on the move is a large part of the central mission of the Catholic Church in Australia. Every priest, religious or lay leader is potentially a multicultural pastoral worker."

Most people would have a general understanding of the work of the Church's Immigration Offices and of the Migrant Chaplains. They have had a key role in serving the sacramental needs of their communities over the years and in providing pastoral care. This care is extensive. It is diverse. It spans across a whole range of activities and contributes greatly to our broader community.

Just to name a few we could mention the prayer and devotional groups, scripture groups, youth groups, classes in language and culture, catechesis, spiritual retreats, outreach and home visits, charitable support, hostels and nursing homes, libraries, social events...

The Chaplains and others who minister in this area of pastoral care are often a central figure of support when migrants and refugees are most vulnerable. Sometimes they are mediators. Other times interpreters. For recently arrived migrant groups, their work is often concerned with practical issues like dealing with the Immigration Department, helping people to learn a new language, preventing poverty and securing the social and economic base for life in a new country.

The care they have provided to people dealing with grief and trauma often associated with leaving homelands and making the transition to a new life in Australia is one aspect of the support that is fundamental to multiculturalism. They would have done a good deal to heal the wounds caused by racism and intolerance that can be part of the experience of arriving in a new country.

For all these reasons, the work of the Migrant Chaplains, and all who engage in this pastoral work represents an important face of cultural diversity and tolerance in Australia. It represents key principles that Australia holds dear, like human dignity, democracy, religious freedom, a fair go, multiculturalism, tolerance, and peaceful existence.

Their work is a great gift to the life of the nation and to the Church in Australia.

Specific details about the conference to be held from 17 to 18 November in Sydney can be found at: <http://www.acmro.catholic.org.au/>

- *John Ferguson (National Executive Officer)*

CURRENT ISSUES/RESOURCES

URGENT APPEAL – STOP EXECUTION OF VAN TUONG NGUYEN

Australian national Van Tuong Nguyen is facing imminent execution following the rejection of his appeal for clemency by the President of Singapore on 21 October. A date has not yet been announced, although the hanging is likely to be carried out within weeks.

Van Tuong Nguyen was arrested in Singapore in 2002 after police found a package of heroin strapped to his back and a second package in his backpack. In March 2004 he was sentenced to death for importing heroin into Singapore. In October 2004 the Court of Appeal rejected his appeal against the death sentence.

Amnesty International Australia has launched an urgent appeal for people to write urging authorities to stop the execution of Van Tuong Nguyen. Please send appeals in English to arrive as quickly as possible:

urging the Cabinet to reconsider the decision to refuse clemency in the case of Van Tuong Nguyen, and commute his death sentence;
urging them to impose a moratorium on executions, with a view to complete abolition, in line with the April 2005 UN Commission on Human Rights (UNCHR) resolution on the question of the death penalty; and
noting that the UNCHR has urged states which still maintain the death penalty not to impose it as a mandatory sentence, or for crimes without lethal or extremely grave consequences.

The Amnesty website has a draft letter that can be sent to the Prime Minister, Minister of Law, Attorney General of Singapore. Further background information is also available:

http://www.amnesty.org.au/Act_now/action_centre/singapore_urge_authorities_to_stop_the_execution_of_van_tuong_nguyen

The Community of Sant'Egidio has also issued an appeal with suggested wording for communications to Singapore's authorities. The Community is a Church public lay association which began in Rome in 1968, in the period following the Second Vatican Council, and today has more than 50,000 members in more than 70 countries throughout the world. The urgent appeal of the Community on behalf of Van Tuong Nguyen can be accessed at:

http://www.santegidio.org/en/pdm/news/ap_van.htm

INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS REFORMS

In October, the Federal Government launched its multi-million dollar industrial relations advertising campaign along with the release of its "Work Choices" brochure. Readers will be aware of the pervasiveness of this advertising in commercial print and broadcast media. The real details of the proposed reforms will be contained in the Government's legislation which will be introduced to Parliament in November.

In September, the Australian Catholic Commission for Employment Relations (ACCER) released its Briefing Paper on the Government's reforms. The paper highlights the Church's social teachings as they pertain to such reforms and it identified five major areas of concern – the minimum wage, unfair dismissals, minimum conditions, workplace bargaining, and the role of the Australian Industrial Relations Commission (refer:

<http://www.accer.asn.au/news/index.html>)

On October 10th, the ACCER said The Federal Government's detailed outline of its proposed new system of workplace relations did not appear to address fundamental concerns about fairness and balance. Remaining concerns include: the setting of the minimum wage based on the needs of the single adult worker; the need for an understanding of the interaction of the day to day living costs of families with the taxation and welfare systems; the unfair dismissal changes; the impact of individual bargaining and reduced employment conditions on young and vulnerable workers; and, the reduced role of the Australian Industrial Relations Commission. (refer: <http://www.accer.asn.au/news/index.html>)

Bishop Christopher Saunders, Chairman of the ACSJC said in an interview with the Catholic Weekly that the Government's proposed reforms do not allay community concerns. He asked: "What will be the likely repercussions of these changes on struggling families, already trying to make ends meet because the minimum wage and income support are barely meeting their costs of living? What about people who are unemployed and seeking a wage that will lift them from poverty? The possibility that more flexible working arrangements will not be family-friendly is of course a concern... The fundamental question is 'How will these changes support family and community life – particularly for the most disadvantaged?' The available information on the reforms does not allay concerns for low-paid workers and their families." (refer:

<http://www.catholicweekly.com.au/article.php?classID=1&subclassID=2&articleID=1291&class=News&subclass=National>)

The Social Action Office (SAO) of the Conference of Leaders of Religious Institutes, Queensland have produced an excellent Briefing Paper and discussion guide entitled, "Money over Humanity: Changes to Industrial Relations in

Australia." These resources are part of an educational and lobbying campaign including a petition to the Senate, postcards that can be sent to Senators and a suggested actions list. (refer: http://sao.clriq.org.au/ir_campaign.html)

The Australian Young Christian Workers have also released an Industrial Relations Analysis entitled "An Economy for the People or A People for the Economy?" This document will soon be available at: <http://www.ycw.org.au/aycw/> The YCW will also be running events and meetings in dioceses around Australia over the coming months. Contact the YCW offices listed on this website for further details about the meetings.

Readers are reminded that the Pastoral Letter for the Feast of St Joseph the Worker this year is very pertinent to the current debate on Industrial Relations reform. This letter, "The Minimum wage in an age of prosperity and wealth", is available at:

http://www.socialjustice.catholic.org.au/content/issues/pastoral_letter_st_joseph_the_worker_may_2005.html

ANTI-TERRORISM LEGISLATION

On 8th September, Prime Minister Howard proposed significant legislative changes to anti-terrorism legislation that would strengthen the surveillance, detention and law enforcement powers of ASIO and the AFP.

Among the proposed reforms are included: preventative detention during terrorist situations; increased powers to law enforcement and security agencies like control orders including tracking devices and association restrictions on people said to pose a terrorist risk to the community; 'modernising' existing sedition offences to target those communicating messages inciting violence against the community or against Australia's interests in the fight against terrorism; a new "notice to produce" regime allowing AFP requests for information that will assist with the investigation of terrorism and other serious offences; extended "stop, question and search" powers for the AFP; tougher visa and citizenship security and character checking processes; and, better targeting of terrorism financing.

On September 27 the State Premiers and Territory Chief Ministers gave strong in-principle agreement to the proposals at their CoAG meeting. Some have questioned the draft legislation to emerge following the CoAG meeting in terms of unforeseen provisions – such as broader shoot-to-kill powers – and legislation's human rights implications and constitutionality.

The controversial anti-terrorism legislation will be introduced into parliament on Melbourne Cup Day and only one week has been given for Senate review.

There is no doubt that the possibility of a terrorist attack on Australian shores or against Australian nationals overseas has become a more imminent threat in recent years. The perceived significance of this threat in the mind of our nation has seen a commensurate increase in public debate on issues of national security and proposals for increased detention and intelligence gathering powers for Federal authorities. Unfortunately, it appears that the sense of urgency given to issues of national security has detracted from the equally important consideration of the need for the protection of democratic rights.

Many legal, civil rights and community groups are very concerned that the kinds of powers outlined for Federal authorities pose a significant threat to civil liberties and human rights. Groups like the Civil Rights Network have raised particular concerns about: an increased executive discretion to target individuals and organisations because of their political views; detention and other

restrictions on liberty without any crime being charged or proved; and new powers for the police to stop, search and demand documents without warrant.

The following links provide a good overview of issues, observations and campaigns about this legislation:

The Civil Rights Network: <http://www.civilrightsnetwork.org/>

The Parliamentary Library:

<http://www.aph.gov.au/library/intguide/LAW/TerrorismLaws.htm>

Getup campaign about the shoot-to-kill powers:

http://www.getup.org.au/campaign.asp?campaign_id=12

Chief Minister Stanhope's website:

http://www.chiefminister.act.gov.au/whats_new.asp?title=What's%20New

MEDIA RELEASE – "CHURCH AGENCIES OFFER CONDOLENCES TO BALI VICTIMS" 6 October 2005

Caritas Australia and the Australian Catholic Social Justice Council (ACSJC) offer sincere condolences to all those who lost loved ones or were injured in the recent Bali bombings.

"We pray for all those who lost their lives and we pray for a speedy recovery for those who were injured – regardless of their nationality or religious beliefs.

Saturday October 1 is yet another day marked by sadness and grief – an all too familiar occurrence in recent years. Our organizations support the initiatives of the governments of both Australia and Indonesia to address terrorism and its causes," said Mr Jack de Groot of Caritas Australia. Mr John Ferguson of the ACSJC said, "We also urge all Australians to develop a greater awareness and understanding of the suffering and oppression which can make people vulnerable to the teachings of terrorists. We reject fanaticism and the destruction of life which is never justified by any cause."

(http://www.acsjc.org.au/Content/media_releases/2005_10_6_1128906367.html)

NATSICC – MESSAGE STICK

The National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Catholic Council is planning to celebrate the 20th Anniversary of Pope John Paul II's visit to Alice Springs by holding its National Assembly in the Red Centre in October 2006. NATSICC's Councillors are sending a Message Stick through Deaneries, Parishes, Schools and communities. This event is a pilgrimage that will bring all of the States together in Alice Springs for the Assembly in 2006. For more information and to see how you can be involved visit:

http://www.natsicc.org.au/message_stick_relay.htm

CARITAS – APPEALS

"Central Asia Appeal": On October 8th 2005 an earthquake measuring 7.6 on the Richter scale struck 90 km north of Islamabad. Massive destruction has taken place. The estimated death toll is 40,000 people, with many expecting this figure to rise further. Caritas Australia is working with Catholic Relief Services and Caritas Pakistan to provide support.

"Niger Famine Appeal": Caritas Australia is now accepting donations for the people of Niger in Western Africa who are suffering from severe food shortages. More than three million people in Niger are experiencing starvation as a result of failed crops caused by a severe drought and locust plagues.

"Central American disaster": Caritas Australia is accepting donations for the victims of volcanic activity and hurricane related floods and landslides affected Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua and Mexico. The people of

Central America urgently need financial support so that they can start to rebuild their lives.

To donate to these appeals please ring 1800 024 413 or donate on line at:
http://www.caritas.org.au/howtohelp/donate_online.htm

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>)

ORDER NOW! - 2006 SOCIAL JUSTICE DIARY

The 2006 Diary includes the dates of significant events, anniversaries and special days which celebrate particular aspects of social justice. A 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.

This is an essential resource for teachers and parishes. Cost: \$6.60 (inc. GST), plus postage. To download an order form, go to:
http://www.socialjustice.catholic.org.au/content/publications/social_justice_calendar.html

SERIES PAPER: A LOVE THAT DOES JUSTICE

Catholic Social Justice Series No. 55 – Fr Neil Brown.

Bishop Christopher Saunders says in his foreword of this paper: In this thoughtful, reflective paper, "A Love That Does Justice", the Australian theologian, Father Neil Brown, discusses the fundamental issues of charity, morality, love and justice, and considers their interconnections in a Christian life.

He examines the different faces of love and sums it up as "following Christ's way of looking at and responding to the world around us". Justice he names as "the reality check of love". This essential link of justice with Christ's love enables us to discern our path when we are presented with valid, but competing, claims of justice. In the end, our solution becomes apparent; we answer the question: "What would Christ do?"

Charity, "the gift of Christ's own Spirit to us", is "our feeble human love, challenged and enabled to become adequate to express God's own love in the world".

I commend this paper to all seekers of "Justice – the Vision of Love".
(Cost \$6.60 plus postage) (postage rates listed below)

2005 SOCIAL JUSTICE SUNDAY STATEMENT – STILL TAKING ORDERS

This year's Australian Catholic Bishops Conference Social Justice Sunday Statement is entitled "Jesus, Light for the World – Living the Gospel today". The ACSJC is now taking orders of 10 or more for the Statement. An order form is available on the ACSJC website: <http://www.socialjustice.catholic.org.au>

The Statement can be downloaded at:

<http://www.acbc.catholic.org.au/latest.html> and

http://www.acsjc.org.au/CONTENT/publications/documentation/documentation_sjs01.html

Leaflet & Prayer Card: Ten Steps Towards Living the Gospel Today

Now available. Call (02) 9956 5811

Other resources available on the ACSJC website:
www.socialjustice.catholic.org.au

ACSJC STATEMENT FOR JUBILEE SUNDAY:

ACSJC Statement for Jubilee Sunday (26 June):

http://www.socialjustice.catholic.org.au/Content/issues/statement_for_jubilee_sunday,_26_june_2005.html

PASTORAL LETTER: THE MINIMUM WAGE IN AN AGE OF PROSPERITY AND WEALTH

The Pastoral Letter issued on the Feast of St Joseph the Worker. Available at: www.socialjustice.catholic.org.au

SERIES PAPER: TRADE JUSTICE

Catholic Social Justice Series No. 54 – Sr Suzette Clark rsc and Dr Patricia Ranald. (Cost \$6.60 plus postage) (postage rates listed below)

SERIES PAPER: ENDING HUNGER – HOW FAR CAN WE GO?

Catholic Social Justice Series No.53 – Fr Bruce Duncan CSsR. (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)

NOVEMBER NOTICES

NOVEMBER 1: DOCUMENTARY SCREENING, "BLACK CHICKS TALKING" (NSW). Documentary film by Leah Purcell who talks with five dynamic Aboriginal women - a passionate and challenging exploration of black identity. 7.30pm, Angophora Room, Nelson Heather Centre, cnr Jacksons & Pittwater Roads, North Narrabeen. For further info call: (02) 9913 7940.

NOVEMBER 2: LAUNCH, "MAKE INDIGENOUS POVERTY HISTORY" (NSW). The National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Ecumenical Commission invites you to an Ecumenical Service to launch the campaign "Make Indigenous Poverty History". 7.30pm at St Patrick's Cathedral, 1 Marist Place, Parramatta. Come and celebrate and find out more about what you can do. Contact NATSIEC on (02) 9299 2215 or visit: <http://www.ncca.org.au/natsiec/miph>

NOVEMBER 3: FILM SCREENING, "BLOWIN' IN THE WIND" (QLD). A haunting film produced by independent film-maker, David Bradbury, raises searching questions about the enduring human costs of the use of depleted uranium weapons in war. 6.00pm, South Bank Cinema, 167 Grey Street, South Brisbane. RSVP on 3855 9497 or 3870 2816.

NOVEMBER 7: LAUNCH, "AND THE DANCE GOES ON" (QLD). An anthology of Australian Catholic women's stories commissioned by the Commission for Australian Catholic Women, will be launched at 11.00am at the Cathedral Gift and Book store, William Street Rockhampton. RSVP on (07) 4921 2170. (refer: <http://www.cacw.catholic.org.au/>)

NOVEMBER 8: LAUNCH, "AND THE DANCE GOES ON" (SA). An anthology of Australian Catholic women's stories will be launched at 6.00pm at Sophia, Cabra Convent, 225 Cross Road, Cumberland Park, Adelaide. RSVP Ph 08 8210 8278. (refer: <http://www.cacw.catholic.org.au/>)

NOVEMBER 9: FILM SCREENING, "RED DUST" (NSW/VIC). Film Preview Screenings are an ANTaR Fundraiser. "Red Dust" exposes the truth about the insults and crimes of racial discrimination in South Africa under apartheid. The film is based on the book by Gillian Slovo, daughter of Joe Slovo and Ruth First who were prominent white activists against apartheid in South Africa, working alongside Nelson Mandela. Screening in Sydney at 6.30pm at the Dendy Newtown, 261 King Street, Newtown (Bookings 02 9555 6138). Screening in Melbourne at Kino Cinema, Collins Place, cnr Collins & Exhibition St (Bookings 03 9419 3613). Tickets: \$20 full or \$15 concession. (refer: <http://www.antar.org.au/>)

NOVEMBER 9: LECTURE, "ENDING WARS AGAINST CHILDREN" (NSW). City of Sydney Peace Prize Lecture will be delivered by Olara Otunnu, United Nations Under Secretary General for the Protection of Children in Armed Conflict and the recipient of the 2005 Sydney Peace Prize. He will deliver the Peace Prize Lecture at the Seymour Centre at 6.00pm. Tickets \$32.60/\$22.60 from box office on 02 9351-7940. (refer: <http://www.sydneypeacefoundation.org.au>)

NOVEMBER 10: AWARD CEREMONY, "2005 SYDNEY PEACE PRIZE AWARD CEREMONY AND GALA DINNER" (NSW). Presentation of the Sydney Peace Prize to UN children's rights worker Olara Otunnu, in the Great Hall, University of Sydney. The event is open to the public and tickets are now on sale. Tickets are \$350, or \$3500 for a table of ten. Call the Sydney Peace Foundation for tickets on: (02) 9351 4468 or or email: spf@arts.usyd.edu.au (refer: <http://www.sydneypeacefoundation.org.au/index.shtml>)

NOVEMBER 10 – 11: CONFERENCE, "RE-IMAGINING AUSTRALIAN SOCIETY – VISIONS AND SOLUTIONS" (QLD). The ACOSS Annual Congress will provide the forum for discussing and developing solutions to pressing national issues, given recent changes to Australia's society and the community sector. Confirmed speakers include: The Hon. Prime Minister John Howard, The Hon. Leader of the Opposition Kim Beazley, Senior Lecturer Eva Cox (AO), Law & Indigenous Studies Professor Larissa Behrendt, Economics Professor Bob Gregory, National Roundtable of Non-profit Organisations Chair Robert Fitzgerald. Convened at the Mercure Hotel, Brisbane. For registration and program details visit the ACOSS website: <http://www.acoss.org.au/Events.aspx?displayID=1>

NOVEMBER 12: LAUNCH, "AND THE DANCE GOES ON" (QLD). The anthology of Australian Catholic women's stories commissioned by the CACW, will be launched for breakfast at Townsville RSL, Charters Towers Road. For further info and to RSVP call Mundingburra Parish Office on (07) 4775 7688 or (07) 4775 7690 (refer: <http://www.cacw.catholic.org.au/>)

NOVEMBER 13: FILM SCREENING, "RED DUST" (QLD). Film Preview Screening is an ANTaR Fundraiser. "Red Dust" exposes the truth about the insults and crimes of racial discrimination in South Africa under apartheid. The film is based on the book by Gillian Slovo, daughter of Joe Slovo and Ruth First who were prominent white activists against apartheid in South Africa, working alongside Nelson Mandela. Screening at 11.00am at Dendy Brisbane, 346 George Street, Brisbane (Bookings 3844 9800). Tickets: \$20 full or \$15 concession. (refer: <http://www.antar.org.au/>)

NOVEMBER 14 – 16: ANNUAL YOUTH CONFERENCE, "EDUCATING THE HEART" (NSW). Youth Off the Streets are running their 5th National Conference. Presentations, workshops and creative discussions will be led by international and Australian specialists. A must for family support workers, youth and social workers, special educators, community and correctional services staff, policy makers etc. Venue: Bankstown District Sports Club, 8 Greenfield Pde., Bankstown, Sydney. For registration and program details call (02) 8332 5000 or visit: <http://www.youthoffthestreets.com.au/events/index.html>

NOVEMBER 15: LAUNCH, "AND THE DANCE GOES ON" (WA). The anthology of Australian Catholic women's stories will be launched by Bishop Gerard Holohan at 10.15am at "Jivin J's", Unit 19 Silos Waterfront, Marsden Hill, Bunbury. Tickets are \$10. RSVP by 10th November on (08) 9752 2834 (refer: <http://www.cacw.catholic.org.au/>)

NOVEMBER 17: MEETING PLACE, "I AM WOMAN; I AM MUSLIM; I AM AUSTRALIAN" (NSW). Uniya invites you to the upcoming Meeting Place featuring Nada Roudé. What is it like being an Australian Muslim woman in a post-September 11 world? How can community leaders reach within and beyond their communities to find new and effective means of dialogue, interaction and co-operation? How does each of us deal with the "other"? 7.15pm for 7.30-9.00, Gallante's Restaurant, 138 Norton St, Leichhardt, Sydney. RSVP: Uniya on (02) 9356 3888 or reception@uniya.org

NOVEMBER 17: LAUNCH, "AND THE DANCE GOES ON" (ACT). The anthology of Australian Catholic women's stories will be launched from 5.30 to 7.00pm at Australian Catholic University, Watson, by Catherine McGrath, ABC Chief Political Correspondent. RSVP on (02) 6284 8988. (refer: <http://www.cacw.catholic.org.au/>)

NOVEMBER 17-18: CONFERENCE, "ONE IN JESUS CHRIST" (NSW). The Australian Catholic Migrant and Refugee Office is taking registrations for a national conference on "Pastoral Care in a Culturally Diverse Australia". This conference will be of particular interest to Priests, Religious and Lay people involved in the pastoral care of migrants and refugees. It will be held at the Randwick Racecourse Function Centre in Sydney. For further info contact (02) 6201 9848 and visit <http://www.acmro.catholic.org.au/>

NOVEMBER 18: PUBLIC FORUM, "CONDEMN TERROR NOT OUR HUMAN RIGHTS" (SA). Amnesty International (SA/NT) together with the 'Fair Go For David' Group, has invited SA Senator Linda Kirk (ALP), NSW Senator Kerry Nettle (Aust. Greens), Vic Senator Lyn Alison (Aust. Democrats) plus others to Debate the status of Human Rights in "The war on Terror". Patrick Frost

(McLeod's Daughters, Channel 7) will MC the event. 6.15pm, Norwood Town Hall. Entry by gold coin donation. For further info call (08) 82215979 or visit: <http://www.ruralaustraliansforrefugees.org/template.php3?area=news&content=noticeboard>

NOVEMBER 18 – 20: CONFERENCE, "CLIMATE CHANGE - OUR RESPONSIBILITY TO SUSTAIN GOD'S EARTH" (ACT). Catholic Earthcare Australia is running the National Climate Change Conference at the Southern Cross Club, Woden ACT. The event aims to establish a dialogue with the wider community on ways to tackle the serious problems which climate change brings and to alert the Church to the reality of this global phenomenon and the need for action. For further info call (02) 4655 4855 and visit: <http://www.catholicearthcareoz.net/>

NOVEMBER 19: OPEN FORUM, "MAKE POVERTY HISTORY IN AUSTRALIA AND BEYOND" (WA). An open space event for conversations about what can be done to support the "Make Poverty History" movement and to network on this issue. 9.30am – 12.30pm at the Loftus Community Centre, 99 Loftus Street, Leederville, Perth. Participation by gold coin donation. RSVP to loftuscc@optusnet.com.au or 9328 3098. (refer: <http://www.active.org.au/perth/calendar/?day=19&month=11>)

NOVEMBER 19: LAUNCH, "AND THE DANCE GOES ON" (NSW). The anthology of Australian Catholic women's stories will be launched at 2.30pm at McAlroy House, 205 Tarcutta St. Wagga Wagga. Ph: 02 6201 9864. (refer: <http://www.cacw.catholic.org.au/>)

NOVEMBER 19: INQUIRY LAUNCH, "PEOPLE'S INQUIRY INTO DETENTION" (NSW). The People's Inquiry into Detention was initiated earlier this year by the Australian Council of Heads of Schools of Social Work. It is an open Inquiry which accepts verbal and written submissions into the practices and procedures of immigration detention and related operations. It is a transparent process in which people can tell their stories and give evidence of their experiences. The public hearings in NSW will be at the University of New South Wales, Sydney, between Sunday 20 November and Tuesday 22 November. The launch for these hearings will be on Saturday 19 November 5.00 to 7.00pm, The Chancellery, UNSW(entrance via Gate 9, High Street, Kensington 2052). For further info call (02) 9544 4983 (refer: http://www.ruralaustraliansforrefugees.org/template.php3?area=news&content=20050911_328)

NOVEMBER 19 – 20: FESTIVAL, "MELBOURNE SOCIAL FORUM" (VIC). The Social Forum is a dynamic open space for finding solutions to the 21st century's most pressing local and global challenges: fair trade, environmental sustainability, global peace and human rights issues. Speakers include: Rod Quantock, Aboriginal human rights activist Rob Thorpe, 'Human Shield' and peace activist Donna Mulhearn, Economist Kenneth Davidson from The Age, Aboriginal educator Lillian Holt from Melbourne University. Nov 19 & 20, at CERES Environmental Park in East Brunswick. Cost: Two days \$20-\$15/One day \$15-\$10/Organisation \$50. (refer: <http://www.melbournesocialforum.org>)

NOVEMBER 19 – 20: FESTIVAL, "NGAN GIRRA FESTIVAL: ALBURY" (NSW).

In its 10th year the festival is a living cultural experience not to be missed. A mix of Australian Indigenous Cultures both traditional and contemporary. Free music, workshops, cultural performances. To be held at the Mungabareena Reserve, Albury from 12.30pm on Saturday. For more details visit: <http://www.antar.org.au/>

NOVEMBER 19 – 20: INTERFAITH WORKSHOP, "YOU ME AUSTRALIAN, LIVING IN HARMONY" (QLD).

The Forum on Australian Islamic Relations (FAIR) and Alternatives to Violence Project Queensland (AVP) are collaborating to present a two day intensive inter-faith workshop to help people of different faiths to develop better relations and to provide skills for transforming conflict. The workshop will be held at the Multi-Faith Centre, Nathan Campus, Griffith University, Brisbane, 9.00 am start. The workshop is free, but donations accepted. Register by 9 November. For registration and program details call 3286 2593 or visit: <http://www.fair.org.au/interfaith>

NOVEMBER 22: COUCH LECTURE, "THE LIFE AND DEATH: THE HORROR OF EXTINCTION" (NSW).

Fr Sean McDonough, will be the keynote speaker at this year's 2005 Couch Lecture. Fr McDonough is a renowned ecological theologian. He is the author of "To Care for the Earth"; "Passions for the Earth"; "Greening the Christian Millennium"; and "Why are we deaf to the cry of the Earth?" 6.00pm, Leone Ryan Auditorium, Level 4, Carroll Building, ACU North Sydney Campus (Mackillop), North Sydney. (refer: http://www.acu.edu.au/acu_national/News___Events_Calendar/Events.cfm)

NOVEMBER 22: CONFERENCE, "MOVING ON: FORCED MIGRATION AND HUMAN RIGHTS" (NSW).

The Sydney Centre for International and Global Law is convening a one-day conference on international refugee and human rights law. Topics will include: terrorism and asylum, separated children, trafficking and slavery, offshore processing of asylum claims etc. The keynote speaker is Guy Goodwin-Gill, University of Oxford. Other speakers include: Justice Tony North (Federal Court of Australia), Rodger Haines QC (NZ), Assoc Prof Arthur Glass (UNSW), Assoc Prof Mary Crock (Sydney), Assoc Prof Susan Kneebone (Monash), Dr Pene Mathew (ANU), Dr Savitri Taylor (La Trobe), Dr JP Fonteyene (ANU), Dr Ben Saul (UNSW), Dr Jane McAdam (Sydney) and Jennifer Burn (UTS). The conference will be held at the theatre of NSW Parliament House, Sydney. For registration and other details call (02) 9351 0354 or visit <http://www.law.usyd.edu.au/scigl/Events.htm>

NOVEMBER 23: SEMINAR, "HOUSING ACTION: SNAPSHOTS FROM THE LAST 30 YEARS - A CRITICAL REVIEW" (NSW).

Shelter NSW and the Urban and Regional Planning Program of the Architecture faculty at Sydney University are running this seminar which will be of interest to tenants and tenancy activists, managers of social and affordable housing, urban and social planners, welfare workers and community development workers, and housing and urban researchers. 9.00am – 5.00pm, Architecture Lecture Theatre 1, Wilkinson Building, Sydney University, 148 City Road, Darlington, Sydney. For registration and program details call (02) 9267 5733 or visit: www.shelternsw.org.au/docs/fly0511sem-rego.html

NOVEMBER 23 – 28: CONFERENCE, "HOPES FULFILLED OR DREAMS SHATTERED?" (NSW). The Centre for Refugee Research and the Australian National Committee on Refugee Women are convening an international conference taking us from resettlement to settlement, with a focus on the Women at Risk special resettlement program. Issues to be discussed include the circumstances, needs and rights of people in Australia on Temporary Protection Visas and Bridging Visas. To be held at the University of New South Wales, Sydney. For conference and registration details, call (02) 9385 1859 or visit <http://www.women-at-risk-resettlement.info/>

NOVEMBER 25 – 26: CONFERENCE, "ISLAM, HUMAN SECURITY, AND XENOPHOBIA" (VIC). An international conference hosted by Deakin University and Monash University focussing on Muslim responses to increasing political, social and security challenges in a global era. The conference will consider the policies toward Islam and Muslims adopted by Australia and major international players. The conference will bring together prominent researchers from Australia and overseas working on diverse but related issues. ANZ Pavilion, 8th Floor, The Arts Centre, 100 St. Kilda Road, Melbourne. For registration and program details, call (03) 5227 2113 or visit: <http://www.deakin.edu.au/conferences/islam/>

NOVEMBER 28: FORUM, "INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS: BETTER OFF & BEING FAIR" (NSW). The Edmund Rice Business Ethics Initiative in conjunction with the St James Ethics Centre are running a forum on the ethics of IR changes. Speakers include: Dr Simon Longstaff, Executive Director of the St James Ethics Centre; Sharan Burrow, President of the ACTU; Prof. Mark Wooden, Melbourne Institute of Applied Economic and Social Research; Michael Pascoe, respected finance and economics commentator; and Dr John Sweeney, Leader of the Edmund Rice Business Ethics Initiative. 6.30pm, The Auditorium, The Australian Stock Exchange, Exchange Square, 18 Bridge St, Sydney. Tickets: \$50, Members \$35, Students \$25. Bookings close 23 November. For registration and forum details call (02) 9745 9700 or visit <http://www.erc.org.au/busethics/>

JANUARY 11 – 15: JUSTICE FESTIVAL, "WHAT IF ...JUSTICE IS POSSIBLE" (VIC). The Marist Young Adult Ministry is holding the 2006 National Justice Festival For Young Adults in Ballarat, Victoria. A live-in experience for young adults (17-30 years) looking to explore the links between their life, faith and how they might respond to the calls to solidarity, peace making and justice action. Guest speakers will include: Bishop Kevin Dowling Csr, Bishop of Rustenberg, South Africa; Regina Lane, Executive Officer for Australian Political Ministry Network; Mark Yettica Paulson, CEO Australian Indigenous Leadership Centre; and Fr Chris Skinner sm, Singer and Youth Ministry. For registration and other details call (03) 9347 7085 or visit: www.myam.org.au

OCTOBER NEWS MONITOR

CENTACARE MELBOURNE URGES GOVT TO SAVE NGUYEN: A church agency urged the Federal Government to maintain pressure on Singapore to give convicted drug trafficker Tuong Van Nguyen a reprieve against his death sentence.

VINNIES CHALLENGE TO GOVERNMENTS ON HOUSING: The St Vincent de Paul Society challenged governments at all levels to respond to shock findings of a Victorian Tenants' Union survey that included widespread overcrowding that included families of eight living in housing designed for four.

PAPAL INTERVENTION FOR DEATH ROW DRUG TRAFFICKER: Cardinal George Pell was to urge Pope Benedict XVI to intervene in a desperate bid to spare Australian drug trafficker Nguyen Tuong Van from the gallows in Singapore.

CATHOLIC HEALTH APPLAUDS PM'S BID FOR NON-GOVT ROLE IN MENTAL HEALTH: Catholic Health Australia supported the interventions by Prime Minister John Howard that called for more collaboration between Government and non-Government organisations, to improve the delivery of mental health services.

CATHOLIC HEALTH CALLS MENTAL HEALTH A "NATIONAL DISGRACE": The release of the report "Not for Service" revealed the desperate underbelly of Australia's mental health system, said Francis Sullivan, CEO of Catholic Health Australia

QUEENSLAND RELIGIOUS JOIN IR RESISTANCE: The Conference of Leaders of Religious Institutes in Queensland launched a campaign that included a briefing paper summing up the Howard Government's industrial relations changes as an attempt to put money ahead of humanity.

CATHOLIC EARTHCARE DECLARES POSITION ON URANIUM: As Australia's politicians and institutions reconsidered their attitude to uranium mining, Catholic Earthcare Australia reasserted its opposition to the growth of the uranium mining industry.

JOURNAL CALLS PROFESSIONAL BOXING 'ATTEMPTED MURDER': An influential Italian Jesuit magazine condemned professional boxing as "a form of legalised attempted murder", asserting that it left more than 500 boxers dead over the last 100 years.

PAPAL TWIST IN PARLIAMENT WORK DEBATE: Catholic Social Teaching was invoked by both sides of politics in Federal Parliament in the debate over proposed industrial relations reforms.

CATHOLIC WELFARE WEIGHS IN ON IR DEBATE: The director of Catholic Welfare Australia told an interchurch welfare symposium that the Catholic Church always deplores the treatment of employment as nothing more than a form of commercial contract, which is the basis of the Government's IR reform.

GOVT IR DETAIL FAILS TO EASE COMMISSION'S CONCERN: The Federal Government's "softened" and more detailed outline of its proposed new system of workplace relations does not appear to address fundamental concerns about fairness and balance, according to the Catholic Church's employment relations body.

CARDINAL HAMAQ TO SPEAK AT SYDNEY MIGRATION CONFERENCE: Cardinal Stephen Hamao, the President of the Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People will give a challenging opening address on the pastoral care of people on the move at a major national conference in Sydney.

CATHOLIC SUPER JOINS CORPORATE SCRUTINY OF CARBON EMISSIONS: The Catholic Superannuation Fund will join a number of other institutional investors in an attempt to coax the biggest companies in Australia and New Zealand to reveal carbon emissions and policies from next year.

CATHOLIC WELFARE WORRIES ABOUT STING IN DOLE REFORMS: The Howard Government will further toughen "three strikes and you're out" dole rules by including in the tally mistakes by unemployed people made during the 12 months before the changes are brought in.

BRAZIL BISHOP ON HUNGER STRIKE OVER RIVER DIVERSION: A bishop in Brazil gone on hunger strike over government plans to partly alter the course of a major river.

- courtesy Church Resources' CathNews, stories in detail at <http://www.cathnews.com/news/510>

NOVEMBER SOCIAL JUSTICE CALENDAR - RACISM

NOVEMBER 16 INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR TOLERANCE

REFLECTION

For over two centuries, Australia's story has been one of welcome and exclusion, as illustrated by the impact of the early white settlers on our first inhabitants through to the development of a multicultural nation. Today, we witness the recurrence of widespread racial hostility and rejection, expressed most clearly in our attitude to prospective refugees and asylum seekers, often from the Middle East.

Perhaps the greatest cause of division is dwelling on one another's differences, in particular racial and religious differences. Racism is a combination of prejudice and power and exists when a dominant cultural group assumes that its

lifestyle, as expressed economically, socially, culturally or religiously, is superior to that of other groups.

All members of the human family are the sons and daughters of the Creator and equal in God's eyes. In the Gospels, the Word of God, we see a Jesus who meets strangers, looks into their faces, engages them in conversation and reveals a God who loves all human beings. As Christians, we respond to God's call by welcoming the Word of God into our hearts, being attentive to it and allowing it to change and renew us. Contrary to such an invitation would be self-centredness, over-protection of 'our way of life', the exclusion of others from 'our nation', and the preservation of 'our culture' at all costs.

- *Bishop Christopher Saunders, ACSJC's Ten Steps Towards Challenging Racism in Australia Today*

PRAYER

God, You are the source of human dignity,
and it is in your image that we are created.
Pour out on us the spirit of love and compassion.
Enable us to reverence each person, to reach out to anyone in need,
to value and appreciate those who differ from us,
to share the resources of our nation,
to receive the gifts offered to us by people from other cultures.
Grant that we may always promote the justice and acceptance
that ensures lasting peace and racial harmony.
Help us to remember that we are one world and one family.
Amen.

- *ACSJC Prayer Card*

RESOURCES

- * The Australian Catholic Bishops' Social Justice Sunday Statement 2003, A Generous Heart in the Love of Christ: Challenging Racism in Australia Today (Available at: www.socialjustice.catholic.org.au)
- * ACSJC's 10 Steps Towards Challenging Racism in Australia Today
- * Ecumenical resource kit: Subverting Racism (Available from the ACSJC)

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

NOVEMBER 25 INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR THE ELIMINATION OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

The United Nations, "recognising the urgent need for the universal application to women of the rights and principles with regard to equality, security, liberty, integrity and dignity of all human beings", acknowledges that violence against women in the family and society is pervasive and cuts across lines of income, class and culture.

Violence against women has been described by the United Nations as:

- * an obstacle to the achievement of equality, development and peace
- * a manifestation of historically unequal power relations between men and women, leading to domination over and discrimination against women by men
- * one of the crucial social mechanisms by which women are forced into a subordinate position compared with men

Women especially vulnerable to violence are:

- * women belonging to minority groups, indigenous women, refugee women,
- * migrant women, women living in rural or remote communities,
- * destitute women, women in institutions or in detention, female children, women with disabilities, elderly women, women in situations of armed conflict.

The UN identifies particular issues including trafficking in women and some traditional practices.

TRAFFICKING IN WOMEN

Trafficking in women has been described as a modern form of slavery. Reports indicate that most are forced into sex or slave labour, or both. This practice is not confined to developing countries. The US State Department estimates that up to 18,000 people are brought into the United States every year and forced to work as prostitutes, domestic workers and labourers.

TRADITIONAL PRACTICES

Traditional practices are rooted in beliefs, values, and cultural and social behaviour patterns governing the lives of the societies concerned. Particular practices have been identified as affecting the health of women and girls. They include female excision, other forms of mutilation (facial scarring), force-feeding of women, early marriage, various nutritional taboos and traditional practices associated with childbirth. Mention is also made of the problem of dowries in some parts of the world, crimes of honour and the consequences of a preference for sons.

Australian Catholic Social Justice Council Leo XIII House, 19 MacKenzie Street, PO Box 1615, North Sydney NSW 2059. Tel: (02) 9956 5811, Fax: (02) 9954 0056, Email: 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.