



No. 87 – February 2008

From the Australian Catholic Social Justice Council,
the social justice and human rights agency of the Catholic Church in Australia

<http://www.socialjustice.catholic.org.au>

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FROM THE SECRETARIAT

Dear Friends,

The Australian Catholic Social Justice Council and its Secretariat would like to wish you a happy New Year, with every blessing for your families and your loved ones.

Let us pray that 2008 will bring social justice, development and peace to vulnerable members of the Australian community and all people of the world whose dignity is shattered by violence and undermined by hardship and deprivation.

PLEASE NOTE - ACSJC NEW CONTACT DETAILS

Over the Christmas break, the ACSJC relocated to new premises in Alexandria, south of the Sydney CBD.

Please note down the new contact details.

The ACSJC website and email details remain unaltered.

Please pass on the following details to your networks:

For written correspondence and other postage:

Australian Catholic Social Justice Council
PO Box 7246
ALEXANDRIA NSW 2015

The street location is:
24 - 32 O'Riordan Street, Alexandria

Phone: (02) 8306 3499

Fax: (02) 8306 3498

ACSJC CAMPAIGNS AGAINST THE DEATH PENALTY

On 20 December last year, the ACSJC was honoured to have Archbishop John Bathersby launch the latest paper in its Catholic Social Justice Series, *Confronting the Death Penalty - People, politics and principle*. The launch took place in the parish church at Corinda in Brisbane. In attendance were Lee and Christine Rush, the parents of Scott Rush who is among the Australians facing the death penalty in Indonesia.

There are four contributors to this paper. Dr Michael Costigan examines the moral and historical dimensions of the death penalty relating to Catholic social teaching. Mr Brian Deegan describes his grief over the loss of his son in the Bali bombing and his conviction that the death penalty is inhumane, even for his son's murderers. Fr Peter Norden SJ speaks of his community's support for the family of Van Tuong Nguyen, who was executed in Singapore. Professor Andrew Byrnes examines the legal implications of the death penalty and the attitudes of Australian police, governments and political parties.

Launching the paper, Archbishop Bathersby said, 'The Catholic Church is driven by an understanding that each and every person is a child of God with a dignity that nothing can erase. It therefore supports the sanctity of human life without exception, even the lives of those who have inflicted great evil on other people. All are made in the image and likeness of God and nothing that we might ever say or do can remove that dignity'.

Archbishop Bathersby said that, in contrast with this reverence for life, the death penalty undermines society's respect for human life and denies those who have committed crimes the chance to repent. For these reasons and more, he said, 'the death penalty should be opposed, not just for fellow Australians but for all our brothers and sisters in the one family of God who throughout the world may face that possibility. In doing so Catholics in no way condone the action of those who may be facing such a penalty. Justice must prevail and appropriate punishment must be used for the common good of society when crimes are committed.

'Because Australia opposes capital punishment as a party to the United Nations Second Optional Protocol on Civil and Political Rights, I hope the Federal Government will speak out strongly against the death penalty, already used by too many nations throughout our troubled world', the Archbishop said.

Responding to Archbishop Bathersby, Professor Andrew Byrnes asked, 'What can we do individually and collectively to continue the struggle against the senseless and barbaric practice that is the death penalty?'

He said, 'We must continue to lend our support to the efforts of those who are seeking to intervene to avoid the imposition or carrying out of death sentences already imposed on compatriots such as Scott Rush and his colleagues, but also on those who come from other countries.

'But we must also address the issue on the political level, and demand of our political leaders that they take a principled approach to the death penalty in our region and beyond.' Reflecting on the federal election campaign, he noted the 'unedifying spectacle'

of Australian politicians proclaiming their in principle opposition to capital punishment, yet 'running for cover' when it appeared this opposition would apply as much to the Bali bombers as it did to Scott Rush, Michael Czugai and the other Australians on death row.

'We must demand of our leaders that they have the courage to say that if the death penalty is wrong in principle, then that principle applies to the Bali bombers as well.'

Professor Byrnes said that the government must continue its work at the United Nations on the death penalty, but also supplement it with a regional strategy.

And for all Australians, there is the challenge to 'find ways to cross political, national, cultural and religious barriers to connect with those communities - in Indonesia, Singapore, Malaysia, Vietnam, and China, to name but a few, so that we can share our perspectives and knowledge with them, since their governments do not care to see the futility and barbarity of the capital punishment they endorse'.

Earlier, Bishop Christopher Saunders, Chairman of the ACSJC, expressed the hope that 'this paper will direct attention once more to Australia's response to the use of the death penalty by countries in our region. In addition to opposing capital punishment in Australia and intervening on behalf of its citizens who are exposed to the penalty in other jurisdictions, we urge the federal government to work energetically with our neighbours for the abolition of the death penalty in our region'.

Bishop Saunders has written to Prime Minister Rudd, urging a strong and consistent stance against capital punishment and advocating the worldwide abolition of the death penalty.

Catholic Social Justice Series paper No.61 can be ordered from the ACSJC (http://www.socialjustice.catholic.org.au/content/publications/social_justice_papers.html)

Addresses delivered at the launch of this paper can be accessed at: <http://www.socialjustice.catholic.org.au>

John Ferguson
National Executive Officer



Current Issues / Resources

MORE RESOURCES ABOUT THE DEATH PENALTY. There are various agencies, campaigns and resources calling for the abolition of the death penalty. Here are a few:

- Catholic Social Justice Series papers 61 and 40: http://www.socialjustice.catholic.org.au/content/publications/social_justice_papers.html
- ACSJC Position Paper on the death penalty: http://www.socialjustice.catholic.org.au/content/publications/positionpapers/2000_10_19the_death_penalty_why_catholics_should_oppose_it.html
- Media report on 'Confronting the Death Penalty': <http://www.theage.com.au/news/national/spare-the-bali-bombers-says-catholic-church/2008/01/02/1198949899803.html>
- The Community of Sant'Egidio: <http://www.santegidio.org/en/solidarieta/carcere/scrivere.htm>
- The Benenson Society: <http://www.staloysius.nsw.edu.au/associations/benenson/default.asp>
- Foreign Prisoner Support Service: <http://www.usp.com.au/fpps/>
- NSW Council for Civil Liberties: http://www.nswccl.org.au/issues/death_penalty/
- Amnesty International's campaign against the death penalty: <http://action.amnesty.org.au/adp>

PROJECT COMPASSION 2008 - 'JUST WANT JUSTICE: A CALL TO ACTION'. Project Compassion 2008 begins on Ash Wednesday 6 February 2008 and ends on Easter Sunday 23 March 2008. During these six weeks of Lent, Catholic schools and parishes throughout Australia will receive and use educational materials aimed at broadening the way we view the world. The theme for Project Compassion this year is 'just want justice - a call to action'. In marking World Youth Day,

this year's Project Compassion campaign also explores the role of young people around the globe empowering their communities and being advocates for change. To find out more and support the cause of reducing world poverty, visit: http://www.caritas.org.au/project_compassion_08/

NEW PAPER - 'NUCLEAR POWER: CURE OR CURSE?' Catholic Social Services Victoria and the Melbourne Catholic Commission for Justice, Development and Peace (now the Melbourne Archdiocesan 'Justice Unit') have published a 52-page Discussion Paper challenging arguments to expand nuclear power. After extensive research, the paper argues that nuclear power is no solution to climate change and remains an expensive, dangerous form of energy generation. Nuclear power is neither clean nor green as the nuclear fuel cycle generates considerable greenhouse gas emissions, from mining the uranium to final waste disposal. The Discussion Paper is available online at <http://www.css.org.au/papers.html>, or for \$5.00 (incl. postage) from Catholic Social Services Victoria, 383 Albert St., East Melbourne VIC 3002. Phone: (03) 9287 5566, or email: office@css.org.au.

WORLD YOUTH DAY COMMITTEE CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS. With six months to go, the countdown to World Youth Day Sydney 2008 (WYD08) is on, and organisers are offering 8,000 domestic and international volunteers the exciting opportunity to help run the largest event Australia has ever hosted. Volunteers will help in many areas including operations and crowd management, customer service, language and translations, staffing, hospitality & catering, accommodation, production, communications, liturgy and evangelization. Volunteers can either work during the event week, 14 - 20 July, or in roles available in the months preceding WYD08. All volunteers must be over the age of 18. WYD08 is taking applications now. For more information and to apply, visit www.wyd2008.org/volunteer or call 02 9390 5997.

YOUNG CATHOLIC WORKERS PUBLICATION: 'THE HOLY SPIRIT COMES'. A comprehensive resource containing practical ideas and strategies to help young people and those working with them in parishes as well as dioceses and schools to prepare for Days in the Dioceses and for pilgrimage to WYD08. 'The Holy Spirit Comes' is the second of three publications that YCS and YCW are creating to assist you to make WYD08 a genuine experience of formation for young people. Electronic copies are free of charge. Hard copies cost \$10 each, including postage and handling. They can be ordered by emailing bethany@aycs.org.au or through the YCW website: <http://www.ycw.org.au>.

CAMPAIGN - 'KEEP POWER IN OUR HANDS'. The Australian Fair Trade and Investment Network (AFTINET) is supporting a community campaign against NSW electricity privatisation. Responding to the NSW Government's plan to sell its electricity retail business and lease its power generating plants to private companies, Dr Patricia Randal says that privatisation will

not increase government income, it will mean that profits will come before the environment, and the government will have less ability to regulate a vital public service. Privatisation will mean higher prices for an essential service and the likelihood of more blackouts. The campaign website provides the means to send a message to the Premier and to get a petition to sign, and take to your family, friends and community group. Visit www.stoptheselloff.org.au for more information.

YOUR GUIDE ON CATHOLIC SOCIAL TEACHING For the authoritative, complete and easy-to-read guide on Catholic Social Teaching, visit this Vatican webpage for the Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church at: http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/justpeace/documents/rc_pc_justpeace_doc_20060526_compendio-dott-soc-en.html The Compendium can be purchased from Pauline Books and Media for \$39.95. For store locations and contact details, visit: <http://www.paulinebooks.com.au/>



Latest Publications

Orders: phone (02) 8306 3499 or download an order form from the ACSJC website: <http://www.socialjustice.catholic.org.au/CONTENT/PDF/TEMPLATE-ORDERFORM.pdf>

ORDER NOW! - 2008 SOCIAL JUSTICE DIARY
The 2008 Diary focuses on the theme of poverty and affluence. It includes the dates of significant events, anniversaries and special days which celebrate particular aspects of social justice and highlight the theme. It 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: \$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

DISCUSSION GUIDE - WORLD DAY OF PEACE MESSAGE 2008

On 1 January, the Holy Father delivered his World Day of Peace message. The theme of his

message is *The Human Family, A Community of Peace*. The ACSJC discussion guide consists of a brief overview of the Pope's message, some points for reflection and prayer. A helpful resource for group and classroom discussion. Download at: <http://www.socialjustice.catholic.org.au>

SERIES PAPER - 'CONFRONTING THE DEATH PENALTY'

The latest paper in the Catholic Social Justice Series consists of four essays by authoritative writers on the moral, legal and personal aspects of the death penalty. It considers capital punishment in the light of the attacks of September 2001, the international 'war on terror' and the moral and political problems thrown up as we see capital punishment rigorously applied in countries close to us.

(\$6.60 a copy, plus postage - postage rates listed below)

SERIES PAPER: TRAUMA AND FORGIVENESS: LESSONS FROM EAST TIMOR AND SOUTH AFRICA

Catholic Social Justice Series Paper No.60. Dr Mark Byrne considers the attempts of nations to heal the wounds left by violence by seeking "transitional justice" and setting up truth commissions. (\$6.60 a copy, plus postage - postage rates listed below)

2007 SOCIAL JUSTICE SUNDAY STATEMENT

The 2007 Social Justice Sunday Statement is entitled *Who Is My Neighbour? Australia's role as a global citizen*. An order form is available on the ACSJC website. A pdf and Word version of the Statement is also available at: <http://www.socialjustice.catholic.org.au>

Prayer Card & Leaflet: *Ten steps towards Australia becoming a global citizen*
Ecumenical resource: 'In Whose Interest? Australia as a global citizen'
Now available. Call (02) 8306 3499

Social Justice Sunday Statement Summary and Liturgy Notes
Now available at: www.socialjustice.catholic.org.au

(Catholic Social Justice Series papers and the Social Justice Diary: \$6.60 a copy, plus postage. Postage rates for Catholic Social Justice Series Papers: 1 copy \$1; 2-3 copies \$1.45; 4-5 copies \$2.45)

Orders: phone (02) 8306 3499 or download an order form from the ACSJC website: <http://www.socialjustice.catholic.org.au/CONTENT/PDF/TEMPLATE-ORDERFORM.pdf>



This Month's Notices

1 FEBRUARY. CONFERENCE: 'NEW DIRECTIONS IN CONFLICT INTERVENTION: WHAT WORKS AND WHAT DOESN'T?' (NSW). Presented by the Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies, University of Sydney. This Conference will explore the recently debated security-development nexus, interactions of military and aid interventions in conflict areas and their impact on societies ravaged by violent conflict. Keynote speaker: Paul Collier, Professor of Economics at Oxford University and former Director of the Development Research group at the World Bank. 9.00 am - 5.00 pm, Holme and Sutherland Rooms, Holme Building A09, Science Road, University of Sydney. Email: [Email arts.cpac@usyd.edu.au](mailto:arts.cpac@usyd.edu.au). Web: <http://www.arts.usyd.edu.au/centres/cpac/news/events.shtml>.

2 FEBRUARY. TV SCREENING: 'TALKING FAMILIES' (NATIONAL). It's back to school week all over the country, and that puts the focus well and truly on parents and their children. With all the pressures around these days, it's never been harder to have a happy family life, so this film from Albert Street

Productions portrays a number of ordinary Australian families and asks the question, 'What makes for a happy family life?' 1.00 pm Aurora Community Television, Foxtel Digital and Austar Digital Channel 183. www.catholicchurchtv.com.au

4-29 FEBRUARY. EXHIBITION: 'TOGETHERNESS FOR PEACE' (NSW). An exhibition by the Multidisciplinary Artists Association Togetherness - Art For Humanity (TAH). Opening: 6 February, 4.30 pm - 7.00 pm, NSW Parliament House, Fountain Court, Macquarie Street, Sydney. Open Mon - Fri 9.00 am - 4.30 pm; Contact: 0403 787 440. Web: <http://www.togetherforhumanity.com>, <http://www.refugeecouncil.org.au/newsevents/index.html>.

5 FEBRUARY. LISTENING TOUR BY HREOC COMMISSIONER FOR SEX DISCRIMINATION AND AGE DISCRIMINATION (ACT). The Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission (HREOC), in partnership with the ACT Human Rights Commission, invite you join HREOC's new Sex Discrimination Commissioner and Commissioner responsible for Age

Discrimination, Elizabeth Broderick, for a community consultation. This consultation is part of Commissioner Broderick's national Listening Tour - an opportunity for all Australians to make their voices heard on the issues that matter to them. 12:00 - 2:00 pm, Theo Notaras Multicultural Centre, 2nd floor, North Building, 180 London Circuit, Canberra City. Includes a light lunch. RSVP 4 February to Jorge Kapeen, ACT Human Rights Commission: (02) 6205 2222 or email human.rights@act.gov.au. Web: <http://www.humanrights.gov.au/about/events/index.html>.

6 FEBRUARY. ACU LENTEN LECTURE (NSW). Rev Dr Gerard Kelly, President of the Catholic Institute of Sydney, will explore the origins of Lent and discuss how we can enter into the spirit of Lent, making it more meaningful for us, and to better prepare for the Easter Resurrection celebration. 6.30 pm - 8.00 pm, Australian Catholic University, 40 Edward Street North Sydney. Parking is available on campus. Light supper will be served at the conclusion of the lecture. Information: (02) 9739 2943.

7-8 FEBRUARY. CONFERENCE: 'DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE IN TIMOR LESTE' (NT). Charles Darwin University, in conjunction with The Australian National University and the Timor Institute of Development Studies, host an international conference: *Democratic Governance in Timor Leste: Reconciling the Local and the National*. The conference will focus on how the process of 'nation building' might be envisaged given the international, national and local expectations that press upon the Timor Leste Government and parliament. For more information: <http://www.cdu.edu.au/timorlestekonference/>.

8 FEBRUARY. PLANNING MEETING FOR INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE: 'RIGHTS, RESPECT, RECONCILIATION, RESPONSIBILITY' (NSW). A three days international conference will be held in Sydney on the topic 'Rights Reconciliation Responsibility Respect - Planning for an inclusive future for Australia' from 30 September to 2 October 2008, organised by the Cosmopolitan Civil Societies Centre at UTS in conjunction with SAVE - Australia Inc and the Institute for Cultural Diversity. You are invited to the 3rd Planning Meeting. 10.00

am, Board Room, Sydney Mechanics' School of Arts, Level 3, 280 Pitt Street, Sydney 2000. Please RSVP by 6 February 2008. Contact Prof. Andrew Jakubowicz, 0419 801 102, andrew.jakubowicz@uts.edu.au or Maqsood Alshams, 0422 085 222 or maqsood.alshams@humanrights.net.au.

8 FEBRUARY. 'COME THIRSTY': ECUMENICAL DEDICATION SERVICE FOR THE COMMENCEMENT OF YEAR 12 (ACT). Christian ecumenical dedication service for the commencement of Year 12 at the initiative of Sir William Deane AC KBE, former Governor-General of Australia. An open invitation for up to 250 students to dedicate themselves to their study and to a life of service in the community. Each ACT college and independent school is invited to send 20 year 12 students and a handful of year 11s. 12.55 pm, Australian Centre for Christianity and Culture, 15 Blackall Street, Barton ACT 2600. For more information and requirements, contact (02) 6273 8805 or chengky@csu.edu.au

9 FEBRUARY. OPENING SERVICE CHAPEL AND ACADEMIC HOUSE, SEMINAR AND BOOK LAUNCH (ACT). 10.30am: Opening Service (Liturgist: Reverend Professor James Haire; Guest Preacher: Archbishop Francis Carroll). 12.30 pm: Lunch - all invited. 2.00 pm: Seminar on Ecumenics - Bishop Michael Putney (Bishop of Townsville, President of the Australian Catholic Bishops' Commission for Ecumenism and Inter-religious Relations) and Professor James Haire. 3.30 pm: Afternoon Tea. 4.00 pm: Book Launch - *Echoes of Irish Australia: Rebellion to Republic*, edited by Jeff Brownrigg, Cheryl Mongan and Richard Reid. Australian Centre for Christianity and Culture, 15 Blackall Street, Barton ACT. Web: <http://www.acc-c.org.au>.

9 FEBRUARY. TV SCREENING: 'TOMORROW'S PROMISE: SOUTH AFRICA' (NATIONAL). With Ash Wednesday, Caritas, the Catholic Church's Australian overseas aid agency, launches its annual Project Compassion over the next five weeks. *Tomorrow's Promise* charts what Caritas Australia is doing for the HIV/AIDS pandemic. This documentary brings us face to face with the pandemic in South Africa and the complex layers beneath its surface. The prevention, care and treatment strategies of

Caritas Australia, its partners and the local Catholic Church networks in South Africa are supported by our generosity to Project Compassion. 1.00 pm, Aurora Community Television, Foxtel Digital and Austar Digital Channel 183. www.catholicchurchtv.com.au

12 & 13 FEBRUARY. NATIONAL APOLOGY TO THE STOLEN GENERATIONS (ACT). On 13 February, this momentous day, the Australian Government will say sorry to members of the Stolen Generations - the first item of business for the new Government. The day before the apology, Tuesday 12 February, there will be a national Welcome to Country as part of the opening ceremony proceedings for Parliament. The Welcome to Country will be delivered by Elder Matilda House on behalf of the Ngunnawal people in the Members Hall.

13 FEBRUARY. SEMINAR - 'CONQUERING CLUSTER MUNITIONS: TOWARDS A NEW INTERNATIONAL TREATY' (ACT). Solferino Seminar presented by the Centre for International and Public Law. Speakers: Lou Maresca (International Committee of the Red Cross), Rae McGrath (Handicap International). Cluster munitions are killing and injuring large numbers of civilians in war affected countries. This presentation will both examine the nature and effects of cluster munitions and the process of developing a new international agreement limiting their use. 5.30 pm, Law Theatre, Bldg 5, ANU College of Law, Fellows Road, ANU. RSVP to: cipl@law.anu.edu.au by cob 11 Feb 2007. Enquiries: (02) 6125 0454 or cipl@law.anu.edu.au. Web: <http://law.anu.edu.au/cipl/events.asp>.

20 FEBRUARY. CONVERSATION: 'DIVERSITY - RIGHTS, RESPECT, RECONCILIATION, RESPONSIBILITY' (NSW). Professor Andrew Jakubowicz, Humanities & Social Sciences and Cosmopolitan Civil Societies Research Centre, University of Technology Sydney, in conversation with co-convenor Maqsood Alshams, Director, S A V E - Australia Inc. Join us for a conversation about the interrelated issues of human rights, Indigenous reconciliation, citizenship and inter-communal

relations. All welcome. 12.30 - 1.30 pm, Sydney Mechanics School of Arts, Level 2, 280 Pitt Street, Sydney. Web: <http://www.sydneymsa.com.au>.

21-22 FEBRUARY. MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES FORUM: 'TIME TO LISTEN, TIME TO ACT' (NSW). The forum will consider the social and emotional well-being of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders. Speakers will include Dr Helen Milroy, Tom Calma, Prof. Ernest Hunter and Coralie Ober. Powerhouse Museum, 500 Harris Street Ultimo. Registration: \$550. Register online at www.themhs.org or (02) 9810 8700. As registrations will be limited to 200, early booking is recommended. Web: www.themhs.org

23-25 FEBRUARY. ASIA-PACIFIC INTERFAITH SYMPOSIUM ON WOMEN, FAITH AND A CULTURE OF PEACE (QLD). Presented by the Multi-Faith Centre, Griffith University. The symposium will recognise and highlight the unique contribution of women of diverse faith communities in the Asia-Pacific region and will provide a forum for learning about intra-faith dialogue initiatives emerging within faith communities and institutions. Registration: \$100 or \$70 concession. Multi-Faith Centre, Griffith University, Nathan campus, 170 Kessels Rd, Nathan, Brisbane. Information: v.cawagas@griffith.edu.au or www.griffith.edu.au/centre/mfc or www.believingwomen.org.au.

27 FEBRUARY. TV SCREENING: 'PROMISE OF TOMORROW: PNG' AND 'DRAWING DARFUR' (NATIONAL). In these films we see how our generosity is put to good work at either end of the globe through our support of Caritas in its Project Compassion. Firstly we will go to our nearest neighbour, Papua New Guinea, and look at what's going on beneath the surface of the HIV pandemic. Secondly, we will go to one of the saddest places on the planet, Darfur in the Sudan, and find out the history of the problem and how Caritas is caring for over 300,000 people there - in the most creative of ways. 1.00 pm Aurora Community Television, Foxtel Digital and Austar Digital Channel 183. www.catholicchurchtv.com.au

Catholic indigenous leader urges Govt to say “sorry”

Prominent Aboriginal Catholic Graeme Mundine advised the Federal Government to stop wasting time talking about saying “sorry” to indigenous Australians and to just do it.

Bishops call for scrapping of citizenship test

The Australian Catholic Bishops Conference called for the replacement of the Citizenship test with compulsory “formation sessions” where Australian values and attitudes can be promoted.

Pope calls for “info-ethics” in media

Pope Benedict urged the media to practice “info ethics” saying the media is often used to create reality rather than just report it.

Jesuits put climate change on the agenda

Climate change and its effects on future generations will headline this year’s Jesuit Lenten Seminar Series in March.

Catholic agencies win family centre contracts

Catholic Social Services welcomed news that Catholic welfare agencies will be involved in 13 of the 25 new Family Relationship Centres announced by the Federal Government.

Vinnies helps families stretched by back to school costs

The St Vincent de Paul Society in Queensland was inundated with more than 400 calls for financial assistance to help families with the cost of getting children back to school.

JRS calls for Villawood “prison” demolition

The director of Jesuit Refugee Service in Australia called for the demolition of Sydney’s Villawood detention centre’s high security section saying the “prison-like conditions” were unjustifiable.

Pressure builds to support pokie ban

Centacare and the St Vincent de Paul Society backed the South Sydney Leagues Club decision

to do away with poker machines saying their availability trapped many into “gambling dependence”.

Bishop says opposition to death penalty must be total

The Australian Catholic Social Justice Council released a new paper on the death penalty, in the Brisbane parish of Bali 9 death row inmate Scott Rush.

Catholic Social Services plea to leaders to protect children

Catholic Social Services Australia appealed to the new government to make child protection a priority as both state and federal leaders come together for the first time since the election.

Vinnies says Howard legacy spoil Christmas for poor

St Vincent de Paul National CEO John Falzon said the previous government’s welfare to work arrangements would spoil Christmas for many single mums, people with disabilities and unemployed people.

Edmund Rice Centre pleads for low-lying Pacific Islanders

Australia must consider the needs of low-lying Pacific Island nations who are under threat rather than just focus on the science of climate change, the Edmund Rice Centre said.

Canberra bishop highlights China human rights violations

Bishop Pat Power said that in the lead-up to next year’s Beijing Olympics, China must appreciate that its human rights violations are being noticed overseas.

Group said revenge no way to deal with wrongdoers

Tasmania’s Catholic Justice and Peace Commission said restorative justice is a more appropriate way of dealing with inappropriate behaviour than sanctions based on retribution.

Bishop said sterilisation won't end poverty
An Argentinian Bishop said "greater equality and social justice" - not sterilisation programs - will counter the poverty attributed to overpopulation.

Columban ecologist praises Rudd Kyoto ratification

Irish ecologist Fr Sean McDonagh wrote from the UN climate change meeting in Bali that Prime Minister Kevin Rudd's signing of the Kyoto protocol was an early highlight of the meeting.

Religious orders ask Rudd to make Australia more just

An appeal by Australia's Catholic Religious sought the ear of newly elected Prime Minister Kevin Rudd, to lead the nation into more just

relationships that help Australians to become "better people".

Pope and NGOs share passion for human dignity

Pope Benedict said the Holy See and Catholic nongovernmental organisations share the same passion to promote human dignity.

Rudd election buoys Bishops' Reconciliation hopes

Australia's Catholic Bishops issued a statement reflecting the hope that "Indigenous Australia will be listened to", on the back of Prime Minister Elect Kevin Rudd's acceptance speech.

Courtesy Church Resources' CathNews - for details go to <http://cathnews.com/news/712> and <http://cathnews.com/news/801>



Social Justice Calendar

1 FRI Medicare introduced, 1984

2 SAT Presentation of Jesus (Feast)
World Wetlands Day -
Theme: Healthy Wetlands, Healthy People

3 SUN 4th Sunday in Ordinary Time
World Day of Prayer for Consecrated Life

5 TUE Cape York Peninsula Heads of Agreement signed, 1996

6 WED Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of Lent
Waitangi Day, Aotearoa New Zealand

10 SUN 1st Sunday of Lent

11 MON Feast of Our Lady of Lourdes -
World Day of Prayer for the Sick

12 TUE The Freedom Ride commenced, journeying through NSW country towns to raise awareness of racism against Aboriginals, 1965

17 SUN 2nd Sunday of Lent

21 THU International Mother Language Day, originating from Bangladesh Martyrs Day

24 SUN 3rd Sunday of Lent

Notes on these dates are available in the printed ACSJC Social Justice Diary (cost \$6.60, to order go to http://www.socialjustice.catholic.org.au/content/publications/social_justice_calendar.html, or call 02 8306 3499)

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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.