

Ten steps towards Australia becoming a global citizen

1. Understand global citizenship

Being a global citizen means living according to values that are good not just for ourselves, or for our own culture, religion or country, but good for the world.

Becoming a global citizen means seeking to understand the world by becoming more aware of global issues. What we do increasingly affects what happens to people in other parts of the world and vice versa. Australia shares responsibility for the global common good.

Consumerism and over-consumption rob the poor of their basic necessities. The challenge is to build a sustainable global community founded on interdependence and the principles of human rights.

2. Accept the challenge to be a neighbour

The person, group, or nation in need is our neighbour. We must be ready to voluntarily assist offshore neighbours at times of crisis, and act in the interests of our neighbours who do not share our prosperity and security.

3. Be a neighbour in our region, the Asia Pacific Australia needs to be a significant presence in its region. Controlling illegal immigration, combating terrorism and strengthening the national economy may be Australia's top priorities, but to truly engage with other nations in the region, we need to be sensitive to its needs and priorities. Think about how your parish and school communities could form partnerships with at least one parish or school community in the Asia-Pacific region.

4. Let the world be a home in which all are welcome

Strict immigration laws, restrictions on temporary working visas and a harsh policy on asylum seekers are not conducive to offering hospitality and hope to refugees fleeing to our shores in fear of persecution. Generous development aid and trade practices would assist the United Nations in its efforts to provide for the poor and weak nations of the world.

5. Foster Gospel nonviolence

Violence threatens not just our human community but our earth as well. Much of the violence in our world is rooted in government policies that ignore the basic needs of the poor and oppressed. By identifying the systems that support war and violence in our world, and educating ourselves about personal, communal and societal nonviolence, we can cultivate a culture of peace. This can begin with something as simple as monitoring the television programs we allow our children to watch. Nationally, we can accept the traditional Catholic doctrine opposing pre-emptive military strikes.

6. Be globally environmentally responsible

The Earth is precious and unique. Environmental responsibility calls us to live by the Earth Charter and to recognise the Kyoto protocol. Indigenous Australians recognise and identify with the spiritual value of the land, which is more than just looking after the land for the sake of what it can give us or enable us to produce. Australia could develop and use the cleanest and safest energy in the world. Individuals could daily reduce their environmental impact on the planet.

7. Recognise difference as gift

We can build on our membership of the world community to promote understanding and appreciation of diversity. Culture, language, religion and nationality provide us with identity and self-confidence, shaping our relationships with one another and the world. People from many lands have enriched Australia, creating a multicultural nation. We can delight in our own heritage and culture while recognising the contribution other cultures can make to Australia and working to preserve the language, history and culture of Indigenous Australians locally and nationally.

8. Become action-oriented

In today's increasingly interdependent global society, each of us is being called upon to explore what it means to be a truly global citizen, and to act on our findings. We are challenged to:

- put energies into personal change as well as social change
- remember that everything and everyone is connected.

9. Helpful Resources

- The Social Justice Sunday Statement 2007: [*Who is my Neighbour? Australia's Role as a Global Citizen*](#)
- The National Council of Churches ecumenical resource kit for Social Justice Sunday: *In Whose Interest? Australia as a Global Citizen*
- The *2007 Social Justice Diary* provides prayers, reflections and ideas on the theme of Australia's role as a global citizen. These resources are available either electronically on the ACSJC website, or as hard copy from the ACSJC.

10. Prayer & reflection

- Use the accompanying [Prayer Card](#), prepared by the ACSJC, for personal prayer, in schools and parishes, and for family and group prayer time.
- Reflect on the possible effects of our not acting in response to a crisis as well as the potential effects of our acting.

