



# Act Justly

## What will *you* leave to the next generation?

### *Social Justice Sunday Statement takes up Pope's challenge to young people*

On September 16, students, Church leaders, volunteers and activists converged on the Strathfield Campus of the Australian Catholic University for the launch of the 2009 Social Justice Sunday Statement.

The event was jointly organized by the Australian Catholic Social Justice Council, the Archdiocesan Justice and Peace Office and the Australian Catholic University, and brought together more than 300 people to celebrate and stand with young people acting for justice.

The theme of the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference's 2009 Social Justice Sunday Statement is "And You Will Be My Witnesses: Young People and Justice."

Speaking at the launch, Bec Bromhead, NSW Vinnies Youth Coordinator, thanked the Bishops "for a statement that empowers young people, and those young at heart, to work together in our Church and broader communities to, as Mahatma Gandhi once said, 'Be the change we wish to see in the world' "

In their statement, the Australian Bishops recall the movement of the Holy Spirit in young people during last year's World Youth Day celebrations, and praise the continuing action of the Spirit amongst young people working for justice now. They also highlight the ways in which youth today are confronted by injustice. The Bishops give particular attention



Below: Bishop Fisher launches the statement.

to indigenous youth, unemployment, mental illness, abuse, environmental destruction and world poverty and conflict.

Bishop Anthony Fisher launched the statement and before the official launch,

Cardinal Pell celebrated mass. Following the launch school students participated in a youth panel in which a diverse group of young adults shared their experiences acting for justice. Panelists from ACU, Caritas and Young Christian Workers shared inspiring stories from their work with local and global communities. They highlighted how their experiences had helped them to grow in confidence and faith.

Each year the Bishop's statement provides a  
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Right: Bec Bromhead speaks at the launch.

What will you leave to the next generation? Are you building your lives on firm foundations, building something that will endure? Are you living your lives in a way that opens up space for the Spirit in the midst of a world that wants to forget God, or even rejects him in the name of a falsely-conceived freedom? How are you using the gifts you have been given, the 'power' which the Holy Spirit is even now prepared to release within you? What legacy will you leave to young people yet to come? What difference will you make?

Pope Benedict XVI quoted in *And You Will Be My Witnesses*

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**The Justice and Peace Office is an agency of the Catholic Archdiocese of Sydney. The Office promotes justice, peace, ecology and development through educational, collaborative and advisory activities based on the social teachings of the Catholic Church.**

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## Young people and justice Apology to 'Forgotten Australians'

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focus for parish celebrations on Social Justice Sunday. On September 27 at Holy Family, Menai, members of the parish youth group shared with the social justice group and other parishioners about their work for justice as part of the Micah Challenge to end poverty.

**To order your copy of the 2009 Social Justice Sunday Statement log on to [www.socialjustice.catholic.org.au](http://www.socialjustice.catholic.org.au)**

Photographs courtesy of Australian Catholic University.



Cardinal Pell celebrated mass at the launch

### Hundreds gather for healing service

On 19 September an apology was delivered to hundreds of Australia's 'forgotten children' at the Royal Botanical Gardens.

These forgotten Australians are former residents of children's homes, orphanages, foster homes, institutions and out of home care. The unregulated care system in past decades saw many children mistreated. More than 200 000 children were taken into to care in NSW in the last century, many suffering physical and sexual abuse.

The apology was delivered by Premier Nathan Rees and Minister for Community Services Linda Burney represented the NSW Government. Anglican Bishop Forsythe spoke on behalf of the Churches and other NGOs.

Speaking on behalf of the NSW Government, Premier Rees said: "this should never have happened," before unveiling a monument to "the lonely, the frightened, the lost and the abused—those who never knew the joys of a loving



Minister for Community Services Linda Burney with CatholicCare's Maureen Eagles (Director of Children and Youth Services) and Pam Zemanek (Assistant Director)

family."

CatholicCare Chaplain Fr Danny Meagher and CEO Bernard Boema represented Cardinal Pell at the ceremony.

"The ceremony, which offered an apology for the harsh treatment experienced by many of these children, was a positive and deeply moving experience," said

Bernard Boema. "The memorial in this beautiful corner of the Gardens will hopefully provide a measure of peace."

## Caritas opens appeals for the disasters in Asia and the Pacific

In the wake of recent disasters, Caritas Australia has launched its South East Asia Typhoon, Pacific Tsunami and Indonesia Emergency Appeals. In Luzon in the Philippines, Caritas is delivering aid to 50 000 people affected by floods that have killed over 240, while assessment and relief teams were sent to Samoa and Indonesia hours after they were hit by a tsunami and earthquake respectively. After dealing with immediate needs, Caritas will focus on long term rehabilitation and development in these regions. To make a donation go to [www.caritas.org.au](http://www.caritas.org.au) or call 1800 024 413.

## Peace prevails in Martin Place

On Monday 21 September, Sydneysiders, city workers, school children and tourists came together to celebrate the International Day of Peace at Martin Place.

The theme of the 14 hour celebration was "Let Peace Prevail on Earth". During this time, Sydney joined the United Nations global call for ceasefire and non-violence.

The event was organized by the non-profit organization Ministry for Peace, and included a live telecast from Martin Place to Assisi, Italy. There was an exchange of peace messages between the Deputy Mayors of each city, between the

Bishop of Assisi to Sydney's Bishop Julian Porteous and; and between Franciscan friars and Sydney's religious leaders representing a range of denominations.

Peace organisations Pax Christi and Pace e Bene gave a presentation sharing how joining with others to act for peace can make a real difference. As part of this, they invited audience members to participate in a walking meditation on the Prayer of St Francis: "Lord Make me an Instrument of you Peace..."

Other highlights from the day included

dances of peace and a ceremony in which 200 school children and adults carried the flags of the UN's 194 member states.

### .... And in Summer Hill

The social justice group at St Patrick's Catholic Church, Summer Hill, worked with Ashfield Council to make all of September a month of peace. Events were held in the local library and the group provided doves with inscribed peace quotes for the parish and local businesses to display.

## Mental health, faith and justice

“What’s spirituality got to do with depression?” was the name of the September gathering of Paddington Spirituality in the Pub. Over 100 people attended, including many young people.

According the 2009 Social Justice Sunday Statement mental health ‘is a justice issue for young people’ because they cannot always get the assistance they need. At the gathering, three women shared their struggle with depression, and participants were able to voice their concerns and hopes.

Mental Health Week is 10 - 16 October this year. To mark this week, members of the Summer Hill social justice group are speaking at masses about the connection between mental illness and homelessness, and collecting items for the St Vincent de Paul Society and other organizations.

## Averting irreversible climate change

Members of the Edmund Rice Centre’s Afternoon Tea For The Future are collecting signatures for a petition to avert irreversible climate change. The petition asks the Australian parliament to commit to strong carbon emission reduction goals and to assist developing nations that are affected by climate change, especially Australia’s small Island Pacific neighbors.

You can assist by collecting signatures and forwarding them to the Edmund Rice Centre.

You can assist by collecting signatures and forwarding them to the Edmund Rice Centre. To get your copy of the petition go to [www.erc.org.au](http://www.erc.org.au), click on Eco Justice and then on Afternoon Tea For The Future.

## Palms calls out for skilled volunteers

Looking to make a difference in a cross-cultural context? Palms Australia places and supports skilled people in overseas placements for up to 3 years. Palms volunteers build the capacity of local communities and foster sustainable development, while gaining experience and further skills.

Over the last 12 months 33 Palms volunteers have worked in Papua New Guinea, Bougainville, Timor-Leste, Kiribati, Tanzania, Kenya, and more recently on the Thai-Burma border.

Positions for 2010 have been announced. To find out more go to [www.palms.org.au/apply/positions](http://www.palms.org.au/apply/positions).

## What’s on around Sydney

### 4 October Feast of St Francis of Assisi

Celebrate 800 years since Pope Innocent III’s approval of the Franciscan way of ‘life according to the Gospel’. The values of justice, peace and integrity of creation are an essential part of the Franciscan charism. Cardinal Pell will celebrate mass, followed by refreshments. **10am, Church of Mary Immaculate, 45a Victoria Street, Waverley.** Contact: 9639 9300.

### 6 October Philosophy and the Free Market

Joffre Balce provides a philosophical treatment of economics by returning to its very foundations. Where is that elusive free market and how does it work? How can philosophers begin to participate in building a new market economy? Cost: \$6. **7:30pm - 9pm, Fairtrade Coffee Company, 33 Glebe Point Road, Glebe.** Contact: 97976459.

### 7 October A Mission-Driven Community: The Spirituality and Practice of Mission

To celebrate World Mission Month, Catholic Mission presents an evening with Dr Roger Schroeder SVD, former missionary, author and Professor of Intercultural Ministries at the Catholic Theological Union. **7pm, The Crypt, St Mary’s Cathedral, St Mary’s Road, Sydney.** Contact 9919 7800 or [admin@catholicmission.org.au](mailto:admin@catholicmission.org.au).

### 8 October Words, Images, Voices. Literature for Children and Young Adults – Speaking of Justice

The Edmund Rice Centre and the Institute for Advancing Community Engagement Australian Catholic University present outstanding writers who educate about human rights, ecology and social justice through their work. Featuring Libby Gleeson AM, Melina Marchetta, Susanne Gervay, Nadia Wheatley, Dr Robin Morrow, Libby Hathorn, Randa Abdel-Fattah and more. Proceeds will support the work of the Edmund Rice Centre. Cost: \$40/ \$70. 9am – 3pm, Santa Sabina College Hall 90 The Boulevard, Strathfield. Bookings: 8762 4219 or [marisab@erc.org.au](mailto:marisab@erc.org.au)

## What's on around Sydney (cont.)

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### 9 - 11 October Climate Camp 09

Three days of workshops, sustainable living and community action in Helensburgh, near Metropolitan Collieries, Australia's oldest coal mine. For more info go to [www.climatecamp.org.au](http://www.climatecamp.org.au).

### 9 October Defense White Paper: Defense Against What?

Politics in the Pub presents Sam Roggeveen of the Lowy Institute and Bob Howard from the University Sydney. **6pm - 7:45pm, The Gaelic Club, Level 1, 64 Devonshire Street, Surry Hills.** For more info go to [www.politicsintheclub.org.au](http://www.politicsintheclub.org.au).

### 11 October Living in Harmony: Christians and Muslims in Australia

Sheikh Mansour Leghaei and Sr Trish Madigan OP, Dominican Sister, discuss what their faiths say about living in harmony and explore the impediments to harmony in Australia. Cost: \$16/\$32 including refreshments. **2pm - 4:30pm, Level 1, St James' Hall, 169 Phillip Street, Sydney.** Contact: 82271305 or go to St James' Institute [www.sjks.org.au](http://www.sjks.org.au).

### 16 - 18 October Stand Up Against Poverty

Stand Up is the world's largest mobilisation calling on world leaders to take action against extreme poverty. Organise a Stand Up event in your school, workplace, university, church or community group, and help make poverty history.

For more info go to [www.standupagainstpovetry.com.au](http://www.standupagainstpovetry.com.au)

### 18 October Sicko: Free Movie and Discussion

Associate Professor Michael Fine, Head of the Department of Sociology, discusses American and Australian experiences of healthcare. **6pm - 8pm, Macquarie Theatre, Macquarie Drive, Macquarie University.** Contact: 9850 1883.

### 22 -23 October NSW Food Summit

Participants at this summit will begin framing of a state-wide food policy addressing affordable access to healthy food, sustainable food systems and farming, food safety and health. **NSW Teachers Federation Conference Centre, 37 Reservoir Street, Surry Hills.** RSVP 18 October. Contact: [summit@sydneyfoodfairness.org.au](mailto:summit@sydneyfoodfairness.org.au)

### 24 October 350.org Global Day of Climate Action

On this day communities around the world will take action to call on world leaders to sign a strong climate agreement. Join an existing action or plan your own. Public events include a concert and talks on the Opera House steps, a festival and giant iceberg sculpture in Newtown and tree-planting at Maroubra Beach. For more info go to [www.350.org](http://www.350.org).

### 27 - 29 October Widen the space of your tent

The Australian Catholic Bishops Conference and Australian Catholic Migrant and Refugee Office present the Second National Conference on the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Refugees. Cost: \$375. **SMC Conference and Function Centre, 66 Goulburn Street, Sydney.** RSVP essential. Contact: 6201 9895 or [assistantdirector@acmro.catholic.org](mailto:assistantdirector@acmro.catholic.org).

### 27 October Afternoon Tea for the Future: Getting Ready for Copenhagen

A look at community attitudes to reducing emissions and fighting climate change. **2pm, Edmund Rice Centre, 15 Henley Road, Homebush West.** Contact: [jillf@erc.org.au](mailto:jillf@erc.org.au).

### 3 November JRS Melbourne Cup Luncheon

Dress up for the races and raise money for Jesuit Refugee Services and its work with asylum-seekers and refugees. Cost: \$105. **11:30am, Dockside, Cockle Bay Wharf, Darling Harbour.** Bookings: 9356 3888 or go to [www.jrs.org.au](http://www.jrs.org.au)

### 10 November Who would Jesus bomb?

Newtown Spirituality in the Pub presents former human shield and Coordinator of the Edmund Rice Network Donna Mulhearn explores the radical Christian notion of loving your enemies and doing good to those who hurt you. (Mth 5:44). **7.30pm - 9pm, the Bald Faced Stag Hotel, 345 Parramatta Road, Leichhardt.** Contact: 9230 7631 or [aclevana@mooball.com](mailto:aclevana@mooball.com)

*The initiatives above are organized by a range of Church and non-Church groups throughout Sydney. The Justice and Peace Office does not necessarily endorse the views and perspectives that will be expressed at these events.*