



CRY OF THE EARTH

SOCIAL JUSTICE SUNDAY 29 AUGUST

Since 1940, Australian Catholic Bishops have released major Social Justice Statements for Social Justice Sunday. These statements invite us to reflect and act on social, economic and ecological issues.

THE SOCIAL MISSION OF THE CHURCH

The social mission of the church draws from Scripture, theological tradition, dialogue and the wisdom of lived experience to form the body of Catholic Social Teaching. For example, in 1891 Pope Leo XIII issued a social encyclical on the conditions working people were experiencing following the industrial revolution.

THE SIGNS OF OUR TIMES

Pope Francis has released a trilogy of social encyclicals:

1. *The Joy of the Gospel*: The Gospel and a commitment to justice, development and peace are inseparably linked. At the very heart of the Gospel is life in community and engagement with others (177) which includes the poor, peace and social dialogue.
2. *Laudato Si'*: A response to the ecological crisis that includes dialogue with the sciences. Pope Francis stresses the origin of the crisis is in human actions. The way forward involves an alternative vision of integral ecology, education, dialogue between politics and economics and ecological conversion as part of living discipleship with Jesus (217)

3. *Fratelli tutti*: Promotes a vision of social friendship based in the unity of the entire human family. We are all sisters and brothers to each other with equal dignity and rights. Racism, hostile responses to migration, exclusion of people with disability, populism, liberalism and the need for "a better kind of politics, one truly at the service of the common good" (154) are all key issues.

CRY OF THE EARTH CRY OF THE POOR

In 2002, Australian Catholic Bishops addressed the environmental crisis in their social justice statement, *A New Earth: The Environmental Challenge*. This year, they have drawn particularly from the three encyclicals from Pope Francis, Scripture, the theological tradition and 'the wisdom of the world, including insights from First Nations people. All these are placed in dialogue with human experience.' (Foreword).

READ CRY OF THE EARTH, CRY OF THE POOR

Go to: <https://socialjustice.catholic.org.au/2021/06/24/social-justice-statement-2021-22/>

JOIN A SHARED READING AND REFLECTION GROUP

Zoom Groups will be offered on:

Tuesdays from 10.30 to 12pm 31 August; 7, 14 and 21 September

Thursdays from 8 to 9.30pm 2, 9, 16 and 23 September

Register with Gail at gail.gill@bbcatholic.org.au



CRY OF THE POOR

WELCOMING THE STRANGER

Twenty years ago on 26 August, a small Indonesian fishing boat carrying 433 asylum seekers, mainly Hazaras fleeing Afghanistan, became stranded in international waters, about 140 kms from Christmas Island. They were rescued by the Norwegian freighter MV Tampa which attempted to land at Christmas Island. Captain Arne Rinnan's humanitarian actions were questioned by the Australian government who refused entry to the asylum seekers. The 'Tampa Crisis' became the catalyst for Australia's new border protection policy. (Source: National Museum of Australia)

Our response to the arrival of migrating persons can be summarised by four words: welcome, protect, promote and integrate.

Fratelli tutti 129

Pope Francis sets out a range of 'indispensable steps, especially in response to those who are feeling grave humanitarian crises.'

1. Increasing and simplifying the granting of visas;
2. Adopting programs of individual and community sponsorship;
3. Opening humanitarian corridors for the most vulnerable refugees;
4. Providing suitable and dignified housing;
5. Guaranteeing personal security and access to basic services;
6. Equitable access to the justice system;

7. The possibility of opening bank accounts and the minimum needed to survive;
8. Freedom of movement and the possibility of employment.

These and other responses to people seeking asylum are set out in paragraph 130 of *Fratelli tutti*.

ARCHBISHOP MARK COLERIDGE'S LETTER TO THE PRIME MINISTER

In a letter on 20 August, Archbishop Mark said:

Based on estimates from key humanitarian organisations and pledges from other countries, Archbishop Coleridge proposed that at least another 17,000 places be made available.

"Australia has stepped up before in response to significant humanitarian crises, and I urge your government to be generous," he wrote, adding that Catholic agencies "stand ready to assist your government with resettlement of refugees as an expression of our great concern for the people of Afghanistan"

"It would seem our moral duty to stand with those who supported Australian military forces as interpreters or in other capacities, who it seems likely will suffer reprisals and even death for their work," he wrote.

"We should also offer refuge to other Afghans who are likely to suffer persecution or risk being killed because of their opposition to the Taliban, or because of their beliefs, values and way of life, including members of the Christian community.