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At the April meeting of the Presentation Oceania Justice Network, it was suggested that we compile a Society *Justice Jottings*, with articles selected from the newsletters distributed by the Justice Contacts in the Australian Congregations. This is the Autumn 2008 edition. We plan to publish these Jottings four times a year.

Peta Anne Molloy, Anne Shay

We will continue to explore ways to nourish our contemplative hearts for mission. We commit ourselves to sustainable living in practical ways which witness to a real concern for our earth.

We commit to the issue *Reconciliation – More Bridges to Cross*.

We will promote the Millennium Development Goals.

We will find new ways to be heard as a public voice for justice.

Presentation Society Congress 2006

IPA Reflection (Millennium Goals 1 and 8)

Rachel Carson says:
"It is a wholesome and necessary thing for us to turn again to the earth and in the contemplation of her beauties to know the sense of wonder and humility."

As time flies since the IPA Assembly, echoes from it keep coming to mind and demanding attention. One such echo flows from Fr Tom Kocherry's words about the stages of violence:

The **first** stage is the accumulation of goods beyond one's needs, which is tantamount to murder as it deprives others of their

rightful share of the earth's resources.

The **second** stage is the retaliation of those who are so deprived as they seek to gain access to their rights.

The **third** stage is the intervention of the state which seeks to suppress such retaliation.

There can be very few conflicts on the planet which are not influenced

by the above analysis.

Fr Tom concludes: *Not to protest against such a cycle of violence is to collaborate with it.*

This surely calls for thought about **our use of goods:**

Do we need them?

Do we want them?

What impact will our having these goods have on the lives of others?

This picture was hanging outside the meeting room where we gathered for the IPA Assembly. It was very powerful and, after glancing once, you were brought back with startling shock. Yes, it is very stark but it makes you reflect on what is happening to our Planet, Earth. No, it is not nice but this is the reality of what is happening to our planet. It also brings to mind the symbolism of Mother Earth, Gaia and how, as women, we know what it is like to be vulnerable and seen as an object to be used, controlled or raped. Our inner knowing will relate to this picture and hopefully touch our spirit to act and work for justice and the preservation of our home, Earth.



Exploitation of Peoples ...

Conscious of our identity as Presentation women, we listen deeply to the cry of the earth heard most loudly in the cry of those made poor and are moved to attend with urgency to the woundedness of our global community.

International Presentation Association Assembly 2007

Child Labour and Cocoa

GOOD NEWS

Skyrocketing Fairtrade sales made Australia the biggest growth market for Fairtrade Products in 2007.

... every time you bite into a piece of chocolate, chances are you're at the consumption end of child labour... Fair Trade reported on their website that as many as 284,000 children in West Africa are working under dangerous conditions on cocoa farms, with many subjected to forced labour and exposed to harmful pesticides and chemicals on a daily basis. At the end of the day, each

member of a cocoa farming family may earn as little as US\$30 per year. Fair Trade gives all of us the opportunity to buy ethically produced items without the exploitation of the producers. It is giving economic justice to producers in the Developing World.

Fair Trade Australia & New Zealand website: <http://www.fairtrade.com.au/>

Water Reflections

On Good Friday this year we seem to have overlooked the fact that that day was **World Water Day**. This year the focus is on **Sanitation** and the challenge that this presents. *The Guardian Weekly* that week had a special report for World Water Day which states that thousands died every day from lack of sanitation. The worst

affected are women. The World Health Organisation says that twice the number of people who live in the whole of Europe and North America have no access to clean water. More than 2.5 billion people [a whole China and India combined] still have no safe place to go to the toilet. These are horrible but cold and somewhat

remote statistics. Let us remember that each of these people have faces – they image their Creator – and each suffers this Good Friday and every day from the preventable diseases caused. Please go to the International Year of Sanitation website for further information: <http://esa.un.org/iys/>

Claude Mostowik

Choose Organic

Organic farming uses no synthetic pesticides or fertilisers and focuses on the health of the soil. Organic food is also free of genetically modified organisms, and organic farmers treat animals with respect. Farming organically can use less

fossil fuels and puts less strain on our climate.

Where possible, buy **Australian Certified Organic** – always check the label! Buying organic can be a little more expensive, but if you only buy what you need, you

can keep the overall price of the family shopping bill low and the more people that buy organic will ultimately drive the price down.

Australian Certified Organic website: <http://www.australianorganic.com.au/>



... and of the Earth



War on Water and Democracy

Women were in the forefront of the battle against Coca-Cola beverages in a village in South India. From 2001 on Coca-Cola had caused a severe drinking water crisis in the district by drawing 350,000 litres of ground water daily for its bottling plant in this drought-prone area.

At full capacity, the plant needed 1.5 million litres per day. Women complained about wells drying up fast and blamed the transnational corporation for “theft” of their community resource and for polluting the

environment with toxic heavy metals. The women started a permanent vigil in front of the plant.

Coca-Cola tried to bring water from other sources to the plant but the women blocked the road and filled their water pots with water from the lorries or poured the water on their fields. A local self-government institution cancelled the licence of the plant because it failed to meet the condition of not using ground water, and the High Court ruled that ground water is common property.

Coca-Cola had to suspend its operation in the village

but started a legal battle against the local government. In August 2007, the state government confirmed the village

council jurisdiction over such projects. This decision strengthened the Gandhian concept of village democracy and self administration.

“Across the world as the supply of fresh water diminishes the transnational corporations seek to gain control over it in order to commodify this precious resource and make a profit from it. The word is ‘Water is the oil of the 21st Century.’”

Under pressure from the World Bank, the Bolivian government sold off the distribution rights of the fresh water in Cochabamba to a subsidiary of the Bechtel Corporation. The rates increased by as much as 300% and the citizens rose up in protest closed down the city for over a week and forced the government to abrogate the agreement. Water is necessary for life, not for profit.”

EarthLight 2001

Australian Catholic Religious Against Trafficking in Humans (Millennium Goal 3)

ACRATH continues its education and lobbying work on behalf of women and children who are trafficked. Working with consultant experts, ACRATH is

- lobbying for the reform of visas for trafficked persons here in Australia
- raising awareness and education on trafficking across the community
- supporting those who are trafficked.

What can you do?

1. Pray
2. Educate yourself. Raise your awareness about trafficking in people.
3. Think about the products you buy. Who makes them? Are the workers treated justly? Is it Fair Trade?
4. Buy Fair Trade goods whenever possible and buy local goods.
5. Raise general awareness by talking about trafficking with others – family, friends.
6. Organise awareness-raising days in your workplace around issues such as child labour, trafficking, fair trade, global poverty.
7. Write to the Immigration Minister asking for the government to make changes to the laws regarding visas and to support trafficked women.

For more information and contact addresses, please go to the Catholic Religious Australia website: <http://catholicreligiousaustralia.org/en/41>





Apology to the Stolen Generations

12 February 2008

Dear Prime Minister

The Society of Presentation Sisters commend the government on its decision to make the apology to the stolen generations the first item of business on its agenda for 2008 tomorrow. We will be very pleased to be present at or watching the event on television, with pride that we as a nation have come to this point at last.

We see this as a great opportunity to acknowledge and heal past wrongs. The consultation you have had with Aboriginal elders on this issue gives us — and we are sure the Aboriginal people as well — hope and optimism for ongoing consultative dialogue with Indigenous people. There are such needy issues around health and education as well as the welfare of the young people, that we commend you in your intentions to continue working together for the first peoples of our beautiful country.

We send you our best wishes and prayer for your onerous work on our behalf.

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Excerpt from “The Big Issue”

“... I am not Aboriginal, so I have no right to claim to understand how Aboriginal citizens must feel. I do, however have my observations... I am in prison. Each morning, we get an hour to go and pace in the sun in a chicken-wire covered, concrete-floored cage. For most of us it's our only chance for anything like being in the world, and we cherished that hour. Yet this morning it was different. The guards opened our cells one by

one and poked in their heads, “Yard?” A single, precious word but this morning, almost to a man, we shook our heads.

On our little televisions, which keep us sane, the newly elected leader of our country stood apologising for years of systematic state-run abuse; a deliberate, calculated attempt at wiping out a race... This morning Kevin Rudd's words flowed out of the grates in our cell doors and each of us, white and black,

heard him take responsibility for the actions of our government. I know we were silent. I know some cried. And I know that, for myself at least, I stood and watched a man of integrity take the reins of our country. May this be the beginning of change for us all.”

From a letter sent in from John who sells *The Big Issue* in SA

The Big Issue website:
<http://www.bigissue.org.au/>



Zimbabwe

Remembering our Sisters and the People of Zimbabwe ...

Our thoughts continue to be with our Presentation Sisters in Zimbabwe as the outcome of the recent elections remains undetermined as we go to press. After 28 years of the cruelest oppression and suffering we pray that the people of Zimbabwe will have the opportunity to live in peace and security.

Zimbabwe was once called the “Switzerland of Africa” in comparison with other African countries, by a British correspondent who chose to become a Zimbabwean after the

dismissal of Rhodesia. The country had maintained roads, constant electricity, drinkable water, world renowned steaks, a Zimbabwean dollar at near parity to the US dollar. Twenty-eight years later under the leadership of Robert Mugabe, the country is shattered — all health systems have collapsed ... education, health, the economy, the once booming agricultural industry. The people, mostly living in slums and refugee squatter quarters, rely on the UN for food and water.

Let us pray for the people of Zimbabwe and the Sisters who work with them.

