



Inside this issue:

<i>IPA Action</i>	1
<i>National Climate Emergency Rallies</i>	2
<i>Asylum Seekers</i>	3
<i>Human Trafficking</i>	3
<i>Reconciliation More Bridges to Cross</i>	4

What are we called to?

Spirituality of the Heart demands active participation in the building of God’s kingdom here and now, a world where justice and compassion reign.

As Pieris puts it, ‘the most eloquent symbol of love is ACTION, particularly action for justice.....’

At the wedding of Cana Mary made the statement “They have no wine” and then “ Do whatever he tells you”.

Perhaps today we are invited to hear and be attentive to the statement of so many people in our world,

“ We have no wine, food, no drinking water, no homes and no peace”

Sr. Merle Salazar

Out of this Sacred Garden, this moving, breathing, dancing fabric of life, curious new creatures emerged – the first humans...They lived lightly on the land and sensed the presence of the Sacred everywhere.

Once Upon a Universe Calendar Ministry of the Arts

These words call us to reflect on the action we are taking to care for the Earth and its people. We acknowledge and are inspired by the way the traditional owners care for this land. We reflect on the voices of those made poor.

Anne Shay, Peta Anne Molloy

IPA Action

At a meeting in Brisbane in May, the Justice Contacts formulated the following statement:

Focus statement

We, the Society of Presentation Sisters, have decided to focus on the exploitation of earth and her people through advocating for the reduction of carbon emissions and the development of renewable energy.

Our initial task is to lobby the Government to reduce carbon emissions in preparation for the UN Climate Change Conference to be held at Copenhagen 7 -18 December 2009.

What you can do

- Learn as much as you can about this issue.
- Discuss this issue with the people you meet.
- Ask your Justice Contact for more information.
- Take action – letters, phone calls, meet your Federal Member. You may wish to use some of the ideas in the following letter:

Letter sent to Mr Rudd

I congratulate the Council of Australian Governments on the decision (4 May 2009) to endorse the final design of the national Renewable Energy Target which will see 20% of Australia’s electricity being generated from renewable resources by 2020.

The current Federal Government policy is deferring any strong action until after the next election, thus making the process of tackling this unprecedented problem more difficult and more expensive.

As a developed country Australia has the highest per capita Carbon Emissions in the world. The UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change states that the minimum level for carbon emissions reduction that countries like Australia need to achieve is 20-40% by 2020 over 1900 levels. Even that only gives us a 50-50 chance of avoiding a 2°

temperature rise.

The research carried out by the Centre of Full Employment and Equity in the Hunter Region in 2008 showed that a *shift to renewable energy will have substantial benefits for the Hunter region and will make the region and Australia a leader in the global fight against the threat of climate chaos.* I congratulate you on your Government’s proposal to develop solar-powered energy in this region.

I ask you and your Government to demonstrate your ongoing commitment to climate change by:

- increasing the carbon emission reduction target to 40% by 2020;
- increasing investment in renewable energy research and development;
- increasing investment in companies that manufacture renewable energy.

Yours sincerely



Exploitation of the Earth ...

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

National Climate Emergency Rallies

Saturday 13 June saw thousands of Australians gather for the Climate Change Emergency Rallies in each state. Several Presentation Sisters joined hundreds of Australian people who listened to speakers, walked the streets carrying their banners and joining in chants.

There were parents and grandparents, workers and students, retirees and unemployed - all caring about the future for the children of Australia and the world. Rosemary Grundy shares with us some of her reflections.



Presentations at Rally in Sydney

When I attended the Climate Change Emergency Rally in Brisbane on Saturday 13th June, the impacts that affected me most were:

- The urgent need to change what faces the whole earth community – soils, air, water, oceans, plants, animals and humanity;
- The commitment of a wide variety of people to encourage human beings to take responsibility for the care of the earth –
 - Young enthusiastic people concerned for the future
 - A GP who had been stirred to action when she became aware of the impacts on her local environment
 - Community leaders who have begun action groups
- The police on duty who used bicycles instead of motorised transport;
- The awareness that Australia is such a significant contributor to pollution –
 - Australia supplies 20% of the world's coal, and most of that comes from Queensland mines
 - Coal is one of the most carbon-polluting substances used by human beings
 - Queensland's wealth is largely derived from the sale of coal;
- The reluctance of political leaders to take courageous steps to change from protecting polluting industries to free up capability to move to alternative sources of energy;

Rosemary Grundy

Presentations Care for the Earth

We hope to support ErinEarth (Wagga) and Balnarring (Victoria) by means of a carbon levy on cars. The levy is \$40 per car per year to offset the carbon we produce by cars.

The Society Justice Contacts plan to advertise this by producing a sticker for our cars. It will read:



PRESENTATION PEOPLE PLANT TREES		
Society logo	website	tree



Balnarring, Victoria

Erin Earth and Balnarring are both active in conservation, education and rehabilitation of the environment. **Stickers will be available in the near future.**

... and of Peoples

Long Walk to Freedom



Atuna Chol was forced to leave Sudan barefoot when she was nine.

Carrying her two-month-old sister, she and her sick mother walked for weeks in the heat to Ethiopia before applying for asylum in the Congo. She lived in a Ugandan refugee camp

before arriving in Australia in 2004.

A comfort she now enjoys is a restful sleep, without fear of needing to flee during the night. "If you took your clothes off, you ran naked," she said. "It's so good here. I'm not thinking about where to run or what to do.

Ms Chol, who is studying for a business certificate, teaches computer skills to young Sudanese refugees. She was among 15 students awarded scholarships yesterday in recognition of academic and community success.

The regional representative of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Richard Towle, told award recipients that education was vital.

"Education ... is the critical building block for your own success, for your family's success and for your full integration and life in this country."

cf Yuko Narushima *SMH* 16/6/09

Are we really being invaded by hundreds of thousands of asylum seekers?

Close to 4800 people made a claim for asylum in Australia in 2008 (compared, for example, to close to 37,000 in Canada and 31,000 in Italy). Most of them arrived by air with valid tourist or student visas, with less than 180 arriving by boat.

Fewer than 50 per cent of total on shore claims submitted by those arriving by air succeeded in the refugee determination process. Close to 90 per cent of those arriving by boat did.

Sacha Bermudez-Goldman SJ
Province Express 29 April 2009

Australian Catholic Religious Against Trafficking in Humans

Improved support for trafficking victims was the main focus in our Canberra lobbying last year. Recent changes have extended the time for victims to receive support and extended the range of support available. These changes are especially valuable for those victims experiencing trauma.

Joan Kennedy, Victoria

In Perth about 43 people attended the information evening on *Human Trafficking* with many

people putting their names down to receive follow up material.

Lucy van Kessel,
Western Australia

Justice/Injustice in the Production of Goods we use: Several people are working to raise awareness about the unjust wages and work conditions among the producers of religious artefacts and books. It has been reported that a label 'made in Italy' had underneath it another label 'made in China'.

Many schools are making

inquiries about where their **school uniforms** are made – because many are either made cheaply overseas or made with materials produced by slave labour. ACRATH Qld discussed the possibility of bringing attention to this injustice in relation to books/text books and uniforms to the Catholic Education Department.

Peta Anne Molloy,
Queensland

Bill of Rights

The shortcomings of Australia's present system of rights protection have been exposed in recent years particularly in regard to the harsh treatment of asylum seekers and the suspension of the Racial Discrimination Act in the Northern Territory Intervention.

"In light of current deficiencies, the debate about an Australian Bill of Rights is, instead, increasingly becoming a debate that holds great practical significance for all Australians."

George Williams

Reconciliation—there are more bridges to cross



On 22 May 2009, the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights expressed its concern that some of the Northern Territory Intervention measures are inconsistent with the International Covenant on these Rights, in particular with the principle of non-discrimination. These measures have a negative impact on the rights of indigenous peoples. The Committee noted 'with regret' that measures were adopted without sufficient and adequate consultation with the indigenous peoples concerned. The Committee's recommendation includes the implementation of a human rights framework that ensures access to appropriate housing, safe drinking water, electricity and effective sanitation systems.'

(UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights,

There is great concern about the Intervention. This is an extract from a letter sent to Kevin Rudd and Jenny Macklin focusing on the axing of the Racial Discrimination Act; and urging the government to replace this Act immediately:

Dear ...

We have been following the impact of the introduction of the Northern Territory Intervention by the former Federal Government in 2007 and its continuation by the present Government.

We are particularly concerned about the suspension of the Racial Discrimination Act. It seems, that the struggles of so many years to obtain this legislation, has been negated by a decision made without consultation by the Howard Government and maintained by your Government.

Yours sincerely

Significant dates for Australia

NAIDOC Week 5-12 July

A recent celebration day occurred on Sunday July 5 - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Sunday when the Church celebrates the culture and contribution of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

This day marks the beginning of **NAIDOC Week**, a celebration of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and an opportunity to recognise the contributions of Indigenous Australians in various fields.

National Reconciliation Week: 27 May - 3 June

In 1993 faith communities of Australia started the Week of Prayer for Reconciliation. Following its success, the week was expanded in 1996 to become NRW to provide nationwide focus for all reconciliation activities.

NRW began in 1996 to provide focus for nationwide reconciliation activities. It's a time to reflect on achievements so far and focus on what is still to be done to achieve reconciliation in Australia.

NRW coincides with two significant dates in Australia's history which provide strong symbols of the aspirations for reconciliation:

Sorry Day, May 27 marks the anniversary of the [1967 Referendum](#) in which more than 90 per cent of Australians voted to remove clauses from the Australian Constitution which discriminated against Indigenous Australians. The referendum also gave the Commonwealth Government the power to make laws on behalf of Aboriginal people.

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Mabo Day, June 3 marks the anniversary of the High Court's judgment in the 1992 Mabo case. The decision recognised the Native Title rights of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the original inhabitants of the continent and overturned the myth of terra nullius – the belief that the continent was an empty, un-owned land before the arrival of Europeans in 1788.