



Co-ordinator's Comments

What have the lack of leadership on climate change by the Australian Government and the response of the hierarchy to sexual abuse in the Catholic Church got in common? A loss of trust in those in central leadership positions! Paul Rogers uses the term "liddism" to describe "the action of the elites of the world who try to maintain the status quo and therefore their own security by trying to keep a lid on the situation rather than facing the core problems." (Justpeace No 276, May-June 2010). However, the underlying issues will keep simmering away, bubble up and spill over if they are not dealt with. At the local level, there are committed groups and individuals who know and live with the core problems and are working to try to address them. They look for leadership that will support their efforts. When dialogue with the people occurs, good things happen.

Sean McDonagh ssc recently praised the efforts of local churches which have made serious efforts to address ecological problems. "In developing its teaching on the Earth the Holy See would do well to incorporate many of the insights from Bishops' Conferences around the world." Here we highlight some of the ways people are initiating peace, ecology and justice at the local level.

Anne Lanyon

What we've been up to

Education

- Conducting the "Growing a Culture of Peace Formation Program for Teachers" at CMI.
- Producing the *monthly bulletin* "Growing a Culture of Peace" for parish and school newsletters. To subscribe, email pej.cmi@columban.org.au
- Leading the CMI team which hosted the *seminar with Sean McDonagh*
- Running *workshops for students* of Bethany College Hurstville; 5 Mercy Schools; Chisolm School Bligh Park, and Australian Catholic University.

Faith Ecology Network

- Co-ordinating an *Enrichment Day for FEN members* with the North Head Sanctuary Foundation at Manly.
- Preparing a *nomination for FEN for the inaugural Eco Awards* by ARRCC (Australian Religious Response to Climate Change) www.arrcc.org.au **STOP PRESS! FEN won the Ecology and Spirituality Award!**

Jubilee Australia

- Preparing and distributing resources with an emphasis on Haiti for *Jubilee Sunday*, May 16th. www.jubileeaustralia.org Follow the links.

Partnerships

- Supporting *PeaceBuilders International* recent training course. www.peacebuilders.in/main/
- Sitting on the planning committee of the NCCA *Decade for Overcoming Violence event*. (See over page)
- Participating in the *Women's Footprints for Peace Walk* (See over page)

Advocacy

- Lobbying Goodman Fielder to keep its *GM free policy* in the face of a take over by Cargill, a pro GM company. The takeover was refused by the ACCC.
- Lobbying the NSW Government on *protecting NSW National Parks* and *no new coal-fired power stations*. *Protesting to US officials* about the honouring of Ex Philippines President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo with an environmental award.
- **NEW Email Format** Our email subscribers will receive this issue via our new system. If you would like to join them and help us save paper, energy and costs, email pej.cmi@columban.org.au Please give us your name and contact details for our records. We welcome you passing this on so we can develop new subscribers.

Catholic Social Teaching - Subsidiarity

There is an old saying, originating in Africa I think, that goes something like this: "Don't tear down a fence until you find out why it was erected in the first place." In one sense it encapsulates the sensitive attitude anyone should bring with them when entering a new or unfamiliar situation. In other words, out of respect for the people and local custom, it's a good idea to ask first, then listen. Often in society, outside market forces dictate whether the "fence" is going to remain or be pulled down for something "better". Our needs are determined by things outside of ourselves, which in turn can lead to alienation from our own sense of worth, where we are conditioned to accept a life of having rather than a life of being. *Globalization* is seen by many as producing this feeling of alienation and confusion because of the breakdown of the local cultural fabric.

Within the Church's social teaching the *Principle of Subsidiarity* has been one of the most constant characteristics, right from the first great social encyclical *Rerum Novarum* (Pope Leo XIII, 1892). Simply put, it states that *higher levels, such as national governments, corporations or bodies of similar ilk, unless invited to do so, should not engage in functions which can be better provided for at lower levels, such as local communities or the family.*

Advertising jingles and certain government policies can frequently mask a disturbing reality. **Jack Evans**

Fr Cyril Hally

The PEJ Centre has lost its elder. Cyril was the one who, when the Columban Mission Institute was formed into three Centres, wanted the name of our Centre to be Peace, Ecology and Justice. He wanted Peace first. He believed the world has entered an age of reconciliation.



We thank God for the gift of Cyril to our Centre and to our lives. May he rest in peace.

Cyril was an inspirational teacher who captured from his wide reading, the essence of the big picture of the church in the world, did this across a range of issues, and then presented his analysis clearly and positively. He opened eyes and urged engagement, as exemplified by the many organisations he had a part in establishing. His simple lifestyle and disciplined approach to learning and living was an example. He continued to be interested and involved right up to his death, aged 90.

Peace is too important to be left to Governments

As we conclude the first decade of this new millennium which we hoped would be a more peaceful one, we see that militarism is still the norm in our culture. We also see violence in our local communities. The Australian bishops are so concerned about this that their 2010 Social Justice Sunday Statement is *"Peace-building as a Christian response to anger and violence in Australian Society"*. www.acsjc.org

Weapons Reduction

Reducing lethal weapons is crucial to peacebuilding eg:

- Japanese Australian Peace Group promotes:

Model Nuclear Weapons Convention
http://jfp.org.au/index_eng.html

- **Nagasaki Prelate** takes anti-nuclear plea to UN (Union of Catholic Asian News 5th May 2010 www.ucanews.com/)

- "I wish to issue a challenge to you: do not any longer buy **toy weapons** for our children..." Nicolau Jemusse Luis, Christian Council of Mozambique
www.oikoumene.org/index.php?RDCT=de20244916dd0830da0d

- **Disarmament Education Kit** <http://icanw.org/resources>

- **Arms Trade Treaty** Grassroots action has led to negotiations in July for the first global treaty to control the international arms trade. Urge strong **ACTION**
www.amnesty.org/en/appeals-for-action/demand-bullet-proof-arms-trade-treaty See www.armstradetreaty.org

From a culture of war to a culture of peace

Bruce Kent, Pax Christi UK names some practical actions:

- Have a national day for peacekeepers, lifesavers, firefighters.
- Each High School student be given a personal copy of the UN Declaration of Human Rights.

- Scrap bank holidays and have a national holiday related to a peace event.

- Schools offer careers in peace, ecology and justice

- Promote a Ministry of Peace www.ministryforpeace.org.au

- Each school twin with a country where there is violence.

- Museums could host peace conferences

- University courses should have a peace component.

- Scientists should learn to refuse military research

- Anti-poverty and environmental protection groups should stress that war is a major cause of poverty and environmental degradation. www.paxchristi.org.uk/www.opendemocracy.net/5050/brucekent/fromculture-of-war-to-culture-of-peace

Other Ways: growing alternatives to violence.

A Special Event, Sept 24, hosted by the National Council of Churches, Christians and other people of goodwill engaged in action to overcome violence and promote peace on the interpersonal, community and global levels are invited. In these the best and worst of times, gather to share your experiences, celebrate achievements, learn together and build networks for the future at this day to mark the end of the Decade to Overcome Violence. The program from 1.00pm to 9.00pm at Santa Sabina College Strathfield, will include local and international speakers, facilitated conversations and a public dinner. www.ncca.nsw.org.au Inquiries to the PEJ Centre. See a Study guide **"Telling the Truth About Ourselves and the World"** at www.oikoumene.org

Women's Footprints for Peace

On Tuesday 25th May, the Women's Footprints for Peace walked into Canberra after leaving Brisbane 80 days earlier. June and Cassie walked the whole distance, but were joined at various stages by other women and supported by many people. Their goal was to call on the Prime Minister to embrace peaceful means in his dealings, and specifically act on climate change and nuclear disarmament. The walkers were unable to meet with Mr Rudd, however their huge effort connected people along the inspirational journey – students in schools, parish social justice groups, local councils, indigenous communities, community activists, peace groups, and environmental groups.
http://footprints.footprintsforpeace.net/australia_walk/walk_for_peace.htm



I joined students from MacKillop and St Peter's Colleges on part of the walk from Warner Vale to Tuggerah on the NSW Central Coast. "We want a nuclear free healthy planet", they said.

Anne Lanyon

“What is needed today, however, is a kind of Copernican revolution leading to a major paradigm shift. We need to locate all our human concerns – and especially our approach to economics – within the far wider context of an ecological and cosmic vision.” Sean McDonagh

Listen to the “grass roots”.

In a recent workshop using the Columban UK dvd “Stations of the Forest” I asked the students the question “Listen to the Earth. What is it saying?” “HELP!” said one boy. He’s so right. The “grass roots” as well as leaders need to include *impact on species other than human* when considering their actions. (See www.columbans.co.uk to obtain the DVD)

Call for Catholic Synod on Creation

In his critique of Pope Benedict’s 2010 New Year Peace Message: “If You Want to Cultivate Peace, Protect Creation”, Sean McDonagh stated “*Official Church Teaching on Ecology is Still Only in its Infancy*”. Sean passionately asserted his position that Church teaching does not express the magnitude of the current ecological crises or the urgency of action. He also criticised the perceived anthropocentric world view in Church documents. In calling for a Synod on Creation, Sean said that, in the preparation “*everyone in the Church, young, old, farmers, industrial workers, bankers, scientists, fishermen, theologians, contemplatives, religious, teachers, doctors, liturgists, artists, poets and writers would be able to share their insights and wisdom. This would give a great impetus to the tasks of caring for the Earth that cares for every creature. I believe it would also give new life and focus to the Catholic faith in our contemporary society.*” See

www.columban.org.au/Archives/features/2010/call-for-catholic-synod-on-creation, also www.worldmission.ph/

Integrity and Dialogue – Setting the Example.

Two UK academics have resigned in protest from the Public Dialogue Steering Committee set up to oversee **public consultation** on food security by the UK Government’s Food Standards Agency. One, Professor Brian Wynne, said of the FSA “In being deeply pro-GM in everything but the explicit punch-line itself, this FSA position is effectively in a state of institutional denial”. <http://bit.ly/dftp15>

He said that the FSA is a pro-GM organisation and the public dialogue is a front for the GM industry which is trying to get GM products introduced into the UK. The framework for the consultation was supposed to be “dialogue should start with the problem which needs to be addressed, ie food security, rather than presupposing any particular solutions”.

These actions of integrity have shone the light on decision making that is not for the common good. This has implications in Australia and other countries where the relentless push for GM food is occurring.

The *Australian Gene Technology Regulator* has put out for public consultation proposed amendments – due by June 18th. **ACTION:** Submit your thoughts, however brief.

More information on www.geneethics.org

Good News on GM Food

■ The SA and Tas governments have committed to **extending the ban on GM crops** until 2014. Consumers will be able to source GM free products from those states, putting farmers in WA, Vic and NSW which have allowed GM canola, at a disadvantage. www.non-gmfarmers.com/

■ Almost 6,000 submissions were made to the Government **review of food labelling**. As well a 30,000 signature petition and a GM-Free charter signed by 200 of Australia’s leading chefs were presented. Demand for GM labelling became a major issue of the review. **ACTION:** Keep it up, the review isn’t finished www.truefood.org.au/

■ The Australian Fair Trade and Investment Network (AFTINET) is publishing a new leaflet “**Resurrecting the US Free Trade Agreement: what US business wants from the Trans Pacific Partnership Agreement**”. The TPPA resurrects all of the issues that were debated in the US-Australia F T A, including labelling of GM food and whether corporations should have the right to challenge environmental regulation. www.aftinet.org.au

■ The decision by a US Judge to invalidate 7 **patents** related to breast cancer genes may ultimately assist the GM food campaign. Judge Robert W. Sweet argued that patents have been improperly granted because they involved the laws of nature. www.nytimes.com/2010/03/30/business/30gene.html

Film Reviews: Food Inc

A documentary produced and directed by Robert Kenner. Showing in Australia at Village Cinemas.

Margaret Pomeranz ABC: At The Movies ★★★★★ www.abc.net.au/atthemovies/txt/s2879962.htm *It’s a shocking indictment of an industry which has been taken over by greedy, litigious, multi-national corporations who not only want to put small farmers and food suppliers out of business, they want to keep quiet about the dangerous practices they use in the slaughtering of animals for food and other farming practices.* **Vijai Singhal** (FEN) *It does a good job of exposing the intimidation and bullying tactics of the multi-national food companies.* **Miriam Pepper** (FEN) *They have their lobbyists working in various Government agencies and holding even ministerial positions to turn decisions in their favour.* **Read the story** of farmer Joel Salatin and his role in the film. www.theaustralian.com.au/news/features/the-lunatics-manifesto/story-e6fgr8h6-1225853985512

Food waste

Australian households waste an estimated \$5bn (3million tonnes) of food a year, wasting the energy used to grow and transport it. That’s 690kg per person that goes to landfill. <http://foodwise.com.au/>

NSW Catholic Sustainable Schools Network Newsletter

Put out by Sue Martin with support from CMI it is for NSW Catholic schools to link and learn together as they implement the “On Holy Ground” ecological education document. To join email sue@kcj.net.au **Anne Lanyon** (*Fr Charles Rue is away at the moment*)

Grandness of Compassion

I was struck by Nicholas D Kristof's piece in the New York Times, May 1 "*I am awed that so many of the selfless people serving the world's neediest are lowly nuns and priests — notable not for the grandeur of their vestments but for the grandness of their compassion*". He gave an example. "*Two years ago, (Sr Cathy) came here (Sudan) on behalf of a terrific Catholic project called Solidarity with Sudan (www.solidarityssudan.org/)* He went on: "*She would like to see more decentralization in the church, a greater role for women, and more emphasis on public service.*" I began thinking of a few of the people connected with our fields of endeavour, notable for their grandness of compassion and community involvement.

■ **Jubilee Australia staff, board and volunteers.** Jubilee manages to achieve great things on a less- than- adequate budget because of the generosity of people committed to economic justice for the majority poor. The staff, tiny in number is large in knowledge of the structural causes of poverty as well as research and lobbying skills. They benefit from dialogue with Jubilee South and advice from economic experts. They are assisted by volunteer workers and a willing board. Our PEJ role in Jubilee brings an awareness of the suffering of the poor in countries where Columbans work. We in turn try to get our voices heard within the Church. Two current activities are:

1. The report "**Risky Business**" brings together research into the Australian government's export credit agency, **Export Finance and Insurance Corporation (EFIC)** It raises serious questions about the Government's role in supporting past and current extractive projects in Asia-Pacific and Africa and their impact on the environment and local communities. The PNG Liquefied Natural Gas project is supported by Australian tax payers with a loan of \$550m. The partners in this \$16.6bn project, the largest in the history of the Pacific region are ExxonMobil, Oil Search, Santos and the PNG Government. Jubilee has grave concerns about transparency, equity, accountability and corruption. www.jubileeaustralia.org/risky-business-download

2. **Proposing alternatives for a fairer, more sustainable global financial system.** Jubilee is coordinating a broad alliance of development organisations, green groups, think tanks, unions and faith communities, to get a global financial transactions tax introduced by the G20. Dubbed the "**Robin Hood**" tax, it would be a small tax on international currency transactions, shares, bonds, securities and derivatives. "*These funds could do so much good: build reserves to insure against future financial crises; finance the adaptations required to combat climate change; more than halve global hunger and poverty in the next decade; and still have money left over to improve drinking water and health care in poor countries.*" Ross Buckley, Professor of international finance law, UNSW and member of the Jubilee Policy Advisory group. www.jubileeaustralia.org/robin-hood-tax

■ Visitors to Refugee Detention Centres

As disappointing leadership hardens Australian hearts against asylum seekers arriving by boat, lay people and nuns regularly go through the prison-like process to take a friendly face, phone cards and other small comforts to those locked inside our detention centres. Priests like **CMI staff members, Jack Evans and Paul McGee** are part of a group which celebrates Eucharist each Friday at Villawood. "*So many of the people I meet have much to contribute to our society,*" said Jack. "*The cost of the current policy is enormous, not just psychologically, but financially. I know of one small man who was deported to China escorted by four large security guards.*"

■ **NetAct is a network of Catholic Social Justice, Welfare and Educational Agencies.** The meetings highlight the work that religious congregations are doing at the grassroots level, not just in Sydney, but nationally and internationally: activities associated with prisons, youth employment and training, refugee settlement, indigenous issues, homelessness, climate change. NetAct prepares an election kit to educate the grassroots, on some of the key issues. Ph Sr Helen Kearins, 02 8306 3499.

■ **Parish Social Justice Groups.** More and more parishes now have social justice groups. Networks are developing between parish groups. Many dioceses have Justice and Peace Co-ordinators. My own parish social justice group follows the See, Judge, Act process in engaging the parishioners with the wider community in the Make Poverty History campaign, in partnership with Allas village in East Timor, in housing issues, in growing relationships and support for the local Aboriginal community as well as the Sydney Somali community. The Diocese of Broken Bay of which we are part supports the growing parish networks which have established a website where they can post their activities and share information. <http://sjaroundthebay.org/?p=1555>. The SJ Round the Bay network has now connected with the St Vincent de Paul Society to put on a forum where each group can improve their understanding of social justice and Catholic Social Teaching.

■ **Schools.** Our PEJ experience of conducting workshops and co-ordinating social justice days is that students are passionate about social justice and ecological concern. Equally, there are passionate teachers who get the students involved as well as make the connections between issues and their studies. In a crowded curriculum that is becoming more impacted by political decisions, it is challenging to ensure that peace, ecology and justice is embedded in the whole school curriculum. The PEJ Formation Program "Growing a Culture of Peace" is aimed at assisting the growth of this as a priority in schools

Anne Lanyon