



Co-ordinator's Comments

I was thinking about what makes a journey a pilgrimage? As a bushwalker, I have been on lots of journeys but just a few that I would consider pilgrimages. These were long journeys with others that took me out of my comfort zone to significant places which involved time for reflecting on the place, the people and other species who had gone before. They filled me with wonder at the enormity of God and gratitude for God's gift of life. They also involved surprise at discovering the unseen around the next corner, achievement from struggling through blockages along the way, and revelation from gifted people who shared their wisdom. I concluded that the pilgrimages I have been on have been journeys to the heart that have given me new insights into who Jesus is for me and a new sense of my role in God's mission.

In the same sense I think that the work we do in Peace, Ecology and Justice is a sort of pilgrimage. We are inspired by those who have gone before us and those we meet along the way. One inspiration has been the Synod of Bishops' document of 1971, "*Justice in the World*" which will be forty years old in November. It is good to examine this document to measure progress over forty years and target the challenges in 2011. www.osjspm.org/majordoc_justicia_in_mundo_official_test.aspx The young people who are journeying to World Youth Day in July are called pilgrims. I wonder if some of the inspirations along their way will be related to peace, ecology and justice! **Anne Lanyon**

Catholic Social Teaching

Within the Christian context, there are also other types of 'pilgrimages', journeys that deal with the development of and growth in understanding and awareness of the Gospel. If we look at the history of the Church - a mixed bag indeed - one constant has been the struggle by people of faith to interpret and live out Jesus' command to love.

Down through the centuries this has been expressed in diverse ways, no less importantly in the writings of saints and scholars in the cultural and social milieu of their particular age. In what has come to be known as Catholic Social Teaching in more recent times,

beginning with Leo XIII's encyclical *Rerum Novarum* in 1891 to the latest writing of Benedict XVI *Caritas in Veritate* in 2009, we can see what has also been for the Church a journey of understanding and growth in faith. The former addressed the "*misery and wretchedness pressing so unjustly on the working class*", the latter outlined moral principles for some of the more pressing issues of the 21st century: *hunger, the environment, migration, bioethics, sexual tourism*. Like many 'pilgrimages' it has been and continues to be a sometimes painful but enlightening journey.

Jack Evans

What We've Been Up To

■ **The "Stations of the Forests: Australian Version" DVD and booklet** was published for Holy Week and launched for World Environment Day. (See over) It's available online or in hard copy. www.columban.org.au

■ **Culture of Peace Formation Program for Educators: Connecting Peace, Ecology and Justice**

Teachers from the dioceses of Sydney and Broken Bay participated in this two-day program held at our Institute on May 2nd and 23rd. The course provides educators with a basic scriptural foundation, Catholic Social Teaching, and knowledge and practical application in growing a culture of peace, a core mission of Catholic schools. It also builds a network within schools.

■ **Teaching About Education in Justice**

We did a week of guest lecturing and tutorials with students of Religious Education and Curriculum at Australian Catholic University.

■ **Pilot Unit of Work in Catholic Studies**

A unit of work developed from the Columban/St Peter's College Youth Theatre of the Oppressed Immersion Program is being trialled with Year 12 students at St Peter's Catholic College, Tuggerah Lakes, NSW.

"Action on behalf of justice and participation in the transformation of the world fully appear to us as a constitutive dimension of the preaching of the Gospel, or, in other words, of the Church's mission for the redemption of the human race and its liberation from every oppressive situation."

Justice in the World #6, Synod of Bishops, 1971

“Ancient divisions between nations and empires, between races and classes, today possess new technological instruments of destruction. The arms race is a threat to our highest good, which is life; it makes poor peoples and individuals yet more miserable, while making richer those already powerful; it creates a continuous danger of conflagration, and in the case of nuclear arms, it threatens to destroy all life from the face of the earth. At the same time new divisions are being born to separate people from their neighbors. Unless combated and overcome by social and political action, the influence of the new industrial and technological order favors the concentration of wealth, power and decision-making in the hands of a small public or private controlling group.”

Justice in the World #9

Forty years on, it is increasingly obvious that an unsustainable economic system, propped up by militarism is behind the ecological crisis. The pursuit for global control by the rich and powerful is one of the greatest challenges facing us. Militarism is supported by Australian leaders, and is part of the cultural landscape. Conscientisation of the people, education and organized active non-violent response go hand-in-hand in the ongoing struggle to grow a culture of peace.

Arms Spending

Australia is said to be the 6th largest per capita military spender in the world at \$32bn per year making us the 14th overall. The military budget is 9-10% of the whole budget. Australia has spent \$10bn on the war in Afghanistan. It is buying 3 air warfare ships for \$6bn and is purchasing Strike Fighter airplanes at a projected cost of \$16 bn. www.smh.com.au/national/joint-strike-fighter-project-faces-more-delays-20100202-nb4m.html

The Federal Government has put a levy on tax payers and cut environmental, education and housing programs to pay for reconstruction after Queensland's natural disasters (in which the military has been constructively engaged). Yet, the one small cut to the military has been \$300m over 3 three years in the area of civilian jobs, not the big budget arms deals.

The Talisman Sabre joint war games with the US will again be held at Shoalwater Bay near Rockhampton in July. Estimated costs are \$100m. Environmental impacts identified by the Department of Defence include those on air quality, marine animals, fire, noise, waste, spills and erosion. Questions need to be asked: “What sense is there in further harming the environment when restoration is still going on to cyclone and flood damaged areas?” and “Why spend tax payers’ money on war games?” “If Australia’s overseas aid budget is equivalent to 1½ month’s military spending, would not increasing effective aid be more conducive to peace than using military weapons?” See *Australian Anti-Bases Campaign Coalition* www.anti-bases.org and www.peaceconvergence.com/#

Nuclear Non-Proliferation

One strategy for freeing the world of nuclear weapons is groups of countries negotiating regional nuclear weapon free zones (NWFZs). They commit themselves not to manufacture, acquire, test, or possess nuclear weapons. Five NWFZs exist today, four of them spanning the entire Southern Hemisphere: Latin America, the South Pacific, (including Australia), Southeast Asia, Africa, and Central Asia. See *Arms Control Association* www.armscontrol.org/factsheets/nwzf

In a speech at the **Palm Sunday Peace Forum**, Wesley Church, Melbourne 2011, **Prof Michael Hamel-Green** cited **Alfonso Garcia Robles**, Nobel Prize-winning Mexican diplomat and architect of the first NWFZ to be established in a populated region. He explained the zonal strategy to gradually broaden the areas of the world “*from which nuclear weapons are prohibited to the point where the territories of powers which possess these terrible weapons of mass destruction will be something like contaminated islands subject to quarantine.*” Or, as another Latin American diplomat, Brazil’s **Felicio Jose** has put it, “*peeling the global nuclear orange, starting from the bottom up.*” *Disarming Times*, Vol 36 No 2, www.paxchristi.org.au

Yet Australia is being pressured by a top Indian promoter of nuclear weapons to work together to build a thorium based nuclear reactor. Australia has large reserves of thorium which is seen by proponents of a nuclear industry as a future material for replacing uranium. Australia currently bans uranium exports to India because it is not a signatory to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.

Revelations are emerging that radiation leakage from the earthquake damaged Fukushima nuclear power plant is double that originally estimated by its operator. Still in Australia, nuclear energy promoters are actively pursuing their agenda as part of the “cost of carbon” discussions. All such discussions should be holistic, making the connections between peace, ecology and social justice to opt for the common good.

India May Expand Nuclear Program, Says Top Advisor
Matt Wade SMH 21-22 May 2011

The Cost of Carbon

www.abc.net.au/rn/bigideas/stories/2011/3235090.htm
www.guardian.co.uk/world/2011/jun/07/japan-doubles-fukushima-radiation-leak-estimate

Take Action: Write to the Prime Minister,

www.pm.gov.au/contact-your-pm ,

Cross-Bench, Government and Opposition MPs

www.aph.gov.au/house/members/index.htm

Eco-Pilgrimage

Religious pilgrimage is well known but secular *ecological-pilgrimage* is also now well established. The marriage of ecology and pilgrimage can prompt our Gospel conversion to grow in our time to the greater glory of God.

The social anthropologist **Victor Turner** says religious pilgrims have a 'liminal' experience of going beyond the known. Journeying beyond one's normal threshold, there is a period of separation from the familiar followed by a process of re-assimilation for the person back home. It is a journey into the unstructured and even anti-structure. One travels to the margins so that one returns home with deeper appreciation of what we have at home.

Pilgrimage sites have traditionally been religious ones – Mt Tabor or Galilee, Mecca, the Ganges River or Brigid's holy well. But pilgrimage sites can also be secular – Gallipoli or Lake Peddar, Cape York or Lake Mungo.

It is notable and important that many pilgrimage sites are associated with natural wonders like mountains and deserts. Awe and wonder are common experiences. The pilgrim experiences the difference of the place compared with home, is pushed to broaden his or her ideas and challenged to live in a new way. The natural wonder helps to give an intense sense of the beyond and helps us to look for wonder where we usually live.

The insights coming from the science of ecology as earth's systems, are explored as modern gifts to us. Our place within these systems is revealed and everyone is challenged to live differently within these systems. We are never the same after a visit to an intensely productive farming area or land dead from salinity, a steel mill or a gaping mining site. Like those on religious pilgrimage who learnt from each other along the way, the ecological-pilgrimage experience is most intense when an ecologist explains the systems of water, air, soil, plant and animal life, how they operate and are being altered at a particular site. We are challenged to see our home with new eyes where these same systems also operate, even if at a less obvious level.

The rituals of religious pilgrimage have their ecological-pilgrimage equivalents. Sometimes the rituals are the same – walking, climbing, bathing, tasting, eating together, sharing stories, meditating, carrying a symbol such as a shell or a leaf, dressing in a particular way, holding a procession. These rituals help mark the occasion and embed the memory of our experience more deeply. The rituals may be somewhat confronting

for the socially reserved but pilgrimage gives permission to break with the normal, anti-structure as Turner expresses it. The ecological-pilgrimage helps convince us that matter really matters.

Rituals of re-integration emerge when the unfamiliar is brought home. If we are convinced that matter really matters we celebrate the sacraments with new insights. The Eucharist is at heart a meal. Followers of Jesus come together as a family in a holy meal to celebrate the Risen Jesus present among them. Full immersion in the water of baptism is meant to be a memorable event just as real birth is an unforgettable experience.

Once we have journeyed on ecological-pilgrimage we can never live on earth the same way as before. Electricity use and public transport issues go beyond economic considerations to become respect for this God given earth. Exploiting natural resource and production of food exports go beyond terms of trade to respect earth's God given rhythms. Eco-pilgrimage transforms.

Charles Rue

Stations of the Forests DVD and booklet launch



ABC Radio personality, **John Cleary** (right), described as "one of Australia's leading commentators on religious affairs" launched the Australian version of this UK Columban resource at the Australian Catholic University on June 3rd to coincide with World Environment Day. In his speech he said:

'This is an important resource. It has a simple, clear message that connects our behaviour to others in the world. It is not a fleeting documentary, but meant to be used in community for reflection, discussion and action. Our society is looking for meaning in possessions. This DVD is about meaning, life and religious belief. It connects the passion, death and resurrection of Jesus with the suffering forests and suffering people. It says the issues are vital, they are part of the Christian calling and won't go away. In 1968 we had an understanding of the relationship between science and faith. The first astronauts who viewed earth from space in wonder quoted Christian scripture. Now people are deliberately

“The new technological possibilities are based upon the unity of science, on the global and simultaneous character of communications and on the birth of an absolutely interdependent economic world. Moreover, people are beginning to grasp a new and more radical dimension of unity; for they perceive that their resources, as well as the precious treasures of air and water--without which there cannot be life-- and the small delicate biosphere of the whole complex of all life on earth, are not infinite, but on the contrary must be saved and preserved as a unique patrimony belonging to all human beings.” **Justice in the World #8**

Economic Justice, Technology and Oil

Information technology has enabled the recent empowerment of people in social and political action in the Middle East. Professor Michael Clare of the Centre for Research on Globalisation, California analyses this upheaval as the end of the petroleum age. “Whatever the outcome of the protests, uprisings, and rebellions now sweeping the Middle East, one thing is guaranteed: the world of oil will be permanently transformed. Consider everything that’s now happening as just the first tremor of an oilquake that will shake our world to its core.

For a century stretching back to the discovery of oil in southwestern Persia before World War I, Western powers have repeatedly intervened in the Middle East to ensure the survival of authoritarian governments devoted to producing petroleum. Without such interventions, the expansion of Western economies after World War II and the current affluence of industrialized societies would be inconceivable.

Here, however, is the news that should be on the front pages of newspapers everywhere: That old oil order is dying, and with its demise we will see the end of cheap and readily accessible petroleum -- forever.” The move away from a fossil-fuelled society has begun. It is vital that Christians and all people respond to the situation with justice. Read more: *The Collapse of the Old Oil Order: How the Petroleum Age Will End.* www.globalresearch.ca/index.php?context=va&aid=23549

Economic Justice and Chocolate

For ten years now our Centre has been using the case study of chocolate to highlight the injustices in globalisation that entrench extreme poverty and wealth. In 2011 in Australia, it is good that more people are aware that the treat we eat may be tainted by the use of child labour or trafficked children. They see more Fair Trade products available and think that because

Cadbury Dairy Milk now carries the Fair Trade logo, things have improved. www.fta.org.au This is true of some farms associated with, for example, Kuapa Koko Co-operative in Ghana. But in fact things are desperate in Cote D’Ivoire, the world’s leading cocoa producer. Civil unrest has left thousands dead and 1m refugees.

You have to come here, to one of the forest regions where Côte d’Ivoire’s million-plus cocoa farmers live, to find the fundamental reason that fighting is breaking out again: a profoundly unjust international economic order that pays the people who supply our primary products a pittance and leaves their nations chronically ill with unemployment and poverty, and with people who will fight one another over scarce resources. Here, too, you will learn that the giant American agribusiness corporations Cargill and Archer Daniels Midland (ADM) are one part of the problem, even though their names do not appear in the grim dispatches about widespread killings and mass graves. Read: **The Roots of the Cote d’Ivoire Crisis**, James North, www.thenation.com/article/159707/roots-cote-divoire-crisis

Take Action

- Read about Chocolate www.columban.org.au
- Send a copy of this article to Ms Heather Ridout, CEO Australian Industry Group, attn Confectionery Sector, c/o PO Box 289 North Sydney NSW 2059 Web: www.aigroup.com.au
- Or write to chocolate manufacturers telling what you think about the situation of cocoa farmers. Could you change your brand of chocolate to Fair Trade?

“Vocation for Justice” 25 years old

Another publication that is marking a milestone is the UK Columban JPIC magazine. The latest edition is a wide-ranging collection of articles by gifted, committed people which feature their experiences and visions for the future. They are a worthwhile read as an overview of justice, peace and integrity of creation work over time, connecting the global to the local. www.columbans.co.uk/VFJ APRIL 2011

Bon Voyage to Jubilee Australia National Director

Adele Webb is taking a 12 month sabbatical from late June to the Institute for Studies in Asian Church and Culture in the Philippines. She will be partnering with the Freedom from Debt (FDC) Coalition in Manila to mobilise church-based supporters in the national campaign against debt as well as writing editorials on economic justice and government accountability for a daily English radio program. **Anne Lanyon**