There is no doubt that the development of information technology is a positive tool we can and do use in the work of peace, ecology and justice. But like any tool, it can be used for good or for evil. It depends on the heart and mind of the user why and how it is used. The abuse of the social media, Facebook and Twitter, has been the focus of public attention recently with cases of bullying, bad behavior and violent protest. In our education work on connecting peace, ecology and justice issues, we incorporate analysis when demonstrating how the SEE, JUDGE, ACT process is used with a social or environmental issue. These analysis tools also need to be applied to the use of all technology, including information technology, asking the question, “How is this bringing about God’s reign of forgiveness and love in our relationships and in the world?”

Anne Lanyon

What We’ve Been Up To:

- **Advocacy** We have been busy writing letters, attending rallies and supporting the networks with which we are connected. (See Peace and Justice pages)

- **Publications** We have written articles for publication on the Stop Debt Vultures campaign, the work of the PEJ Centre and on Chocolate and globalization. A new format for the NSW Catholic Sustainable Schools Network Newsletter has been produced. Called ENHANCE and written by Sue Martin, it comes out once a term and features five sections which enable Catholic schools to Reflect, Link, Learn and Share as they try to implement “On Holy Ground”, their ecological vision statement.

  Contact Sue on sue@kcj.net.au

- **Faith Ecology Network (FEN)** With the FEN team we have been planning a public forum on the mining issue entitled “Faith in Mining? An Interfaith Forum” to be held on October 14th (See insert).

- **Education and Formation** Anne Lanyon co-ordinated the program for the Broken Bay Schools Social Justice Day while Sr Kateia Kaikai (PEJ) and Fr Patrick McInerney (CMR) presented workshops on Ecology and Justice and Christian-Muslim Relations. Sr Kateia and Anne have run workshops at Australian Catholic University, St Scholastica’s College Glebe and have one more in the pipe line at the Sydney Schools Social Justice Day. Fr Jack Evans and Anne ran a workshop on Asylum Seekers at Terrigal with the Central Coast Catholic Women’s League. We are currently planning another Culture of Peace Formation Program for Educators to be held at CMI on Oct 15th and Nov 5th (See Ecology page).

  Anne, in a new role on the NSW Environment Trust Technical Committee, assessed grant applications from NSW schools for eco projects and school gardens.

Catholic Social Teaching

**Reflection** is perhaps one of the aspects least attempted in contemporary education. For example, today, given the rapid proliferation of social media, the twin voices of ethics and propriety of use are struggling to be heard. One of the hallmarks of CST has always been the place given to the role of reflection (SEE, JUDGE, ACT). On that particular issue Pope Benedict xvi has this to say... “people are frequently bombarded with answers to questions they have never asked and to needs of which they were unaware. If we are to recognize and focus upon the truly important questions then silence is a precious commodity that enables us to exercise proper discernment in the face of the surcharge of stimuli...” (World Communications Day Silence and Word: The Path of Evangelization, January 2012)

Jack Evans
Social Media and Mimetic Rivalry
Print and electronic media have vividly brought home to us how social media can be used for spreading mob violence. It is the tool of the 21st Century being used for what humans have always done – play out rivalry, select scapegoats, and develop myths about our own role in the violence that occurs. Rene Girard’s groundbreaking anthropological insight into mimetic rivalry has helped our understanding of how retributive or violent justice works. Read more www.australiangirardseminar.org
Our role as followers of Jesus is to imitate him in non-violence, forgiveness and restoration of right relations. We are called to spread this Good News - and using social media helps.

Joel Hodge (ACU Melbourne) has written a new book, “Resisting Violence and Victimisation” (Ashgate Publishing). Grounded in the work of Girard, he contends that the East Timorese peoples’ experience of victimisation led to their self-identification with Jesus and formed a distinctive communal solidarity. East Timor’s Prime Minister Gusmao enunciated this well at the opening of the 2012 ICAPP Asian Peace and Reconciliation Council Conference. “For the Timorese people, peace meant living free from hatred, revenge and distrust. Peace meant living in harmony with our enemies, and especially with ourselves, both individually and as a whole... We understood from the experiences of other post-conflict countries that if we were to keep hatred and mistrust alive in our society, we would not be able to build our Nation”. (http://bit.ly/P4PSzk)
That ex-leaders of Asian nations are meeting to try to deal with conflict non-violently is a good news story which should be shared in the wider Australian community. However, there are no women on the new Council. For it to be effective, it needs to include women with expertise in conflict resolution, peace building and women’s rights.

McLaughlin, a former top policy official at Google who later worked for the Obama White House as deputy chief technology officer. Google Moderates Free Speech Craig Timberg, 19 Sept www.smh.com.au This power can be misused by corporations, governments and individuals alike. We must ask questions when, under the cloak of national security, situations arise like the isolation of Private Bradley Manning in a military prison, and the pursuit of Wikileaks’ Julian Assange.

Open Source is one non-profit organization which seeks to keep information technology in the hands of the people and build community education links. http://opensource.org/

Militarism
Columbans in Japan, the Philippines and South Korea have all experienced the negative effects of military bases. In South Korea, Fr Pat Cunningham has been supporting the Gangjeong villagers in their struggle against the naval base which is destroying the unique environment of their island of Jeju. We have written to the South Korean authorities. Learn more at Sacred Rock Blasted www.columban.org.au and http://bit.ly/O9krmM
The Independent and Peaceful Australia Network (IPAN) was launched on 21 September, at the International Day of Peace event at St John’s Anglican Cathedral Brisbane. It was formed out of concern that decisions to base US troops in Australia and increase military use of Australian facilities were made too hastily to allow proper consultation with affected communities and are not in Australia’s best security, economic or environmental interests. BaseWatch Darwin has managed to ensure that the ADF undertake a Social Impact Assessment for the US Marine base. Get involved http://www.basewatch.org/

Power and Technology
The same technology used in smart phones is used in drones which kill people remotely. Now the Australian government is spending $3bn on drones for surveillance of asylum seeker boats. These are significant ethical issues. See Here Comes the Drone Age and Flying Drones a Safety Threat in www.smh.com.au 11 Sept.

Power and Social Media
Social media gives people power. It was used to bring about the nonviolent overthrow of the dictator in Egypt. However, it is the monolithic corporations who now have the power to control peoples’ voices. “Google, YouTube, Facebook, Twitter now play this adjudicatory role on free speech,” said Andrew

Anne Lanyon participated in a rally outside the office of Tanya Plibersek. The message was ‘More money for health, not more money for war.’
New Media and ‘Ecological Vocation’
New media-technology grows constantly. Social networking showed its power as much in the 2008 election of President Obama, as it does in Australian campaigns run by groups such as Get Up. A question is how to use this media technology as a force for good, especially for environmental care.

Social Movements
The Holy Spirit is active in history and our discernment of the action of God manifests in new social movements. Social media is such a movement and we are called to discern where Gospel is happening there.

Year of Grace
The environmental writings of Pope John Paul II argue the moral imperative to respect the integrity of creation as do the recently published environmental writings of Benedict XVI. They reiterate that God first communicated through the natural world in preparing for a human communication in the person of Jesus.

Ecological Literacy
In his new book, Our Natural World, Father Denis Edwards encourages us to see how the sciences are helping us to a deeper spirituality by exploring the earth processes and the human connection with other creatures. The study of cosmology and biodiversity can excite believers who see God as Life-Giver. Our Natural World, Garratt Publications, Mulgrave 2012.

Science, Technology and Policies
The findings of ecological science are often confused with human technologies or the policies derived from its findings. This can lead to fights over the means rather than the objectives even though people share similar values about care for earth and justice for future generations.

All-of-life Approach
Knowing that science alone is not enough, some envision a coming together of knowledge in response to the fundamental earth issue, climate change. They would add the humanities and arts, cultural and religious traditions to the physical sciences. The coming-together would be celebrated in all-of-life events to find hope, insight and power.

Social Networking
New media communicates not just information but attitudes. It cuts across established institutional and business structures, across national boundaries. It is capable of leveraging power to break the business stranglehold on politics and rewrite the basis of democratic processes. http://bit.ly/MlbIPj

Ecological vocation
A positive use of the social media could be seen as a vocation for the younger generation: a God given call to fulfil a special role in service of the community and to find fulfilment there. They could claim the phrase of Pope John Paul II, ‘ecological vocation’. Those who grow up with the social media could become ‘eco-warriors’. Older priests like the late Passionist environmentalist Father Thomas Berry and Father Daniel Berrigan could inspire them. (See article Vale Thomas Berry CP 1914-2009, by Marie Farrell in Australasian Catholic Record p468ff)

Ecological Faith Resources
Web-based resources on faith and ecology in English have multiplied worldwide:
• Justice Peace and Integrity of Creation Commission, Rome http://jpicformation.wikispaces.com/
• US Catholic Coalition in Climate Change http://catholicclimatecovenant.org/
• Ecology and Jesuits in Communication www.ecojesuits.com
• Independent Asian Catholic News www.ucanews.com
• Operation Noah (UK) www.operationnoah.org

Charles Rue
Globalisation and Mobile Phones
Our PEJ Centre uses the case study of chocolate as one way of bringing home the reality of injustice involved in globalization. See www.columban.org.au/our-works/peace-ecology-justice/campaigns/
Another case study could be mobile phones. Texting or using other social media brings us together in a globalised world. But, do we think about where the products come from, what they are made from and who makes them? The Democratic Republic of the Congo has at least 64 percent of worldwide reserves of coltan used in mobile phones. “The exploitation of coltan in dozens of informal mines scattered throughout the jungle in the eastern DRC, is used for financing armed groups and the personal enrichment of military and government officials. Artisanal mining, with no controls, is carried out in semi-slave labour conditions and causes significant damage to the environment and the health of workers, including children.” Learn More: See “Blood in the Mobile” by Danish director Frank Piasecki and "http://www.ipsnews.net/author/ines-benitez/"

Economic Justice
Through its connection with Jubilee Australia, the PEJ Centre urges you to support these two campaigns:

Stop Debt Vultures
Earlier this year in the UK, debt vulture fund, FG Hemisphere, was defeated in court from trying to claim $100 million from the Democratic Republic of Congo for a debt it bought up for just $3 million. Legislation to stop debt vulture funds from similarly using Australian courts is currently being drafted to go before Parliament. http://stopdebtvultures.org.au/?p=416
Please sign the petition to ensure it is voted through. http://www.thepetitionsite.com/1/Stop-Debt-Vultures/

Tax Justice
The impact of tax evasion on developing countries denies them the finance they need to be self-sufficient and makes them dependent on aid and debt. The Australian Government should support global efforts to stem tax dodging, and the flow of corruptly stolen money through:
• Automatic exchange of information between tax authorities about money flowing across borders;
• Greater disclosure by companies of the profit they make and the tax they pay in each country in which they operate;
• Tougher rules on disclosing the ultimate owners of companies and trusts so banks know who they are dealing with and can ensure that the money has not been illegally sourced. Take Action: go to http://taxjustice.org.au/

War a drain on global fiscal resources
Despite popular notions that war industries are good for the economy, studies show that violence is a significant drain on global fiscal resources. According to the inaugural report on the Positive Peace Index, if 25% of the global violence level went down, it would add an additional $2.25 trillion to the global economy. www.economicsandpeace.org

More Advocacy
We have also written letters to the:
• NSW Education Minister to save Sustainability Education from the axe as a cost-cutting measure. www.sustainableschools.nsw.edu.au
• NSW Minister for Environment and Heritage to oppose the approval of hunting in NSW National Parks and also to protest the latest move by the Shooters and Fishers Party to repeal the Native Vegetation Act, www.npansw.org.au/
• Federal Minister for Trade re the current negotiations on the Trans Pacific Partnership Agreement (TPP). www.aftinet.org.au

WOW (Wonders of Waste) Bags
We received a request from Helen Mitchell, who has a project with women from the Columban parish in Malate, Manila. They create bags made from recycled drink cartons. The income goes to support education scholarships for children like Analyn and Genalyn.

They are keen for school or parish groups to support them.
If you would like to help, please contact the PEJ Centre.

Anne Lanyon

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