

Jubilee Sunday May 17, 2015

"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor, to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour." Luke 4: 18,19.



Bac Ha, Viet Nam.
Photo credit: United Nations

A Christian worship and education resource for your faith community.



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1. Invitation

Join in remembering and acting on the biblical principle of “Jubilee” on Sunday May 17, 2015.

True wisdom doesn't age or expire. And so it is with the ancient idea of 'Jubilee', the year of the Lord's favour. Each year, on Jubilee Sunday, people across Australia and around the globe unite in heart, mind and spirit to recall and be re-inspired by the ancient Old Testament idea of 'Jubilee', a time when debts were cancelled, slaves were freed and land was redistributed.

As a congregation, a social justice group, a school group, a family or even as an individual, Jubilee Sunday is an opportunity to set aside time to reflect on our role in building a fair, compassionate and environmentally sustainable society. In Australia Jubilee Sunday is usually the third Sunday in May but can be celebrated at another convenient time.

As Christians, we are called to live in step with the spirit of Jubilee renewal, to break the chains of oppression that bind our global brothers and sisters and prevent them from realising full and dignified lives. The causes of poverty and inequality in our world today are complex. Living the Jubilee Principle means understanding that poverty is not simply about lack of money, and that charity alone will not bring it to an end.

Jubilee Australia is part of a global movement that acts on this through researching the structural causes of poverty, inequality and environmental damage and by seeking ways to enable communities to have a voice in economic policies and in decisions that affect their lives.

We invite you to join us on Jubilee Sunday to listen to the voices of the poor, the oppressed and the powerless, to deepen your understanding of the structural causes of global poverty and injustice, to pray for long-term solutions to the global poverty crisis, and contribute to the work of Jubilee Australia.

Enclosed you will find reflection, worship and action materials. We encourage you to adapt and use them in any way that works for your group. Through your prayers and actions, your congregation can be part of the worldwide Jubilee movement to fight greed and inequity, and build a just and fair global economy, for the sake of the world's poorest communities.

Our warmest regards, The Jubilee Australia Team.

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www.jubileeaustralia.org

2. Reflect

Hearing the Voice of God in the voices of the poor.

“My metaphor for thinking about the world is ‘the beloved of God’. It means that I must tie my life to the voice of God in my heart as I hear it through the poor, the oppressed, the disenfranchised, and those voices other than the voice of the institutions. For that I may be rejected by the system, of course, but I cannot keep my soul and do otherwise.”

Joan Chittister OSB Called to Question: A spiritual memoir.

In this beautiful yet challenging picture, Benedictine Sister Joan Chittister, well-known author and international speaker, talks not only of hearing the voices of the poor, the oppressed, and the most vulnerable, but of attaching the very meaning of her life to what she hears through those voices. This pursuit of Sister Joan is a tough challenge for all of us.

But there is a second idea raised in the passage above, about the need for us to take care that we hear the real voice. This second challenge is a tall order in today’s media saturated world where we are inundated with news and information, and the opinions of this person and that.

When we hear of a new development plan or mining development which affects a poor community, more often than not we get the positive stories crafted by clever Public Relations staff wrapped in language of ‘progress’ and ‘benefits’. The voices of communities affected are too far away, and become drowned out by the voice of those more powerful.

All the more reason for us to heed the words of Sister Joan. If we want to uphold the dignity of people, regardless of their financial wealth and power, the first thing we are called to do is to listen to them...not to institutions which purport to speak on their behalf.

The citizens who are risking much by speaking out on the streets of the Philippines, Bougainville, Indonesia, Bangladesh, Myanmar, Mongolia, Papua New Guinea, Timor Leste and more - what are they asking for, what do they have to say, and what does ‘justice’ look like to them? In response to what we hear, we have the opportunity to ask questions of ourselves - what kinds of laws/policies (national and international) do we have?

Do they espouse human freedom, or put people in bondage? Are there opportunities for ordinary people like us to change some of these laws or make new ones? What role can we play?

(Listening and responding to the grassroots struggles in our region is the essence of Jubilee Australia’s mission. Learn more in part 4 of the Jubilee Sunday 2015 material.)

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3. Worship

Liturgical Resources for Jubilee Sunday

Jubilee Sunday May 17th, 2015

Seventh Sunday of Easter : Holy Father, keep them in your name that you have given me, so that they may be one just as we are one. **Jn: 17: 11B**

Notes:

- This year Jubilee Sunday falls on the Seventh Sunday of Easter.
- The Readings here are for the Seventh Sunday of Easter from the Common Lectionary. Use the Readings of the Sunday if you hold it in a different week.
- Prepare a simple candle ceremony for the beginning of the liturgy. You will need two candles (one red for solidarity and one yellow for liberation).
- Have the Powerpoint slide ready (You can download it from www.jubileeaustralia.org)
- Brief homily notes are included.
- You are encouraged to use music that is appropriate to the theme and well-known.

Introduction (Gathering) to be read by Welcomer

Have Powerpoint display up.

Today we gather as a faith community in the Great Southern Land of the Holy Spirit on the traditional country of the people for Jubilee Sunday.

• **Light Candle One**

Based on Old Testament scripture, the ancient Hebrew traditions of Sabbath and Jubilee renewal required that those enslaved as a result of debt be freed, lands lost because of debt be returned and communities torn by inequality be restored.

Jesus expressed the Jubilee Principle when in Matthew's Gospel, he asked the people to pray, ***"Give us today our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we also forgive those who have debts against us"***. Matthew 6:12.

As a local community which is part of the global community, we pray together in hope for a world made new where those struggling under the weight of poverty because of economic injustice will be able to live in dignity and peace.

• **Light Candle Two**

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Homily Notes.



Scripture points to connect with:

1. “Holy Father, keep them in your name that you have given me, so that they may be one just as we are one.” – the global world, global family, solidarity, difference but unity, common good.
2. “I protected them in your name that you gave me,” - care for all, the vulnerable, those with the least, the forgotten.
3. “I do not ask that you take them out of the world but that you keep them from the evil one.”- the evil of greed, financial profits gained on the backs of the poor and damage to the earth.
4. Use stories of examples from Jubilee websites:
www.jubileeaustralia.org ; www.jubileeusa.org ; <http://jubileedebt.org.uk/>

How do we apply the essence of the Jubilee principle in today’s complex and globally connected world?

The causes of poverty and inequality in our world are complex. Living the Jubilee Principle today means understanding that poverty is not simply about lack of money, and that charity alone will not bring it to an end. Our approach to helping the poor must have two facets: a focus on the actual conditions of those in poverty, and a corresponding focus on the systems, laws and policies that make and keep people poor.

Today, Jubilee Australia collaborates with groups in 50 other countries that are working against greed and inequity, and towards a global economy that is fair, sustainable, and protects the most vulnerable from exploitation. This is something that faith communities can and should take action on.

Final Blessing

God of all, give us the strength and the desire to minister to those who struggle to live under oppressive conditions. Allow us to see your presence in our lives and in the lives of others. Breathe the fire of your love into our hearts. Amen.

**Prepared by the Columban Mission Institute Centre for Peace, Ecology and Justice.
Debt prayer bookmarks are available by contacting Anne Lanyon 02 9352 8021 or
pej.cmi@columban.org.au**

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Prayers of the Faithful (Bidding Prayers)



(Celebrant) God of all, you created us in your image and call on us to serve you and do your will on Earth.

Response: "That they may be one just as we are one".

1. We give thanks for your gifts of the rich diversity of life which is to be available to all. R.
2. We pray for church and world leaders that they will be inspired by your Spirit to act to change a global system which is creating an increasing gap between the rich and the poor. R.
3. We pray for the global family of peoples. Help us to show the same solidarity with our brothers and sisters far away as we do with those close to us. R.
4. We pray for all those who are suffering through no fault of their own under the weight of poverty caused by economic injustice. R.
5. We pray that we too will have the strength to work towards a world that reflects the love, mercy and justice of Jesus. Give us courage to lay down our lives for justice for the poor and for the earth. R.

(Celebrant) Compassionate God, help us to embrace the love we receive from you, that comes to us through the most unlikely of the people in the most unlikely of places. We ask this in Jesus' name. Amen.)

Announcement

Jubilee Australia is a small, dynamic organisation formed at the turn of the millennium when 24 million people signed a petition calling for 'Third World' Debts to be cancelled by the year 2000. In response to the Jubilee 2000 campaign, around \$125 billion of debt was cancelled, and governments were able to start spending money in ways that benefited their people. But the 'Jubilee' idea goes beyond cancelling some debt.

Jubilee Australia is still working with its colleagues around the world because of its belief that the global economy has been structured in a way that is deeply unfair, worsening poverty and contributing to further inequality in our region and among people everywhere.

Over the long term, our efforts have to change the economic rules of engagement if less-developed countries and communities are to do anything more than struggle against the tide. At a recent meeting of global Jubilee members from different faiths Pope Francis praised the work of the Jubilee network. Jubilee USA's Eric LeCompte said: "Pope Francis is challenging the policies that keep people poor." <http://christianchurchestogether.org>

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What does Jubilee justice look like today?

“Mining, like many other industrial activities, has ecological and social consequences which go well beyond national borders and pass from one generation to the next”.

From Pope Francis’ message for the day of reflection on the mining industry, 2014

Bougainville

On the island of Bougainville, located 500km off the PNG mainland, the Panguna copper and gold mine was established. It was potentially one of the largest reserves in the world and once a lucrative operation for Australian mining giant Rio Tinto and the PNG state. Being a large, open-cut mine, surrounding villages suffered from land appropriation, poisoned rivers, village relocation and social disruption, while receiving little over 1% of the earnings.



When negotiations with the company to address these problems failed, local people took matters into their own hands and disrupted the operations of the company. This led to the closure of the mine in 1989. The PNG government responded with military force which [evidence suggests](#) was funded, facilitated and encouraged by both Bougainville Copper Limited (BCL), a local subsidiary of Rio Tinto, and the Australian government. Civilians faced the most brutal campaign of state violence witnessed in the region since WWII. When the blockade of the island and war finally ceased in 1998, between 10,000 and 20,000 people are estimated to have died, close to 10% of the island’s population. The majority of those who died were civilians.

No truth commission has been held for this war, nor has there been an independent investigation into the systematic violations against the people of Bougainville, reparations for injuries suffered, or necessary steps taken to prevent a recurrence.

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Through its subsidiary Bougainville Copper Ltd, Rio Tinto is now negotiating to restart the highly controversial mine. The Autonomous Bougainville Government recently passed legislation raising once again the possibility of large-scale mining in the region.

Because of its concern about accountability by the Australian Government in its support for Australian mining interests overseas, Jubilee Australia undertook research in 2013 in the Panguna region at the invitation of community leaders. They spoke with people from most of the key villages in or around the closed off mine site.

The Voices of Bougainville Nikana Langsi, Nikana Doug Damana (Our Land, Our future) Report www.jubileeaustralia.org showed that the people near the Panguna mine were strongly opposed to the re-opening of the mine. The report also found that they were unhappy with the consultation process. Indeed the Jubilee report inspired people on the island and elsewhere to listen to their voices for the first time. Since that report those people are still being marginalised and ignored by the Australian Government, Rio Tinto and their Government.



VOICES OF BOUGAINVILLE

Nikana Kangsi, Nikana Dong
Damana (Our Land, Our Future)

Rio Tinto has yet to explain how it will remove the huge amount of toxic waste still polluting much of the site. Its role in defence force operations during the bloody years of 1988-1990 has not yet been acknowledged to the impacted communities.

Until the Company commits to full disclosure, any attempt to reopen the Bougainville mine will harm an already deeply scarred people.

While theoretically, a country's natural wealth in underground minerals should provide a large economic boost, in reality the opposite has proved to be true. The economies of developing countries rich in natural resources have, almost without exception, grown at a slower rate than the economies of those countries that are natural resource-scarce. This phenomenon has become known as the 'resource curse'. Repeatedly, these projects fail to live up to their lavish projections.

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TAKE ACTION



What can we do to bring justice?

Through its various agencies, the Australian Government is supporting large scale mining in Bougainville without addressing the grievous concerns of the people living in the vicinity of the Panguna mine.

Jubilee Australia's **#NotOnMyWatch** campaign has shone a light on this activity.

1. Jubilee needs financial support for this crucial work. Help us help communities in our region to determine their own future by:
 - Giving online <http://www.jubileeaustralia.org/page/donate> or
 - Sending your gift to **Jubilee Australia at Level 7, 379 Kent Street, Sydney NSW 2000**, or;
 - Calling Jubilee on 02 8259 0817. Your gift makes a big difference as Jubilee does not receive government or corporate funding.
2. By participating in the #Not on My watch Campaign to keep informed about actions undertaken to address these issues. Australians have the opportunity to ask: What role do we have in contributing to this cycle and how can we help to change it, allowing people to be engaged with, and truly benefit from, development that sustains and supports their communities rather than causing irreversible harm.

5. Contribute

Print this page & Return to us by post:
Locked Bag 199, QVB NSW 1230.

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	\$50	\$100	\$250	\$500	\$1000	Other \$ _____

Or sign-up and/or donate online www.jubileeaustralia.org

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