

An update from the Pacific Calling Partnership.

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**Responding to climate change in partnership with
our Pacific Island neighbours**

*PCP patrons, His eminence Cardinal John Ribat (MSC),
Dr Richard A O'Brien and Hon Dr Meredith Burgmann*

May Newsletter - Laudato Si' Week

Dear PCP Supporters,

While the Coronavirus pandemic has a long way to run still, many of us have been increasingly engaged in thinking about what the post-pandemic world should look like.

The PCP sees the pandemic as another manifestation of the unsustainable practices which humanity is engaged in, and we strongly believe that the recovery, when it comes, should be one that brings with it a new consciousness of the fragility of nature and humanity.

Like climate change, the Coronavirus pandemic is affecting the poor and vulnerable most, those who don't have access to good health care and medical supplies, such as test kits, ventilators and medicines.

It is vital that we re-build our world in a way that respects nature and leaves no-one behind. This view is strongly aligned with [Pope Francis' urgent call for action](#) to protect our Common Home as part of Laudato Si' week on 16 to 24 May 2020.

What can you do to respond to the Pope's Call for Action?

As a first step to responding to the Pope's call for action, we encourage you to listen to what young people have to say about their vision for the future by joining their climate action Livestream event tomorrow, Friday 15 May, between 4 and 8pm. You will need to register for this event and you can do so [here](#).

We also urge you to set aside some time during Laudato Si' week, in order to take concrete action towards the protection of our Common Home. Below are some suggestions but these are certainly not exhaustive. Please feel free to reach out if you need help with any of them and let us know how you go via reply to this email.

- [Join one of the many official Laudato Si' events](#) during 16-24 May
 - [Write a letter to Scott Morrison](#) asking him to use the COVID-19 recovery to invest in clean, renewable energy
 - Write a letter to your local member asking her/him to advocate against government subsidies for fossil fuels and for jobs that benefit people and the planet
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- Increase climate change awareness amongst your networks by sharing material about the climate crisis through your social media pages or via email.

Thank you for taking action.

SAD NEWS

It is with great sadness that we learnt of the death on Wednesday of Meteka Raoi, one of our I-Kiribati participants in the advocacy and leadership program which PCP conducted in Australia in 2015.

We remember Meteka as a lovely gentle and capable young man who was very dedicated to his church and to his family. It is no easy task to leave the security of life in Kiribati to come to Australia, knowing English is your second language and that you will be meeting with media, parliamentarians and other church and community leaders, in order to advocate for your country and for action on climate change. The difficulties begin with trying to get a visa, and for Meteka these difficulties were so great that he arrived late and missed some of the preparatory training. Nevertheless he worked hard with the support of Tiringatea from Kiribati and Walter and Merineta from Tuvalu, to be able to share his story and the climate concerns of his country with politicians like Matt Thistlethwaite and Philip Ruddock, church leaders from Catholic and Uniting churches and with Pacific diaspora communities.

On Meteka's return home he gained a reputation as a highly respected leader among the Pentecostal Youth. When Maria and Jill conducted our climate leadership course on Tarawa, Meteka contributed by running a workshop where he shared his experiences of the training and advocacy in Australia.

We extend our profound sympathy to Meteka's family, friends and to the members of his church and we thank God for his life. The photos below are of Meteka during his time in Sydney (he is the tall young man on the left) and here is [a lovely article](#) published after his meeting with Maroubra MP Matt Thistlethwaite.





PCP ADVOCACY IN RECENT WEEKS

In recent weeks, the PCP has been writing to Australian parliamentarians urging timely action and support for small Pacific nations in the battle against Covid 19. Letters were sent to Minister for the Pacific Alex Hawke, with copies to Foreign Minister Marise Payne and Prime Minister Scott Morrison. Other letters were addressed to prominent members of the Opposition, including Leader of the Opposition Anthony Albanese.

On 31 March PCP also published a [media release](#) urging the Australian Government to ramp up its assistance to small Pacific nations to help them manage the health and economic impacts of the Coronavirus pandemic on their communities.

PCP Coordinator Corinne Fisher was quoted as saying, *"We fully appreciate that the impacts of COVID-19 on Australians are very challenging and welcome the Morrison Government's efforts to minimise the consequences of this pandemic for vulnerable Australians. At the same time, we must also remember that our direct neighbours - small Pacific nations - are potentially much more vulnerable than we are, from both a health and economic perspective. Without urgent and adequate assistance, the impacts of this pandemic in the Pacific could be devastating."*

THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT RESPONDS TO CALLS FOR PACIFIC ASSISTANCE

The PCP was gratified to see that on 8 May Minister for the Pacific Alex Hawke published a media release promising increased assistance to the Pacific to help in the battle against the pandemic. The Minister stated that Pacific Island countries *"will be equipped to more effectively detect and*

prevent the spread of COVID-19". The PCP was especially pleased that Mr Hawke promised delivery of new rapid diagnostic tests.

PCP COORDINATOR CORINNE FISHER INTERVIEWED ON SBS

On 3 May, our Coordinator Corinne Fisher was interviewed on SBS Radio. You can listen to Corinne's interview [here](#). Corinne called on the Australian federal government to make special funding arrangements to boost the preparedness of small island countries in the event of a COVID-19 outbreak.

KEEP WELL AND STAY SAFE

If you have any questions, or if we can be of assistance to you in any way, please do not hesitate to contact us via return email.

Until next time,

Stay safe

Corinne Fisher, Coordinator PCP, and all of us on the PCP team



We acknowledge the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples of Australia as the traditional owners and custodians of the land. We commit ourselves to actively work alongside them for reconciliation and justice. We pay our respects to our Elders; past, present and future. As we take our next step we remember the first footsteps taken on this sacred land.

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