

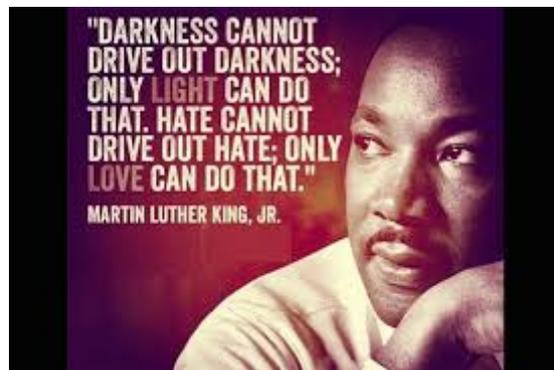


**Edmund Rice Centre**  
Awareness. Advocacy. Action

---

## **ERC JUSTICE UPDATES**

### **June 2020 No.24**



Dear All,

Welcome to the 24th Edition of ERC Justice Updates your regular newsletter from the Edmund Rice Centre, on all sorts of matters relating to human rights, first nations and environmental justice.

Our world as we know it forever changed on May 25th 2020 when George Floyd, a 46-year-old black American was violently killed. What has happened since has brought to light the many injustices stemming from endemic racism that black people all over the world endure. As Desmond Tutu said:

*"In the end we must remember that no amount of rules or their enforcement will defeat those with justice on their side."*

In this time of great upheaval & change Justice Updates will be coming to you every fortnight - please send us anything you would like included. Your suggestions, comments both positive and negative or indeed any information you think would be good to include, it is all much

appreciated.

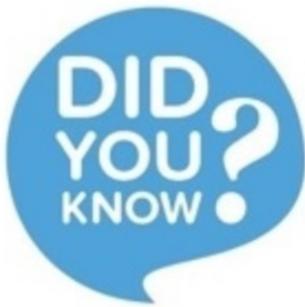
Don't forget to forward Justice Updates onto anyone or let me know their email address and I will subscribe them.

Previous editions are available at <https://www.erc.org.au/newsletters>

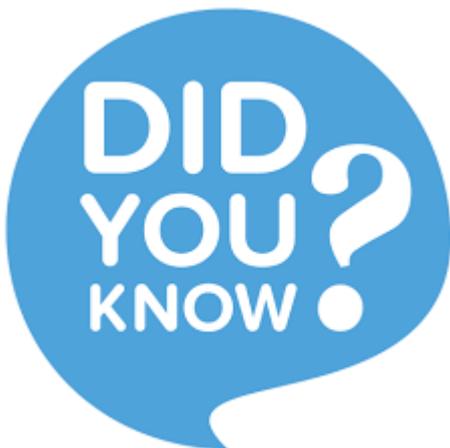
Peace

Marita

Communications Project Officer,  
Marita McInerney



*On Friday 12<sup>th</sup> June 2020, the Australian Government will have detained men & women on Nauru and Manus Island/Port Moresby for 2490 days.*



The Guardian Australia in late 2017 began a project called 'Deaths Inside' the aim of which was to compile a searchable database that acknowledged deaths in custody, even though the 1991 Royal Commission had as one of its 339 recommendations to monitor, there was no up to date data. The 3 journalists Lorena Allam, Calla Wahlquist & Nick Evershed are to be commended. The database can be found at:

<https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/ng-interactive/2018/aug/28/deaths-inside-indigenous-australian-deaths-in-custody>

These 3 journalists in the wake of the 'Black Lives Protest' rallies held all over the country on Saturday 6th June updated the database and wrote 2

articles one on 6th & one on the 9th June.

The following are some of the facts and figures highlighted in these 2 articles.

- As of Monday 8th June the number of Aboriginal deaths in custody since 1991 Royal commission is at least 437.
  - Agencies such as police watch-houses, prisons and hospitals failed to follow all of their own procedures in 41% of cases where indigenous people died.
  - The proportion of Indigenous deaths where medical care was required at some point, but not given, was 38%.
  - Mental health or cognitive impairment was a factor in 42% of all deaths in custody. But Indigenous people with a diagnosed mental health condition or cognitive impairment, such as a brain injury or foetal alcohol syndrome disorder, received the care they needed in just 51% of cases.
  - The key finding of the 1991 Royal Commission was that Aboriginal people are more likely to die in custody because they are arrested and jailed at disproportionate rates. That remains as true now as it did in 1991. However one key thing has changed - in 1991, 14.3% of the male prison population in Australia was indigenous. In March 2020 it was 28.6%.
  - According to recently released Australian Bureau of statistics data 4.7% of all indigenous men are in jail compared with just 0.3% of all non-indigenous men. Indigenous people make up just 3% of the total Australian population.
  - The projects analysis in 2018 showed that 34% of Indigenous people were denied all appropriate medical care before their death, compared with 25% of non-indigenous people. Indigenous women were the worst affected, with 50% not receiving all the medical care they needed.
  - 56% of Indigenous people & 51% of non-indigenous who died in custody between 2010 & 2015 were not serving a prison sentence - but instead were on remand, fleeing police, or were killed during arrest.
-



*'The 24-7 coverage here shows just how much more newsworthy a black death in custody from the US is here than the many Aboriginal deaths in Australia.'* Photograph: Darrian Traynor/Getty Images

## **Australia still turns a blind eye to Aboriginal people dying in police custody**

***Celeste Liddle, The Guardian, 2nd June 2020***

***Solidarity with US protesters following George Floyd's death is important, but Australia also needs to address its own racism***

In April, after a long battle, the family of Tanya Day achieved a victory. The [inquest into the death of their mother](#) following a fall while in Castlemaine police station found that unconscious race bias had played at least some part in her arrest. While the coroner fell short of labelling the neglectful actions of the attending police as such (though they were found to have violated Day's human rights), she did find that the train conductor had made judgement calls based on Day's Aboriginality which contributed to him calling the police on her in her intoxicated state.

In other words, had Tanya – who had a valid ticket – been left to merely sleep on the train like so many other intoxicated commuters who aren't Aboriginal are, she might still be with us today.

This finding followed an earlier victory Ms Day's incredible children had achieved: that "public drunkenness" would be removed from the criminal code in Victoria. In 2019, the [Victorian premier promised this would happen](#) – a mere 28 years after this recommendation was handed down by the royal commission into Aboriginal deaths in custody because it was found that such laws

disproportionately criminalised Aboriginal people. It's thanks to the family of Tanya Day that all Victorians now have the right to make it safely home, without police interference, no matter what our state.

I mention this case because it's one that everyone who lives in Victoria, and Australia, should know. Day's family joined the countless other heartbroken Aboriginal families in this country who have had to embark on a journey for justice for their loved ones who have died in police custody. [Over 430 of them](#), incidentally, since the royal commission findings were handed down. Yet despite the fact that this keeps happening, Australia mainly turns a blind eye to the problem, or bends over backwards to justify the fact that Aboriginal people are the most [incarcerated race of people](#) on the planet.

Read More: <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2020/jun/02/australia-still-turns-a-blind-eye-to-aboriginal-people-dying-in-police-custody>



Protesters at the Black Lives Matter rally in Sydney on Saturday. Credit: James Brickwood

## **After the protest, what comes next?**

***Megan Davis, SMH, June 8th 2020***

There is no denying the nationwide protests on Saturday, leveraging off Black Lives Matter and the death of George Floyd at the hands of police in the US, reflect a growing sentiment in Australia about Indigenous affairs. There is something in the zeitgeist when tens of thousands of Australians descend on the streets to march for Aboriginal justice while the nation is transitioning out of lockdown.

One of the perennial challenges of protest is how to translate it into substantive and durable change. I remember marching as a young person through the streets of Brisbane protesting against Aboriginal deaths in custody and calling for the implementation of the royal commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody's recommendations. It has been almost 30 years since the royal commission and my nieces and nephews were marching on Saturday through the same streets of Brisbane. Yet we know what needs to be done.

The royal commission was set up in October 1987 following national outrage about the number of Aboriginal deaths in custody. It investigated 99 deaths that occurred between January 1, 1980 and May 31, 1989, in prisons, police stations or juvenile detention institutions. A key finding was that the deaths in custody investigated were not the product of deliberate violence or brutality of police or prison officers but that there was a lack of regard for the duty of care that is owed to people in custody by police officers and prison officers.

The commission made many recommendations but one of its primary reforms centred on the structural powerlessness that renders Indigenous voices silent in a liberal democracy. The commission singled out the importance of Indigenous participation in decision-making to transform Aboriginal affairs and the right to self-determination. It found that the government had the power to transform the picture of Aboriginal affairs, "not so much by 'doing' things – more by letting go of the controls; letting Aboriginal people make the decisions which government now pretends they do make". At the heart of the findings was that Indigenous peoples should have a say in the decisions that are made about them.

This afternoon in Sydney, hundreds marched against the injustices of over 400 indigenous Australian deaths whilst in custody throughout Australia. This evening was also in solidarity with those across America who have taken to the streets across the states, seeking justice for George Floyd, who last week died at the hands of Minneapolis police officers.

Sound familiar? It should. The Uluru Statement from the Heart in 2017 said the same thing. In 2017, the Uluru Statement from the Heart was issued to the Australian people as an invitation to walk with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in a movement of the Australian people for a better future. The statement was the culmination of regional constitutional dialogues conducted over 2016 and 2017 under the supervision of the Referendum Council established by Malcolm Turnbull. The Uluru Statement decided upon a consensus reform agenda aimed at fixing the same structural problems the royal commission highlighted 30 years ago. After the protest, what comes next?

"The problem is that white people see racism as conscious hate, when racism is bigger than that. Racism is a complex system of social and political levers and pulleys set up generations ago to continue working on the behalf of whites at other people's expense, whether whites know/like it or not. Racism is an insidious cultural disease. It is so insidious that it doesn't care if you are a white person who likes Black people; it's still going to find a way to infect how you deal with people who don't look like you. Yes, racism looks like hate, but hate is just one manifestation. Privilege is another. Access is another. Ignorance is another. Apathy is another. And so on. So while I agree with people who say no one is born racist, it remains a powerful system that we're immediately born into. It's like being born into air: you take it in as soon as you breathe. It's not a cold that you can get over. There is no anti-racist certification class. It's a set of socioeconomic traps and cultural values that are fired up every time we interact with the world. It is a thing you have to keep scooping out of the boat of your life to keep from drowning in it. I know it's hard work, but it's the price you pay for owning everything."

-Scott Woods

# Refugee Week 2020



**celebrating the year of welcome**

**Digital Refugee Week: 14-20 June 2020**

Get involved at [www.refugeeweek.org.au](http://www.refugeeweek.org.au) Photo credit: Michele Aboud



Coordinated by



Refugee Council of Australia

Event Partners



The Wheeler Centre  
Books Writing Ideas

Major Sponsor



Sponsors



Partners



**Refugee Week Sunday June 14 to Saturday June 20, 2020**

**Celebrating the Year of Welcome - Online**

Refugee Week is Australia's peak annual activity to inform the public about refugees and celebrate positive contributions made by refugees to Australian society. The first Refugee Week events were organised in Sydney in 1986 by Austcare. In 1987, Refugee Council of Australia (RCOA) became a co-organiser of the week, which became a national event from 1988. RCOA took on responsibility for the national coordination of Refugee Week from 2004.

Major-General Paul Cullen, the foundation president of both Austcare and RCOA, actively lobbied, from the 1980s, for a global annual celebration of the contribution of refugees. His dream was achieved in 2001, when the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) coordinated the first World Refugee Day (June 20).

Refugee Week provides a platform where positive images of refugees can be promoted in order to create a culture of welcome throughout the country. The ultimate aim of the celebration is to create better understanding between different communities and to encourage successful integration enabling refugees to live in safety and to continue making a valuable contribution to Australia.

The aims of Refugee Week are:

- to **educate** the Australian public about who refugees are and why they have come to Australia;
- to help people **understand** the many challenges refugees face coming to Australia;
- to **celebrate** the contribution refugees make to our community; to focus on how the community can provide a safe and welcoming environment for refugees;
- for community groups and individuals to **do something positive** for refugees, asylum seekers and displaced people, within Australia but also around the world; and
- for service providers to **reflect** on whether they are providing the best possible services to refugees.

Refugee Week is a unique opportunity for us all to experience and celebrate the rich diversity of refugee communities through theatre, music, dance, film and other events which take place all over Australia and highlight the aims of the Week, as outlined above. Refugee Week is an umbrella participatory festival which allows a wide range of refugee community organisations, voluntary and statutory organisations, local councils, schools, student groups and faith-based organisations to host events during the week.

Past events have included football tournaments, public talks, exhibitions, music and dance festivals, theatre projects and film screenings. Everyone is welcome to participate in promoting the aims of Refugee Week – the more the merrier.

Through Refugee Week, we aim to provide an important opportunity for asylum seekers and refugees to be seen, listened to and valued.

Further information: <https://www.refugeeweek.org.au/>

# Asylum Seekers and Refugees Education Resources

## June 2020

The Edmund Rice Centre's free publication [\*Asylum Seekers and Refugees Education Resource\*](#) June 2020 Edition provides activities for students which are practical, engaging and focused on increasing awareness about human rights and advocacy.

Students are encouraged to think about asylum seekers and refugees with compassion, to move their understanding from the head to the heart.

Download [here](#).

### **Media Release Refugee Council of Australia**

#### ***NSW joins interstate counterparts in helping asylum seekers left with no federal support.***

The Refugee Council of Australia (RCOA) has welcomed today's New South Wales Government announcement of emergency funding to support people seeking asylum who have lost jobs during the COVID-19 pandemic and been left with no support from the Federal Government.

NSW's Acting Minister for Multiculturalism Geoff Lee said his government would provide \$6 million to agencies assisting people on temporary visas, including people seeking asylum and temporary migrants, building on \$20 million announced last month to assist international students in NSW with crisis accommodation. The first \$2 million, to be distributed this month, will focus on people seeking asylum – \$1.5 million for crisis with food, medicine and housing and \$500,000 to support the work of frontline agencies.

NSW joins the governments of Victoria, Queensland, South Australia, Tasmania and the ACT in announcing emergency relief packages in recent weeks to assist people seeking asylum and other temporary visa holders.

“The intervention of the governments of NSW and other states and territories is most welcome, as the situation gets worse every week for people seeking

asylum who have lost jobs since the full force of the COVID-19 pandemic was felt in Australia in March,” RCOA chief executive officer Paul Power said.

“Most of the 97,000 people seeking asylum have no access to any form of safety net and many thousands of them have lost jobs in the past three months. A Settlement Services International survey in May of 461 temporary visa holders, many of them seeking asylum, showed that 75% could not pay rent and 62% had gone without meals because of their lack of funds.

“State and territory governments are acknowledging the growing levels of destitution within their communities and acting. However, it must be acknowledged that this destitution is happening as a direct result of the Federal Government choosing to exclude temporary visa holders from assistance offered to others in the Australian community.

“RCOA has been working with hundreds of organisations around Australia to draw attention to the need for the Federal Government to include temporary visa holders in its emergency responses to COVID-19. Emergency relief funds put together by state governments are very important but they can only ever partly fill a gap for people left with no week-to-week income to cover rent, food, medical help and essentials.

“We would strongly encourage the state governments which have been forced to find funds to meet needs created by Federal inaction to lobby the Federal Government to take its responsibilities seriously. We will be living with the COVID-19 pandemic for some time and, for the sake of all people in Australia, we cannot afford to leave anyone in our community behind simply because of their visa status.”



***The Pacific Calling Partnership (PCP) is an initiative of the Edmund Rice Centre for Justice and Community Education (ERC) and began in 2006 in response to Pacific Island calls for solidarity in the face of climate***

*change. PCP seeks out and provides opportunities for Pacific Islanders to tell their stories and promote understanding of the impacts of climate change on their homelands. Small island nations do not have the resources to counter the negative impacts of climate change and look to nations like Australia for solidarity and support. PCP is committed to collaborating with our island neighbours, such as Kiribati and Tuvalu, to communicate and amplify their climate change messages both within Australia and internationally.*

The 2019 Annual Report of the Pacific Calling Partnership can be found :  
[https://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/erc/pages/31/attachments/original/1589846874/Final\\_PCP\\_Annual\\_Report\\_2019.pdf?1589846874](https://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/erc/pages/31/attachments/original/1589846874/Final_PCP_Annual_Report_2019.pdf?1589846874)



Victor Moriyama for The New York Times

**A rise in illegal deforestation heightens the risk of fires in the Brazilian rainforest even more destructive than those that drew global outrage last year.**

*Ernesto Londoño, Manuela Andreoni and Letícia Casado, The New York Times, June 6th, 2020*

RIO DE JANEIRO — Since coming to office, President Jair Bolsonaro of Brazil has enabled increased razing of the Amazon rainforest.

Now, the coronavirus has accelerated that destruction.

Illegal loggers, miners and land grabbers have cleared vast areas of the Amazon with impunity in recent months as law enforcement efforts were

hobbled by the pandemic.

Those recently cleared areas will almost certainly make way for a rash of fires even more widespread and devastating than the ones that drew global outrage last year. The newly cleared patches are typically set ablaze during the drier months of August to October to prepare the land for cattle grazing, often spiraling out of control into wildfires.

“The trend line is shooting upward compared to a year that was already historic in terms of a rise in deforestation,” said Ana Carolina Haliuc Bragança, a federal prosecutor who leads a task force that investigates environmental crimes in the Amazon. “If state entities don’t adopt very decisive measures, we’re looking at a likely tragedy.”

The fallout from the pandemic has exacerbated the ecological degradation set in motion by government policies under Mr. Bolsonaro, who favors expanding commercial development in the Amazon and views environmental regulations as a hindrance to economic growth. But some career civil servants are still working to enforce environmental protections.

An estimated 464 square miles of Amazon tree cover was slashed from January to April, a 55 percent increase from the same period last year and an area roughly 20 times the size of Manhattan, according to Brazil’s National Institute for Space Research, a government agency that tracks deforestation with satellite images.

Already last year, deforestation in the Amazon had reached levels not seen since 2008.

At the same time, the coronavirus has killed more than 34,000 people in Brazil, which now is recording the highest daily number of deaths in the world. It has also fueled political polarization and dominated headlines and policy debates in recent months, eclipsing the increased damage to the rainforest.

Read more: [https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/06/world/americas/amazon-deforestation-brazil.html?campaign\\_id=3&emc=edit\\_MBAU\\_p\\_20200607&instance\\_id=19169&nl=morning-briefing&regi\\_id=132157641&section=longRead&segment\\_id=30311&te=1&user\\_id=cfe005d35b6b49d751e71065346565f7](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/06/world/americas/amazon-deforestation-brazil.html?campaign_id=3&emc=edit_MBAU_p_20200607&instance_id=19169&nl=morning-briefing&regi_id=132157641&section=longRead&segment_id=30311&te=1&user_id=cfe005d35b6b49d751e71065346565f7)

**This Perilous Moment:**

***A Statement from Religious Leaders and Communities on the Crisis***

## ***of Racial Injustice and Inequity and the Current Protests***

Posted In: *Interfaith Movement Partner Statement, 06. 03. 2020*

*By Parliament of World Religions*

We write together and in one voice, with urgency, as people of faith and as religious and spiritual leaders that represent the diverse faith traditions of United States of America. We are Baha'i, Buddhist, Christian, Hindu, Humanist, Indigenous, Jain, Jewish, Muslim, Sikh, Taoist, Unitarian Universalist, Zoroastrian, and many others.

Our words come in an hour of peril informed by a sense of crisis. Racial injustice, deep inequities, hate speech, brutality, and authoritarian power converge in a vulnerable moment when millions are infected and affected by a global virus that we have yet to find either a vaccine for or any medication to deliver us from. This endangers the fabric of our society.

Recent recurrent violence against African Americans made inescapably public has brought to a head long-stewing, justified, and righteous anger.

Our wicked scourge of discrimination and racism is structural, systemic, systematic, and institutional. We live with its legacy daily in a myriad of forms, seen and unseen.

We soberly own up to the fact that our religious communities have been complicit for far too long. We have upheld in far too many ways the false tenets that enable racism to continue in our society.

Our nation's original sin of racism necessitates a longform response effort that will span generations and advance reconciliation, realignments, and reparations. Long after protests have quelled and headlines shifted, we must continue praying with our feet and hands and working together to resolve the insidious impacts of the ugly legacy of slavery, the blight of racism, and the multiple forms of discrimination in our communities.

We must do better at addressing our roles in perpetuating injustices. We will continue to point towards the deep wellsprings that our respective faiths can offer in fostering hope, justice, and reconciliation.

We are here to stand with those who are rightly and justifiably enraged at police brutality and racial injustice, and who feel unheard and unheeded in their lamentations. At the same time, we strongly discourage the defacement and destruction of public and private property and unequivocally condemn the opportunistic violent actions of extremist groups that have sought to co-opt this

moment for their own distracting agendas.

Law enforcement have an important and vital role in our society to serve and protect all of us, and we support their peaceable actions to uphold just laws. We celebrate the law enforcement leadership who are visibly acting in solidarity with their communities and who are calling for reforms that will lead to safer policing and communities and to racial justice.

Read more:

<https://parliamentofreligions.org/blog/2020-06-04-1144/perilous-moment-statement-religious-leaders-and-communities-crisis-racial>

We've tried hate. We've tried wars. We've tried destruction. It only caused us more pain. Let's try something different.



Let's try PEACE, LOVE,  
EMPOWERMENT,  
COMMUNICATION,  
COLLABORATION.  
Let's see how that turns out.

ENLIGHTENED.  
CONSCIOUSNESS.

**Pope Francis: No tolerance for racism, but without violence**  
*Pope Francis spoke at the General Audience about the protests in the United States following the killing of George Floyd, saying we cannot claim to defend the sacredness of every human life while turning a blind eye to racism and exclusion.*  
*Vatican News, 3rd June 2020*

In his greetings to the English-speaking faithful at the weekly General Audience, Pope Francis addressed the people of the United States, as protests continue throughout the nation.

“I have witnessed with great concern the disturbing social unrest in your nation in these past days, following the tragic death of Mr. George Floyd,” he said. “We cannot tolerate or turn a blind eye to racism and exclusion in any form and yet claim to defend the sacredness of every human life.”

Denouncing violence

The Pope then cited a recent statement from Archbishop José Gomez of Los Angeles, president of the US Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), to denounce outcroppings of violence at some protests.

“At the same time, we have to recognize that ‘the violence of recent nights is self-destructive and self-defeating. Nothing is gained by violence and so much is lost’.”

Pope Francis added that today he joins the Church in Saint Paul and Minneapolis, and throughout the entire US, “in praying for the repose of the soul of George Floyd and of all those others who have lost their lives as a result of the sin of racism.”

The Pope concluded his remarks with an invitation to prayer.

“Let us pray for the consolation of their grieving families and friends and let us implore the national reconciliation and peace for which we yearn,” he said. “May Our Lady of Guadalupe, Mother of America, intercede for all those who work for peace and justice in your land and throughout the world.”

Video recording: <https://www.vaticannews.va/en/pope/news/2020-06/pope-francis-usa-george-floyd-protests-no-racism-violence.html>



## **The truths beyond uncertainty**

*Andrew Hamilton, Eureka Street, Vol. 30 No.9, 14<sup>th</sup> May 2020*

**This period of social distancing and restriction has been called many things, some of them printable. One of the most common has been a time of uncertainty. Business leaders and media columnists chafe at the uncertainty that attends lessening personal restrictions, opening shops, schools and workplaces and allowing travel. Uncertainty damages investment and other economic activity.**

Uncertainty, however, is not an impediment to life which can be removed by clear and authoritative statements of dates to remove restrictions and get back to work. These may exude certainty, but it is fraudulent because they are based on uncertain assessments about COVID-19, its economic effects in Australia and elsewhere, and how people will respond in coming months. Our lack of sure knowledge condemns us to live in a state of uncertainty.

For all the pain associated with our current lack of certainty, it has brought many benefits to our public life. Instead of being limited to an exchange of hostile slogans, political leaders have admitted to lacking adequate knowledge about COVID-19, about how it may be treated, about its spread, about the extent of any immunity gained from exposure to it, and about whether and when a vaccine may be available. In the face of their lack of certainty governments have sought and made public most supported wisdom about the virus and based their decisions on that.

The experts on whose advice they have relied, too, have been honest about the uncertainties that accompany their advice. They rely on the experience of past epidemics, its correspondence with current experience of COVID-19, to gauge its likely extent and effects, and how best to mitigate them. Their advice

and the readiness of governments to hear it have so far largely been vindicated by their results.

The crisis has shredded many unwarranted claims to certainty. People with varying degrees of expertise who claim to a certain knowledge that discredits other judgments simply seem shrill and self-important.

The limits of the human sciences, such as economics, have also been made clear. The idea that society is best served by allowing the markets free rein has been shattered as governments have given priority to the saving of human lives over economic growth. The economy has been seen to name very important human relationships, but not the most important. It serves human wellbeing.

***'What matters now is personal truth — the coherence between words and life, the trustworthiness of those who will lead us through the dark, and their commitment to discover the scientific and the human truth of the situation we find ourselves.'***

[Read More:](#)

[https://www.eurekastreet.com.au/article/the-truths-beyond-uncertainty?utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=Eureka%20Street%20Daily%20-%20Thursday%202014%20May%202020&utm\\_content=Eureka%20Street%20Daily%20-%20Thursday%202014%20May%202020+CID\\_22b4e349c3e9a680c13cf0021d48bf1c&utm\\_source=Jescom%20Newsletters&utm\\_term=READ%20MORE](https://www.eurekastreet.com.au/article/the-truths-beyond-uncertainty?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Eureka%20Street%20Daily%20-%20Thursday%202014%20May%202020&utm_content=Eureka%20Street%20Daily%20-%20Thursday%202014%20May%202020+CID_22b4e349c3e9a680c13cf0021d48bf1c&utm_source=Jescom%20Newsletters&utm_term=READ%20MORE)



*Pilgrims of Uncertainty, journeying together in openness to a new day.*

## **REFLECTIONS**

### **Pilgrims of Uncertainty**

*As people of mercy and hope they stand committed to the good of all.*

*They own yesterday's and today's uncertainty, anxieties and fears deeply open to shared realities, and joys.*

*With mutual appreciation and learning they vision tomorrow anew.*

*As pilgrims of uncertainty, they value and trust their differences.*

*Owning a new sense of knowing, they commit themselves to visions now shared .*

*Jude Butcher 27 May, 2020. Reflections in the midst of the Coronavirus, with gratitude to the Aboriginal and Timor-Leste people, and other people including those with cancer and other serious illnesses with whom I have been blessed to be a companioning pilgrim.*

**Br Jude Butcher cfc AM PhD**

It is from numberless diverse acts of courage and belief that human history is shaped. Each time a man stands up for an ideal, or acts to improve the lot of others, or strikes out against injustice, he sends forth a tiny ripple of hope, and crossing each other from a million different centers of energy and daring, those ripples build a current that can sweep down the mightiest walls of oppression and resistance.

***Robert F. Kennedy, US Attorney General 1961-64, assassinated in Los Angeles while campaigning***

## **I HAVE A DREAM**

A dream that will never fail.  
Wasn't every successful person  
once a dreamer like me?

My dreams are just like a seed  
fallen on a rocky path.  
My journey is long  
but I do not waver.

Every day of my life is a page of my history.  
Every day the seed spreads its roots.  
Every step that I take is a move  
towards my glorious destiny.

As the seed becomes a tree  
it's not where I am  
but how I am growing that matters.

Now listen carefully to these words of wisdom:

Stop watching your dreams fall.

Fight.

Fight.

Fight for your dreams.

Fall down seven times and get up eight times.

Wasn't every successful person once a dreamer like me?

Wasn't every great tree that the wind blows

once a tiny seed?

**Hani Abdile** from a book of poems 'I will Rise' (2016)

*Hani Abdile is a writer, poet and advocate from Somalia who now lives in Sydney. Hani was the recipient of performance art and community leadership awards during Refugee Week in 2015 & 2016 and was awarded a Civics and Citizen Merit Award by the NSW Government in 2015.*

*Hani fled Somalia in 2013 and was held in Australia's immigration detention for 18months. During that time Hani found solace and empowering in writing.*

*The work of Maya Angelou had a profound influence on Hani's poetry whilst in detention. The title of the book and the opening poem refer to Maya's Angelou's poem 'Still I Rise'. Hani's dream is to be a mother to thousands of orphans across the world.*

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 the Elders; past, present and future. As we take our next step we remember the first footsteps taken on this sacred land.

**Our mailing address is:**

\*|HTML:LIST\_ADDRESS\_HTML|\* \*|END:IF|\*

Want to change how you receive these emails?  
You can **update your preferences** or **unsubscribe from this list**.

\*|IF:REWARDS|\* \*|HTML:REWARDS|\* \*|END:IF|\*