



Edmund Rice Centre
Awareness. Advocacy. Action

ERC JUSTICE UPDATES

September 2020 No.30

Dear All,

Welcome to the 30th 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.

In these tumultuous and draining times that we are living through one must never cease to try as the *Tui Motu* (Independent New Zealand Catholic Magazine) team so beautifully says:

May justice
like sun on the frost
melt our prejudicial -isms
uncovering our fairness
to act with generosity
for the good of all.
Tui Motu team

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.

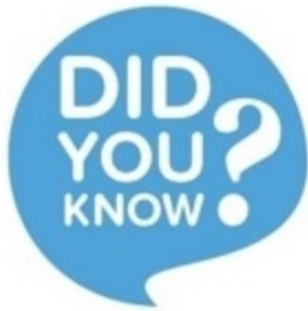
Don't forget to forward Justice Updates onto anyone or let me know their email address and I will subscribe them.

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

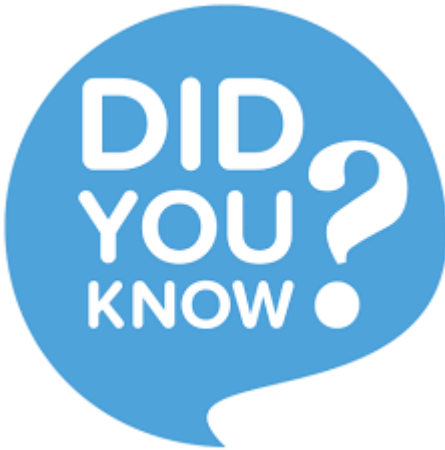
Peace

Marita

Communications Project Officer,
Marita McInerney



On Friday the 4th September 2020 the Australian Government will have detained men & women on Nauru & Manus Island/Port Moresby for 2576 days.



In a recently released report entitled: *Seven years of Elder Abuse Data in Victoria* released by Seniors Rights Victoria (SRV) & the National Ageing Research institute the Key Points were:

- The report analysed 2,385 cases of elder abuse reported to SRV between June 2012 & July 2019.
- 90% of abuse was perpetrated by family members most commonly adult sons(39%) and daughters (28%).
- SRV says there is an urgent need to address the factors that contribute to elder abuse.
- Most common form of abuse seen was psychological abuse i.e. name calling, threats or abuse or financial abuse according to Principal Lawyer Rebecca Edwards.
- Ms Edwards said: "As people become unemployed during COVID -19 there returning home, often under a lot of stress".
- The number of people seeking advice about elder abuse from SRV has increased over the past seven years.

- 72% of callers were older women
- Almost two thirds of callers said they had experienced psychological or financial abuse, while 16% reported physical abuse.
- Men are more likely to be perpetrators than women.
- Family conflict - reported in 44% of all cases was identified as the most common risk factor.
- People experiencing poor physical health, cognitive impairment or lack of support were identified as being at higher risk of becoming victims.
- While adult children are most likely to take advantage of older Victorians, partners, in-laws, grandchildren and friends have also been accused of perpetrating abuse.
- The report found drug, alcohol and gambling problems were the highest risk factor for perpetrators, followed by mental health issues and financial difficulties.
- A lack of support for carers may also be a contributing factor, particularly where an older person is living with disability or dementia.



Indigenous leaders have lost a mentor in Widjabul Wyabul elder Aunty Dorothy Harris-Gordon. *(Supplied: Kate Holmes, Arts Northern Rivers)*

Aunty Dorothy Harris-Gordon, first Indigenous woman prison chaplain in NSW dies aged 78

Catherine Marchiniak, ABC North Coast , 26th August 2020

Advisory: Her family gave the ABC permission to use photographs of Dorothy Harris-Gordon in this article.

She was a woman of firsts — the first ordained Aboriginal woman in the Uniting Church in Australia and the first Aboriginal woman chaplain in the NSW prison system.

The Reverend Dorothy Harris-Gordon, a Widjabul Wyabul elder of the Bundjalung nation on the New South Wales north coast, has died at age 78. "She was a lady that gave all of herself, no matter what time a call came through she would be there", her cousin Queenie Speeding said.

Aunty Dorrie, as she was known, was in high demand. She was a preacher at the Indigenous churches she helped establish and she was a civil rights activist. She was known to be a mentor for the next generation of Indigenous leaders and a gentle listener to sometimes hardened criminals. Her driving force was said to be a faith inspired by her grandparents and her childhood.

Growing up in a 'place of plenty'

The 1940s and 50s were a tough time for Indigenous people in Australia, but Aunty Dorrie was raised in a relatively unique situation that has been credited with helping her to rise above the poverty and racism she encountered. She grew up at Cubawee just west of Lismore. In Bundjalung, Cubawee means 'place of full and plenty', but in this case plenty had nothing to do with money. There was no electricity, sewerage or running water, and people there lived on rations.

Most Bundjalung people were forced to live on missions governed by non-Indigenous managers, however from the 1930s until 1965 Cubawee was a self-managed settlement that became a place of Aboriginal resistance. Sisters Diane Torrens and Queenie Speeding are Aunty Dorrie's cousins. Their grandfather was The Reverend Frank Roberts senior.

"It was grandfather, and a few other men, that stood at the road leading into Cubawee that wouldn't allow a manager to go in there and take over," Ms Torrens said.

"I thank God that he had the courage and strength to do that."

The freedom to gather to practice culture and faith enabled the people of Cubawee to become leaders in the Indigenous rights movement of the mid-1900s.

Read More: https://www.abc.net.au/news/2020-08-26/first-indigenous-woman-prison-chaplain-dies-australia/12592460?fbclid=IwAR2UduoL1jcpNL2_cQyShhY_CbU_6yq6mzz6VB0vmG7m2Qxe-7EY7QXZ24E



Metropolitan Aboriginal Land Council CEO, Nathan Moran, (front) chair Yvonne Weldon, and Josh Marr, Land Conservation Officer, in Reconciliation Park, Redfern. Credit: Janie Barrett

'Institutional racism': Aboriginal land rights impeded by NSW government

Angus Thompson, Sydney Morning Herald, August 15th, 2020

Aboriginal Australians' land rights have been impeded under a recent NSW government program that forced them into negotiations with bureaucrats for areas in which they already had legal standing.

Crown lands staff demanded local Aboriginal land councils forgo future claims over land in some regions, including in metropolitan Sydney, in return for parcels identified through negotiations in which bureaucrats exerted power by showing up late and concealing information.

A government-commissioned report detailed allegations of attitudes of "colonialists" within the state's land agencies.

This comes atop a backlog of 38,000 Aboriginal land claims in NSW and, despite the government spruiking that 1500 claims were determined in the past year, most of these were rejected.

Government officials unilaterally decided what land wasn't up for negotiation and specifically excluded classes of potentially claimable land, including showgrounds, racecourses and scout halls, even if they were disused.

Coastal areas were also off the bargaining table, as were travelling stock routes, despite their deep cultural connections with local Aboriginal communities.

NSW Aboriginal Land Council chief executive James Christian said Indigenous Australians continued to be denied the legal rights they were granted under 1983 laws to help compensate for intergenerational displacement through Crown land transfers.

"There can be no other explanation than institutional racism that is designed to prevent Aboriginal people from achieving any parity through land rights and access to Crown land estates," Mr Christian said.

<https://www.smh.com.au/national/nsw/institutional-racism-aboriginal-land-rights-impeded-by-nsw-government-20200814-p55ls2.html?fbclid=IwAR1jSCvLdPmu0Jst1zgJ0SPd56cC4QNE-nRpnUAiB0t2OYHgJhgbdmcnF0>

Palm Island community lodges formal complaint against racist media reports

Mikele Syron, www.sbs.com.au 25 Aug 2020

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are advised this article contains the names of people who have died.

A large group of Palm Island community members take their complaint against two commercial media companies to the Human Rights Commission.

Hundreds of Palm Islanders have lodged a complaint with the Australian Human Rights Commission over racist reports published by two media companies.

Channel Nine and the Daily Mail online news site published two stories in May. The stories were both concerned with how members of the remote island community were spending money awarded to them in compensation as part of a settlement agreement with the Queensland state government in 2018 for events that occurred following the death in custody of Cameron "Mulrunji" Doomadgee.

The Channel Nine report implied that the community members were irresponsibly spending the \$30 million in compensation, which it labeled, "taxpayer money". The news organisation claimed its story was a "major investigation" and went on to describe some of the community members as "dodgy claimants".

The Daily Mail story alleged that the compensation was "blown" on a variety of luxury goods including "boats, high-performance sports cars, and four-wheel drives".

Lex Wotton, a community member who initiated the 2015 proceedings, told NITV News on Friday that he was disappointed with the negative way Channel Nine portrayed his community.

"They didn't put one positive thing in their reports about the compensation being a just outcome for us," he said.

Mr Wotton also said that he believed the reports were racially charged and that it is none of the wider Australian communities' business how the claimants choose to spend the money.

"What they also didn't put in the report was that the claim was open to 2000 people and only 447 people applied ... People spent their money on a whole variety of things that improved their lives, but they didn't report that either," said Mr Wotton.

Recipients of the compensation told ABC News on Friday that they felt unfairly portrayed by the two media organisations and that they believed it was racial.

Some of the claimants said they believed that the reports breached section 18C of the Racial Discrimination Act. The class-action documentation signed also states that if the conciliation is not reached via the Human Rights Commission process, the claimants will seek to sue the media organisations through the court.

Read More:

<https://www.sbs.com.au/nitv/article/2020/08/25/palm-island-community-lodges-formal-complaint-against-racist-media-reports>



Traditional owner Nathan Hicks at site S08-032 in Weelamurra valley. Fortescue has sought approval to destroy several sites in the area. Photograph: Wintawari Guruma Aboriginal Corporation

More than 100 Aboriginal sacred sites – some dating before the ice age – could be destroyed by mining companies

Lorena Allam & Calla Wahlquist, The Guardian, 28th August 2020

Traditional owners reveal their fears for ancient sites, including rock shelters with painted walls and scar trees

More than 100 ancient Aboriginal sites in [Western Australia](#) – some of which date before the last ice age – could be destroyed by mining companies which have already obtained legal permission to do so.

Guardian Australia has spoken to traditional owners in the iron ore-rich Pilbara who reveal their fears for sacred sites, including rock shelters with painted walls and scar trees.

A federal inquiry was recently established in response to the destruction by Rio Tinto of a 46,000-year-old rock shelter at Juukan Gorge deemed to be of [the highest archaeological significance in Australia](#).

The shelter was [destroyed by the iron ore giant in May](#) against the consent of traditional owners, and sparked global outrage, an [international shareholder revolt](#), and cost Rio Tinto its gold chip status for working with Indigenous people in Australia.

[Its CEO and two top executives will lose a combined A\\$7m in bonuses](#) as a result – although [Australia's largest retirement fund says those penalties do not go far enough](#).

Now one of the foremost Indigenous academics in Australia, Prof Marcia Langton, says public attention is all that is keeping some companies from destroying many more sites.

Langton, who has had a long involvement in research on the mining industry and has advised several companies on [Indigenous engagement](#), said: “All of the existing authorities to destroy remain valid.”

She believes “the companies that have them are just biding their time and waiting for public attention to move to something else, and they will go ahead and destroy hundreds of sites – amongst them sites as important as Juukan Gorge”.

Mining companies have been granted permission to damage 463 sites in the past 10 years. They include the cave that was used to prove the theory that the iron ore-rich Hamersley range was used as a climate refuge at the end of the last Ice Age between 18,000 and 12,000 years ago – around the same time the clay bison were sculpted in the Tuc d'Audoubert in France.

Mining firms BHP, [Rio Tinto](#) and Fortescue have all said, in the wake of the international backlash against the destruction of Juukan Gorge, they will not proceed without further consultation with traditional owners, but they retain the final say.

https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2020/aug/28/more-than-100-aboriginal-sacred-sites-some-dating-before-the-ice-age-could-be-destroyed-by-mining-companies?fbclid=IwAR0_RzE2AVePKR2IOUxC1vGZhAc8GeuuGgR5j-oBLjcBIOOpkIIVC2o-D4



Image ~ Sky Road, Connemara by Ann Cahill

Jamberoo Abbey Facebook 24th Aug
Monday morning of the "quiet light" to you...

"There is a quiet light that shines in every heart. It draws no attention to itself though it is always secretly there. It is what illuminates our minds to see beauty, our desire to seek possibility and our hearts to love life. Without this subtle quickening our days would be empty and wearisome, and no horizon would ever awaken our longing. Our passion for life is quietly sustained from somewhere in us that is wedded to the energy and excitement of life. This shy inner light is what enables us to recognize and receive our very presence here as blessing. We enter the world as strangers who all at once become heirs to a harvest of memory, spirit, and dream that has long preceded us and will now unfold, nourish, and sustain us."

~ John O'Donohue



JESUS, YOU INVITE US ALL INTO THE FULLNESS
OF LIFE.

MAY WE SUPPORT ONE ANOTHER TO
FLOURISH IN BODY, MIND AND SPIRIT.

STRENGTHEN OUR COMMITMENT TO ENSURE
THAT NOBODY FALLS THROUGH GAPS IN OUR
SYSTEMS OF CARE.

PEOPLE CALLED YOU MAD.
HELP US TO RECOGNISE YOU IN THOSE WHO
SUFFER MENTAL ILL-HEALTH TODAY.

SHOW US HOW TO ELIMINATE
STIGMATISATION OF MENTAL ILL-HEALTH
FROM OUR PARISHES, SCHOOLS,
COMMUNITIES AND ORGANISATIONS.

YOU DREW NEAR TO THOSE
WHO WERE SUFFERING IN BODY OR MIND.
MAY WE TOO FEEL YOUR NEARNESS
WHEN WE STRUGGLE WITH MENTAL HEALTH
CHALLENGES.

MAY WE BE ONE AS MEMBERS OF YOUR BODY.

YOU INVITE US TO SHARE IN YOUR MINISTRY
OF LOVE AND TRUE COMPASSION.

MAY WE BE EMPOWERED BY YOUR SPIRIT
TO REACH OUT TO ALL PEOPLE IN NEED.

MAY WE BUILD COMMUNITIES OF WELCOME
AND INCLUSION.

AMEN



**AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC BISHOP'S
SOCIAL JUSTICE STATEMENT 2020 - 2021
To Live Life to the Full: Mental health in Australia today**

The COVID-19 pandemic is impacting the mental health of many members of our parishes, schools and communities. In fact, most of us will experience a mental health problem at some point over the course of our lives.

Understanding mental health will help us to be aware of those who need our support. Our parishes, organisations and communities can be places of acceptance care and healing, not places of rejection, judgment or stigma.

In the Social Justice Statement *To Live Life to the Full: Mental health in Australia today*, the Bishops welcome the deinstitutionalisation of mental health care in Australia. However, without adequately funded community mental health services, there is a gap in the system through which people continue to fall. Social determinants including poverty, living conditions, and personal security are significant contributors to mental ill-health.

The Statement highlights the experience of First Nations people and communities, asylum seekers and refugees, people who are homeless and those who are in prison.

The Bishops observe that “our society tends to draw away from, or to push away, those who confront us with our frailties and limitations” which is “completely at odds with the story of Jesus” who “takes on the frailty of the human condition” and “draws near to those who are sick or who have disabilities, those who are marginalized or despised”. People living with mental

ill-health are part of the Body of Christ – ‘us’ and not ‘them’ – and share equally in Jesus’ promise of the fullness of life (Jn 10:10).

The Bishops invite us all to reject stigmatisation, to work for the transformation of social determinants of mental ill-health, and to call for policies and service provision that meets the needs of the poorest and most marginalised members of our community.

Read/ hear full Social Justice Statement resources here:

<https://socialjustice.catholic.org.au/2020/07/03/social-justice-statement-2020-21/>



In a moment where so much has been stripped away, people in Melbourne seem to be finding hope and joy — and the strength to carry on — in little wonders. (Pexels: Ana M)

Tiny wonders helped me through depression. Now they're making lockdown bearable for Melburnians

Jessica Martin, <https://www.abc.net.au/news> , 30th August 2020

Something interesting happened to me the second time I clawed myself out of an all-consuming major depression 10 years ago: I was struck by awe almost every day.

I've lived with some form of depression and anxiety since I was a child. Occasionally, the illness becomes life-threatening, as it did during this

particularly nasty episode.

But as I emerged from the heavy malaise, I found myself — still bleary-eyed and battle worn — mesmerised by an abundance of natural minutiae.

Plants appeared more vibrant in colour. I noticed tiny birds and tracked them as they flew to their mother. The gentle breeze I'd so often taken for granted was a balm I breathed in deeply.

Sad, slow-paced walks up the road became sad, slow-paced walks with a side of wonderment that, even when not exactly rendered hopeful, helped me feel a lot less dead.

I've noticed something similar seems to be happening to people in Melbourne during the city's stage 4 COVID-19 lockdown. In the middle of justifiable sadness, anger, despair and despondency have come flashes of delight, often during their state-sanctioned hour of daily outside exercise.

In this second, harder lockdown, social media posts of Friday night Zoom drinks have been replaced by pictures of pretty leaves, bugs and bees, and magnificent trees. In a moment where so much has been stripped away, many seem to be finding hope and joy — and the strength to carry on — in little wonders.

Although Armadale local Ella Loeffler is "starting to feel tired in the drabness of the city", she uses her allotted hour of exercise to wander around her neighbourhood in search of tiny treasures.

"Our urban spaces are filled with pockets of magic if you look close enough," she says. "I'm enjoying the moments of calm when I find a nice beetle or learn the name of a native flower in my neighbourhood.

"It's definitely making me slow down and appreciate the small things."

Awe is a focused type of noticing

For me, the study of awe began with flowers.

Roses, of course — because who hasn't told you to stop and smell them; huge unfurling magnolias that become their own cream-coloured stamen-catching receptacles; fluffy pink blossoms that surely signal the start of spring.

What I had previously paid no mind to became a revelation and salve after living in a world stripped of colour.

Awe, I think, is a focused type of noticing. But how often are we still enough to realise?

Read More:

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2020-08-30/melbourne-lockdown-moments-help-overcome-depression-isolation/12601672>



4115 assaults in immigration detention

Karen Middleton, The Saturday Paper, August 22nd- 28th 2020

The federal government has been warned excessive and possibly illegal force is being used to resolve conflict inside Australia's immigration detention centres, with more than 4000 assaults recorded in the past five years. In a review of detention centres published late last week, Commonwealth ombudsman Michael Manthorpe said that while force was sometimes "necessary and appropriate" for safety, it was being used too readily, too often and not always proportionately.

"We are concerned that there appears to be an increasing tendency across the immigration detention network for force to be used to resolve conflict or non-compliant behaviour as the first rather than last choice and can be exercised in a manner both inconsistent with the department's procedures and possibly without legal basis," Manthorpe told parliament in his report.

Department of Home Affairs figures obtained under freedom of information confirm that detention centres have become violent places, recording 4115 assaults between January 1, 2015, and March 31 this year.

Of these, 184 were reported to police.

Home Affairs says that while 82.6 per cent of the reported assaults – equal to 152 – involved detainees as the alleged perpetrators, the remainder – 32 – involved other perpetrators, who could be "visitors, staff (including contractors) or other stakeholders".

Asked how many alleged perpetrators of the reported assaults were contractors or Australian Border Force officers, the ABF was unable to provide a response before deadline, despite 10 days' notice.

The assault figures do not cover most of the Covid-19 lockdown period, during which tensions are understood to have worsened. The government banned all visitors to prisons and detention centres from March.

In his report, Ombudsman Manthorpe noted that while the government had accepted almost all the recommendations from his previous six-monthly report, many still had not been actioned.

Four of the ombudsman's 12 new recommendations related to the use of force. He said staff should be reminded of procedures and the consequences of breaching them.

His report raised the 2018 case of a detainee who had been injured while restrained when Serco employees used excessive force.

"It's incredibly prison-like. If you treat somebody like they're in a prison, they're going to behave like they're in a prison."

Manthorpe said the detainee had been "obstructive" but not physically aggressive, did not otherwise resist and neither posed nor made a threat. He concluded the use of force appeared to have no lawful basis and that Serco's investigations were "inadequate" and too slow. Neither Serco nor Home Affairs shared investigation outcomes with the complainant.

The department had since advised it was obtaining legal advice on the limitations of the protected use of force.

Manthorpe said force-related complaint reviews should be completed within six months and Serco should be chastised. Guidelines should be updated, and complainants informed of investigation results.

The ombudsman also recommended the detainee receive an apology. Home Affairs agreed to remind staff – and Serco – and expedite investigations.

It did not agree to share investigation results, nor to apologise. It said it was examining the incident within a review of the use of force, which began in March and "remains under way".

Read More:

<https://www.thesaturdaypaper.com.au/edition/2020/08/22>



Isabella leaving the detention centre with her parents on Wednesday. Source: Supplied/Huyen Thu Thi Tran

Two-year-old girl and mother released after years in Australian immigration detention

Rebekah Holt, www.sbs.com.au, 26th August 2020

Huyen Thu Thi Tran and her daughter Isabella - who has spent her entire life in a detention centre - have been released after Ms Tran was granted a bridging visa. It's an emotional day, Ms Tran tells SBS News.

A Vietnamese asylum seeker and her two-year-old daughter have been released from a Melbourne immigration detention centre.

Huyen Thu Thi Tran was reunited with her husband Paul Lee, Isabella's father, on Wednesday, which is his 34th birthday.

Isabella has lived at the Melbourne Immigration Transit Accommodation centre (MITA) in Broadmeadows since her birth in March 2018.

Her father lives only 15 minutes away but has not seen his wife or daughter since March when the COVID-19 pandemic stopped visits.

Ms Tran said she was called unexpectedly by staff at the centre to say she was expected to be granted a bridging visa the same day.

"We are so happy to see my husband and for us to all be together as a family," she told SBS News as Mr Lee drove them away from the detention centre.

"We all cried, guards and everyone in the centre."

The family's lawyer Alison Battisson had not initially been made aware of the development.

“When we got the news, although we are lawyers, there were many tears and hugs. We are invested in the lives of this family and many others,” she told SBS News.

“There is an entire team of advocates, lawyers and doctors behind the liberty of Huyen and Isabella. We have worked for over two years for this family, on a pro bono basis, for the simple reason that they deserved better. Isabella deserved the chance to have a normal childhood.”

Ms Tran, 31, is Catholic and says she fled religious persecution in rural Vietnam in 2011.

She landed on Christmas Island by boat and was detained for more than a year before being moved to community detention. Isabella was not technically detained but her mother was placed in MITA in November 2017 when she was four months pregnant.

Mr Lee, who is from Mauritius and is on a 457 visa, hoped he'd be able to sponsor Ms Tran's visa after they got married in 2017 but learned it was not possible because she arrived in Australia by boat. He is in the process of applying for permanent residency

Read full story:

<https://www.sbs.com.au/news/two-year-old-girl-and-mother-released-after-years-in-australian-immigration-detention>



The majority of people in immigration detention are not accused or guilty of any crime at all. *Credit: Joe*

Armao

A law to deprive immigration detainees of their only contact:

Australia's shame before the world

Graham Thom, Sydney Morning Herald, 31st August 2020

A few months from now, Australia's human rights track record will be assessed by the rest of the world. The Universal Periodic Review takes place on a five-year cycle and is an opportunity for members of the UN to assess a country's achievements in protecting its citizens and others under its care. This year it is Australia's turn.

As a liberal democracy, Australia will fare well compared with more autocratic, intolerant regimes. Protesters, journalists, political opponents don't disappear here, the police aren't shooting at unarmed people in the street, our democratic process – give or take the odd raid on the media – is intact.

But there are areas where Australia has been found wanting and one of those areas is our ongoing appalling treatment of people who are currently held in immigration detention. At the last periodic review in 2015, 25 states from around the world asked Australia to do more to protect the rights of refugees.

The recommendations included making every effort "to guarantee the rights of asylum seekers" and "to review immigration laws and policies to ensure they met international standards and in accordance with the UN Refugee Convention".

Responding to these recommendations at the time, the Australian government said it was "committed to a managed and equitable system of migration, consistent with our international obligations and respectful of the human rights of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers".

Amnesty International believes the government is utterly failing in this regard. This week the government will attempt to amend the Migration Act to allow immigration detainees to be searched without a warrant and to give security officers the power to take away the only means of contact many of these people have with the outside: their mobile phones.

This is a clear breach of the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners (the Mandela Rules) which stress the need for people in detention to be able to communicate with family and friends at regular intervals, stay connected with their community and have access to legal representation.

The effect this amendment will have on those detained cannot be emphasised enough. The anguish these people endure is huge. Many have been locked up for years and have severe mental health issues as a consequence. The reason is lack of hope that their detention will ever end and they believe they will never

be able to reunite with their families.

Adding to their trauma is the significant curtailment of all visiting schedules due to COVID-19. The only way to communicate with loved ones and lawyers is through the use of mobile phones.

Immigration detainees are, in theory, being held only for administrative purposes and yet they have fewer rights than those brought and found guilty before a court, including the most violent offenders.

According to the Refugee Council of Australia, the average number of days spent in detention is 553. More than 370 of the 1458 people currently in detention have been held for more than 730 days.

Read More:

https://www.smh.com.au/national/a-law-to-deprive-immigration-detainees-of-their-only-contact-australia-s-shame-before-the-world-20200830-p55qr7.html?fbclid=IwAR2bk6bHkAkGNX8eothgLkSikep4_UuOWTnsfEN1O58ah1Gq42zLHQJTRGU



Timor-Leste's José Ramos-Horta has called on the Australian government to let Witness K and Bernard Collaery live out the rest of their lives in normality. Photograph: Dean Lewins/AAP

José Ramos-Horta urges Australia to drop Witness K and Bernard Collaery prosecution

Christopher Knaus, The Guardian, 2nd September 2020

Former president says Australia and Timor-Leste should put the bugging scandal behind them

The former [Timor-Leste](#) president José Ramos-Horta has urged Australia to show wisdom, honesty and compassion by stopping the unfair prosecution of Witness K and Bernard Collaery, a case he described as “political” and one that had “profoundly shocked” the Timorese people.

Ramos-Horta, a Nobel peace prize winner, said the pair should be allowed to live out the rest of their lives in normality and that Australia and Timor-Leste should [put the bugging scandal](#) – a “dark cloud” on an otherwise positive bilateral relationship – behind them.

“We should put all of this behind [us] and please show wisdom, show honesty, compassion, if you wish, to let Witness K live his life as an honourable patriot of Australia,” Ramos-Horta told an event organised by the Australia Institute.

“Stop harassing Bernard Collaery. Let him go back to his law practice and to have a normal life and honour them.”

Witness K, a former intelligence officer, and his lawyer Collaery, a former ACT attorney general, are [facing potential jail time](#) for communicating information about a 2004 bugging operation conducted by the Australian Secret Intelligence Service on Timor-Leste government offices during sensitive bilateral negotiations concerning the carve up of oil and gas resources in the Timor Sea.

The listening devices gave Australia an advantage in negotiations about lucrative resources critical to the future of Timor-Leste, one of the world’s youngest and most impoverished countries.

Revelations about the operation’s existence led Timor-Leste to take Australia to the international courts and, ultimately, renegotiate a treaty in much fairer terms. The prosecution of Witness K and Collaery began soon after the new treaty was signed.

Ramos-Horta said news of the prosecution had “profoundly shocked” the Timorese people. He said he could see no point to it.

“Obviously in Timor-Leste, everyone who follows this aberration and this situation, the very unfair treatment of Bernard Collaery and Witness K, we are profoundly shocked because we were supposed to have reached a way forward in the relationship overall,” Ramos-Horta said.

Read More:

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/sep/02/jose-ramos-horta-urges-australia-to-drop-witness-k-and-bernard-collaery-prosecution?>

[CMP=Share_iOSApp_Other&fbclid=IwAR1b0xbI2rZvIfQMbLtI7EBn5sCXoMk5Qn_jLuLZmed_mmZGLtDhDxhsyAk](#)



**THIS MARKS THE DATE WHEN HUMANITY'S CONSUMPTION OF
ECOLOGICAL RESOURCES AND SERVICES IN A GIVEN YEAR EXCEEDS
WHAT OUR EARTH CAN REGENERATE IN THAT YEAR.**

Australians are some of the biggest contributors to this problem. If everyone behaved like us, humanity would consume the equivalent of over 4 Earths each year.

www.overshootday.org



Our attitudes must change

Now it is time for action

On Fri 21st August, take symbolic action by ringing chimes or bells or lighting candles.

- A coalition of many faith traditions will mark Earth Overshoot Day 2020, affirming our belief that the Earth is sacred for all people and all life.
 - As people of faith we recognise our failure to care for our common home, the Earth, in words, attitudes and deeds. We live our Faith in our actions.
 - We do not simply despair about the state of the Earth, but seek to reduce the threat our lifestyles pose to our Earth and to future generations.
 - We seek to live in harmony with each other and the environment that sustains us all, taking only what we need and sharing our resources.
 - We commit to work towards a sustainable ecological footprint, to reduce our carbon emissions and to support vulnerable communities. We encourage others to do the same.
 - We do this with hope and determination to make a positive impact on our common future.
-
- Speak with your Faith community leaders about Earth Overshoot.
 - Encourage them to lead your faith community in action for change.
 - Urge your political representatives to act for a thriving Earth for all.
 - Pray for all people to see the ecological crises in our midst and take action.
 - Watch "Fight for Planet A" on ABC I-View and take action.



Religions for Peace





Season of Creation 1st September - 4th October

"A Catholic Season of Creation" resource explores the Sunday scripture readings to help us find the voice of the earth as the voice of the Holy Spirit. Our common Sunday worship is an easy place to start seeing the natural world in God's plan of Salvation in Jesus Christ by linking the insights of ecology with Scripture.

Using this resource, Catholic communities can systematically answer Pope Francis' call in *Laudato Si'* to respect what scientists tell us about billions of year of cosmic evolution and contemplate God's presence there. We can recognise that the earth is being abused; that poor people are the first to suffer and pray to be responsible carers for the multiple gifts of the earth as co-creators with God.

Fr. Charles Rue SSC has written this wonderful resource further details at:

https://www.columban.org.au/media-and-publications/educational-resources/a-catholic-season-of-creation-sundays-of-september-year-a?fbclid=IwAR0cCwu_91SwKJLSewbCugMiVnacAJOeM3EqdP26YW9kdqxK_dAHoCKitWY

Pope's prayer intention for September: Respect for the planet's resources

Vatican News, 31st August, 2020

Pope Francis releases a video message accompanying his prayer

intention for September, which this month is for respect for the planet's resources: that we "take care of Creation responsibly".

In his prayer intention for September 2020, Pope Francis asks everyone to pray that we learn to respect the planet's resources

It has become the custom of Pope Francis to release a video message detailing his prayer intention for each month.

The full text of the prayer intention is below:

We are squeezing out the planet's goods. Squeezing them out, as if the earth were an orange.

Countries and businesses from the global north have enriched themselves by exploiting the natural resources of the south, creating an "ecological debt." Who is going to pay this debt?

In addition, this "ecological debt" is increased when multinationals do abroad what they would never be allowed to do in their own countries. It's outrageous.

Today, not tomorrow; today, we have to take care of Creation responsibly.

Let us pray that the planet's resources will not be plundered, but shared in a just and respectful manner.

No to plundering; yes to sharing.

Each year, the World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation is observed on September 1. The international celebration marks the beginning of the Season of Creation, which extends to 4 October, the feast of St Francis of Assisi, the patron saint of ecology.

The Pope's [Worldwide Prayer Network of the Apostleship of Prayer](#) developed "The Pope Video" initiative to assist in the worldwide dissemination of monthly intentions of the Holy Father in relation to the challenges facing humanity.

Link to Video:

<https://www.vaticannews.va/en/pope/news/2020-08/pope-francis-video-prayer-intention-september-respect-planet.html>

-



Leaders representing the breadth of Australian society are calling on Australian governments to act immediately to reduce and manage climate risks. File photo of the Port Kembla steelworks. Photograph: Dean Lewins/AAP

Climate crisis: business, farming and environment leaders unite to warn Australia 'woefully unprepared'

Adam Morton, The Guardian, 28th August 2020

An extraordinary statement by 10 groups says the nation's future prosperity is at risk without a coherent response

[Business](#), industry, farming and environmental leaders have joined forces to warn Australia is “woefully unprepared” for the impact of climate change over the coming decades and to urge the Morrison government to do far more to cut emissions and improve the country’s resilience.

An [extraordinary statement](#) by 10 organisations, several with close ties to the Coalition, said climate change was already having a “real and significant” impact on the economy and community. The groups, representing the breadth of Australian society, called on the federal and state governments to act immediately to reduce and manage the risks.

Organisations including the Business Council of Australia, the Australian Industry Group, the National Farmers’ Federation, the Australian Aluminium Council and the ACTU said public debate about the cost of doing more to reduce emissions had too often not considered the cost of climate change to the economy, environment and society.

They cited [evidence from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change](#) that

emissions would need to be net-zero by 2050 if the goals of the [Paris agreement](#) are to be achieved, and said Australia must adopt that target. The statement, issued under the [Australian Climate Roundtable](#) banner, said Australia's future prosperity would be at risk unless it had a coherent national response to the crisis.

"The scale of costs and breadth of the impact of climate change for people in Australia is deeply concerning and will escalate over time," it said. "It is in Australia's national interest that we do all we can to contribute to successful global action to minimise further temperature rises and take action to manage the changes we can't avoid."

The groups, some of which have been involved in past campaigns to slow action on climate change, agreed to the statement after holding five climate-themed expert workshops. They heard from climate scientists and organisations including the [Reserve Bank](#), the [Australian Energy Market Operator](#) and Insurance Australia Group.

The statement said the expert advice made clear temperatures were increasing, extreme climate-related events such as heatwaves and bushfires were becoming more intense and frequent, and natural systems were suffering irreversible damage. Some communities were now in a constant state of recovery from successive natural disasters with growing economic ramifications.

It said inaction would lead to unprecedented economic damage to Australia and its regional trading partners, heightened risks to financial stability – particularly as the insurance industry became compromised – and significant threats to the agriculture, forestry, tourism and fishing industries.

There would be severe pressure on government budgets due to a dramatic fall in tax revenue and a rise in natural disasters that demanded emergency response and recovery spending and there would be major and long-lived social and health impacts, including loss of life.

The roundtable concluded Australia must play its fair part in international efforts to limit average global heating to 1.5C above pre-industrial levels, or at most to well below a 2C increase.

That meant setting a target of net-zero emissions by mid-century and introducing policies to meet it that aimed to lift social equity and the country's global competitive advantage in a zero-emissions world.

The Morrison government has rejected calls that it back the goal of net-zero emissions by 2050. The target has been adopted by more than 70 countries, all Australian states and a growing number of business and investors, including fossil fuel companies. National emissions [have dipped 1.5% since the Coalition was elected](#) in 2013 after falling about 14% in six years under Labor.

Read More:

<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2020/aug/28/climate-crisis-business-farming-and-environment-leaders-unite-to-warn-australia-woefully-unprepared>

REFLECTIONS



Coronavirus Lament

Pain of world's dark laments stir deep awakenings.
People grieving. Sadness deepening. Patience waning.
Challenging one to new hope within the darkness.

Nature ever inviting shared openness to hope in a new dawn.
Wisdom of insights, knowledge, experiences
Rising within stillness of honest presence to the now.

Mercy and hope responding to the deep pain
Listening attentively for the gift of wisdom

Midst long yearning for the dawn of a new day.

Jude Butcher August 14, 2020. Heeding people's laments within today's coronavirus world.

Community is mutual vulnerability and openness one to the other. It is liberation for both, indeed, where both are allowed to be themselves, where both are called to grow in greater freedom and openness to others and to the universe.

L'Arche Community

10 Quotes by Carl Jung (1875-1961)



- Loneliness does not come from having no people around you, but from being unable to communicate the things that seem important to you.
- To be normal is the ultimate aim of the unsuccessful.
- The first half of life is devoted to forming a healthy ego, the second half is going inward and letting go of it.
- If our religion is based on salvation, our chief emotions will be fear and trembling. If our religion is based on wonder, our chief emotion will be gratitude.
- What usually has the strongest psychic effect on the child is the life which the parents have not lived.
- There is no coming to consciousness without pain. People will do anything, no matter how absurd, in order to avoid facing their own soul. One does not become enlightened by imagining figures of light, but by making the darkness conscious.
- A man who is unconscious of himself acts in a blind, instinctive way, and is, in addition, fooled by all the illusions that arise when he sees everything that he is not conscious of in himself coming to meet him from outside as projections upon his neighbor.
- The artist is not a person endowed with free will, who seeks his own ends, but one who allows art to realize its purposes through him. As a human being, he may have moods, and a will, and personal aims, but as an artist, he is "man" in a higher sense: He is "collective man," a vehicle and molder of the unconscious psychic life of mankind.
- I am not what happened to me, I am what I choose to become.
- As far as we can discern, the sole purpose of human existence is to kindle a light in the darkness of mere being.

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|*