



**Edmund Rice Centre**

Awareness. Advocacy. Action

---

## **ERC JUSTICE UPDATES**

**October 2021 No.56**

Dear All,

This 56th Edition of ERC Justice Updates, our regular newsletter from the Edmund Rice Centre, on matters relating to human rights, first nations and environmental justice.

The world we are currently living in is uncertain, full of injustice and inequity and hard to see a bright future for generations to come.

So for them we as an Edmund Rice community must continue to practice those three tenets of Edmund Rice: Compassion - Liberation - Presence.

**My mission in life is not merely to survive, but to thrive; and to do so with some passion, some compassion, some humour, and some style. Maya Angelou**

If you have a story or any material you would like to include in Justice Updates - please do send along.

Please note that if you come up against a paywall in any of the articles below - please contact me at: [mmcinerney@edmundrice.org](mailto:mmcinerney@edmundrice.org) and I will send you the full article.

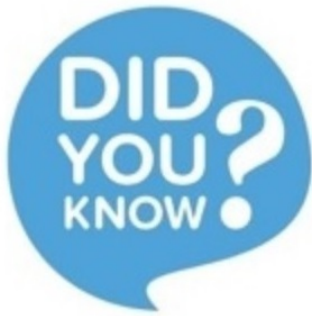
Previous editions are available at <https://www.erc.org.au/newsletters>.

## Peace & Blessings

Marita

Communications Project Officer,  
Marita McInerney

*Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander readers are advised that there may be articles in this publication with names and images of deceased people.*



*On Friday 8<sup>th</sup> October 2021, the Australian Government will have detained men & women on Nauru & Manus Island/Port Moresby for 2977 days.*



The recently released Report by ACOSS/UNSW Sydney Poverty and Inequality Partnership entitled **COVID INCOME SUPPORT:**

**Analysis of Income Support in Covid Lockdowns in 2020 and 2021, Build back fairer series, report No. 1** - *looked specifically at changes in the number of people relying on income support payments in different regions between September 2019 and September 2021, pre-pandemic to the present time.*

**Key findings were as follows:**

- *From September 2019 (pre-pandemic) to October 2020 (during the peak of the 2020 Alpha wave), the number of people receiving the lowest income support payments like JobSeeker - those payments that were eligible for receipt of the Coronavirus supplement in 2020 - increased by 70%.*
- *By September 2021, there were 1,661,000 people on those payments - an*

*overall increase since September 2019 of 27%.*

- *The federal electorates in which the numbers of people receiving payments increased the most during 2020 were those already facing financial disadvantage, pre-pandemic.*
- *Areas were concentrated in outer north-west and south-east Melbourne, west and south-west Sydney, from Brisbane to NSW border, and north Adelaide.*
- *These same communities still have elevated numbers of people receiving the lowest income support payments, harder hit by the pandemic and for longer.*
- *While people receiving these key income support payments were eligible for the Coronavirus supplement in 2020, over 80 % - 3/4 of a million people - have been ineligible in 2021 for COVID Disaster Payments, despite living in lockdown areas.*



## **Refugees face indefinite detention in Australia**

*Gianni Francis, Upstart, 20th September 2021*

***After nearly a decade in detention, refugees in immigration detention could be detained for the rest of their lives.***

“When I when I arrived in Australia, I was so happy. I thought to myself ‘Hamid it’s over. Your new life is coming, and you can live’. But it wasn’t so,” ex-refugee, Hamid, tells upstart.

Hamid arrived in Darwin by boat in 2013 and was held in offshore detention at Manus Island for many years. One day it became too much, and he took “too many sleeping tablets”, forcing the Australian government to bring him to Australia for medical treatment where he was held in hotel detention for more than two years. Hamid says that his experience in hotel detention was more akin to torture than treatment.

“It’s so much harder than Manus Island. And we wrote requests that we

wanted to go back to Manus Island,” Hamid says.

“Because my room is shared – this small room. And there is no space, no privacy, no nothing. No fresh air, no sun, no anything. Just eating food and room, eating food and room – that’s it.”

***“It wasn’t a real life.”***

Being confined to a hotel room for years on end took a toll, and Hamid says that nights and days blurred into a constant exhausting sameness. But he says the worst part of hotel detention was the never knowing when would be free, with no avenue for relief.

For almost a decade, Australia has maintained a policy of mandatory detention for asylum seekers and refugees. The current average period of immigration detention in Australia is 668 days, according to the Refugee Council, but many refugees have spent nearly a decade imprisoned.

However, on 13 May 2021 the Australian Government passed the Migration Amendment Bill, which Immigration Minister Alex Hawke said would promote human rights and strengthen refugee law to prevent deportation to the country they fled from.

But human rights advocates like Dr Carolyn Graydon, principal solicitor at the Asylum Seeker Resource Centre, have expressed concern that the law gives the immigration minister the unchallengeable power to withdraw recognised refugee status. And because they cannot be deported, it essentially means they can spend the rest of their lives in immigration detention.

“There’s then no legal mechanism really, to get them out. And so, we’ve had some clients that have been detained – seven, eight, even nine years – which constitutes arbitrary detention, and it’s unlawful in international law,” she tells upstart.

“Australian [immigration detention] laws are completely uncompliant with international human rights standards and are deliberately designed to oust the jurisdiction of the court to be able to review or have any oversight of immigration detention.”

This is what’s called ‘administrative detention’. This is completely different from criminal detention, with courts regularly reviewing the conditions of incarceration. Dr Graydon says that people in immigration detention have no way of being released unless the minister personally exercises a non-compellable power to release them, based on exceptional circumstances.

“Unlike a sentenced prisoner, who knows how long their sentence is and who has some idea of what the future holds, [refugees] are just left in an indefinite limbo,” Dr Graydon says. “The minister doesn’t even have to respond to a request for relief.”

## Read full article

<https://www.upstart.net.au/refugees-face-indefinite-detention-in-australia/?fbclid=IwAR0ZHa-1Qg3tPfgHL5UuylwT7INCntsAXmIYlZlFkxePwyXjRYCSrzOa-Jo>



A Hazara boy walks his dog in Bamiyan province, Afghanistan, 5 March 2021 (Wakil Kohsar/AFP via Getty Images)

## Afghanistan: The Hazara dread

***Sitarah Mohammadi Sajjad Askary, The Interpreter, Lowy Institute, 24th September 2021***

### ***What the Taliban takeover means for one of the most persecuted peoples in the world.***

As the Taliban takes control of Afghanistan, violence is once more widespread across the country. Global awareness of the oppression of women and girls under the Taliban is well known; less understood is the persecution of Hazaras. As one of the largest ethnic groups in Afghanistan, the Hazara people have endured a history of oppression, including slavery, torture and massacre, most recently under governments formed by the Pashtun majority. At the hands of the Taliban, Hazaras have been subjected to institutional discrimination, systematic attacks and mass atrocities. It's an experience that has earned the Hazaras the sad title of one of the most persecuted people in the world.

To save Afghanistan's Hazara population, the international community must pressure the Taliban through diplomatic channels to protect the rights of religious minorities to prevent atrocities, and take immediate steps to accept more Hazara refugees.

Excluded from re-building the current state and from the new Taliban cabinet,

the Hazara population will remain under-represented and vulnerable to repression and persecution. The fear of genocide is not unfounded.

Hazara youths are specifically subjected to violence as they represent a driving generational force for social change and the emancipation of girls and women.

Hazaras, with their distinctive Turko-Mongolian ethnic origins and values of social liberalism and democracy, are visible targets to the monocultural Taliban. They also differ in religion, being predominantly Shia Muslims amid Afghanistan's majority population of Sunni Muslims – a difference that is abhorred by Sunni Muslim radicals such as Islamic State and the hardcore Taliban. Hazaras do not all share a single religious affinity, but rather represent a plurality of positions across branches of Islam and atheism. This culture of liberalism is antithetical to orthodox Taliban belief.

Hazaras' hard-earned relative success during the past two decades, especially in the area of education, has made them ongoing targets because their achievements exert cultural power and influence beyond their own community. Hazara youths are specifically subjected to violence as they represent a driving generational force for social change and the emancipation of girls and women.

This cultural challenge has antagonised Pashtun authoritarians for centuries. Pashtun ethnocentric policy under Amir Abdur Rahman Khan in the late 19th century led to a sectarian jihad against the Shia Hazaras, who were deemed "infidels". During his reign, as many as 60 per cent of all Hazaras were murdered or forced to leave their homeland – sometimes being sold into slavery. Further repression continued under subsequent governments through to the end of the 20th century.

**Read More:**

<https://www.lowyinstitute.org/the-interpreter/afghanistan-hazara-dread>





Cooper Creek in the Daintree rainforest. The world heritage-listed national park is being handed back to the Eastern Kuku Yalanji people, who will manage it in partnership with the Queensland government. Photograph: Kerry Trapnell/Queensland Conservation Council

## **Indigenous traditional owners win back Daintree rainforest in historic deal**

***Ben Smee, The Guardian, 29th September 2021***

***The world's oldest rainforest will join landmarks like Uluru and Kakadu, where First Nations people are custodians of world heritage sites***

Eastern Kuku Yalanji people will take formal ownership of the world heritage-listed Daintree tropical rainforest in northern Australia, after the Indigenous traditional owners reached a historic deal with the Queensland government.

The Daintree national park is part of 160,108 hectares (395,467 acres) of land that will be handed back to the traditional owners at a ceremony on Wednesday at Bloomfield, north of Wujal Wujal.

The handback will see the world's oldest tropical rainforest join Australian landmarks such as Uluru and Kakadu, where First Nations peoples are the

custodians of Unesco world heritage-listed sites.

Under the agreement to be signed on Wednesday, the Daintree, Ngalba Bulal, Kalkajaka and Hope Islands national parks will be handed back to the Eastern Kuku Yalanji. They will also manage the areas in partnership with the Queensland government.

“It’s a big thing for Eastern Kuku Yalanji people, for us bama, which means people,” said Chrissy Grant, a traditional owner and the incoming chair of the Wet Tropics Management Authority board.

“Bama across the wet tropics have consistently lived within the rainforest. That in itself is something that is pretty unique to the world heritage listing.

“It’s an opportunity to work our way up ... we will be looking at long-term gains out of this, but we need to work our way up to get our people trained up confident.”

Grant, who is also the chair of the Unesco International Indigenous People’s Forum for World Heritage, said the handback of the Daintree and surrounds would also help address a historical oversight, which meant rainforest Aboriginal people were not involved in the 1988 process for the world heritage listing of Queensland’s wet tropics.

### Read full story

<https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2021/sep/29/indigenous-traditional-owners-win-back-daintree-rainforest-in-historic-deal>



(Image: Wikimedia Commons)

## The biggest issue for the 2022 federal election is the Uluru Statement from the Heart

**Bob McMullan, Pearls & Irritations, 1st October 2021**



***There are many issues in contention between the major parties at the next federal election. The biggest question to be determined by that election is the nature of our response to the Uluru Statement from the Heart.***

There are many conventional short- to medium-term issues which will be in contention between the major parties at the next election.

For example, there is likely to still be debate about taxation. Middle class people and rich and powerful people are always focused on taxation. Poorer people know that how a government spends its money is much more important to them.

There are, of course, also serious issues about the availability of child care and social housing which will be influenced by the choice voters make at the election. There will be an important contest about policy to deal with climate change. The election will also decide whether Australia gets a serious integrity commission, or whether we get one at all.

But over and above all these there is one set of issues with the potential to make an important and permanent change to the way we are governed and the way we see ourselves.

This is the suite of issues arising from the “Uluru Statement from the Heart”, including the issue of an Indigenous Voice to Parliament.

Anthony Albanese has expressed his support for a bipartisan process to lead to a constitutional amendment to enshrine the voice of Indigenous people in all the issues which affect them. Scott Morrison has not.

To be fair, I have no reason to doubt the genuine commitment of the Indigenous Affairs Minister Ken Wyatt, but I doubt his capacity to deliver his coalition colleagues. Some, such as Andrew Bragg, have expressed support. However, it is hard to see the Coalition overall giving up the opportunity to exploit such a potentially divisive issue. This is particularly relevant in Queensland, where Pauline Hanson is threatening to eat into their vote on this and other issues.

I have seen reports that Barnaby Joyce now supports a Voice to Parliament. I cannot validate this claim. He has certainly walked back his more extreme opposition. If it is true that he would support a constitutional change to this effect that would be very significant.

In parallel to the question of a voice is the issue of a Makarrata Commission to conduct national level discussions about a treaty similar to the processes under way in Victoria, Queensland and the Northern Territory.

The commission may well prove to be the most important part of the Uluru Statement but it has not had the same attention as the voice proposal.

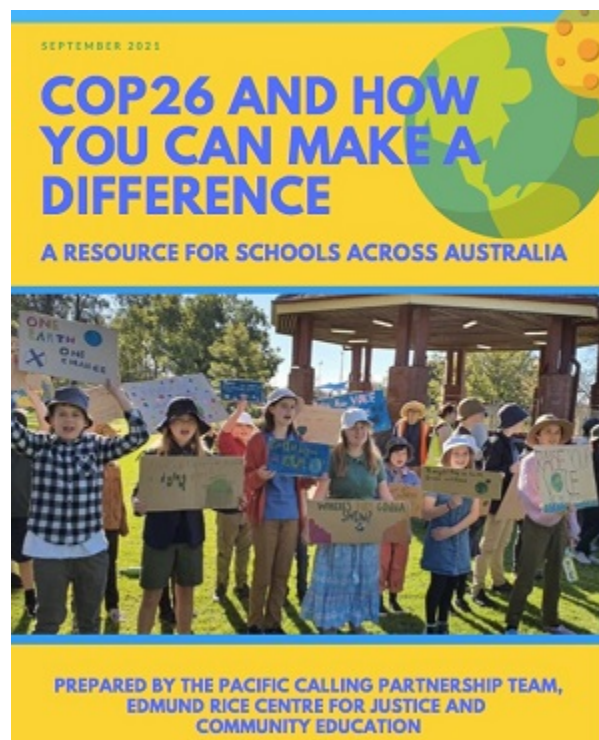
As envisaged, the commission should be able to lead discussions on the

rumours, allegations and established facts about massacres of indigenous people up to and including events of the 20th century. It could also follow-up on the unimplemented recommendations of the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody and any other historical incidents of interest.

Albanese has committed to establish such a commission. Morrison has not.

### Read full story

[https://johnmenadue.com/the-biggest-issue-for-the-2022-federal-election-is-the-  
uluru-statement-from-the-  
heart/?fbclid=IwAR1KLwPeN\\_0QUkw5xLfCmxYgOJeTrOubOC1mDxAceaVAf-  
DpFJjVXrUZDb0](https://johnmenadue.com/the-biggest-issue-for-the-2022-federal-election-is-the-<br/>uluru-statement-from-the-<br/>heart/?fbclid=IwAR1KLwPeN_0QUkw5xLfCmxYgOJeTrOubOC1mDxAceaVAf-<br/>DpFJjVXrUZDb0)



### PCP COP26 School Resource

As you know, one of our core and longstanding areas of work at the Edmund Rice Centre focuses on Pacific climate advocacy.

Ahead of the upcoming COP26 (the annual United Nations Climate Conference) starting on 1 November 2021, we have developed a school resource to help students advocate for climate action ahead of COP26.

Earlier this year, on 8 September 2021, the world's three main Christian leaders issued an unprecedented joint appeal, <https://www.reuters.com/business/environment/worlds-top-three-christian-leaders-climate-appeal-ahead-un-summit-2021-09-07/> to members of their Churches to "listen to the Cry of the Earth" and back action to stem the effects of climate change.

In "A Joint Message for the Protection of Creation", Pope Francis, Archbishop of Canterbury Justin Welby and Orthodox Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew asked Christians to pray that world leaders at COP26 make courageous choices.

The world has little time left to turn the tide of climate change and avoid its most severe impacts on humanity and our planet.

**We encourage you to download our COP26 School Resource**  
[https://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/erc/pages/44/attachments/original/1631851678/School\\_Resource\\_for\\_PCP.pdf?1631851678](https://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/erc/pages/44/attachments/original/1631851678/School_Resource_for_PCP.pdf?1631851678)

**share it with your networks, and where possible, actively engage school students in climate advocacy prior to COP26.**

Thank you for your support.

Sincerely,

***Corinne Fagueret***

Coordinator Pacific Calling Partnership



Climate Student climate strike, 2019.

**Ian Fry: What will the Pacific islands region be prioritising at the**

## **COP26 climate talks?**

*Ian Fry, Pasifika Environews, 13th September 2021*

### ***The former Tuvalu Ambassador for Climate Change and Environment highlights the expectations of Pacific Ministers for COP26***

As wildfires take lives and ravage property around the Mediterranean and North America and floods destroy lives and property in other parts of Europe, China and Nepal, Pacific Island countries are bracing themselves for another severe cyclone season. These are no longer simply natural disasters, they are climate change events. This is the new normal and it's going to get worse.

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change released part of its Sixth Assessment Report earlier this month and their message does not make for cheery reading. According to the report, the Western Pacific sea levels rose faster than anywhere else in the world in recent times and by 2050 are estimated to rise by 10cm – 25cm. For Pacific coastal communities with villages close to the sea, this will have a devastating effect. Storm surges are the critical factor. Coastal inundation events are happening far more regularly with the IPCC estimating that one in a 100-year event could happen annually or more frequently by 2100. Coastal villages will have to start looking for new land. Coral atoll nations and communities where there is nowhere to go will have to start thinking about land reclamation and raising the level of their islands. This is an extremely costly proposition.

Storm surges not only destroy property, but they also contaminate groundwater supplies and crops. Freshwater is going to be in short supply. Droughts will become more frequent. It seems that we are moving into an all or nothing climate. We will face severe storms with heavy rainfall causing flooding and then the climate cycle changes, and we will face more severe droughts.

The IPCC report is describing the effects of basic physics. As we increase the temperature of the atmosphere due to the greenhouse effect, our oceans are warming in tandem. Warmer oceans mean that greater energy is being created in a weather system. This means more severe cyclones and more severe droughts.

Warmer oceans are not just affecting the weather, they are having an impact on our fish stocks. Recent studies suggest that our tuna populations are migrating eastward as the Western Pacific becomes warmer. Far western Pacific nations could see significant declines in their catch. The economic ramifications of this are significant and are likely to exacerbate regional tensions over access to fish stocks by distant water fishing nations.

**Read full story:**

[https://pasifika.news/2021/09/ian-fry-what-will-the-pacific-islands-region-be-prioritising-at-the-cop26-climate-talks/?fbclid=IwAR1nPm\\_11Xe\\_gMgomms2fripn5eDz0k2czHO52uik\\_39wRr68S\\_nh\\_QKZQ](https://pasifika.news/2021/09/ian-fry-what-will-the-pacific-islands-region-be-prioritising-at-the-cop26-climate-talks/?fbclid=IwAR1nPm_11Xe_gMgomms2fripn5eDz0k2czHO52uik_39wRr68S_nh_QKZQ)



Pope Francis and Orthodox Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew of Constantinople arrive for the meeting, 'Faith and Science: Towards COP26', with religious leaders in the Hall of Benedictions at the Vatican Oct. 4, 2021. The meeting was part of the run-up to the U.N. Climate Change Conference, called COP26, in Glasgow, Scotland, Oct. 31 to Nov. 12, 2021. (Credit: Paul Haring/CNS.)

## **Pope Francis and faith leaders call for net-zero carbon emissions ahead of UN summit**

***Inés San Martín, Crux, October 4th 2021***

ROME – In a majestic room at the heart of the Vatican's apostolic palace, and surrounded by greenery set out for the occasion, leaders of the world's faith traditions signed an appeal addressed to those who will negotiate the future of the environment in an upcoming United Nations summit in Glasgow.

The appeal calls for the world to achieve net-zero carbon emissions as soon as possible to limit the global average temperature rise to 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels; presses wealthier nations to step up their climate action at home and financially supporting vulnerable countries to address climate change; and calls on governments to be more ambitious in transitioning to clean energy and sustainable use of land, with eco-friendly food systems and responsible financing.

The faith leaders also commit themselves to greater climate action, particularly in the fields of education on caring for the environment and also choosing green investments for their faith communities.

In a surprise move, the pope set aside his prepared remarks, telling participants to read them instead, so other speakers would have the opportunity to address the meeting.

**Read full story:**

<https://cruxnow.com/vatican/2021/10/pope-francis-and-faith-leaders-call-for-net-zero-carbon-emissions-ahead-of-un-summit/>



**Justice Reform Initiative Recruitment Drive**

*The Edmund Rice Centre was involved in the initial setup of the Justice Reform Initiative (JRI) and is assisting in the ongoing operation of the Initiative.*

*JRI was set up with the purpose of reforming the prison system particularly in relation to the First Nations People of Australia.*

*The Justice Reform Initiative is currently recruiting (5 positions in all) see link below in Ethical Jobs.*

**Read full details of JRI**

<https://www.justicereforminitiative.org.au/>

**Read full details of positions available**

<https://www.ethicaljobs.com.au/jobs?keywords=justice%20reform%20initiative>



Jane Goodall says some unlikely teachers have given her lessons of "humanity and hope." (Supplied: Tony Burrows)



## How a tree, a dog and a chimpanzee taught Jane Goodall to hold on to hope

***Karen Tong & Meredith Lake, Soul Search: ABC Radio National, 13th September 2021***

Throughout her life, acclaimed ethologist Jane Goodall has witnessed an array of environmental destruction, from deforestation to the loss of biodiversity to the catastrophic effects of climate change.

But despite this, Dr Goodall still has hope. Lots of it.

"I saw places that we had utterly destroyed, covered with concrete, but give nature a chance and she'll reclaim it," she tells RN's Soul Search.

"I saw animals on the very brink of extinction, [but] because people care, they've been given another chance."

This outlook has not come easily, and Dr Goodall credits it to a collection of "teachers" in life who have given her lessons of "humanity and hope."

Five of these most important "teachers" include a reading tree, her first dog and – of course – her beloved chimps.

### **#1: A beech tree called Beech**

The 87-year-old Dr Goodall has spent more than six decades studying chimpanzees and is widely considered the world's top expert on the species.

But long before venturing into the forests of Africa, she had an affinity with nature, specifically a beech tree in her UK childhood home which she calls one of her earliest "teachers."

"I learned about nature firsthand in my garden ... [There] was a beech tree and I called him Beech, not very imaginative," Dr Goodall says.

"But Beech was very special and up there I could feel closer to the birds and the sky." She would climb Beech and read books as a child growing up during World War II.

"I read Tarzan of the Apes, a little tiny second-hand copy that I found in an old bookshop ... and of course I fell passionately in love with that glorious lord of the jungle. But he married the wrong Jane, I was very jealous."

### **Read full story**

[https://www.abc.net.au/news/2021-09-11/jane-goodall-on-humanity-and-hope/100375246?utm\\_source=sfmc%e2%80%8b%e2%80%8b&utm\\_medium=email%e2%80%8b%e2%80%8b&utm\\_campaign=abc\\_specialist\\_religion\\_sfmc\\_20210927%e2%80%8b%e2%80%8b&utm\\_term=%e2%80%8b&utm\\_id=1738964%e2%80%8b%e2%80%8b&sfmc\\_id=132400292](https://www.abc.net.au/news/2021-09-11/jane-goodall-on-humanity-and-hope/100375246?utm_source=sfmc%e2%80%8b%e2%80%8b&utm_medium=email%e2%80%8b%e2%80%8b&utm_campaign=abc_specialist_religion_sfmc_20210927%e2%80%8b%e2%80%8b&utm_term=%e2%80%8b&utm_id=1738964%e2%80%8b%e2%80%8b&sfmc_id=132400292)

## REFLECTIONS



### Hope's Hunger

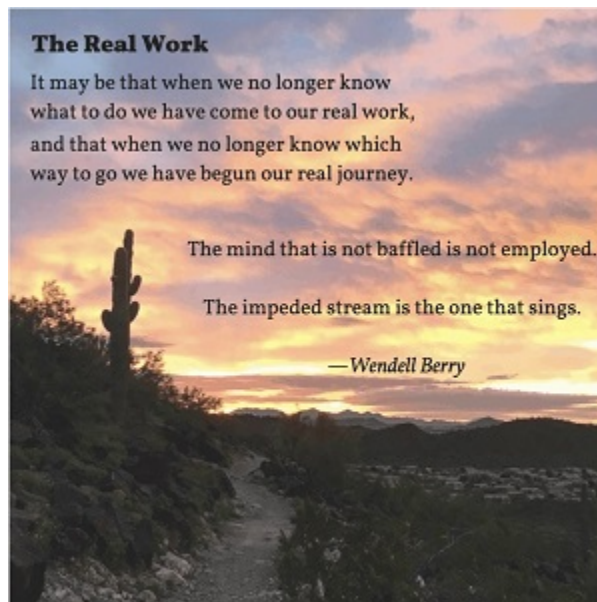
*Light emerges from within the darkness,  
To gift the dawn of a new day  
A day open to life anew.*

*Nature has waited through the night  
To enter the now of the day.*

*Hope's deep hunger  
Now welcomes life's gifts in responsive sharing,  
Opening to self and others, in the embrace of a new dawn.*

*(Jude Butcher 27 September, 2021 Reflecting upon Hope's deep hunger, within  
people and nature, opening self and others to the richness of life truly shared.)*

***Br Jude Butcher cfc AM PhD***



### Jamberoo Abbey Facebook Post 28th September 2021

***Baffled, stuck in a rut, impeded at every turn or just not sure which way we're going or where we're at in these covid times?***

***If any or all of the above hits the mark, the poet, Wendell Berry provides us with a shot of hope and encouragement! May there be "real work" and much singing on today's journey!***



### Pace - e - Bene Non-Violence Inspirations

***"Humanity is a family, even a small family. Above everything else, we are called to love our brothers and sisters without regard for any distinctions of race, religion, or nationality. Of course, sometimes we feel like St. John the Baptist, screaming his message in the desert." Bishop of Assisi***

***"The future of the earth depends on a change of consciousness. the only hope for the future is in a change of people's consciousness and the change is bound to come. But it is left to humans to decide if they will collaborate for this change or if it will have to be enforced upon them by the power of crashing circumstances. So, wake up and collaborate!"***

**Mira Alfassa, The Mother**



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.

The Edmund Rice Centre wholeheartedly supports and endorses the  
ULURU STATEMENT FROM THE HEART  
and urges all Australians to get behind this wonderful statement.

**Our mailing address is:**

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