



Edmund Rice Centre
Awareness. Advocacy. Action

ERC JUSTICE UPDATES

December 2021 No.60

Dear Friends,

This 60th Edition of ERC Justice Updates, our regular newsletter from the Edmund Rice Centre, on matters relating to human rights, first nations and environmental justice.

As we come to the end of 2021 - a year that has brought endless challenges, much sadness, much injustice and inequality in our world let us as an Edmund Rice Community always remain true to the three tenets of Edmund Rice: Compassion - Liberation - Presence.

Human kind has not woven the web of life.

We are but one thread within it.

Whatever we do to the web, we do to ourselves.

All things are bound together. All things connect. *Chief Seattle*

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

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

As this will be the last Justice Updates for 2021 I do hope you have found the

content

useful, uplifting and also challenging. Your feedback has been welcomed and much appreciated. Justice Updates will resume in early February.

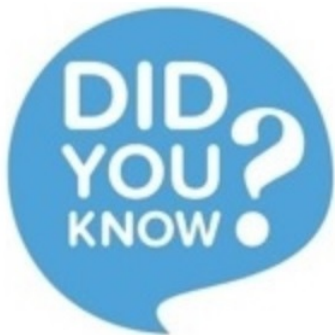
May you all have a peaceful, blessed, safe and Happy Christmas and New Year with your friends and family.

Peace & Blessings

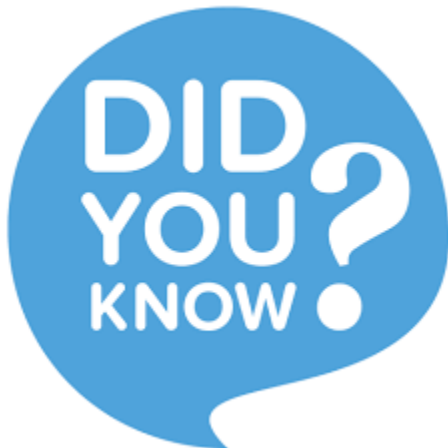
Marita

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 10th December 2021 (UN Human Rights Day), The Australian Government will have detained men & women on Nauru & Manus Island/Port Moresby for 3040 days.



A recently released Report by UN Women entitled: *'Measuring the Shadow Pandemic: Violence Against Women During COVID -19.'*; revealed that the coronavirus pandemic has made women feel more vulnerable to abuse, sexual harassment and violence, which in turn is harming their mental health and emotional well being. Findings include:

- 45% of women surveyed in 13 countries reported that they or a woman they knew had experienced a form of violence since start of pandemic.
- The same women said they were 1.3times more likely than others surveyed to report greater mental or emotional stress.
- Four in 10 women said they felt more unsafe in public spaces.
- One in four said that household conflicts had become more frequent, and the same proportion felt more unsafe in their homes.
- Seven in 10 said they thought verbal or physical abuse by a partner had become more common.
- Six in 10 said they thought sexual harassment in public had worsened.
- Three in 10 said they thought that violence against women in their community had increased.

Sima Bahous, the Executive Director of UN Women said *"The COVID - 19 pandemic which necessitated isolation and social distancing , enabled a second shadow pandemic of violence against women and girls, where they often found themselves in lockdown with their abusers." "Our new data underlies the urgency of concerted efforts to end this."*

Read More:

<https://data.unwomen.org/publications/vaw-rga>



Yolngu actor David Dalaithngu, who defined Indigenous Australians in movies for half a century, has died aged 68. (AAP Image/Terry

Trewin)

'The Black Superman': Reflections on David Dalaithngu's life and legacy

Sarah Collard, Nadine Silva, Guy McLean, NITV News, 30th November 2021

The young boy from the bush who became a star has been remembered as a 'beautiful human being' who inspired generations of First Nations people.

When Yothu Yindi co-founder Witiyana Marika first met Mr Dalaithngu in 1984 there was an instant connection.

"[He said] You must be my son, I know you... Your features look like my father," Mr Marika told NITV News.

"He just knew me through his spirituality, connected to me."

The Yolŋu men forged a treasured friendship since then with Mr Marika in awe of how the late actor was able to showcase his culture to the world.

"When he danced, twisted, shook his chest with that power and movement, it's something special," he said.

"We all have that same movement, but he was the first one to show it on the screen."

"The young boy from the bush became a star to the whole of Australia and whole Arnhem land."

Mr Marika has joined thousands from across the world to pay tribute to the highly-esteemed dancer, actor, singer, painter and storyteller from Ramingining, who passed away on Monday after battling lung cancer.

His storied career spanned five decades, putting in numerous memorable performances in a range of iconic films.

"I call him the Black Superman, he could do everything... such a beautiful human being," said John Paul Janke, host of NITV's The Point.

"At that time [1970's], a lot of Aboriginal characters were still being played by non-Indigenous people in blackface, so really he broke the mould.

Brindle Films co-founder Trisha Morton-Thomas told NITV she was mesmerised watching him as 'Fingerbone Bill' in 1976's Storm Boy as a child.

"David Dalaithngu was the first Aboriginal face I saw on Australian screen," the Anmatyerr woman said.

"Seeing him own the screen allowed me to dream that I could one day follow in his footsteps."

He opened the doors for First Nations people in the film industry, according to Bunya Productions producer Penny Smallacombe.

"I know my career would not exist if it weren't for him and others, that stepped onto our screens and inspired us to be in this industry. An industry that hasn't always been inviting," the Maramanindj woman said.

"He has made our ability to be on-screen possible."

Read full story:

https://www.sbs.com.au/nitv/article/2021/11/30/black-superman-reflections-david-dalaithngus-life-and-legacy?fbclid=IwAR1_wX0XxM5pNro80vWt6zoZKszj4_4ovq3Gkw6V_vG0thdmBz6VzomSsyk



A video clip from a deleted but reshared video shared on an Instagram account purporting to be run by Indigenous Australians

(Image: Supplied)

Anti-vaxxers are targeting NT Indigenous communities with quarantine and vaccine conspiracies

Cam Wilson, Crikey, 26th November 2021

A combination of local fringe voices and international influencers are developing and spreading misinformation.

Positioned in front of a giant Aboriginal flag, a group of First Nations people speak one after another about the Northern Territory (NT)'s COVID-19 response.

The eldest, wedged between others in the middle of the couch, speaks briefly but generally about a need for unity and sovereignty. The next speakers are more specific: they rail against lockdowns ("corporate tyranny government") and claim that COVID-19 vaccination programs are genocide.

A 14-minute video of these speeches was posted to an independent news publisher's website on Wednesday, where it got 30,000 views in the eight hours before it was removed. Another version posted by an anti-vaccine Instagram account that purports to be run by Indigenous Australians has 100,000 views and counting.

Vaccine rates have lagged among Indigenous Australians, particularly those in rural and remote communities. Like any other community, misinformation about vaccines has also fed hesitancy including alleged intentional efforts to

injure Indigenous communities. These false claims resonate because of Australia's colonial history of scientific experiments on Indigenous Australians.

But the harsh lockdown recently imposed on parts of the NT have provided fertile conditions for misinformation. In remote communities like Binjari and Rockhole, where daily temperatures are north of 40 degrees, hundreds of residents have been ordered not to leave their homes — sometimes with 20 people to a two-bedroom house — for any reasons other than emergencies or medical care. Close contacts of COVID-19 cases in the communities have been transported to the Howard Springs quarantine camp, with the army brought in to provide transport and food supplies.

Read More:

https://www.crikey.com.au/2021/11/26/anti-vaxxers-are-targeting-nt-indigenous-communities/?utm_campaign=Weekender&utm_medium=email&utm_source=newsletter&wkndr=cStWZ0tYMmFBZG1rZG5XdU4zczRDZz09



Breastplate, of metal, engraved 'McIntyre King of Mannilla', c.1860–1874. 'King' McIntyre (c.1814–74) . Donated by A.W. Wilkins to Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery, 1930. Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery

Indigenous afterlives in Britain

Gaye Sculthorpe, *The Conversation*, December 3rd 2021

Readers are advised this article contains content relating to violent colonial practices and deceased Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, which some may find distressing.

Ancestors of Indigenous Australians are represented in Britain not only by the objects they made.

The Ancestral Remains of Aboriginal people still lie in museums or in graves, marked and unmarked.

A number of Aboriginal people who travelled to Britain in the late 18th and 19th century died there. These include Yemmerrawanne, who visited with Bennelong in 1793; William Wimmera, whose mother was killed by colonists in northwest Victoria and who was subsequently brought by the Reverend Septimus Lloyd Chase to Reading, where the lad died in 1852; and Bripumyarrimin, “King Cole”, a member of the 1868 Aboriginal cricket team who died in London in the same year.

Indirect evidence of Aboriginal visitors to Britain and their agency in collecting specimens is also evident in some museum collections. The Natural History Museum, for instance, has plant specimens collected by botanist George Caley in New South Wales. His field collecting was greatly assisted by “Dan”, referring to Daniel Moowattin, an Aboriginal man from the Parramatta region, who came to London with Caley in 1810–11 to work on naturalist Joseph Banks’s collection.

The collecting of Ancestral Remains was a practice that began in the earliest days of the colony in Sydney and continued well into the 20th century. A number of the remains collected were of well-known individuals killed in frontier violence, whose heads became trophies. Throughout most of the 19th century, there was a particular interest in obtaining Tasmanian Aboriginal remains as the people were then believed to be becoming “extinct”.

Both their bones and hair were keenly sought after. While there are large numbers of unidentified Ancestral Remains in British collections, traces of named individuals can be found.

Collectively, they illustrate the violence of the colonial frontier and the wide-ranging medical and other networks of 19th-century collectors reaching from Britain to Australia.

Read full Story

https://theconversation.com/friday-essay-indigenous-afterlives-in-britain-171479?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Latest%20from%20The%20Conversation%20for%20December%203%202021%20-%202135021131&utm_content=Latest%20from%20The%20Conversation%20for%20December%203%202021%20-%202135021131+CID_029286a0380f3bf192124f7c717f1650&utm_source=campaign_monitor&utm_term=Friday%20essay%20Indigenous%20afterlives%20in%20Britain



'At current global emissions rates, the carbon budget that we have left if we are to stay under 1.5°C will be depleted in six years.'

Photograph: Friedemann Vogel/EPA

The richest 10% produce half of greenhouse gas emissions. They should pay to fix the climate

Lucas Chancel, The Guardian, 7th December 2021

This is not simply a rich versus poor countries divide: there are huge emitters in poor countries, and low emitters in rich countries

Let's face it: our chances of staying under a 2C increase in global temperature are not looking good. If we continue business as usual, the world is on track to heat up by 3C at least by the end of this century. At current global emissions rates, the carbon budget that we have left if we are to stay under 1.5C will be depleted in six years. The paradox is that, globally, popular support for climate action has never been so strong. According to a recent United Nations poll, the vast majority of people around the world sees climate change as a global emergency. So, what have we got wrong so far?

There is a fundamental problem in contemporary discussion of climate policy: it rarely acknowledges inequality. Poorer households, which are low CO2 emitters, rightly anticipate that climate policies will limit their purchasing power. In return, policymakers fear a political backlash should they demand faster climate action. The problem with this vicious circle is that it has lost us a lot of time. The good news is that we can end it.

Let's first look at the facts: 10% of the world's population are responsible for about half of all greenhouse gas emissions, while the bottom half of the world contributes just 12% of all emissions. This is not simply a rich versus poor countries divide: there are huge emitters in poor countries, and low emitters in rich countries.

Consider the US, for instance. Every year, the poorest 50% of the US

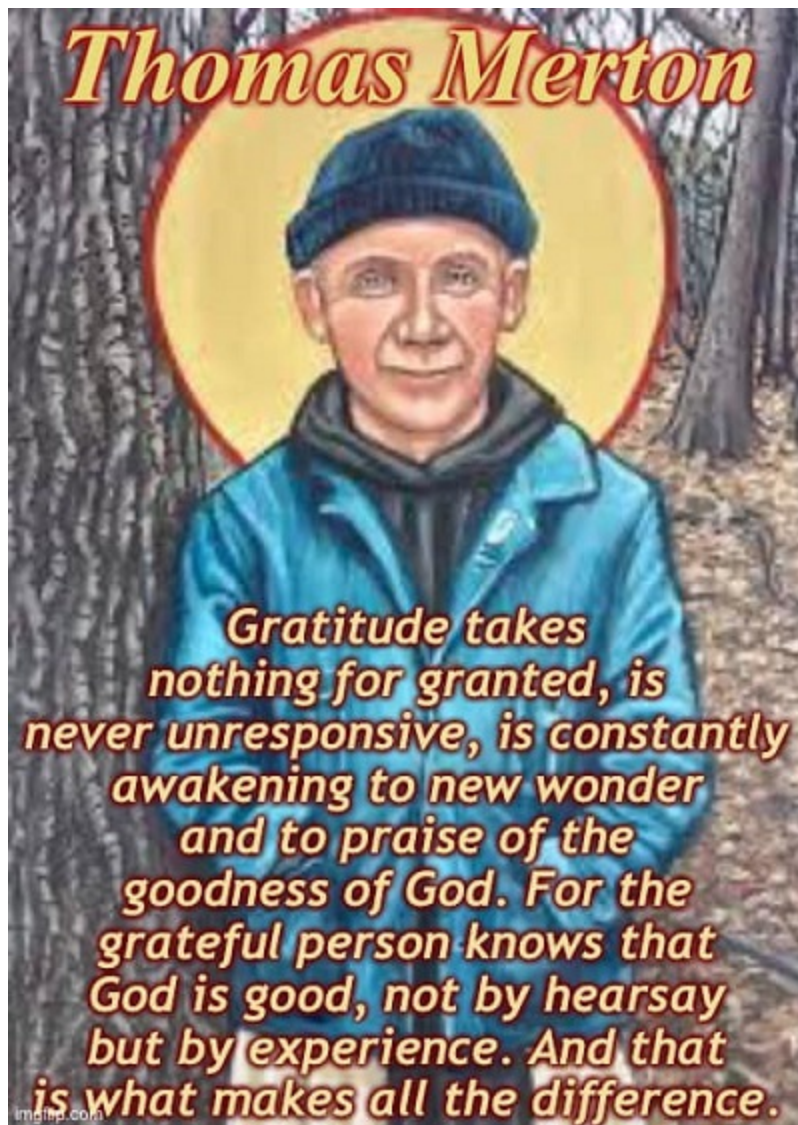
population emit about 10 tonnes of CO2 per person, while the richest 10% emit 75 tonnes per person. That is a gap of more than seven to one. Similarly, in Europe, the poorest half emits about five tonnes per person, while the richest 10% emit about 30 tonnes – a gap of six to one.

(You can now view this data on the World Inequality Database.)

Link: https://wid.world/world/#|pfghg_p90p100_z/US;FR;DE;CN;ZA;GB;WO/2019/eu/k/p/yearly/l/false/2.92/100/curve/false/country

Read full article:

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2021/dec/07/we-cant-address-the-climate-crisis-unless-we-also-take-on-global-inequality>





Pope Francis greets a child as he visits with refugees at the government-run Reception and Identification Center in Mytilene, Greece, Dec. 5, 2021. (CNS photo/Vatican Media)

Returning to migrant hotspot of Lesbos, Pope Francis chides world leaders for an 'indifference that kills'

Christopher White, National Catholic Reporter, December 5th, 2021

'Self-interest and nationalism lead to disastrous consequences,' says Francis in Greece

LESBOS, Greece — As he returned to an island that has become a symbol of Europe's refugee crisis, Pope Francis on Dec. 5 chided world leaders for their "cynical disregard" of the plight of migrants.

The pope's visit was brief and his message direct: Indifference kills.

"Stop ignoring reality, stop constantly shifting responsibility, stop passing off the issue of migration to others, as if it mattered to no one and was only a pointless burden to be shouldered by somebody else," Francis pleaded during his return visit.

Over the last decade, hundreds of thousands of refugees escaping violence across the Middle East have passed through Lesbos, many seeking permanent relocation in Europe. When Francis first visited in April 2016 — and memorably brought back 12 refugees back to the Vatican — 1.3 million people sought asylum in Europe that year.

"History teaches us that narrow self-interest and nationalism lead to disastrous consequences," said Francis during his two hours on the island.

As he spoke against a backdrop of refugee shelters along the shores of the Aegean Sea, Francis cited the global vaccination campaign and the fight against climate change, saying that while these efforts are at times stalled, he believes forward progress is being made.

"All this seems to be terribly absent when it comes to migration," he said. "Yet human lives, real people, are at stake!"

Two days ago during his visit to Cyprus, Francis criticized the use of barbed wires and likened the treatment of migrants to the torture in concentration camps. In Lesbos, where barbed wire fences had also been erected around the refugee camp, Francis turned to the words of a Holocaust survivor to again press his case.

"When human lives are endangered, when human dignity is in jeopardy, national borders become irrelevant," Francis said, quoting the late Elie Wiesel.

At the time of his last visit, more than 5,000 migrants had died that year at sea as they attempted to cross from mainland Turkey over to Greece.

"Let us stop this shipwreck of civilization," urged Francis on Sunday.

Read full story

<https://www.ncronline.org/news/vatican/returning-migrant-hotspot-lesbos-pope-francis-chides-world-leaders-indifference-kills>



Fr. Giorgio Licini

Excerpt from “Christmas of tears and hope” regarding Manus guys in PNG

Eyes On Offshore Facebook Post 6th December 2021

A sad celebration of Christmas also again awaits about one hundred asylum seekers and refugees in Port Moresby. They are the remnants of the more than one thousand men housed first in Manus Island since 2013 by the Australian government. By 1st January 2022 they will be under the full responsibility of the cashless PNG government until a solution is found at least for some of them. Expect the others to be in the streets of Port Moresby rather soon, including the fifteen or so in a special list by humanitarian organizations as being too mentally ill now to ever be able to fend for themselves.

From “Christmas of tears and hope” by Fr. Giorgio Licini, Catholic Reporter PNG – Dec 2021

Link to Fr. Giorgio's post of his full article: facebook.com/100002360007358/posts/4790412057714080/



Iranian asylum seeker Mohammad Kord was one of six men released from detention on Wednesday. Source: Supplied

Why this Iranian asylum seeker burst into tears after being released from detention

Eden Gillespie, www.sbs.com.au/news, 3rd December 2021

Mohammad Kord has been released from immigration detention after more than eight years, but he says he won't be truly happy until his friends are also freed.

When Iranian asylum seeker Mohammad Kord found out he would be granted a bridging visa and released from Melbourne's Park Hotel on Wednesday afternoon, he burst into tears. ***But they were not happy tears.***

Speaking to SBS News from his hotel room after his release, Mr Kord said he felt overwhelmed by a deep sense of injustice and guilt that he'd be freed while many of his friends would be left behind in detention.

"I swear to God, you don't know what I'm going through," Mr Kord said.

"My friends, we've been together almost nine years. On Manus [Island], we had each other's backs. We care too much about each other.

"I'm free but I'm not going to be happy until my friends are released." The 37-year-old was one of six men who were freed from detention centres in Melbourne and Brisbane, and granted bridging visas on Wednesday.

Of those six men, five were from Melbourne's Park Hotel and one from Brisbane Immigration Transit Accommodation (BITA).

Released but left 'in limbo'

In 2013, Mr Kord escaped Iran and arrived in Indonesia, where he attempted to travel to Australia by boat. As a follower of the Zoroastrian faith, Mr Kord said he left Iran due to religious persecution.

Mr Kord was detained on Manus Island in Papua New Guinea until 2019 when he was transferred to Australia for medical treatment under the Medevac legislation.

He was first detained in Melbourne Immigration Transit Accommodation (MITA) before he was moved to Park Hotel last December.

"I am scared. They released me and put me in limbo. I have to leave [Australia]," Mr Kord said.

"When this government always says 'I don't want you', you're not going to be happy here."

Read full story:

https://www.sbs.com.au/news/iranian-asylum-seeker-burst-into-tears-after-being-granted-release-from-detention/6068528c-44dc-47ce-889e-9dae5851809c?fbclid=IwAR2-O_oPjZSFcYtJnmRsc-vvsUhY_QpivCzqD8AuATpkZ_Nk3mFme1iQnOO

Iran's Human Rights Petition

A plea from the local Iranian community to sign a petition

It has two simple steps:

Firstly, you need to add your details to the petition (name, surname and email address) and secondly wait to receive an email from the Australia parliament to ratify your signature. you must open the reply email and click on the link.

Without clicking on the link, your name won't appear.

Link to petition:

<https://www.aph.gov.au/e-petitions/petition/EN3550>

Many thanks for your help
Mohammad Sadeghpour
iran4democracy@gmail.com

ON THIS ROAD CALLED LIFE,
you have to take the good with
the bad, smile with the sad, love
what you got, and remember
what you had. Always forgive, but
never forget, learn from your
mistakes, but never forget. People
change. Things go wrong. But
just remember, the ride goes on.



A voter displays proof of having exercised her voice at the ballot box in Timore-Leste's parliamentary elections. UN Photo/Martine

Perret

Human Rights Day, 10th December 2021

UN Secretary-General's Message

Our world is at a crossroads.

The COVID-19 pandemic, the climate crisis and the expansion of digital technology into all areas of our lives have created new threats to human rights.

- * Exclusion and discrimination are rampant.
- * Public space is shrinking.
- * Poverty and hunger are rising for the first time in decades.
- * Millions of children are missing out on their right to education.
- * Inequality is deepening.

But we can choose a different path.

Seventy-three years ago today, the United Nations General Assembly adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

The principles set out in this simple Declaration remain the key to realizing all human rights – civil, economic, cultural, social, and political – for all people, everywhere.

Recovery from the pandemic must be an opportunity to expand human rights and freedoms, and to rebuild trust.

Trust in the justice and impartiality of laws and institutions.

Confidence that a life of dignity is within reach.

Faith that people can get a fair hearing and resolve their grievances peacefully.

The United Nations stands for the rights of every member of our human family.

Today and every day, we will continue to work for justice, equality, dignity and human rights for all.

Happy Human Rights Day.

António Guterres

Read More:

<https://www.un.org/en/observances/human-rights-day/messages>

Inside Bernard Collaery's trial

Keiran Pender, The Saturday Paper No. 378, December 4th – 10th, 2021

Secret evidence, secret hearings and secret judgements. Each step in the prosecution of Bernard Collaery comes with another layer of opacity. If it were not so serious, the accumulation of secrecy in this case would be comedic. Secrecy heaped upon secrecy for secrecy's sake. A secrecy onion? But this case is no laughing matter. At stake are transparency and accountability.

Three years ago, Collaery – an eminent Canberra lawyer – was charged with five secrecy offences. Four relate to Collaery's communications with the ABC; one involves an alleged conspiracy with Witness K, Collaery's client and a former spy, to

communicate secrets to the government of Timor-Leste.

The context underlying these charges is that our government spied on Timor for commercial advantage during negotiations over oil and gas in the Timor Sea. Australia, one of the richest countries in the world, bugged the cabinet office of an impoverished, newly independent neighbour as it sought to rebuild following Indonesia's destructive invasion. All this was done for the sake of a financial windfall for Australia and private-sector energy companies.

The government has wrapped this case in so much secrecy, and has picked so many obscure procedural battles, that it can be almost impossible to keep up ... All of this – a dozen interlocutory judgements, 50 or so court hearings – has been instigated by the federal government against one man.

Australia's government has never admitted this, although it is widely accepted as true. We have never apologised to the Timorese. Instead, the government approved the prosecutions of Collaery and Witness K and has done all it can to keep the cases from the public eye. (K pleaded guilty to a lesser charge earlier this year, and was given a suspended sentence.)

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At a broader level, law reform is urgently needed – to our whistleblowing, secrecy and surveillance laws. We need laws that empower whistleblowers to speak up, let journalists do their job and ensure neither group suffers as a result. It is a deep shame that no such change looks likely before the next election. Whoever wins should prioritise reform, end the current government's ceaseless quest for secrecy, and, if necessary, direct the CDPP to discontinue the Collaery prosecution. **An apology to the people of Timor-Leste is also overdue.**

Whistleblowers make Australia a better place. They should be protected, not punished – and certainly not prosecuted in a secret trial, with secret evidence and secret judgements.

Read More:

<https://www.thesaturdaypaper.com.au/opinion/topic/2021/12/04/inside-bernard-collaerys-trial/163853640013016>

NB: *If you wish to read the full article and strike a pay wall - please contact me mmcinerney@edmundrice.org and I will send you the full article -*

REFLECTIONS.

Craig Greenfield Facebook Post, 6th December 2021

This is my prayer this morning....

*“...Let us pray for
the hungry for justice,
who document inequalities,
demonstrate against tyranny,
distinguish between need
and greed,
and are sometimes misrepresented or persecuted in the process.
May their labour not be in vain
and may we be counted in their number.
Let us pray for the hungry
and the fed.
Lord have mercy...”*

From the Scottish Iona Community's Wild Goose liturgy



I WANT TO THINK AGAIN
OF DANGEROUS
AND NOBLE THINGS.

I WANT TO BE LIGHT
AND FROLICSOME.

I WANT TO BE IMPROBABLE
AND BEAUTIFUL

AND AFRAID OF NOTHING

AS THOUGH I HAD WINGS.

+ MARY OLIVER

Pace - e - Bene Nonviolence Inspirations

"Until you start focusing on what needs to be done rather than what is politically possible, there is no hope. We can't solve a crisis without treating it

as a crisis. . . . We need to focus on equity, and if the solutions within the system are so impossible to find, maybe we should change the system itself."
Greta Thunberg

"The pain we feel for our world is a living testimony to our interconnectedness with it. If we deny this pain, we become like blocked and atrophied neurons, deprived of life's flow and weakening the larger body in which we take being. But if we let it move through us, we affirm our belonging; our collective awareness increases. We can open to the pain of the world in confidence that it can neither shatter nor isolate us, for we are not objects that can break. We are resilient patterns within a vaster web of knowing." Joanna Macy

"Nonviolent strategy calls those who are now faithful to the good present inside them, to awaken the good inside their adversaries who at that same moment serve violence or injustice. This dynamic is built on confidence in the divine power of the good and its unity." Alain J. Richard

"Now we can no longer just give answers and explanations, we have to become the answer, and our own transformation is the only credible explanation. It seems we must tame and integrate the demon of violence within ourselves before we have anything to say to anybody else. " Richard Rohr



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:

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