



HOLY SPIRIT SOCIAL JUSTICE

ADVENT & CHRISTMAS 2020 EDITION



A MESSAGE FROM FR MARK

2020 has been a year of challenges in the area of social justice and it is sadly ironic that the biggest of those challenges, the pandemic, has limited our ability to be with people and to give them the help and support they need.

The good news is that our Social Justice Group (SJG) has accepted the challenge and made good headway in improving our understanding of and education in social justice issues ranging from the impacts of COVID-19 to climate change to homelessness and beyond. The SJG had set its priorities for 2020 simply on communication through the [SJG Newsletter](#) and I think there has been a steady improvement to a very worthwhile publication.

I am pleased that the SJG is considering its way forward and is giving full consideration to Pope Francis' encyclical letters – Laudato Si and Fratelli Tutti – and they have provided us with a framework to think and pray about before the SJG restarts in February 2021. (See Holy Spirit Social Justice Group – Planning for 2021 article.)

As a matter of interest, Wikipedia reports that "**Fratelli Tutti** is the third encyclical of Pope Francis, subtitled 'on fraternity and social friendship'. In the document, Francis states that the COVID-19 pandemic has proven the failure of the world to work together during the crisis. The encyclical calls for more human fraternity and solidarity and is a plea to reject wars."

The document was signed on 3 October 2020 on the occasion of Pope Francis' visit to the tomb of his namesake, Saint Francis of Assisi, and was published the following day, the saint's feast day.'

[A summary of the document can be found on the Vatican website.](#)

In the meantime, and until the next SJG newsletter, I know that you will seize opportunities to support others in these tough times.

Fr. Mark Croker



Pope Francis remarked that the word Advent means "**coming**." "The Lord comes," he said. "Here is the root of our hope: the assurance that the consolation of God reaches us among the tribulations of the world, a consolation that is not made of words, but of presence, of His presence that comes among us."

FROM THE CHAIR

As you read this newsletter, we will have commenced the Season of Advent and in a few weeks, we will celebrate Christmas in our Parish and homes. Throughout the year, the Social Justice Group has used the parable of the Good Samaritan as our focus and we ask that, during this month, we all make an effort to share with others in our immediate Gungahlin area and beyond in whatever way we can.

From the Chair continued

I would like to take this opportunity to thank my fellow members of the Social Justice Group – Fiona Wilkinson, Alison Weeks, Maureen Hilton, Peter Knight and Paul Crowley for their hard work during the year. Recently we welcomed a new member into the group, Leanne Johns and while Leanne was initially uncertain how she might contribute, she is fast becoming aware of the importance of the work of the social justice group. I have no doubt there are many of you reading this who can help us in so many ways, to achieve real change and to support social action by following Pope Francis' teachings.

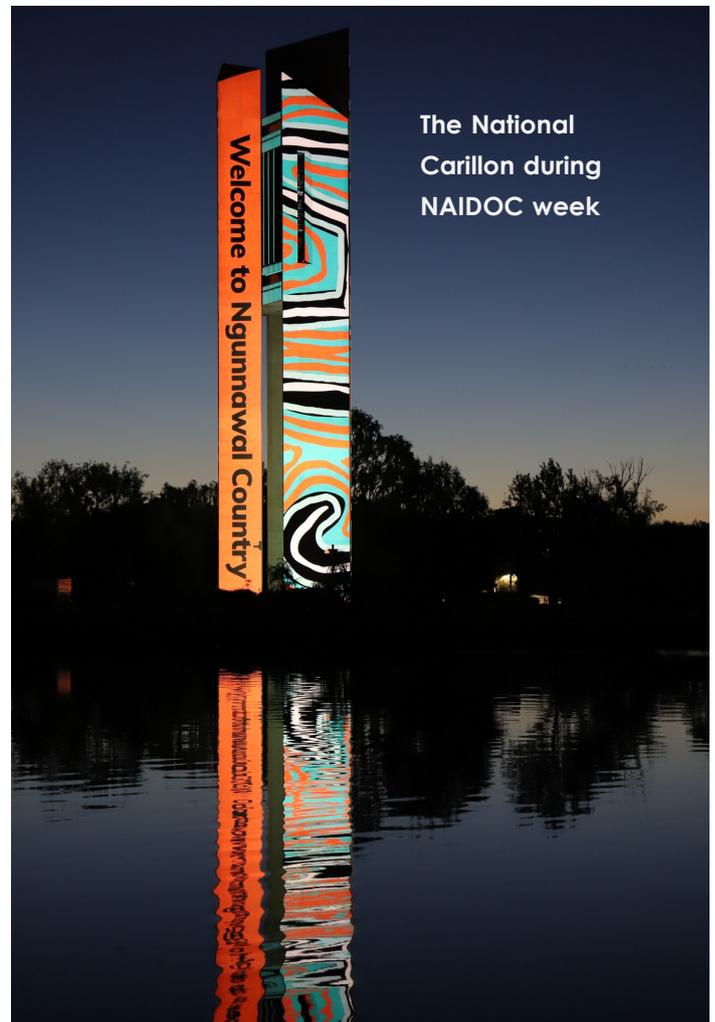
One of the members of the Social Justice Group, Peter Knight wrote the following message for us to think about during the seasons of Advent and Christmas.

2020 has been a challenging year on so many fronts. As a result, our society has been polarised and it has brought out the best and the worst in us. It is difficult to know who and what to believe.

December provides a window for us to focus our attention on the centre of our spirituality LOVE!! For most of us our love is conditional – we seek affirmation as a reward for our good deeds and our charity and we are selective, we single out those we judge deserving and ignore or punish those we judge not worthy.

Divine love on the other hand is unconditional; the biblical term is AGAPE the highest form of love. 'For God so loved the world that He gave His only Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send His Son into the world to be its judge, but to be its saviour.' (John 3: 16,17)

We are socialised to blame, to be judgemental. Advent and Christmas is a great time to evaluate how we express our love. What a great example Jesus is. When Peter denied Him, He forgave and there are numerous examples but perhaps there



are two examples we can better relate to in Mary and Joseph. However, there is a trap in that we can be too hard on ourselves or on the other side, our ego can take over. For us to love unconditionally we must first learn to humbly love ourselves.

Have a happy and blessed Christmas and please consider ways you might be able to contribute to social justice in our Parish and community. I look forward to hearing from you.

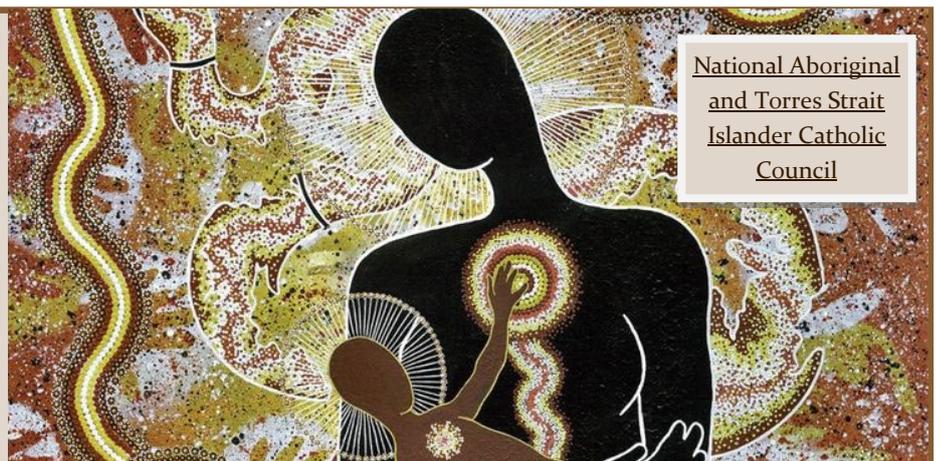
Peter Peterson peterimantpeterson@gmail.com

Because of Her, We Can!!

Rejoice so highly favoured!
The Lord is with you. Luke 1:28

Of all women you are the most blessed, and blessed is the fruit of your womb.

Luke 1:42



National Aboriginal
and Torres Strait
Islander Catholic
Council

HOLY SPIRIT SOCIAL JUSTICE GROUP – PLANNING FOR 2021

“And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.’ The second is this: ‘You shall love your neighbour as yourself.’ There is no other commandment greater than these.”

Matthew 22: 36–40.

Catholic social justice thinking in 2020 is reflected in the two encyclicals of Pope Francis: *Laudato Si* and *Fratelli Tutti*. Together they unite to instruct and convince us to reach out in love and friendship to all people – and to our common home – the earth which sustains us.

These two letters from Pope Francis provide the guidance, framework and moral authority for the work of the Holy Spirit Parish Social Justice Group. We are small but determined and we focus on spreading the word about the meaning of social justice to living the Word of God.

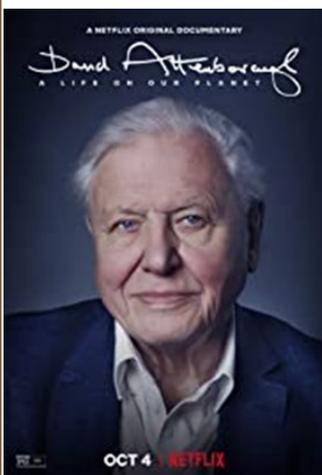
What could be a clearer message from the Lord than a letter from the Pope? Well, perhaps, two letters from the Pope!

From *Laudato Si* we learn that “Peace, justice and the preservation of creation are three absolutely connected themes, which cannot be separated or treated individually.” (para 92).

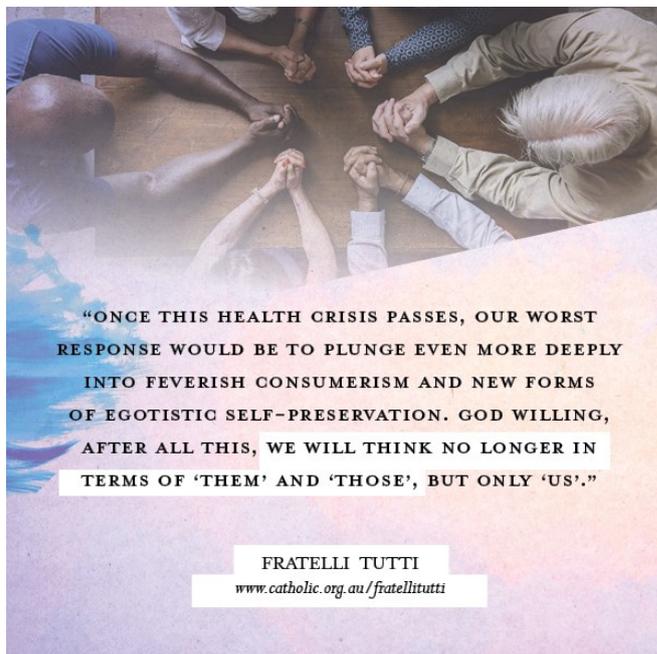
In 2021 we will work to increase awareness and adoption of the principles of *Laudato Si* by:

HOLIDAY VIEWING

I have heard that the latest documentary by David



Attenborough *A life on our planet* is excellent viewing. It is available on Netflix and the blurb says ‘A broadcaster recounts his life, and the evolutionary history of life on Earth, to grieve the loss of wild places and offer a vision for the future.’ It’s PG and well worth a look, I’m told.
Maureen Hilton



- Educating ourselves and our parish community about the Church's role in reversing climate change and promoting sustainability;
- Becoming an Eco-Parish; and
- Developing relationships with the students of John Paul II College and other parishes to share information, resources and action.

From *Fratelli Tutti* we learn that the Pope believes: *that we are still "ill-literate" when it comes to accompanying, caring for and supporting the most frail and vulnerable members of our developed societies"* (Paras 56–86).

In 2021 we will encourage ourselves and our parish community to recognise and **turn towards** those in need by:

- Educating ourselves and our community on *Fratelli Tutti*.
- Promoting successful approaches to homelessness in our city; agitating for more social housing.
- Supporting and promoting other social justice groups (eg Vinnies, Salvos, Caritas).
- Increasing awareness of Indigenous issues, specifically juvenile sentencing, deaths in custody and poor shelter/housing.
- Monitoring the plight of refugees in detention and advocating for their release.

We want to be modern day Good Samaritans, we will not walk by.

Peter Peterson peterimantpeterson@gmail.com