



HOLY SPIRIT SOCIAL JUSTICE

MARCH 2021 EDITION

A MESSAGE FROM FR MARK

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

We wish to acknowledge that we are in the country of the Ngunnawal people. We pay respect to their elders. We acknowledge the memories of their ancestors and celebrate their continuing culture. We acknowledge the deep, spiritual attachment and relationship of Aboriginal and Torres Strait peoples to this country and commit ourselves to the ongoing Journey of reconciliation.

(NATSIC) 2014

Pope Francis' encyclical *Laudato Si'*, on care for our common home, is now six years old and his passionate concern for creation calls us to action. Recently, he added to his teachings with another encyclical, *Fratelli Tutti*, which teaches us the truths of the parable of the Good Samaritan and instructs that we must be good neighbours to all. After the bushfires, COVID-19 pandemic and the horrific death count, along with the isolation felt by so many people, now is the time to act.

Pope Francis is encouraging us to show ever greater care for one another and I commend the Social Justice Group for the work and prayer they have put into the preparation of the document – **Social Justice Group – future planning and focus – 2021-2026**. This document provides a map for the Parish to take up Pope Francis' direction to care for our common home and for all our brothers and sisters.

In the New Year, members of the group met with the Archbishop and others from across the Archdiocese to begin an archdiocesan approach to *Laudato Si'*. We will hear more about this in coming months.

I encourage everyone to participate in whatever way you can so that we as a Parish act on the challenges we face in the environment while always reaching out to those in need.

Fr Mark Croker

FROM THE CHAIR

Welcome to 2021 and to the first newsletter this year from the Social Justice Group (SJG).

Since Pope Francis released *Laudato Si'* (on Care for Our Common Home) he has been encouraging all Catholics to take an active role in caring for our planet. 'When our hearts are authentically open to universal communion, this sense of fraternity excludes nothing and no one ... peace, justice and the preservation of creation are three absolutely connected themes, which cannot be separated or treated individually.' (LS, 92).

Last year, the SJG prepared a document **Social Justice Group – future planning and focus – 2021-2026** where we have set goals in response to Pope Francis' two most recent encyclicals, *Laudato Si'* and *Fratelli Tutti*. We have included this strategy in this newsletter so that you can see how the work of the SJG is closely aligned with the Pope's priorities. Over the next couple of months we will provide opportunities to talk about it so that together, we can identify ways to really **Care for Creation**. Some things to think about are – how can we improve our recycling and our



The cycle of flood and drought in the reserve near Holy Spirit Amaroo.

use of electricity and water? What opportunities do we have to make our Parish buildings more environmentally friendly and sustainable? How can we engage you and especially our young people to help us to achieve our goals?

This Newsletter includes the document **Social Justice Group – Future planning and focus – 2021–2026** for your information and further discussion and we are looking forward to an active and rewarding 2021.

In the meantime, if you have any questions or suggestions, please email me on peterimantpeter@gmail.com

If this work plan speaks to you, please join us for our monthly meetings, held on the second Tuesday, in the parish rooms at 7 pm.

Best wishes
Peter Peterson

SOCIAL JUSTICE GROUP

FUTURE PLANNING AND FOCUS 2021—2026

INTRODUCTION

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. Matt 22: 36–40.

Catholic social justice thinking in 2021 is reflected in the modern theology expressed in the two encyclicals of the times: *Laudato Si* and *Fratelli Tutti*. Care for each other and care for our common home. *Laudato Si* (on the Care of Our common Home) and *Fratelli Tutti* (on Fraternity and Social Friendship) unite to exhort us to reach out in love and friendship to all people and to 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 a small but determined group and as our resources are limited, we have chosen to focus our work, primarily, in spreading the word about the meaning and importance of social justice to living the Word of God.

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

Our small group will become 'heralds in the camp' like those found in Isaiah:

I have made you a watchman for the house of Israel. Therefore, when you hear a message that comes from me, you are to warn them for me. Isaiah 52:8.

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

LAUDATO SI

When our hearts are authentically open to universal communion, this sense of fraternity excludes nothing and no one...Peace, justice and the creation are three absolutely connected themes, which cannot be separated or treated individually.' LS, 92.



A Superb Parrot spotted just outside Mulligans Flat Reserve near Forde

OBJECTIVE: to increase awareness and adoption of the principles of *Laudato Si*

- ◆ **Educate** ourselves and our parish community about the Church's role in reversing climate change and promoting sustainability; including actions we can take at a personal and a community level.
- ◆ **Promote** Global Catholic Climate Movement (GCCM), participate in events and use as a guide to become an Eco-Parish.
- ◆ **Develop** relationships with other parishes to share information, resources and collaborative action.
- ◆ **Convince and assist** Holy Spirit Parish to become an Eco-Parish.
- ◆ **Convince** the students of St John Paul II College (JPC) to join with the Social Justice Group (SJG) and take leadership of sustainability issues in the Parish.

ACTION LAUDATO SI

1. Have a 'sustainability/climate change' article in every SJG Bulletin.
2. Give two reflections at Mass each year on this topic to inform and encourage action by parishioners. (Look for guest speakers).
3. Ask JPC leadership to assist us in identifying and encouraging the opinions and commitment of the students to leading change at Parish level.
4. Approach JPC leadership with a sustainability joint project.
5. Conduct at least one parish seminar with a reputable guest speaker or facilitator.
6. Invite guest speakers occasionally to our own meeting and invite JPC and the parish.
7. Initiate the Eco-Parish project by reviewing our resource use, wastage, recycling and, potentially, the use of green power.
8. Prepare the strategy and steps towards becoming an Eco-Parish, including seeking advice from other parishes and GCCM.
9. Use the Parish Pastoral Council (PPC) chairs network to inviting them to joint seminars, and, potentially, to conduct a diocesan conference on the Catholic Church and Sustainability (good title required). Ask Archdiocese for help.
10. Research and assess the ethical investment strategies of Catholic Super and the Catholic Development Fund and advise parishioners accordingly. If necessary, advocate for change.
11. Identify climate resilience projects in Pacific nations for us to promote and support.
12. One more international activity – hopefully with Caritas.

FRATELLI TUTTI

Let us admit that, for all the progress we have made, we are still 'ill-literate' when it comes to accompanying, caring for and supporting the most frail and vulnerable members of our developed societies. (FT, 56-86) referencing the parable of the Good Samaritan.

OBJECTIVE FRATELLI TUTTI

to encourage ourselves and our parish community to recognise and turn towards those in need.

- ◆ **Educate** ourselves and our community on the content, purpose and possible action arising from Fratelli Tutti.
- ◆ Give two **reflections** this year at Mass on these topics.
- ◆ Educate ourselves and our community about the causes and **successful approaches** to homelessness in our city; WHY? – WHO? – HOW?
- ◆ **Connect with** and assess other social justice groups (eg Vinnies, Salvos) regarding their needs for support with a view to parish involvement to enhance their effectiveness. For example – do the Salvos running the food pantry on Valley Way need any help; or does Vinnies need a night van for North Canberra?
- ◆ **Agitate for** improved government policies on homelessness, social housing and poverty.
- ◆ Significantly **improve awareness of Indigenous issues**, specifically juvenile sentencing, deaths in custody and shelter/housing.
- ◆ Monitor the **plight of refugees** in detention and advocate for their release.

Palm Sunday Rally for Refugees in Garema Place 2019



<https://youtu.be/hHB7SOE3POk>



Parishioners of Holy Spirit attend the Palm Sunday Rally



ACTION

FRATELLI TUTTI

1. Publish summary and review of Fratelli Tutti for the Parish.
2. Provide a short summary and specific speaking points for our priests.
3. Encourage the visibility of the SJG on this encyclical, including guest speakers.
4. Support Mackillop House through promotion, volunteering and fundraising.
5. Approach other social justice groups informally to offer support and assistance.
6. Prepare Bulletin articles, letters to Ministers and letters to the editors regarding homelessness, indigenous injustice and inequality.
7. Begin a conversation with indigenous leaders, our Ngunnawal Elders, by inviting them to meet with us at Holy Spirit, preferably in NAIDOC week.
9. Actively participate and promote NAIDOC week.
10. Wherever possible, begin meetings on Parish land with an Acknowledgement of Country.
11. Actively recognise Refugee Week and conduct a retiring collection.
12. Participate in the relevant activities of the Refugee Action Campaign, mainly through joint membership.
13. Liaise with St John's Kippax Refugee Group.

USEFUL LINKS TO ARTICLES

Laudato Si <https://laudatosi.com/watch>

Fratelli Tutti http://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco_20201003_enciclica-fratelli-tutti.html

Global Catholic Climate Movement <https://catholicclimatemovement.global/>

Centre for Restorative Justice <https://www.restorativejustice.com.au/>

Refugee Action Campaign <https://refugeeaction.org/>

Mackillop House, Lyneham <https://catholiccare.cg.org.au/news/from-sleeping-rough-to-sleeping-safe/>

NAIDOC Week <https://www.naidoc.org.au/>

Onelink (This initiative will link people with services such as housing, disability and family support.) <https://www.onelink.org.au/>

Saint Vincent de Paul, Canberra https://www.vinnies.org.au/page/Our_Impact/