



Further Ideas and Resources

Some dates to mark in 2003

The following dates are just a few great occasions to cultivate peace and reconciliation in a special way.

- * **May 25** beginning of *Simply Sharing Week* (May 25 - 1 June)
- * **May 26** *Sorry Day*
- * **May 27** beginning of the *Week of Prayer for Reconciliation*
(27 May - 3 June)
- * **Aug 31** *Refugee Sunday*
- * **Sept 28** *Social Justice Sunday* (this year on the theme of Racism)

- plan ahead and use the available resources to help make a difference (contact your State Ecumenical Body (details in this section) for more information)

and don't forget *Mothers Day*...

Arise then...women of this day!
Arise, all women who have hearts!
Whether your baptism be of water or of tears!

- so began the Mothers Day Proclamation for peace by Julia Ward Howe (authoress of 'The Battle Hymn of the Republic').
Aghast at the destruction wrought by the American Civil War and Franco-Prussian War of 1870, she sought to establish Mothers Day as a Day of Peace.

Why not share something of her fascinating story and work and pray for peace amongst our families and nations?

or the major festivals:



People for Peace Nativity Sign

This peace sign is erected each Christmas in Burwood highway at the council offices. It is a joint project with the Knox City Council, People for Peace, the Rotary Club of Boronia and The Knights of the Southern Cross to promote the peace message across local cultural diversity.

Check out <http://peacelink.topcities.com/index.htm> for many more ideas from People for Peace here in Australia

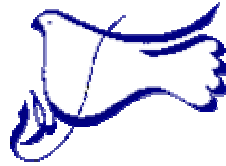
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Further Ideas and Resources

Developing Inter-faith relationships



Why not help develop good relationships with people of other faiths?

Many mosques for example, are only too happy to welcome groups of Christians seeking to build understanding and community.

Or, why not, like Jesus, share a meal with some others different to you?

By sharing with others, Christians not only help to counteract bigotry and intolerance but find new friendships and, often, a deeper awareness of God within our own faith.

Goodness and Kindness - a Muslim, a Christian and a Jew

Just one 'phone call can make the difference - as Joe Sheridan found when his excitement about Christian theology led him to ring a rabbi, Rabbi Zalman Kastel and they ended up sharing a message of peace together. With Muslim teacher Seyfi Seyit, they began talking about goodness and kindness in local schools, and have now shared their common religious purpose with well over 10 000 Australian school children. Simply the presence of the trio has witnessed marvellously to shared values. The children in each school have designed their own part of a massive Australian Goodness and Kindness quilt - another powerful message of hope and peace to the wider world.

ALTERNATIVES TO VIOLENCE

PROJECT

AVP (Alternatives to Violence) is a nationwide and worldwide association of volunteer groups offering experiential workshops in conflict resolution, responses to violence, and personal growth. Through exploring the same non-violent skills as were used by Gandhi and Martin Luther King, participants are introduced to ways of resolving conflict without violence. Begun in the USA, AVP has had good success here in Australia, working in prisons, schools and communities in capital cities and rural centres all over the country.

For more information contact your stet ecumenical body or jinkpin@ncca.org.au

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Further Ideas and Resources

Continuing the journey...

'From little things, big things grow'

The continuing challenge of facing up to what has been called Australia's 'Original Sin' - the dispossession, oppression and lack of recognition of indigenous peoples - remains the major underlying issue of violence in Australia. Sometimes overcoming this violence seems a 'very long row to hoe'. Yet there are many good examples of what can be achieved with God's grace.



Your Hand My Hand...Moving Beyond Words

This is just of many available resources inviting those who are connected to the issues of reconciliation and native title, or those who want to be connected, to act...to move beyond words. This video demonstrates this through the stories of Camilla Cowley, Ethel Munn and the Lewisham Public School Community in New South Wales. Such stories and the words of Bishop Arthur Malcolm and Patrick Dodson inspire hope for what is possible. *Your Hand My Hand* is available from the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Ecumenical Commission.

What Churches can do for Reconciliation

Churches can do many things to assist the process of Reconciliation

- (above all) making deeper relationships with indigenous people within and beyond the churches: listening to people's stories, learning about indigenous culture, offering support and apologies where appropriate
- marking and celebrating the Week of Prayer for Reconciliation and remembering indigenous issues in prayer and worship at other times
- discovering the story of the local land and community, and acknowledging prior ownership of church land by appropriate means
- supporting indigenous claims for justice and recognition
- checking out examples of positive steps forward, such as:

The Aboriginal Women's Healing House at <http://www.aboriginalcm.cathcomm.org>

Contact NATSIEC for further details and resources: via Locked Bag 199, Sydney NSW 1230. Tel: (02) 9299 2215 www.ncca.org.au/aic

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Further Ideas and Resources

From Violence to Wholeness

A Spirituality and Practice of Nonviolent Living

"Woundedness lies at the roots of violence in ourselves, in others, and in our culture. Active nonviolence comes face to face with these wounds. This includes identifying and gradually transforming our personal and social 'scripts' that keep us in the rut of violence. But even more more profoundly, active nonviolence makes contact with the sacredness that lies deeper than wounds. This sacredness is the presence of God who longs for our wholeness. It is where our truest selves live, the depths where we receive the gift of our richness, our authenticity, and our capacity for compassion. It is the spiritual centre where we come to our senses, recover our balance, and reclaim our humanity."

From Violence to Wholeness is a ten-part program inspired by the Pace e Bene Franciscan Centre in Las Vegas and supported in Australia by the Christian brothers (Holy Spirit Province), the Tabitha Trust (Uniting Church, WA), PALMS Australia and the Mercy Foundation.

With the use of readings, scripture, role-play, group sharing, reflection on our lived experience and journaling, participants discover how to explore the violence in ourselves and in our culture, finding a deep spiritual foundation for the journey to wholeness.

*For more information about From Violence to Wholeness courses all over the country, contact **People of the Way**, 879 Albany Highway, East Victoria Park, WA 6101, ph. (08) 9472 4227 ozpow@iprimus.com.au*

Healing our Garden Planet

Have you seen the Australian Catholic Bishops' recent Video - "The Garden Planet"?

Every Catholic school and parish should have received a free copy to explain the Catholic teaching on Ecology. Personal copies are now available for \$20.

Catholic Earthcare Australia, 86 - 88 Market St, Wollongong. 2500
Ph: 0242530858, Fax: 4253 0992 green@catholicearthcareoz.net

Are you working towards the Earth Charter?

check out the Earth Charter Educational website: www.ecreflection4action.org

or contact Earth Charter Australia -

Brendan.Mackay, GPO Box 11 Canberra ACT 2601

Are you looking for ways to overcome violence against animals?

Contact animals@networksmm.com.au for further information.

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Further Ideas and Resources

Supporting Refugees

Things you can do

- *Educate yourself, raise your concerns, challenge prejudices, educate others, or join others in worship and prayer*
- *Contact your local State Ecumenical Body (see final sheet) for information about local initiatives and contacts*
- *Support Christian World Service (CWS) programs assisting survivors of human rights abuses and working for peace and justice*
- *Provide friendship, skills, financial or spiritual support to asylum seekers - contact your State Ecumenical Body for ways to do this*
- *Support organisations which advocate on behalf of refugees*
- *Organise a Refugee Support event - meet in the park for a Refugee Support picnic, gather in your church for prayers, organise a speaker*
- *Lobby your Members of Parliament and write letters to newspapers (find lobby information and ideas at www.ncca.org.au/rdp)*

Helpful Resources include...

- *Biblical Reflections on Refugees and Asylum Seekers* by Charlie Ocampo see www.ncca.org.au/rdp
- the NCCA's *myths and fact sheet* at www.ncca.org.au/rdp
- *The Refugee Council of Australia's website* (with fact sheets, position papers and reports) at www.refugeecouncil.org.au/newfacts.htm
- the NCCA's quarterly *Refugee and Displaced Peoples Newsletter* email: jthomson@ncca.org.au to subscribe
- *Rural Australians for Refugees* - www.ruralaustraliansforrefugees.org
- *ChilOut* (Children Out of Detention) - www.chilout.org

Ever loving God, when we were once distant strangers you proclaimed peace and brought us near. Help us extend your grace and welcome in word and deed to all around us. Help us to live out the values to which you have called us. Let us not be conformed to the world and behave with selfishness or indifference to the needs of others, but follow the way of your Son, who came not to be served, but to serve. Let our lives and words witness to your grace and love that reach out to the last and the least. Amen.

From 'Refugees and Uprooted People' liturgy, WCC

God bless our eyes so that we will recognise injustices.

God bless our ears so that we will hear the cry of the stranger.

God bless our mouths so that we will speak words of welcome to newcomers.

God bless our shoulders so that we will be able to bear the weight of struggling for justice.

God bless our hands so that we can work together with all people to establish peace.

modified form of the blessing by Beverley O'Grady, Canada, in 'On Frequent Journeys'

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Further Ideas and Resources



Christian World Service

With programs throughout the world -

In the Philippines - supporting literacy programs

In Fiji - local social justice and peace initiatives

In French Polynesia - working with programs for women and youth

In the Middle East - searching for hope, supporting refugee and development programs

In Africa - working with local partners to provide innovative responses to life's basic needs; building peace; and developing local leadership capacity

In 24 countries around the world, working to alleviate suffering and poverty

With emergencies -

In times of natural disasters and emergencies created by war and unrest, your network of Churches, through Action by Churches Together International (ACT), can respond swiftly to help anywhere in the world.

With refugees and asylum seekers -

Helping churches to discover practical strategies for responding to the issues of detention, particularly for women and children

Monitoring and developing policy in response to the situation of asylum seekers.

With our indigenous people

Continuing advocacy, education, community development and supporting reconciliation through the work of the Aboriginal & Islander Commission of the National Council of Churches in Australia

With you, your church and others, we seek to make all Australians aware of injustice and poverty, through education of all ages and through advocacy campaigns such as Jubilee Australia, Fair Wear, Landmines and Child Soldiers. Join us in changing the world through the *Christmas Bowl*, *force ten*, *Simply Sharing Week*, and *ACT International*.

For more details
contact your State Ecumenical Body
or visit

<http://www.ncca.org.au/cws/index.asp>

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Further Ideas and Resources

Some helpful websites

Particularly among the non-religious organizations, there are of course a wide variety of approaches and foci amongst these groups - and not everything on any or all of them is endorsed by the NCCA. They are however a useful starting aid.

Religiously affiliated websites

- <http://www.catholicworker.org/> Catholic Worker Home Page
- <http://www.nonviolence.org/epf/> Episcopal (Anglican) Peace Fellowship
- <http://www.ipj-ppj.org> Institute for Peace and Justice
- <http://www.ifor.org/> International Fellowship of Reconciliation (IFOR)
- <http://www.jrsau.org/> Jesuit Refugee Service
- <http://www.nonviolence.org/jpf/> Jewish Peace Fellowship
- http://members.tripod.com/~lutheran_peace/ Lutheran Peace Fellowship
- <http://www.mpfweb.org/> Muslim Peace Fellowship
- <http://www.ncca.org.au> National Council of Churches in Australia
- <http://www.incommunion.org> Orthodox Peace Fellowship
- [http://www.paxchristi.org.au /](http://www.paxchristi.org.au/) Pax Christi Australia
- <http://www.sojo.net> Sojourners Community
- <http://www2.wcc-coe.org/dov> WCC Decade to Overcome Violence

Some other websites of interest

- <http://www.2020vision.org/> 20/20 vision
- <http://www.simpleliving.org> Alternatives for Simple Living
- <http://avpusa.org/> Alternatives to Violence Project (USA)
- <http://www.nativetitle.org> ANTaR
- <http://www.conversion.org/> Center for Economic Conversion
- <http://fairwear.org.au/> FairWear campaign
- <http://youth.haguepeace.org> Hague Appeal for Peace
- <http://www.humanrights.gov.au> Human Rights and Equality of Opportunity Commission
- <http://australia.icbl.org/#> International Campaign to Ban Landmines Australia Network Inc
- <http://www.lastfirst.net/> LastFirst - a non-profit organisation offering excellent resources for effective grassroots development.
- <http://www.peaceinc.org> PeaceIncorporated
- <http://www.icg.org> PeaceNet: with many links to other groups
- <http://peacelink.topcities.com/index.htm> People for Peace
- <http://www.nonviolence.org/training/> Training for Change
- <http://www.zmag.org/ZNET.htm> ZNET

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Further Ideas and Resources

and finally...

remember that peace begins 'at home', with every human heart

"The line separating good and evil passes not through states, nor between classes, nor between political parties either -- but right through every human heart -- and through all human hearts. This line shifts. Inside us, it oscillates with the years. And even within hearts overwhelmed by evil, one small bridgehead of good is retained. And even in the best of hearts, there remains . . . an un-uprooted small corner of evil." *Solzhenitsyn*

We have met the enemy and s/he is us...

'St. Paul tells us that we struggle

"not with flesh and blood but with principalities and powers." (Eph 6:12)

This is crucial to any understanding of Christian peacemaking...because our center point is not an ideology or philosophy or political movement of peace. It is Christ himself. It is not simply that Christ is peaceful but rather that he is peace. For us peacemaking is not a secular word. It is participation in who Christ is: the Logos, the Second Person of the Holy Trinity, our maker and redeemer, who not only came to live us with us as a man among men, but gives us an example of what is to be fully human, to become people in whom the image of God is not only present, if largely hidden, but has become visible; a people in whom God's likeness has been restored.

Battling the principalities and powers rather than flesh and blood is the essence of Christian peacemaking and why in the Beatitudes Christ calls peacemakers children of God.' (*Jim Forrest, Orthodox Peace Fellowship*)

In prayer the human soul makes a great effort at sincerity, honesty, truth, humility and acceptance of personal responsibility...

Meditation and prayer help believers to reflect, to see themselves as they are and not just as they would like to be seen. A consequence is that the offender is rendered more willing to acknowledge faults, to repent, and to ask forgiveness, instead of engaging in pointless self-justification. This attitude is helpful towards peace...

Mutual esteem and acceptance of other people with all their differences, and finally love of others, are what we can hope for from sincere meditation and prayers. They are highly conducive to peace.

Cardinal Arinze, Religions for Peace: A Call for Solidarity to the Religions of the World

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