



Email Notice Board of the Social Action Office

13 May 2008 - Number 169

Reconciliation: it's all our story

(National Reconciliation Week 2008 Theme)

Welcome to SAO BYTES 169

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Sorry Day – Monday 26 May

“Sorry Day”, 26 May, directly precedes **Reconciliation Week (27 May - 3 June)** and is the anniversary of the release of the *Bringing Them Home Report* in 1997. Every year since 1998, ceremonies have been held in various locations around Australia to remember prayerfully all those affected by generations of government policies that removed Aboriginal children from their families and placed them in institutions or foster care. Plaques are located on or near the sites of such institutions. The ceremonies are a great opportunity for people who care – Indigenous and non-Indigenous people, Christians and those of other persuasions – to **come together in commemoration** and in **support of the families** who have suffered under the policies of the **Stolen Generations**.



Reconciliation Australia

The theme of this year's [National Reconciliation Week](#) is **Reconciliation: it's all our story**.

Some Commemoration ceremonies around Brisbane:

- **Queensland State Library, Kuril Dhagun Centre**, Monday 26 May 12.00 noon-1.45pm: Includes bbq lunch, symbolic planting of “Stolen Generations (feet) Track Home”, and some traditional dance.
- **Teralba Park, Everton Park**, Monday 26 May 7.00am (entrance via Pullen Road): Breakfast will be served afterwards in the park and is a great opportunity to chat and get to know each other.
- **Sherwood Arboretum**, Monday 26 May 7.00am at the “Journey Home” Plaque, near Joseph Street entrance. Please bring a light breakfast to share. Tea and coffee provided.

Reconciliation: After the Apology – Sunday 25 May

Reconciliation Queensland is hosting a coming-together of local reconciliation groups to **examine local and international issues** in the current climate following the federal government's apology. The day will include displays, films, speeches, "Singing for Reconciliation" and discussion groups. **Les Malezer** will present an update on the **United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples** which was finally ratified on 13 September 2007. This event will be held in the Ithaca Auditorium, Brisbane City Hall from 10.00am to 2.00pm.



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Burma Cyclone Appeal

Caritas Australia have launched an appeal for the **victims of the cyclone in Burma**. To **donate** online go to the [Caritas website](#) or phone Tim O'Connor on 0417 284 831 for more information. The website also has **very good resources** especially for schools.



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The Great Solar PV Swindle in Queensland!

In March the Queensland Government announced plans to bulk purchase 1,000 1kW Solar PV systems to initiate a **Solar Homes Scheme**. It was reported that within 24 hours the State Government had received over 5,000 registrations for the offer.



Following the Solar Homes Scheme, the Government announced the **Solar Bonus Scheme**, a program to introduce a **feed-in tariff for solar PV systems**. A tariff of 44 cents was to be made for all electricity provided to the grid from solar PV systems. In Queensland, virtually all current suburban PV customers have their systems directly connected to the grid. They draw power through a second meter from the grid. Under these conditions the Solar Bonus Scheme for householders was an attractive proposition. Customers receive 44 cents for the gross generation and pay 15 cents for what they use.

However, the **Clean Energy Bill** which will shortly be debated in Parliament seeks to change these arrangements. The Department of Mines and Energy now propose that PV systems be wired to the house, and then the grid with **the feed-in tariff will only be paid for any net (surplus) power generated**. The new metering arrangements will mean that virtually no-one will qualify for the tariff, effectively removing the feed-in incentive to go solar.

Queenslanders need to take action now by contacting your local member about the Solar Bonus Scheme and asking them to **oppose the Clean Energy Bill** as proposed.

[Click here](#) for a list of **Queensland State MP's email addresses**. Just send a brief email to your local MP and to the Premier to let them know that you'd like to see Queensland get serious about our **clean energy future right now**. [Campaign initiated by **Queensland Conservation Council**]

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Cyber Action for Climate Refugees

Friends of the Earth (FOE) are calling for citizens to participate in their cyber action on climate refugees. One of the serious impacts of climate change is **rising sea levels** which will displace many people in low-lying Pacific island nations. FOE is asking you to **sign**



[their electronic petition](#) calling on the Foreign Affairs Minister, Stephen Smith, to [implement the ALP's policy on climate refugees](#). To find out more and to sign this petition, [click here](#).

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World Environment Day – 5 June

Kick the Habit – Towards a Low Carbon Economy is this year's WED theme. [Click here](#) to go to the United Nations Environment Programme for **information and suggested action**.



Join the **WED Festival on 5 June** at Griffith University, Multi-Faith Centre, Nathan Campus (Brisbane) 12.15-1.30pm featuring prayers and readings from **diverse faith traditions** and film clips on *Kicking the Habit*. Complimentary light lunch. RSVP by 1 June to (07) 3735 7052 or mfc@griffith.edu.au.

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Refugee Week: A Place to Call Home – 15-21 June

Australia's Refugee Week theme of ***A Place to Call Home*** encourages people to think about the global themes of **protection and human rights** by focusing on the fundamental right to **a secure place to call home**. It encourages us to think about our common obligations to people who have no secure home, as well as to acknowledge the **700,000 refugees and humanitarian migrants** over the past 60 years who have made Australia their home.



There are lots of different ways to **mark the week** from the simple to the elaborate. Here are some **suggestions**:

- Organise a **cultural celebration** with traditional food, dance and music to bring together refugees and non-refugees and share their stories
- Run a workshop to **provide information and raise awareness** on some issues that refugees might face
- Organise an **art competition** or an exhibition using this year's Refugee Week theme
- Invite a **speaker** to come and present. It can be a person who works with refugees or someone who has been through the refugee experience.
- Organise a screening of a **refugee related documentary and movie**
- Send a **positive story** for Refugee Week to your local newspaper
- Attend any of the **many events** during Refugee Week.

For more ideas refer to the **2008 Refugee Week Resource Kit** which is a great resource and can be downloaded from the Refugee Council of Australia's [Refugee Week webpage](#).

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Voices for Justice

The **Micah Challenge National Gathering** will be held in **Canberra 11-14 October**. This program offers opportunities for people to speak out, pray, worship, learn and engage in conversation with our nation's leaders calling for **global poverty to be halved** by 2015. For more information and to apply online go to www.micahchallenge.org.au/.



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Interfaith Understanding and Dialogue

The Multi-Faith Centre at Griffith University, Nathan Campus (Brisbane) is hosting **two sessions in May**:



- **Friday 16 May** 2.00-3.30pm – Topic: *Islam Core Beliefs and Practices and Role in the Modern World*. Speaker: **Dr Halim Rane**, Lecturer, National Centre of Excellence in Islamic Studies, Griffith University
- **Thursday 22 May**, 7.15-9.00pm – Topic: *Christianity Core Beliefs and Practices and Role in the Modern World*. Speaker: **Rev Dr Ormond Rush**, Lecturer, St Paul's Theological College, Banyo

Registration is free. For more information contact Virginia Cawagas on (07) 3735 7051 or v.cawagas@griffith.edu.au. Gold coin donation for refreshments.

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Enterprising Communities

Thinking about the future of your community? Meet some people who are making a difference. Join **Judy Wicks**, international sustainable business pioneer, and others on **Tuesday 20 May**, 7.00pm at Brisbane City Hall. View the premiere of the documentary **Australia Pumping Empty**. Tickets \$30 (concession \$18) online at www.climateleadership.net.au or at the door.



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That's it for this SAO Bytes!
Please post your news on this Notice Board.
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Stay tuned for the next SAO Bytes on 27 May!

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