



**CONFERENCE OF LEADERS OF RELIGIOUS INSTITUTES
IN NEW SOUTH WALES
CLRI (NSW)**

ABN: 52 476 362 010
Member of Catholic Church Religious Group

Mr Petro Georgiou MP
House of Representatives
Parliament House
Canberra
ACT 2600

Dear Mr Georgiou,

The Conference of Leaders of Religious Institutes (NSW) has over three thousand members and, through its social justice committee, works to support and advocate on behalf of poor and disadvantaged people.

Many of our members work with refugees in schools and parishes, at the Asylum Seekers Centre, the House of Welcome, Jesuit Refugee Service and centres run by the Mercy Sisters, the Sisters of St Joseph and others. We have always been enormously grateful for the stance you have taken in support of refugees and asylum seekers. It is with this sense of gratitude that we applaud your recent article in *The Age* (July 31, 2008).

As you rightly point out the reforms are "substantial and are a further step towards the establishment of a fairer, more humane and more accountable approach to the treatment of asylum seekers and others subject to immigration detention." We welcome your critique of some of the reforms and support your questions around work rights, access to medical care and the need to have these changes embedded in reform of the laws and mandated by legislation. The Christmas Island facility, as you so clearly indicate, is a jail and no place for processing people seeking refuge.

Many thanks for your continued courageous stand on behalf of people who seek protection from persecution and violence.

Yours sincerely,

Libby Rogerson ibvm
for CLRI(NSW)
4 August 2008

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