

**Pax Christi Australia (NSW)**  
**Convenor's Report**  
**July 2, 2018**

**June 4, 2018** Pax Christi Meeting

**June 7, 2018** Pacific Calling Watch Inter-congregational Voice on Climate Change in the Pacific.

**June 7, 2018** Mass with and for the Cana Community, Darlinghurst

**June 9, 2018** Seminar with Rev Clive Pearson, Mercy Convent, Parramatta.



The presenter (Clive Pearson) with some of the 50+ participants

Input and discussion on the Anthropocene and its implications for religion, spirituality and life in the 21<sup>st</sup> century and beyond. Questions included:

- How do we understand Christ in the Anthropocene?
- In what way does our understanding of the Anthropocene challenge our established patterns of faith, action and religious practice?
- What might be the role of religion and spirituality in a period where the prospects for our life together do not seem too promising? Will hope become a last resort?
- Islamic response to the Anthropocene. The **Islamic Declaration on Global Climate Change** was released to prepare the way for a robust treaty in Paris. The Declaration calls on the world's 1.6 billion Muslims to do their part to eliminate dangerous greenhouse gas emissions and commit to renewable energy sources. It was drafted by academics and finalized at the International Islamic Climate Change Symposium held in Istanbul Aug. 17-18. <http://islamicclimatedeclaration.org/>

***Text of the declaration***

*In the name of Allah, Most Merciful, Most Compassionate*

**PREAMBLE**

God – Whom we know as Allah – has created the universe in all its diversity, richness and vitality: the stars, the sun and moon, the earth and all its communities of living beings. All these reflect and manifest the boundless glory and mercy of their Creator. All created beings by nature serve and glorify their Maker, all bow to their Lord's will. We human beings are created to serve the Lord of all beings, to work the greatest good we can for all the species, individuals, and generations of God's creatures.

Our planet has existed for billions of years and climate change in itself is not new. The earth's climate has gone through phases wet and dry, cold and warm, in response to many natural factors. Most of these changes have been gradual, so that

the forms and communities of life have adjusted accordingly. There have been catastrophic climate changes that brought about mass extinctions, but over time, life adjusted even to these impacts, flowering anew in the emergence of balanced ecosystems such as those we treasure today. Climate change in the past was also instrumental in laying down immense stores of fossil fuels from which we derive benefits today. Ironically, our unwise and short-sighted use of these resources is now resulting in the destruction of the very conditions that have made our life on earth possible.

The pace of Global climate change today is of a different order of magnitude from the gradual changes that previously occurred throughout the most recent era, the Cenozoic. Moreover, it is human-induced: we have now become a force dominating nature. The epoch in which we live has increasingly been described in geological terms as the Anthropocene, or "Age of Humans". Our species, though selected to be a caretaker or steward (*khalifah*) on the earth, has been the cause of such corruption and devastation on it that we are in danger ending life as we know it on our planet. This current rate of climate change cannot be sustained, and the earth's fine equilibrium (*mīzān*) may soon be lost. As we humans are woven into the fabric of the natural world, its gifts are for us to savour. But the same fossil fuels that helped us achieve most of the prosperity we see today are the main cause of climate change. Excessive pollution from fossil fuels threatens to destroy the gifts bestowed on us by God, whom we know as Allah – gifts such as a functioning climate, healthy air to breathe, regular seasons, and living oceans. But our attitude to these gifts has been short-sighted, and we have abused them. What will future generations say of us, who leave them a degraded planet as our legacy? How will we face our Lord and Creator? We note that the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment (UNEP, 2005) and backed by over 1300 scientists from 95 countries, found that "overall, people have made greater changes to ecosystems in the last half of the 20th century than at any time in human history... these changes have enhanced human well-being, but have been accompanied by ever increasing degradation (of our environment)."

"Human activity is putting such a strain on the natural functions of the earth that the ability of the planet's ecosystems to sustain future generations can no longer be taken for granted."

Nearly ten years later, and in spite of the numerous conferences that have taken place to try to agree on a successor to the Kyoto Protocol, the overall state of the Earth has steadily deteriorated. A study by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) comprising representatives from over 100 nations published in March 2014 gave five reasons for concern. In summary, they are:

- Ecosystems and human cultures are already at risk from climate change;
- Risks resulting from climate change caused by extreme events such as heat waves, extreme precipitation and coastal flooding are on the rise;
- These risks are unevenly distributed, and are generally greater for the poor and disadvantaged communities of every country, at all levels of development;
- Foreseeable impacts will affect adversely Earth's biodiversity, the goods and services provided by our ecosystems, and our overall global economy;
- The Earth's core physical systems themselves are at risk of abrupt and irreversible changes.

We are driven to conclude from these warnings that there are serious flaws in the way we have used natural resources – the sources of life on Earth. An urgent and radical reappraisal is called for. Humankind cannot afford the slow progress we have seen in all the COP (Conference of Parties – climate change negotiations) processes since the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment was published in 2005, or the present deadlock.

In the brief period since the Industrial Revolution, humans have consumed much of the non-renewable resources which have taken the earth 250 million years to produce – all in the name of economic development and human progress. We note

with alarm the combined impacts of rising per capita consumption combined with the rising human population. We also note with alarm the multi-national scramble now taking place for more fossil fuel deposits under the dissolving ice caps in the arctic regions. We are accelerating our own destruction through these processes.

Leading climate scientists now believe that a rise of two degrees centigrade in global temperature, which is considered to be the "tipping point", is now very unlikely to be avoided if we continue with business-as-usual; other leading climate scientists consider 1.5 degrees centigrade to be a more likely "tipping point". This is the point considered to be the threshold for catastrophic climate change, which will expose yet more millions of people and countless other creatures to drought, hunger and flooding. The brunt of this will continue to be borne by the poor, as the Earth experiences a drastic increase in levels of carbon in the atmosphere brought on in the period since the onset of the industrial revolution.

1.8 It is alarming that in spite of all the warnings and predictions, the successor to the Kyoto Protocol which should have been in place by 2012, has been delayed. It is essential that all countries, especially the more developed nations, increase their efforts and adopt the pro-active approach needed to halt and hopefully eventually reverse the damage being wrought.

*WE AFFIRM*

***We affirm that Allah is the Lord and Sustainer (Rabb) of all beings***

**June 10, 2018** Invitation to Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation Desk – The Association of Major Religious Superiors in Taiwan (JPIC-AMRS Taiwan) to join Pax Christi Asia Pacific Facilitation Group

Sr. Antonia Liu, FMM (Executive Secretary) Fr. Will Ollevier, CICM (Coordinator)  
Email: [jplic.jpax@yahoo.com.tw](mailto:jplic.jpax@yahoo.com.tw)

Dear Sister Antonia Liu fmm and Father Will Ollevier cicm

I am writing to let you know that participants of the Pax Christi regional consultation held in Manila last year agreed to form a regional network which we call Pax Christi Asia-Pacific (PCAP) Regional Network

All members and affiliates of Pax Christi International are part of the network except for a few.

This is the reason why I am reaching out to your organisation.

On behalf of the PCAP Facilitation Team, I wish to invite - Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation Desk – The Association of Major Religious Superiors in Taiwan (JPIC-AMRS Taiwan) to consider being part of the network. We have an existing e-group and I wish to invite you to be part of that, as well.

When I hear from you, I will have our coordinator in Manila share the report from the 2017 Pax Christi regional consultation.

Peace and kind regards

(Father) Claude Mostowik msc  
President Pax Christi Australia

**June 15, 2018** Launch of Refugee Week

**June 19, 2018** MSC Justice and Peace Social Justice Committee Meeting.

**June 21, 2018** Letter to Sheba Medical Center Hospital- Tel Hashomer

Prof. Yitshak Kreiss MD

Director General

Sheba Medical Center Hospital- Tel Hashomer

Dear Professor Kreiss

The Jerusalem Post refers to your Sheba Medical Center as [The Hospital Without Borders](#) and checking your website I was impressed with your Mission Statement

- To be a medical center without boundaries and dedicated to providing quality, compassionate, value driven health care to all our patients without discrimination and regardless of, color, creed, and nationality.
- To be the Hospital of Peace and a source of inspiration for peacemakers.

In this 'Sheba spirit' I am appealing to you to invite for treatment a young man from Gaza, Haitham Abu Sabla, who, on June 8, was shot in the face with a tear gas canister.

His surgeon, Dr Hossam Al Majaida, head of the Department of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery at Nasser Hospital, Khan Younis stated

*"We did not see a case like Haitham's before. The gas canister stayed for 45 minutes in his face until we made a plan to start to operate on him. It means that the gas continued to enter to his body for a long time and that will affect him in the long term."*

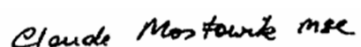
*Haitham's only hope now is that he can leave Gaza to receive the treatment he requires.*

*"He has a fracture in his upper jaw, and a breakdown in his left mouth muscle, while losing most of his teeth," the doctor continued. "He needs to get out of Gaza to continue treatment or he will have a permanent malformation in his face."*

[Gazan disfigured by tear gas canister says 'it was like death'](#)

I hope you will extend the Sheba spirit and compassion to helping Haitham.

Sincerely



President, Pax Christi Australia

Director, Missionaries of the Sacred Heart Justice and Peace Centre (Australia)



**June 26, 2018** Pacific Calling Partnership Sub-committee re: Monograph for ACSJC. We had our initial meeting and found we had many possible resources. Claude also contacted David Brennan at the ACSJC that we were still a long way off from getting the monograph completed.

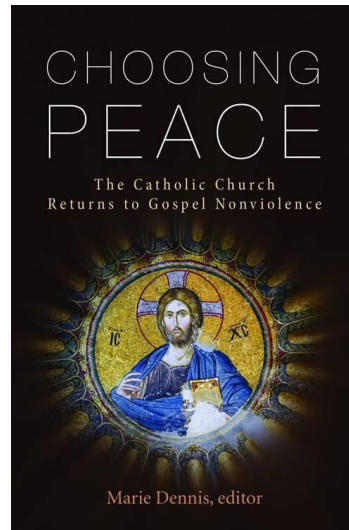
Regularly: Every Friday with Sydney Knitting Nannas and Friends [SKNAGS] in Martin Place from 11am-1pm sharing information with the public and collecting signatures for petitions to stop destroying our land, water and future by mining fossil fuels – Coal and Coal Seam Gas.

**The following report was provided by Pax Christi NSW Committee member Gill Burrows.**



**June 13<sup>th</sup> Wed** Excellent Book Launch of *The Coal Truth: the fight to stop Adani, defeat the big polluters and reclaim our democracy*, which brings together vital voices from the movement to tell this story. The story of the power and determination of the Australian people who are fighting to wrest our country back from the coal industry - a fight we can't afford to lose. With lead author, **David Ritter**, CEO of Greenpeace Australia-Pacific in conversation with **Prof. Lesley Hughes** (Climate Council), **Tara Moss** (Author) and **Berndt Sellheim** (Poet) to discuss their contributions to this unique book with chair, **David Schlosberg** (Sydney Environment Institute).

**Fri June 22<sup>nd</sup>** Final Skype meeting of \*\*Catholic Nonviolence Initiative Round Table V International group. See <https://nonviolencejustpeace.net/> for details of the ground-breaking 2016 meeting in Rome and ongoing program. Marie Dennis, co-president of Pax Christi International, joined us this time. She is the editor of Excellent book just released Choosing Peace see <https://www.bookdepository.com/Choosing-Peace/9781626982703>. Please publicise this book widely if you can.



**Mon June 25<sup>th</sup>** North Sydney Our lady of the way parishes Ecology Group meeting.

**Thurs June 28<sup>th</sup>** Politics in the Pub – IPAN committee member and Marrickville Peace group leader Nick Deane speaking on US Marines in Darwin – Give ‘em the Boot campaign.

**Friday June 29<sup>th</sup>** from 8-9.30am joined Sydney action as part of FLAC [Frontline Action Against Coal] Red line on coal demanding no new coal. The Sydney group marched from Circular quay to EFIC offices [Economic, Finance and Industry Commission] calling for NO finance to ADANI #Redline and demand #NoNewCoal.

♥♥♥♥♥ In 25 cities and towns we stood up to say the coal era is over, we need clean renewables now! .This video shows some of the 25 groups <https://www.facebook.com/FrontlineActionOnCoal/videos/1646383195474564/>

**Sat June 30<sup>th</sup>** : With SKNAGS outside NSW ALP conference sending message to delegates to protect our land, water, farms and future generations and STOP coal and CSG mining Seated is the wonderful 96yr old –Kokoda veteran - yes he’s 96 and an amazing, tireless protector of our Land, Water and future against Fossil fuel mining and a member of Sydney Knitting Nannas and friends.



**Sat June 30<sup>th</sup>** 12 noon outside QVB AABCC and IPAN for symbolic burning of the Australian Military Sales catalogue with speeches, song and info for passers by. Quite well received a number of people said 'good on you'. Video

[https://l.facebook.com/l.php?u=https%3A%2F%2Fyoutu.be%2FEm824eqhYZY&h=AT3PtX\\_788ZmSAHYjUBGVbaVnhblhA-3QTIQUULg4vAcHnN1EG0dOpgFeSrz7KM9-ziPwQulcXe\\_OQ-F8qJ86Sdq9\\_v-AqBhmlg4bCrYWJKMa1A5CbyDAEt\\_tpl0QY4dfWdc](https://l.facebook.com/l.php?u=https%3A%2F%2Fyoutu.be%2FEm824eqhYZY&h=AT3PtX_788ZmSAHYjUBGVbaVnhblhA-3QTIQUULg4vAcHnN1EG0dOpgFeSrz7KM9-ziPwQulcXe_OQ-F8qJ86Sdq9_v-AqBhmlg4bCrYWJKMa1A5CbyDAEt_tpl0QY4dfWdc)



**\*\* *The Catholic Nonviolence Initiative***, a project of *Pax Christi International*, the Catholic peace movement, affirms that active nonviolence is at the heart of the vision and message of Jesus, the life of the Catholic Church, and the long-term vocation of healing and reconciling both people and the planet.