

**For more information on
this month's social justice
issues:**

World Day of Peace:

<http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/human-life-and-dignity/war-and-peace/world-day-of-peace.cfm>

World Leprosy Day:

<https://www.leprosymission.org.au/get-involved/world-leprosy-sunday/>

<https://www.caritas.org.au/learn/newsroom/news-detail?ID=7b51c012-8d0b-4881-bc9b-0c7f6bfb0f3e>

**Australian Catholic Social Justice
Council:**


www.socialjustice.catholic.org.au

Links for Catholic social justice:

<http://www.socialjustice.catholic.org.au/links>

Upcoming Dates:

- 4 February:
World Cancer Day
- 11 February:
**World Day of Prayer
for the Sick**
- 20 February:
**World Day of Social
Justice**
- 21 February:
**International Mother
Language Day**



**Social
Justice
Diary**

St John's Parish, Kippax,
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There are many social justice issues currently not being addressed by the parish community because we no longer have a committee. If anyone is interested in meeting every few months, please contact us.



WELCOME TO ISSUE 3

In his New Year's Day homily, Pope Francis said the start of the new year is a time to be "amazed" by the opportunity for new beginnings. God makes all things new and we can rejoice that we can always have a new start, both individually and as His people.

1 JANUARY: World Day of Peace

This day was instituted in 1968 by Pope St Paul VI, and each year on this day the Pope gives a special message. In 2019, Pope Francis' theme is: *"Good Politics is at the Service of Peace"*.

In announcing the theme, the Vatican made note of the call to all of us to engage with our civic systems and raise our voices for the common good. Civic participation and faithful citizenship requires us to understand the political and social issues that impact our brothers and sisters throughout the world.

Quote from Pope Francis:

"We need to participate for the common good. Sometimes we hear: a good Catholic is not interested in politics. This is not true: good Catholics immerse themselves in politics by offering the best of themselves so that the leader can govern."

- Pope Francis, 16 Sep 2013

Working for the *common good* means not just listening to the message of the Gospels but also putting it into practice. By appreciating our gifts and talents, we can use them for the benefit of the whole community.

27 JANUARY: World Leprosy Day

Raoul Follereau is credited with establishing World Leprosy Day, first celebrated in 1954, and is observed in most countries in the world on the last Sunday of January each year. The Church reads the story of the Gospel where Jesus meets and heals a person with leprosy.

Raoul was a writer, and a routine assignment to the Sahara region brought him face to face with leprosy affected persons for the first time. The strong social discrimination meted out against these unfortunate people, set him on a crusade against this discrimination. Over the next ten years, he travelled the world many times, raising money to support the Sisters of Our Lady of the Apostles in building a centre for treatment in Adzope in Ivory Coast, a town of leprosy affected persons.

What began there spread into a strong campaign to free them from segregation imposed by society for centuries. Not confining himself to mere speech, Follereau set an example, visiting them and embracing them to promote the idea that leprosy affected persons are human beings.

World Leprosy Day is an occasion to remind the whole world that in the poorest regions of the world there are people afflicted by the oldest and the most feared disease known to humankind. For nearly thirty years this disease has been curable. Several millions of people suffering from leprosy have been cured. But there is still a long way to eliminate this disease completely. And the stigma of the disease means that even after being cured, people are still treated as "untouchables".

Each of us can say like Christ: *'I want you to be healed'*, by supporting those with a prayer and donation to organisations like Caritas or Leprosy Mission Australia, for those whom the world has made outcasts.

A leper in present-day India:



Other January Dates:

4 JANUARY: World Braille Day

This is the birth date of Louis Braille who invented the system so that blind people could read and write. This day recognises the revolution that Louis Braille brought in the lives of people who are blind or visually impaired. Braille is said to be the key which has improved the social and economic opportunities to millions of people and has given a definite meaning to blind people so that they can be more independent and can educate themselves.

27 JANUARY: Commemoration of the Holocaust Day

27 January marks the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau, the largest Nazi death camp. We remember the millions of people killed in the Holocaust, and in subsequent genocides in Bosnia, Cambodia, Rwanda, and Darfur.

The theme for 2019 is *Torn from Home* to help us reflect on what happens when individuals, families and communities are driven out of their homes, because of persecution or the threat of genocide. There is also the continuing difficulty survivors face as they try to find and build new homes when the genocide is over.