

Indigenous MAKE POVERTY HISTORY.

MIPH Newsletter

4th May 2009

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MIPH is an initiative of the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Ecumenical Commission (NATSIEC) which is a commission of the National Council of Churches in Australia (NCCA).

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Dear supporter,

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner, Mr Tom Calma, today launched the 2008 Social Justice Report and the 2008 Native Title Report in Sydney. This is Mr Calma's fifth Social Justice report and his last as his term ends in July. During the launch the speakers paid their respects to Mr Calma for his unwavering commitment to achieving justice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and the remarkable contribution he has made over the past several years; an accolade which is wholeheartedly shared by NATSIEC.

The report Mr Calma delivered has a feeling of optimism and remarks on some of the significant actions taken to improve the situation for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people over the past eighteen months. Actions highlighted include the Federal Government's apology, supporting the United Nation's Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, and the headway made on reducing Indigenous disadvantage. Mr Calma spoke of an optimism that new partnerships can be forged to address the challenges now and into the future.

However, Mr Calma also spoke of fears of uncertainty, particularly in the face of the economic crisis and the growing concern of climate change. He stressed the need for strong and genuine partnerships to overcome the issues facing Australians over the next 18 months.

key to setting a new agenda are the following areas highlighted in this year's Social Justice report. They include:

- Putting into place a credible national Indigenous representative mechanism;
- Creating a role for human rights as part of the architecture in building a new relationship with Indigenous people;
- Reinstating the application of the Racial Discrimination Act 1975 of the NTER legislation;
- Developing a remote education strategy and accountability framework;
- Auditing populations and projected populations of remote pre-school and school-aged children;
- Establishing an Indigenous controlled national healing body;
- Establishing a long term national plan of action to achieve health equality;
- Establishing adequate mechanisms to coordinate and monitor the multiple service delivery roles of governments that impact on

and NATSIEC's work.

Indigenous health.

The Social Justice Report 2008 is available at
http://www.hreoc.gov.au/social_justice/sj_report/sjreport08/index.html

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2009 Martung Upah Appeal Launched

martung upah appeal

The Make *Indigenous Poverty* History Campaign is an initiative of the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Ecumenical Commission (NATSIEC). Other projects run by NATSIEC include the Indigenous Theology project and a development fund.

NATSIEC receives significant funding from Act of Peace and the Uniting Church (NSW) 2% fund, however the rest of our funding comes from Church donations and donations to its annual appeal Martung Upah*.

By supporting the Martung Upah appeal you are joining us in a partnership to engage Churches and the wider community in fostering a deeper understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Together we can work towards healing the hurts of the past and building a better tomorrow for all our children so that injustice and discrimination will not be part of Australia's future.

We thank you for your support.

To download go to the Martung Upah Appeal webpage and to make an online donation [click here](#).

* Martung Upah is from Western Australia and means partnership.

Week of Prayer for Reconciliation

The Week of Prayer for Reconciliation (27th May to June 3rd), and National Sorry Day which opens the week on the 26th May, remind us of unfinished business concerning the needs of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples of Australia. Christ calls us to actively work for reconciliation and forgiveness, and to address the hardships and injustices experienced by our Indigenous sisters and brothers.

NATSIEC has produced two resources for the week of Prayer for Reconciliation. An order of service which congregations can adapt for their own use during this week as well as a booklet with prayers readings and reflections for each of the days. These are available from our website at www.ncca.org.au/natsiec

Illuminations



On 13th February 2009, on the first Anniversary of the Apology to the Stolen Generations, NATSIEC was holding a Munguddor Bi Buya Retreat (an Indigenous Theology retreat). During the day we took some

time to reflect on the year since the Apology and what it meant then, and now, to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Rev. Sealin Garlett gave a moving talk which we would like to share with you in the lead up to the Week of Prayer for Reconciliation in May. Rev Garlett's talk has been published in Illuminations - an occasional paper.

You can also download Illuminations and as well as an MP3 recording of his talk from our website www.ncca.org.au/natsiec.

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