

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS



Dr Laurie Berg

*Associate Professor,
Faculty of Law, University of Technology Sydney
Co-Executive Director,
Migrant Justice Institute Sydney*

Dr Laurie is widely recognised as one of Australia's leading legal researchers on migrant workers' rights. She has conducted major international and national studies on migrant worker wage theft, exploitation, and access to justice in Australia, and globally. Her book, *Migrant Rights at Work: Law's Precariousness at the Intersection of Immigration and Labour* published by Routledge in 2016, was the first on migrant workers' rights in Australia. Prior to her academic appointment, Laurie held posts at Human Rights First in New York, the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees in Washington DC, and the Australian Red Cross in Sydney. She is a recipient of the Lisa Gilad prize by the International Association for the Study of Forced Migration and has been awarded numerous university and faculty prizes for research excellence and impact.



Rev James Bhagwan

*General Secretary,
Pacific Conference of Churches, Suva, Fiji*

Born and raised in Fiji and an ordained minister of the Methodist Church in Fiji, Rev James Shri Bhagwan is in his second term as General Secretary of the Pacific Conference of Churches, the Oceania region's peak ecumenical organisation with 35 member churches and 11 national Councils of churches from 19 Pacific Island Countries and territories, including Aotearoa New Zealand and the land now called Australia. A practicing ecumenist, Rev. James is also licenced to preach and celebrate the Sacraments in the Anglican Diocese of Polynesia. He holds a Bachelor of Divinity in Ecumenical Studies (with Honours) from the Pacific Theological College, a Master of Theology in Christian Social Ethics from the Methodist Theological University in Seoul, South Korea, and hopes to eventually finish his PhD when he can make time.

A great-grandson of labourers brought to Fiji under the British modern slavery programme known as the Indenture System, social and ecological justice are key areas of Rev. James' Christian Activism. An avid stand-up paddler and volunteer crew member, chaplain, and trustee of the Fijian Traditional Voyaging Canoe, the Uto Ni Yalo, he is heavily involved in coastal and ocean/marine protection. He has previously served as the Methodist Church in Fiji's Secretary for Communication and Overseas Mission, as well as acting General Secretary of the Fiji Council of Churches.

Rev James is also involved in gender justice work, climate justice, and development issues.

DISCUSSION FORUM SPEAKERS

{In order of presentation}



Her Excellency Chiara Porro

*Australian Ambassador
to the Holy See*

HE Ambassador Chiara Porro is a career diplomat who joined Australia's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) in 2009. She has held a range of positions in Canberra, including most recently as Director, Ministerial and Executive Liaison Section, Executive Branch. She was seconded as an Adviser to the International Division of the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet (2016-17), and has worked in DFAT's Budget Branch (2015-16) and Africa Branch (2014).

Overseas, Ambassador Porro has served as Deputy Consul-General in Noumea, New Caledonia (2018-2020), on a short term mission to West Africa (2016), and as Second Secretary in New Delhi, India (2011-2014).

Ambassador Porro holds a Master of International Relations and Diplomacy from the University of Leiden, the Netherlands and a Bachelor of Arts in Politics, Philosophy and Economics from the University of York, United Kingdom. She speaks Italian and French.

Ambassador Porro presented credentials to His Holiness Pope Francis on 27 August 2020.

Ambassador Porro is married and has two children.



Archbishop Christopher Prowse

*Catholic Archbishop of Canberra and Goulburn
Chair, ACBC Bishops Commission for
Evangelisation, Laity and Ministry*

Archbishop Christopher Prowse was appointed Catholic Archbishop of Canberra and Goulburn, Australia in 2013. He was previously the Bishop of Sale Diocese (2009-2013). He was appointed Vicar General of the Archdiocese of Melbourne in 2001. Afterwards he was appointed as Auxiliary Bishop of Melbourne in 2001. Archbishop Prowse is a current member of the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference as Chair, Bishops Commission for Evangelisation, Laity and Church Ministry. He is also the Bishop Delegate for the Australian Catholic Migrant and Refugee Office (ACMRO).

He was a Member of the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue, Rome. In 2014, he was appointed Consulter to the Vatican's Commission for Religious Relations with the Jews. In 2016, Pope Francis appointed him Apostolic Administrator of the Wagga Wagga Diocese until the appointment of Bishop Mark Edwards in May 2020. In May 2021, Pope Francis appointed him Apostolic Administrator of the Military Ordinariate of Australia.

PALM

Pacific Australia Labour Mobility

Ms Carry Duffy

*Director - Workers Support Strategy,
Pacific Australia Labour Mobility (PALM)
Delivery Branch,
Pacific Labour Operations Division
Australian Government Department of
Employment and Workplace Relations (DEWR)*

Ms Fiona Nitschke

*Director - Worker Support,
Pacific Australia Labour Mobility (PALM)
Delivery Branch,
Pacific Labour Operations Division
Australian Government Department of
Employment and Workplace Relations (DEWR)*



Photo: palmscheme.gov.au



Mr Peter Arndt

*Director, ACBC Office for Justice,
Ecology & Peace*

Peter Arndt is currently the Director of the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference's Office for Justice, Ecology & Peace. He previously served as the Executive Officer of the Archdiocesan Justice & Peace Commission in Brisbane. Peter's early career focused on secondary teaching, including religious education. He has been involved in local parish social justice groups, and through his role as Executive Officer of the Catholic Justice & Peace Commission, Peter has studied and applied Catholic Social Teaching through various means. A recent project undertaken by Peter included the Signs of Our Times website initiative which offers resources for Catholics to embrace a culture of encounter in their social and environmental action, grounded in the Church's rich Catholic tradition. Peter has been influenced by *Evangelii Gaudium* and *Laudato Si'* and has spent time with people on the peripheries, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, the peoples of the Pacific, and of West Papua.

Peter has a Bachelor of Divinity with Honours awarded by the Melbourne College of Divinity. He has completed a Master of Arts by thesis with Griffith University, the topic of which was the ecumenical theology of Hans Kung. Peter has audited a course in Catholic Social Teaching at the Australian Catholic University in Brisbane.



Mr Mark Zirnsak

*Senior Social Justice Advocate, Uniting Church in Australia, Synod of Victoria and Tasmania
Community Connections Victoria and Tasmania*

Mark Zirnsak joined the Uniting Church in Australia, Synod of Victoria and Tasmania, in 1999 as the Social Justice Officer. In 2004 he became the Director of the social justice unit and in 2018 became the Synod Senior Social Justice Advocate. He has advocated for seasonal workers on the Pacific Australia Labour Mobility (PALM) scheme since 2014. He is a member of five of the PALM stakeholder groups with the Federal Government. He is also on the Federal Government Modern Slavery Expert Advisory Group and the Attorney General's National Roundtable on Slavery and Human Trafficking.



Ms Christine Carolan

*National Executive Officer, ACRA TH
(Australian Catholic Religious Against the Trafficking of Humans)*

Christine Carolan has worked on the issue of human trafficking since a global Catholic sisters' call for action in 2001. Christine is the Executive Officer of ACRATH, a collaboration of Catholic religious and their partners. ACRATH's work is to support victims and survivors, raise awareness, and advocate for systemic change. One aspect of ACRATH's advocacy for systemic change has been a successful annual advocacy week in Canberra in federal parliament engaging on pressing human trafficking issues.

CONFERENCE DINNER GUEST SPEAKER



Dr James Cockayne

New South Wales Anti-Slavery Commissioner

Dr James Cockayne grew up in Sydney and now lives on Bundjalung country in the Northern Rivers. Trained in law, public policy and human rights, James spent two decades overseas promoting human rights and responsible business practices - from counter-terrorism work in Africa and the Middle East, to advising United Nations leaders in New York, Geneva and Tokyo. Over the last decade James' efforts have focused on the global fight to end modern slavery. He was appointed as NSW's inaugural independent Anti-slavery Commissioner on 1 August 2022, for a five year term.

DISCUSSION FORUM SPEAKERS {CONT'D}

{In order of presentation}



Fr Peter O'Neill SSC

*Regional Director of Oceania,
St Columbans Mission Society
ACRATH's representative on
PALM Scheme Agriculture Committee*

Fr Peter O'Neill SSC is the Columban Regional Director Oceania. After his ordination in 1990, Peter was assigned to the Columban mission in Taiwan where he ministered for 26 years in the Diocese of Hsinchu, one hour south of the capital Taipei. While in Taiwan, Peter was the Diocesan Coordinator for social and pastoral services for migrants, trafficked peoples and immigrants, and the Director of the Diocesan Migrant Centre which he helped establish in 1996. He also established four safe houses for trafficked women and men. On three occasions he attended the United Nations Human Rights Council and the International Labour Conference in Geneva. Peter was a regular guest speaker at International Migrant Conferences

In July 2017, Peter was assigned to Australia and became a member of ACRATH. In January 2019, Peter became ACRATH's representative on the Australian Government's Seasonal Worker Program Advisory Committee and in November 2021, he became ACRATH's representative on the Australian Government's Pacific Australia Labour Mobility (PALM) Scheme Agriculture Committee. Peter is also a member of the ACRATH Advocacy Team.



Ms Denise Talbot

*Parish Advocate for Seasonal Workers,
Kings Meadows Parish, Tasmania*

Denise, a parishioner of Kings Meadows Parish in the Archdiocese of Hobart, is a qualified Early Childhood Teacher and a Life Member of the Tasmania Catholic Women's League. She has been involved in the community, teaching in various parts of the state, and has been involved in various organisations, including the Tasmania Catholic Schools Parents and Friends Federation. Denise has been on Parish Pastoral Councils of at least four northern Tasmanian Parishes and was awarded the Sir Guilford Young Medal in 2022 for services to the Archdiocese.

In 2018, Denise became involved in supporting Seasonal Workers in the Northern Midlands area, south of Launceston. A small grant from the John Wallis Foundation led to a Community Welcome Party for the Seasonal Workers in November 2019, which led to the Australia Day Event of the Year Award by the Northern Midlands Council. In recognition of her contribution to the community, she was awarded the Evandale Rotary Club Citizen of the Year and is a Paul Harris Fellow.

Over the past 20 years, Denise has been involved in the disability sector, serving as a volunteer for Days for Girls Australia Ltd. (a not for profit organisation). Over the past 10 years, she has founded and led the Launceston Chapter, been Tasmanian State Coordinator, and is a DfGAL Director.



Sr Helen Nolen rsm

Religious Advocate for Seasonal Workers

Helen Nolen is a Sister of Mercy currently residing in the Sunraysia region in Mildura, one of the main centres for Seasonal Workers in Australia. Her background is in education, at primary, secondary and tertiary levels. She has extensive experience working interculturally in Northern Territory, Western Australia and more recently in Timor Leste. Helen continues to lecture in Sacramental Education through Diploma in Pastoral Ministry for religious sisters in PNG and Solomon Islands. Presently she is a member of the RCIA program in Mildura and is a member of the Ballarat Diocesan Social Justice Commission. She is a member of PALM Scheme Community Connections Sunraysia-Mallee and a volunteer with SMECC- Sunraysia Mallee Ethnic Communities Council.



**For this reason,
the presence of migrants and refugees
and of vulnerable people in general -
is an invitation to recover some of those essential
dimensions of our Christian existence
and our humanity that risk being overlooked
in a prosperous society.**

That is why it is not just about migrants.

**When we show concern for them,
we also show concern for ourselves,
for everyone; in taking care of them, we all grow;
in listening to them, we also give voice
to a part of ourselves that we may keep hidden
because it is not well regarded nowadays. ●●**

*Pope Francis
Vatican City, 27 May 2019*