



## CONCERNED CATHOLICS CANBERRA GOULBURN BLOG

### **The Easter Light breaks through the darkness**

**28 March 2024**

The Easter ceremonies focus on light. The ever-present metaphor of enlightened darkness is the message of the resurrection. It is so pertinent for our troubled times where political gridlock characterises so many of our pressing social concerns.

The carnage in Gaza demands a humanitarian solution but remains in limbo. The plight of refugees is once again a 'political football'. Sustainable action on the climate crisis is prey to ignorance and self-interest. Low income people and welfare recipients keep falling behind.

Our politics seems stuck, even paralysed for solutions.

These are the times for faith communities to be the catalysts for change. To speak from an 'enlightened reality'. To venture where the political parties are too shy to go.

Faith communities have the credibility to offer positions of consensus on contentious issues. A consensus that at its minimum, 'solidifies on the right to life, on the inviolable respect for the innocent, for just treatment of prisoners and the physical and mental integrity of every human person' (Leonardo Boff, *Thoughts and Dreams of an Old Theologian*, p.109).

This past year we have seen the weakened nature of our Catholic voice in the takeover of Calvary Hospital by the ACT government. The value of a Catholic run hospital fell on deaf ears. The muted community reaction was also telling. If our faith community is to be an active catalyst to bring about a minimum consensus for the common good, then the enlightened wisdom of the resurrection message needs to be promulgated in an engaging and life enhancing manner.

I was proud to see Fr John Woods speaking in just this fashion at last Sunday's Palm Sunday Rally for Refugees. He made the essence of the Gospel intelligible and challenging. He spoke to a diverse and intensely engaged assembly of heart felt advocates. People seeking justice for those unable to bring about for themselves. A place where surely Jesus would have been.

We need more of this from our Church. We need to stand up and insist that a just peace be effected in Gaza immediately. We need to call out the scaremongering that drives migration

politics. We need to do more than pray for the poor but bring to the forefront the timid efforts to increased social housing options and real cash relief on the costs of essential household items.

Ours is not a privatised religion. Nor is it a vanguard for conventional comfortable social order.

The Easter light breaks through the darkness when we bring it to bear on the struggles of the poor and the misery of the oppressed.

Our call is to be a part of their liberation and to agitate until that is their reality.

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