

## **ANNUAL REPORT OF OLOG SOCIAL JUSTICE GROUP – 2019**

1. **History and Aims of OLoG Social Justice Group** – Our Lady of Graces Parish Social Justice Group was formed about 10 years ago as a ministry at OLOG to assist the Parish Priest to further the Dominican ideals of furthering Social Justice Issues and at the same time remembering vulnerable people in society. We achieve this by selecting up to half a dozen relevant issues each year to raise awareness in the parish usually in conjunction with a mass. When planning an event linked to a mass, the Social Justice Group prepares an addition for the MOC's introduction before the mass and two appropriate prayers to be included in the Prayers of the Faithful relevant to the issue being prayed for.
2. **Social Justice Group Meetings 2019** – 2019 was another successful year for OLoG Social Justice Group which is comprised of 5 active members who are very passionate about advancing Christian social justice issues in the parish. The Social Justice Group was able to meet its ministry goals and arranged 5 parish events during the year. The Parish Social Justice Group met 10 times between February and December 2019. Our meetings were held on the first Tuesday of the month.
3. **Social Justice Events 2019** – The events the Social Justice Group focussed on during 2019 were Family & Domestic Violence, Refugees and Asylum Seekers, NAIDOC Week and First Australians, Homelessness in Australia and the Australian Catholic Bishops Social Justice Statement.
4. **Family & Domestic Violence Month, May 2019** – At weekend masses on 18/19 May 2019, **Domestic Violence Sunday**, the issue of family and domestic violence was again highlighted to members of the Parish Community. We continued with our usual theme of "Never is the time for Domestic Violence, No Never." Victims of domestic and family violence in OLoG's parish were encouraged to seek appropriate professional support.
5. **World Refugee Day, 20 June 2019** – At weekend masses on 22/23 June 2019 members of the parish were again informed of and asked to reflect on the plight of refugees and asylum seekers, many fleeing from war zones, violence, poverty, extreme hardship and religious or ethnic persecution.
6. **NAIDOC Week, 7 to 14 July 2019** – At masses on 6/7 July 2019, NAIDOC Week 2019 was again brought to the notice of parishioners. The theme for NAIDOC Week 2019 was "Voice, Treaty, Truth. Let's Work Together." It gave the parish community an opportunity to celebrate the contribution Indigenous Australians make to Australian Society and enabled them to spend time thinking about what the future holds for the first people of Australia. Parishioners were given the opportunity to pay respect to the traditional owners of the land on which OLoG's Church stands by joining in an Acknowledgement of Country before the commencement of mass.
7. **Brisbane East Deanery Meeting, 24 July 2019** – The Brisbane East Deanery meeting was held in OLoG Parish Library on the evening of Wednesday 24 July 2019. Two members of the Social Justice Group attended the meeting and advocated for a greater emphasis on social justice issues across the East Deanery. We were invited to attend future deanery meetings to raise social justice issues.
8. **National Homelessness Week, 4 to 11 August 2019** – This was a new venture by the Social Justice Group. At masses on the Weekend of 10/11 August 2019, **Homelessness Sunday**, the Social Justice Group highlighted the issue of homelessness as an ongoing challenge in the Brisbane community and throughout Australia. The theme for 2019 was "Homelessness takes many hidden forms" to emphasise that homelessness is more than

people living in parks. A short video prepared by the Saint Vincent de Paul Society on this year's theme was shown prior to the commencement of mass.

9. **Launch of the Australian Catholic Bishops Social Justice Statement 2019/2020: Making It Real; Genuine Human Encounter in our Digital World, 25 September 2019** – Archbishop Mark Coleridge launched the 2019/2020 statement dealing with the challenge of putting people at the centre of the digital world. Well known Brisbane journalist Madonna King led a conversation about the statement with a panel of communication experts. Two members of the Social Justice Group attended the launch on the evening of Wednesday 25 September 2019 at St James' Parish Hall, Coorparoo, put questions to the panel for consideration and took the opportunity after the event to discuss social justice issues with Archbishop Mark Coleridge, Peter Arnt from the Catholic Justice and Peace Commission and members of various other diocesan social justice groups who attended the event.
10. **Social Justice Sunday, 29 September 2019** – Social Justice Sunday was the climax of the Social Justice Year in Our Lady of Graces Parish. The Social Justice Group arranged for the Parish to receive copies of the Social Justice Statement 2019/2020 and the Liturgy Notes provided by the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference.
11. **Other Events during 2019** – The Social Justice Group was well represented at various events in the wider Brisbane Christian Community during 2019.
12. **Preparing for 2020** – OLoG Social Justice Group is looking forward to 2020 and the social justice challenges that will confront us. In order to gain new ideas and different perspectives on Social Justice Issues, we would appreciate additional members and encourage other parishioners to join us for our one hourly meetings on the first Tuesday of each month commencing at 7.00pm in the Parish Library.

Henry Gorniak (President)