



*Southern African Catholic Bishops' Conference*  
**PARLIAMENTARY LIAISON OFFICE**



**Newsletter: Volume 18 – July-December 2011**



**Public Lecture: The Legacy of Archbishop Oscar Romero for Contemporary Public Life**

This event was hosted at St Michael's parish hall in Rondebosch and attracted about 200 guests. Pictured above left are Peter-John Pearson (CPLD director), welcoming guests and Julian Filochowski, CMG, OBE, former director of Catholic Fund for Overseas Development (CAFOD) in the UK.



**Roundtable Discussion: The Experiences of CAFOD in Faith-based Advocacy with Government**

While in Cape Town, Julian Filochowski addressed a small group of people representing various faiths who have an advocacy role. Pictured above left are Reverend Suzanne Peterson (Anglican Church Public Policy Office), Sr Margaret Kelly (former head of the Bishops' Conference J+P Commission), Fr Wim Lindeque (CT Archdiocesan Justice and Peace Commission) and Ms Lois Law (CPLD Researcher). Above right are Palesa Siphuma, (CPLD researcher), Peter-John Pearson and Julian Filochowski.



**Roundtable Discussion: The costs of our energy options**

The rising cost of electricity, in conjunction with continuing power outages, has led to much uncertainty regarding South African's energy supply. There is also a great deal of misunderstanding, indeed confusion, surrounding the costs of the different energy options available to the South African public (i.e. nuclear, coal, solar, wind, hydro, etc.). Many sustainable and renewable energy solutions are not being readily implemented because of how much more expensive they are – or are said to be – in comparison to fossil fuels. At the same time, the 'hidden' environmental costs of coal, oil and nuclear energy are not always taken into account. This roundtable discussion was addressed by Dr Andrew Marquard from the UCT Energy Research Centre. Organizations represented included: WWF South Africa, Islamic Relief Services, Ethicore and the 90x2030 Project.



**Roundtable Discussion: Social Welfare Grants – Are They Still Affordable and Sustainable?**

Government spends 10.9 percent of its total budget on social welfare grants which support approximately 15.2 million South Africans. Given the current economic crisis facing Europe and our own escalating public debt, we must ask ourselves whether we can sustain such spending on social welfare. On the other hand, with so many of our people dependent on social welfare, can we afford not to spend the money? These were some of the issues addressed by our two speakers; Professor Stan du Plessis from the Department of Economics, University of Stellenbosch and Mr David Neves, researcher at PLAAS, University of the Western Cape (both pictured above left). Organisations represented included the National Association of Child Care Workers, BADISA (the ministry of Compassion for the Dutch Reformed Church and the Uniting Reformed Church), Wolpe Trust and Hope Africa.



**Roundtable Discussion: Exploring SA Family Policy**

This roundtable discussion was co-hosted with the SACBC Family Life Desk and took place in Pretoria. Family Policy recognizes the many different kinds of families that exist in our country and focuses on effective functioning for the wellbeing of the family unit as well as the individual members. Various bishops, including Archbishop William Slattery of Pretoria, pictured above right with Fr Peter John Pearson, and those interested in this policy participated in this discussion. Organizations represented included World Vision, the Foundation for the Person and the Family, the Turquoise Harmony Institute, Retrouvaille Johannesburg, and Radio Veritas.



**Roundtable: Parenting with Grace – The Challenge of Positive Parenting**

This roundtable discussion was a collaboration between CPLO, Youth Unlimited and the Archdiocesan Centre for Pastoral Development. Main inputs were given by Judith Bredekamp (an educational psychologist) and Toni Rowland from the SACBC Family Desk. This discussion was very well attended by representatives from various schools, St Kizito, Nicro and BADISA.



**Sri Lankan Bishops:** A group of seven Roman Catholic Bishops from Sri Lanka visited Cape Town. They were accompanied by the secretary general of Caritas Sri Lanka and two staffers. The purpose of their visit was to inform themselves of the different ways in which South Africa has managed to emerge from its apartheid past and begin the journey towards reconciliation and peace. The delegation was particularly keen to hear reflections on our Truth and Reconciliation Commission from as many angles as possible.



**Roundtable Discussion: Multi-grade Schools in South Africa – Finding Solutions to Rural Education**

In hundreds of rural schools around the country teachers are having to cope with children of a range of ages in one classroom. What does this mean for the quality of education they provide? And what can be done to meet the challenge of small, under-resourced schools in country areas? Dr Jurie Joubert, director of the Cape Peninsula University of Technology, Centre for Multi-grade Education, based in Wellington addressed some of these questions in his very thought-provoking presentation.



**Roundtable Discussion: The Children’s Act – A Work in Progress:**

The new Children’s Act has been operational for over a year and this discussion considered the difficulties in implementation with particular reference to Early Childhood Development. Lucy Jamieson, senior advocacy co-ordinator at the Children’s Institute, University of Cape Town gave the main input. Representatives from Nazareth House, Lawrence House, the Scalabrini Centre and Catholic Welfare and Development participated in this discussion.



### Meeting with Trevor Manuel

Seen at the end of Trevor Manuel's presentation of the National Planning Commission to Catholic leaders in Johannesburg on October 5 are (above left): Fr Sean O'Leary of the Denis Hurley Peace Institute in Pretoria, Mr Manuel, Cardinal Wilfrid Napier of Durban, and Fr Peter-John Pearson, director of the Catholic Parliamentary Liaison Office. Above right: Mr Gunther Simmermacher (Southern Cross editor), Sr Hermenegild Makoro CPS (Secretary General of the SACBC), Bishop Barry Wood OMI (Archdiocese of Durban), Bishop Joe Sandri MCCJ (Diocese of Witbank), Bishop Graham Rose (Diocese of Dundee), and Bishop Frank De Gouveia (Diocese of Oudtshoorn).

## 2012 YEAR PLANNING



During December, the CPLO team conducted a review of 2011 and set out various plans for 2012. This process was facilitated by Bev Gillespie, an independent consultant, who also shared some of her findings from the three-year (2009-2011) evaluation she conducted. ABOVE (from L-R): Lois Law (Researcher), Lucinda Permall (Financial Administrator), Palesa Siphuma (Researcher), Maria Beauvoir (Office Administrator) and Karen Morris (Programme Co-ordinator). BELOW (from L-R): Kenny Pasensie (Researcher), Mike Pothier (Research Co-ordinator), Peter-John Pearson (Director) and Mayibuye Magwaza (Research Intern).



## Publications Distributed

### Briefing Papers

- 265 The new growth path
- 266 Water services: progress and constraints
- 267 The National Environmental Management Waste Act
- 268 Irregular migration challenges & opportunities for SA & USA
- 269 The National Health Insurance: Can we afford it or can we afford not to have it?
- 270 The Children's Act: An ECD perspective
- 271 Domestic workers' wage determination hearings
- 272 Low level corruption
- 273 President Zuma: The first 2.5 years
- 274 The Expanded Public Works Programme: Chipping away at unemployment
- 275 Corruption: Action at the Top, Still Bad at the Bottom
- 276 Social Grants: An affordable way to combat poverty
- 277 The Cost of our Energy
- 278 Aspects of Pre and Post Natal Care

### Responses

- 6. In contempt of the Constitution
- 7. The fruits of compromise
- 8. Subverting Parliament
- 9. Better late than never
- 10. Suspended, not silenced

### Submissions made

- Criminal Procedure Amendment Bill 2010
- Judges' Remuneration and Conditions of Employment Amendment Bill
- Concept Document for the Proposed National Council on Gender Based Violence.

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