

Report of Meeting BDSJC July

The Ballarat Diocesan Social Justice Commission met on July 27 in Ballarat. All members were present except Bishop Paul and Jim Ryan who were apologies.

The meeting began with a time of prayer and reflection. The members experienced a spiral cosmic walk that highlighted science's understandings of evolution time from the Big Bang billions of years ago to today. This was introduced with reflections from an Aboriginal philosopher and followed up with reflection and deep contemplation. It established a prayerful and reflective ambience to the day.

After reviewing tasks and progress since the previous meeting the Commission discussed the up-coming breakfast session with Chris Lowney which has been organised and promoted by Centacare.

Rachel had sent a questionnaire to schools asking for which charitable organisations they raise money to support. It was rewarding to note that schools prioritise Catholic charities mostly.

Solar energy and the environment have been key discussion points for the Commission. It is hoped that Parishes look carefully at how they can support re-newable energy. Members of the Commission will discuss with the Townsville Diocese their program for re-newable energy rollout for schools.

Two members of the Commission will attend the launch of the Bishops' Social Justice statement in Sydney and then co-ordinate the Diocesan launch. The topic relates to relationships and technology.

At the ACRATH meeting Rachel heard about a recently published illustrated children's book aimed at teaching children about present day slavery. "**The Dead Eye and the Deep Blue Sea**" by Vannak Anan Prum.

Fair Trade Week will be celebrated in August and we are invited to host a morning tea with all products consumed ethically sourced as Fair Trade.

Felicity, our Youth representative, spoke of the up-coming Catholic Youth Festival in December which will be held in Perth. Because of the distance involved in getting to Perth, the costs to attend are higher than previous Festivals.

The Commission hopes to hold its next meeting out of Ballarat.