

CATHOLIC
DIOCESE
of
BALLARAT



**Ballarat Diocese
Social Justice Commission**

Report of Meeting
Saturday, 13th March, 2021

The Ballarat Diocesan Social Justice Commission met in Ballarat on Saturday 13 March, 2021.

Present were Anthea Hinchey (chair), Bishop Paul Bird, Sue Searls, Jim Ryan, Noel Gregory, Felicity Liston and Executive Secretary: Dr Rachel Smith

Apologies were received by Sr. Helen Nolen, Stacey Atkins

Absent: Andrew O'Flynn

Felicity prepared and led prayer based on getting in touch with the joy in us and reuniting with those present who have not had a face-to-face meeting for a year.

The Commission endorsed the Palm Sunday March for Justice for Refugees which will be held in Melbourne. The Commission will support the Palm Sunday March for Refugees held in Ballarat this year should it go ahead.

The Commission reflected that several issues the Commission had addressed through correspondence to Members of Parliament had gone largely unacknowledged which has caused disappointment and concern. When writing letters to Members of Parliament the Commission uses the structure of identifying the problem, giving specific supportable examples of the problem and offering possible solutions.

As Easter is only a few weeks away, the Commission re-visited the issue of chocolate manufacturers who underpay workers and use child workers as part of their harvesting or production and will issue a reminder, through the schools, to check that chocolate and other products are ethically sourced and have the appropriate logo informing this. ACRATH.org.au/resources/ is an excellent source of information and resources and easily accessible.

Also, there will be a forum this year on the topic of Climate Change and what we can do to make a difference.