



Today is Social Justice Sunday. The statement for this year is *Cry of the Earth, Cry of the Poor*. It is 20 years since the last environmental justice statement by the Bishops of Australia, that time on the Great Barrier Reef. The statement this year is like an Australian response to the Laudato Si letter of Pope Francis, and it could not be more timely. During the launch of the Statement, the Bishops and Archbishops expressed their sincere commitment to addressing the cries of Earth and her people.

The statement is in three parts, and you could say that a key word is “listening”. Listen to the cries of Earth and her people; listen to the voices of Wisdom, and act. Just as you listen to the voices of the people of Blackall and Tambo as they experience natural hardships, **we** are called to listen to those already experiencing the impact of climate change such as more frequent and severe bushfires and floods, to those whose livelihoods are threatened because they work in industries that contribute to climate change, to those, especially our First Nations people, who **feel** the impact of changes of nature itself, to our Pacific neighbours who are experiencing rising sea levels and the threat to their homes, their culture and their food supply.

We are invited to listen to the voices of Wisdom: to our call to be caretakers of Earth which is a gift of God’s boundless love; a gift which reached a pinnacle with the life, death and resurrection of Jesus who is in solidarity with us and Earth. As we gather in this Eucharist we are reminded of God’s sacramental presence in the things of Earth, bread and wine, and in the community gathered here. Even as we marvel at the wonders of the natural world, including you and me, we hear its cries because of the way in which we humans are treating it. We are called to lament and be sorry. We are reminded to listen to the findings of science such as those incorporated in the very recent report from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. We recognize the distinctive insights of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and the need to incorporate them in any conversations about the future of our common home and her inhabitants.

Last but not least, we are called to act. The Social Justice statement (p14) tells us that “we are being called to a new way of thinking, feeling, understanding, and living”. This is both an individual and a collective call. We can begin by taking part in the Season of Creation during September, and by supporting the commitment recently made by this Parish to work towards a series of goals for sustainable living according to a plan developed by the Vatican. Please do your part, and stay tuned for more action by this community.

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