

FAITH GROUPS UNITE FOR ACTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE

On June 2nd in Canberra Sisters of Mercy Marie Butcher and Margaret Hinchey, representing CCJP, joined with representatives from Australia's Uniting, Anglican, Catholic, Jewish, Hindu, Buddhist, Sikh, Bahai and Jain religious communities to show their support for action on climate change. They visited members of both sides of politics and expressed their support for strong action on climate change, including a price on pollution. They congratulated the Government on its stand to put a price on carbon but insisted it should be only one of a number of measures to bring down emissions.

"People of faith believe the earth is a gift from our Creator to be enjoyed, preserved and handed on to future generations" said Sister Margaret Hinchey, "but unless we take seriously the overwhelming scientific consensus on dangerous global warming through greenhouse gas emissions there won't be an earth worth living on in the future".

Anglican Bishop George Browning spoke passionately at the open forum in the evening and stated that those of us in faith communities are aware of the cost this imposes on large sections of Australian society. However he said that the cost of not pricing pollution could compromise the future of humanity and other species and the longer the cost is postponed the heavier the burden on our grandchildren and on the poorest people in the world, those for example in the Pacific Islands and Bangladesh who face losing their very homelands through rising sea levels.

Member for Parramatta Ms Julie Owens MP shared her understanding of the challenge of climate change and said to the visiting group "It's great to see local religious leaders getting behind this cause".

we human beings have no future on this planet if our moral sensibility remains too limited, if we continue to act in our short-term, narrow self-interest, and fail to develop a broader awareness of our well-being being intimately connected with the health of our environment. It is our disconnection from the environment and from each other which has led us to act in ways that have caused untold harm.