

EDITORIAL May 2017 *The Pope talks TED*

Pope Francis has again rocked the world with his ability to speak to the heart of every creature. Last month he became the first pope to give a TED talk. His [talk](#) which was beamed from the Vatican to a live audience in Vancouver, Canada, brought the people to their feet.

TED is an international organisation devoted to spreading ideas through short, powerful talks. The pope spoke of a future together which could be started by just one person with hope.

TED's International Curator, Bruno Giussani, spent a year coordinating the talk and is struck by the sense of urgency in Francis' voice.

"...he uses strong language to denounce the 'culture of waste' arising from our techno-economic system and our obsession with 'money and things'." He talks about 'the evil we breathe every day', which is a clear reference to the increasingly sectarian and hate-filled political space."

Two years after his groundbreaking environmental encyclical *Laudato Si'*, Pope Francis is again showing us how to be true followers of Jesus – to work alongside others with a common goal – to bring about the kingdom of God. In the sense of the Good Samaritan parable, (the difference between those who would not be bothered, and those who take care of the other), Pope Francis says Jesus taught that we must bring people into our group and do whatever it takes to help them get back on their feet.

As he did in his encyclical, the pope gives a blueprint for action on behalf of justice. "We can only build the future by standing together." Everything is interconnected.

How good it would be, he says, if technological change brought social inclusion. Then he talks about the power of solidarity. Only by educating people in solidarity will we be able to overcome a "culture of waste". He describes solidarity as a free response from the heart of everyone. The other has a face. The "you" is a real presence.

Through the darkness of today's conflicts each of us can be a bright candle.

Pope Francis speaks of hope as being like the dough that enables growth.

The heart that recognises the other grows in tenderness and it is tenderness that will bring about

the revolution. He likens tenderness to the love of a child for its parents. This love grows through their touch, their gaze, their tenderness, their getting down to the child's level and talking their language. Tenderness is the path of the most courageous men and women. But, he says, we must act with humility lest we destroy the other with our power.

Finally he says the future is in the hands not only of politicians, leaders, and big companies, although they have an enormous responsibility, but the future is in those who recognise the other "as a 'you' and themselves as part of an 'us'."

Indigenous Australia

Moving truth: Six years of Anzac Day frontier wars

Commemorating the frontier conflicts, massacres, frontier wars and murderous killings with genocidal intent that covers the continent.

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Indigenous affairs: no steps forward, two steps back

The landscape in Indigenous Affairs across Australia has changed so much in the last two decades that 'not losing' is now the same thing as 'winning'. Luke Pearson writes about how this may impact on our ability to achieve positive outcomes for self-determination and Indigenous advancement in everything from eradicating racial discrimination to Closing the Gap.

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Indigenous Australians know removing race from constitution is pretend change

While black and white Australians have at times fought each other, delegates also remembered times we have fought side by side, as allies. We recalled our Aboriginal countrymen who fought for Australia in the Vietnam and other wars, but who remain unrecognised for their service. They were denied the rights of other veterans because they were black, write David Ross and Barbara Shaw for *The Guardian*.

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Call for a treaty gathering momentum

Less than a year ago, renowned artist Richard Frankland led a crowd of hundreds in a powerful chant of 'Treaty'.

He was responding to protesters at the first Victorian Treaty Forum, who were dissatisfied with the way the process was running. Just three months earlier, the Victorian community had made history.

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Boosting the number of Aboriginal teachers in schools

While Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander teachers are significantly underrepresented in schools and universities, encouraging initiatives are aiming to bring more diversity in our classrooms.

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What constitutes real indigenous policy reform?

Some clues:

We are at a crucial point in the debate about Indigenous constitutional recognition –11 out of 12 First Nations regional dialogues have now been conducted and each has rejected a purely symbolic or minimalist model in favour of substantive reform, write Jill Gallagher and Nolan Hunter.

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Don't call them disadvantaged

It was probably the single largest collection of Indigenous millionaires ever assembled in one room, writes the ABC's indigenous affairs editor Stan Grant.

They were there to celebrate black business. It was a conference organised by Supply Nation, Australia's leading directory of Indigenous businesses.

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Poverty

Locked warriors New Zealand's prison problem

Despite its reputation for social justice and equality, New Zealand has one of the highest rates of imprisonment in the western world. One in two prisoners are Maori, even though they account for just 15 percent of the population.

Soaring rates of child poverty, school dropout, unemployment and family breakdown within indigenous communities are responsible, writes *Al Jazeera*.

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The federal budget: a fair go for all?

The current government's election policy platform, Our Plan: Real solutions for all Australians, stated as one of its aims delivering "a decent and respectful society which gives a 'fair go' to all, and encourages people to thrive and move ahead". But, as Jenny Begent writes, a 'fair go for all' means continuing to invest in those within our community who are most in need, to ensure they are able to participate fully in and contribute to our society.

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Welfare recipients vulnerable under auto-debt scheme

Many vulnerable Tasmanians have been "crushed" by the Centrelink automated debt recovery program, a Senate inquiry has heard, reports *The Mercury*.

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Refugees and asylum seekers

Doctors stop attempts to deport Lebanese man on Manus

Doctors have warned Australian immigration officers about deporting from Papua New Guinea an asylum seeker with severe chest injuries and kidney damage, over fears the plane journey could kill him, write Alice Workman and Gina Rushton for *Buzzfeed*.

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An organ trafficker who preys on Syrian refugees

There's a glint of pride in Abu Jaafar's eyes as he explains what he does for a living.

His job is to find people desperate enough to give up parts of their body for money, and the influx of refugees from Syria to Lebanon has created many opportunities, writes Alex Forsyth for *BBC News*.

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268th caller in the queue: citizenship chaos

The Immigration Department is struggling to cope with a massive influx of inquiries about the government's changes to the citizenship test, with callers turned away or placed in lengthy queues, writes Michael Koziol for *The Age*.

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The Political Community

Easter in dark times

Any number of things test the fortitude of people of faith. Relationships break, failures interrupt, and sometimes we feel keenly the inexorable nature of mortality. Easter, for me, has always been a time to sit in the brokenness of things, to absorb the dread and devastation that runs through the Triduum, and reel at the inexplicable sacrifice, writes Fatima Measham for *Eureka Street*.

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Fundamentalism: a threatening global reality

Fundamentalism is today vigorously alive at home and abroad, writes Fr Gerald Arbuckle in *The Good Oil*. Pope Francis is right: "Fundamentalism is a sickness that is in all religions". It is a form of organised anger in reaction to the unsettling consequences of rapid social and religious change.

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Environment

Adani faces mega fine over discharge

Mining giant Adani faces a possible multi-million-dollar fine after sediment water eight times above authorised levels was discharged from the Abbot Point coal terminal last month, the ABC can reveal.

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Indonesia sues over oil spill off WA

The Indonesian government has launched a \$US2 billion (\$2.6 billion) lawsuit against the company responsible for the worst oil spill in the history of Australia's offshore petroleum industry. An estimated 300,000 litres of oil a day belched into the Timor Sea for more than 10 weeks in 2009.

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Water fools? Sacred pipi beds polluted

A Bay of Plenty iwi is devastated that local dairy farms have polluted its sacred pipi beds with E coli bacteria. The iwi has relied on the nearby Waiotaha pipi beds to feed its whanau for more than 100 years. But what was once a land covered in rich native bush and an estuary bursting with kaimoana is now a patchwork of dairy farms and waterways lined with a layer of sediment washed down from forestry and farming.

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Use It

Online course teaching Sydney's Indigenous history and culture to anyone, anywhere

For 25-year-old Drew Rooke, school education on Indigenous Australia left him wanting ... So Mr Rooke enrolled in a massive open online course (MOOC) run by the University of Sydney called Cultural Competency: Aboriginal Sydney.

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Can plastic save the planet?

The world's 40 million kilometres of roads use thousands of barrels of oil to make the bitumen that binds the various components together to make a road. An engineer in Scotland is trialling waste plastic instead of bitumen.

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Calling volunteers to promote climate change petition

The community climate petition is an initiative launched by Micah Australia, involving collaboration with a range of organisations.

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Afghanistan's bleak situation

The security situation in Afghanistan has deteriorated and conflict has become more intense throughout the country. The Taliban ... have expanded their control and influence over many regions of Afghanistan and tens of thousands of Afghans have sought refuge in Europe, Australia and other parts of the world, according to a situation report Farhad Arian has compiled for the Edmund Rice Centre.

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