

CATHOLIC AGENCIES CHALLENGE CASE FOR NUCLEAR POWER

Two of Melbourne's Catholic social justice agencies have published a 52-page booklet challenging arguments to expand nuclear power. *Nuclear Power: Cure or Curse? A Discussion Paper* was commissioned by Catholic Social Services Victoria and the Melbourne Catholic Commission for Justice, Development and Peace (now the Archdiocesan 'Justice Unit') in collaboration with the Victorian Council of Churches, and written by researcher, Luke Vaughan.

The report was launched by Professor Joe Camilleri at the Thomas Carr Centre in Melbourne on Monday 12 November. Professor Camilleri is a specialist in international relations and disarmament issues at La Trobe University, one of the founders of the Centre for Dialogue at La Trobe, and a prime mover in Pax Christi in Victoria.

Nuclear Power: Cure or Curse considers if nuclear power might help reduce greenhouse gas emissions and hence combat climate change, and if it were a clean and safe form of energy generation.

After extensive research, the discussion paper argued that nuclear power is no solution to climate change and remains an expensive, dangerous form of energy generation. Nuclear power is neither clean nor green as the nuclear fuel cycle generates considerable greenhouse gas emissions, from mining the uranium to final waste disposal.

Further problems with nuclear power are yet to be resolved after fifty years of operation. These include risks of nuclear proliferation; concerns for public health and safety; and unsolved problems with long-term storage of radioactive materials that remain hazardous for many thousands of years.

Instead the report concludes that Australia can meet the Kyoto targets by reducing demand for electricity, encouraging renewable technologies, increasing energy efficiency and promoting the cleaner use of fossil fuels.

Nuclear Power: Cure or Curse? A Discussion Paper is available online at www.css.org.au, or for \$5.00 (incl. postage) from Catholic Social Services Victoria, 383 Albert St., East Melbourne VIC 3002. Phone: (03) 9287-5566, or email: office@css.org.au.