

## EDITORIAL

### *The Good News of the Gospel* July 2010

The media have missed much as they focus on the forthcoming federal election. The elevation of Julia Gillard as Australia's first female Prime Minister had left obscured other milestones for women's equality in Australia.

On 17 June, Australia's first Paid Parental Leave Scheme was passed in Parliament. Elizabeth Broderick, the Sex Discrimination Commissioner described this as "a major triumph, not only for mothers and parents, but for our community". As "a critical piece of social infrastructure" Broderick continued, the passing of this bill:

*"...will help deliver stronger outcomes for mothers, families, businesses, the economy and our community as a whole".*

The discussion of Julia Gillard's gender might have profitably referred to the Paid Parental Leave Scheme. It is clear this legislation will have a greater impact on the lives and careers of women than even Gillard's achievement, and yet there has been little recognition of this in the media.

At the same time, the media has focused a disproportionate amount of space on the issue of refugees coming to Australia via boats. Given the few people who actually arrive this way, the issue has minimal impact on the day-to-day lives of people. Yet if we were to believe some reports, it would seem our country is deluged with refugees.

The disparity of discussion raises questions about how issues are covered in the media. What does it mean to have a 'balanced' and 'just' media? Can media be an instrument of the 'Good News'?

The beatification of Manuel Lozano Garrido, a lay Spanish journalist illustrates the positive role the media can have in the era of the 'new evangelisation'. Appealing to Garrido's example,

Pope Benedict XVI said:

*"Journalists can find...an eloquent testimony of the good that can be done when one's pen reflects the greatness of the soul and is put at the service of truth and noble causes".*

The President of the Vatican's Social Communications Council Archbishop Claudio Celli described Garrido's contribution to journalism as finding continuity in:

*"...the news and the Good News of the Gospel; he saw Jesus as the paradigm of communication".*

On an immersion experience in Malaysia a few years ago, the director of the refugee centre we were visiting suggested reading the newspaper through the eyes of Jesus Christ. It seems odd tool for action, yet it's also a very powerful instrument for reflection.

Though the media is a complex institution, influenced by so many things, we should look in its pages for action for justice and peace. If Jesus is to be 'the paradigm of communication,' the bringer of justice and peace in our world, why not try to read through his eyes the next time you read the paper?

**Madeleine Marson,**  
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*In the coming months we shall review the Faith Doing Justice Newsletter, Facebook and Twitter accounts.*

*We welcome your suggestions about what you find helpful and what can be improved or adapted with the Faith Doing Justice Website and newsletter.*

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