

North Melbourne Vic 3051  
Friday, April 8, 2011

Committee Secretary  
Joint Standing Committee on Migration  
PO Box 6021  
Parliament House  
CANBERRA ACT 2600

**Submission to the Inquiry into Multiculturalism in Australia from the Public Affairs  
Commission of the Anglican Church of Australia**

The Anglican Church of Australia (ACA) is organised into 23 dioceses and includes a diverse cross-section of Australian communities. The ACA is embedded in communities through its local parishes, and contributes widely in public life through education, welfare and aged services, advocacy for social justice and support for Indigenous Australians. The context of multicultural Australia has been a challenge to religious groups to practice social pluralism. The Public Affairs Commission is a body established by the ACA to enable comment on public issues. The information presented and the views expressed should not be taken to reflect the opinion of the Primate or General Synod of the Anglican Church of Australia

The ACA, with its English heritage provides an interesting case study of multiculturalism in Australia. There may be a mistaken perception that Anglican churches are comprised of predominantly older, white, middle-class, educated and suburban Australians. The reality in most local congregations is more diverse, a fact confirmed by National Church Life Surveys. With the growth in the number of countries from which the Australian population has come there has also been a striking growth in the diversity of the origins of Anglican congregations.

Christianity, as a monotheistic religion, provides community integration and cohesion that transcends ethnic belonging because Christian teaching affirms that God is God of all people, and that all may relate to God on equal terms. Belief in the one, benevolent God (a belief shared by Christians, Jews and Muslims) gives these religions an ethical dimension often summarised as the reciprocity principle (do to others what you would have them do to you, and not do to others what you would not want them to do to you). This ethic has produced the Christian values of justice (the administration of justice tempered with mercy), law (equality of people before the law, impartiality and consistency in the application of the law), freedom (one of the great themes of the Christian Scriptures) and love (both love of God and neighbor).

In addressing migration and multicultural issues the values of justice, law, freedom and love are central for the ACA. We look forward to the opportunity to make a more detailed submission and possibly discuss these matters further.

Yours sincerely

Professor John Langmore  
Chair