

SCD MID-YEAR CONFERENCE 2016

Friday 22nd - Saturday 23rd July, 2016

Sydney College of Divinity campus  
North Ryde, Sydney, Australia

# JUSTICE, MERCY AND SOCIAL WELLBEING: INTERDISCIPLINARY PERSPECTIVES

## Who cares in a society where justice and mercy seldom meet?

Both words are at the core of Christian tradition, but the Roman emperors also claimed them as their exclusive preserve. Augustus boasted that clemency and justice belonged to his defining virtues, whereas Seneca advised Nero on how to exercise clemency without violating his justice.

Which tradition, Roman or Christian, shaped western culture in this respect?

How does each virtue inform modern civic discourse and practice?

What difference should the intersection of justice and mercy make to our personal, ecclesial, social and political lives?

In a world exhausted by compassion fatigue and rendered cynical by the ubiquitous failures of the justice system, where does true virtue reside?

Papers from any discipline are welcome in this interdisciplinary conference.

## Keynote Speakers

### / Dr Stephen Barton

*Reader and Honorary Fellow,  
Durham University, United Kingdom*

### / Professor Christopher Marshall

*Diana Unwin Chair in Restorative Justice,  
School of Government, Victoria University  
of Wellington, New Zealand*

### / Professor Stephen Pickard

*Executive Director of the Australian  
Centre for Christianity and Culture,  
Canberra, Australia*



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## Call for Papers

The Conference Planning Committee invites scholars and doctoral candidates from the theological and wider academic community to submit the title of their proposed presentation at this conference, together with an abstract of 250 - 300 words, by **April 4th 2016**. Acceptance of papers will be communicated by **April 18th 2016**.

This should be accompanied by contact details: name, institutional affiliation, postal address, phone number and email address. Please address submissions to Professor James R. Harrison - jimh@scd.edu.au.

It is expected that presentations will be 30 minutes, with 5 minutes for questions.

Registration costs, including conference dinner, accommodation options, and transport details, will be available on the SCD website from **March 28th 2016**.

## Plenary Sessions

The keynote speakers are internationally known scholars.

**Stephen Barton** has published:

- *The Spirituality of the Gospels* (1992)
- *Discipleship and Family Ties in Mark and Matthew* (1994)

**Christopher Marshall** has published:

- *Compassionate Justice: An Interdisciplinary Dialogue with Two Gospel Parables on Law, Crime, and Restorative Justice* (2012)
- *The Little Book of Biblical Justice: A Fresh Approach to the Bible's Teaching on Justice* (2005)

**Stephen Pickard** has published:

- *Seeking the Church: An Introduction to Ecclesiology* (2012)
- *In-Between God: Theology, Community and Discipleship* (2011)

## Conference Theme

The relationship between justice and mercy has been a matter of debate from Roman times. Seneca advised the emperor Nero that he must exercise clemency towards the worthy, respecting the canons of justice, but to avoid mercy, because it was an unstable passion, at least in the view of the Stoics.

The debate about justice and mercy is no less heated in our time. Popular calls for justice ring out when criminals are given lenient sentences by the judiciary.

What does justice for the poor look like?

Or mercy for refugees?

Where does the Christian tradition stand on these issues?

Interdisciplinary papers are most welcome.

## Guidelines for paper proposals

1. As noted, the paper's title, with an abstract of 250 - 300 words, should be sent to the SCD Research Director, Professor James R. Harrison - jimh@scd.edu.au, by **April 4th, 2016**. Submissions should be accompanied by contact details: name, institutional affiliation, postal address, phone number and email address.
2. The title of the paper and its abstract must articulate clearly the line of argument that the paper will take, indicating its contribution to research in the chosen area.
3. Paper proposals should indicate whether audio-visual equipment is required for the presentation, so that the presentations in each room can proceed smoothly.
4. Subject to the papers offered, the Conference Program will assign papers to various streams (e.g. socio-historical, exegetical, theological, pastoral, patristic, sociological, philosophical, etc.), so that conferees may specialise in their interest area. It would be helpful if paper proposals would nominate the discipline in which their paper falls.
5. Further enquiries should be directed to Professor Harrison at the email address above.