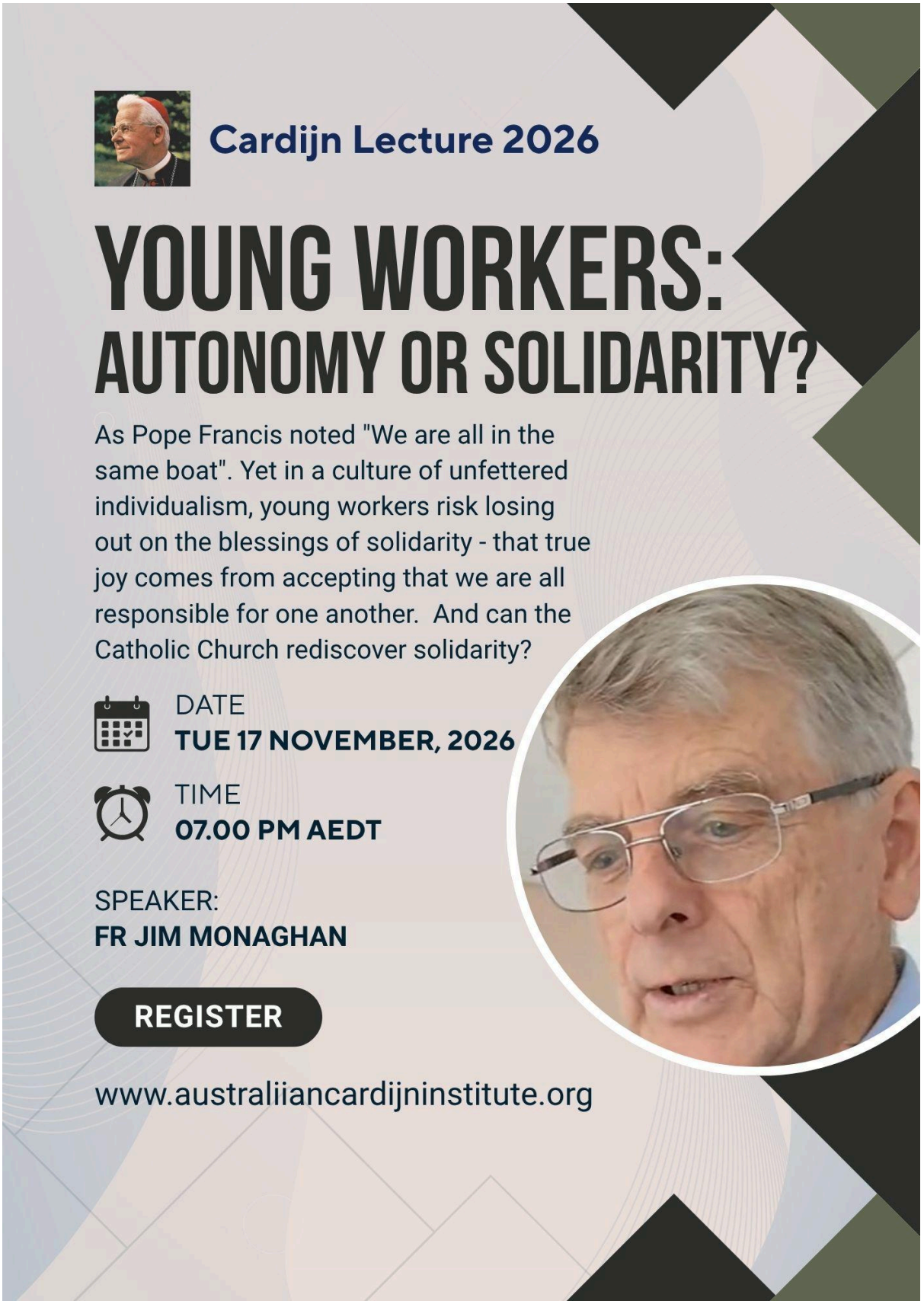
ACI Media Release - Cardijn Lecture 2026: Young workers: Autonomy or solidarity? - 17 Nov 2026



We are pleased to announce that Fr Jim Monaghan, vicar-general of the Port Pirie Diocese and former national chaplain of the Australian YCW, will deliver this year's Cardijn Lecture on Tuesday 17 November 2026.

The theme for Fr Jim's presentation will be "Young workers: Autonomy or solidarity." As Pope Francis noted "We are all in the same boat". Yet in a culture of unfettered individualism, young workers risk losing out on the blessings of solidarity – that true joy comes from accepting that we are all responsible for one another. And can the Catholic Church rediscover solidarity?

Details

Date and time: Tuesday 17 November 2026, 7pm AEDT

Register

https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/ilDn2BF8SUSx1OU8IK0RHg

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Our speaker: Fr Jim Monaghan



Fr Jim Monaghan

Fr James (Jim) G. Monaghan is a Catholic priest of the Diocese of Port Pirie in South Australia, where he serves as Vicar General. Over several decades of ministry across regional, rural, and outback communities, he has been known for pastoral care on the margins, lay leadership formation, and prison chaplaincy.

Pastoral ministry & outback parishes

Fr Jim has spent much of his priestly life ministering to communities across the vast geographic expanse of the Port Pirie Diocese (which covers almost 980,000 square kilometres of regional South Australia).

Woomera and Roxby Downs: In 1999, Fr Monaghan took up the appointment as parish priest of Woomera and Roxby Downs. During this period, Woomera was facing significant transitions – including the wind-down of defence installations and town downsizing – while the mining community of Roxby Downs was expanding. His ministry focused on accompanying people through rapid social change and isolation. Jim's YCW training was the basis of the pastoral care of refugees and detention workers in the disaster that was the Woomera Detention Centre.

Port Augusta & Other Appointments: He has also served in pastoral leadership across key centres of the Upper Spencer Gulf, including Port Augusta and Port Pirie, building strong community ties with workers, local families, and remote congregations.

Lay formation and the worker apostolate

Fr Jim has long been associated with the Young Christian Workers (YCW) and the Cardijn movement in Australia. Having served as an Australian YCW chaplain and mentor, he has consistently championed the formation of lay people to live out their faith in the everyday realities of secular life.

During the Fifth Plenary Council of Australia (2021–2022), he made notable interventions advocating for the dignity of working people and the renewal of worker formation. He emphasized:

The spiritual and human challenges facing employees in mining, 12-hour shift rosters, and fly-in fly-out (FIFO) arrangements.

The principle that working people themselves must be empowered as missionary leaders and apostles within their workplaces.

Prison chaplaincy & social outreach

A significant dimension of Fr Jim's pastoral outreach has been in correctional facilities. As one of the prison chaplains in the Port Pirie Diocese, he provides spiritual accompaniment, celebrates liturgies for inmates, and supports reintegration efforts such as pen-pal networks and welfare assistance programs for released prisoners.

Diocesan leadership

In his capacity as Vicar General, he assists the Bishop of Port Pirie (Most Rev. Karol Kulczycki SDS) in the general governance and administration of the diocese. Known for his pastoral approach – once describing his role simply as that of an everyday parish priest who "belongs to the people and their life"- he continues to combine executive diocesan responsibilities with direct grassroots ministry.