



AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC BISHOPS CONFERENCE

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

3rd July 2017

Dear Friends,

Re: Social Justice Statement 2017–2018
Everyone's Business: Developing an inclusive and sustainable economy

Social Justice Sunday will be celebrated this year on 24 September. I am writing to inform you about the Catholic Bishops' Social Justice Statement and how you can access this document.

The title of the 2017–2018 Statement is *Everyone's Business: Developing an inclusive and sustainable economy*. It is a response to calls by Pope Francis for economic justice and for societies that are founded on justice, offering dignity and inclusion to every person.

Australia has been fortunate to have enjoyed a quarter of a century of continuous growth. Yet not all Australians have experienced the benefits of that good fortune. Inequality has been increasing, especially in recent years. Employment and working conditions have become more insecure for many, and unemployed people have to subsist on incomes well below poverty levels. Housing is becoming less and less affordable for buyers and renters. Our Indigenous people still confront enormous economic and social challenges.

In the Gospel for this year's Social Justice Sunday, Jesus tells the parable of the workers in the vineyard, where all become active contributors and are recognised for their human dignity. Inspired by this, the Statement calls us to build an economy founded on true solidarity with those who are most vulnerable. Justice must be built into the very foundations of our community, and business can work for everybody's benefit, not just for shareholders. The excluded and vulnerable must have a voice in decision-making.

The Statement will be launched in early September. Copies of the Statement can be ordered now from the Australian Catholic Social Justice Council by using the attached order form. Additionally, the Statement will be available for download on the websites of the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference (www.catholic.org.au) and the Australian Catholic Social Justice Council (www.socialjustice.catholic.org.au) from the week of the launch. In the attached summary sheet there is a suggested entry that can be used by parishes, schools and groups as Social Justice Sunday approaches.

I commend this Statement to you and your contacts and would welcome your part in its promotion.

Yours sincerely in Christ,

Archbishop Denis J Hart
President