



AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC BISHOPS CONFERENCE

FROM THE PRESIDENT

5 July 2018

Dear Friends,

Re: Social Justice Statement 2018–2019
A Place to Call Home: Making a home for everyone in our land

Social Justice Sunday will be celebrated this year on 30 September. I am writing to inform you about the Catholic Bishops' Social Justice Statement and how you can access it.

The 2018–2019 Statement, titled *A Place to Call Home: Making a home for everyone in our land*, is a response to the growing problem of homelessness in Australia. It seems hard to believe that in a rich nation such as ours, the latest Census figures show that the number of Australians who are homeless has grown to more than 116,000. House prices and even rents are spiralling out of reach of too many families and placing huge financial stress on ordinary people, even when they are employed. For those living on pensions or allowances, finding secure housing can be a far greater challenge – one that often takes a terrible toll on social wellbeing and mental health.

The Scriptural basis of this year's Statement is Jesus' parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:30–35), about the outsider who stops to help a man in desperate need, takes him to safety and pays for his care.

The Statement examines the extent of Australia's homelessness and housing crisis. It emphasises that secure housing is a human right and an uncontested public good, affirmed by both Catholic teaching and the Declaration of Human Rights. In concluding, it issues a challenge to government, to Church and community and to us as individuals to bring about change and reform.

The Statement will be launched during September. Copies of it 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 notice 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 invite you to promote it as widely as possible.

Yours sincerely in Christ,

Archbishop Mark Coleridge
President