



AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC BISHOPS CONFERENCE

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

1st July, 2013.

Dear Friends,

Re: Social Justice Statement 2013–2014
Lazarus at our Gate
A critical moment in the fight against world poverty

Social Justice Sunday will be celebrated this year on 29th September. I am writing to inform you about the Catholic Bishops' Social Justice Statement and how parishes, schools, Congregations and other organisations and groups can access this document.

The title of the 2013–2014 Statement is *Lazarus at our Gate: A critical moment in the fight against world poverty*. It refers to Jesus' parable in the Gospel of Luke (16:19–31), which forms the Gospel reading for Social Justice Sunday 2013.

In this Social Justice Statement, the Catholic Bishops call on Australians to renew their resolve to address poverty in our region and globally. The target date for the Millennium Development Goals is 2015, and although great achievements have been made in alleviating poverty, many of the goals will not be fulfilled. A billion people around the world remain in extreme poverty, and twenty per cent of the world's poorest live in countries near Australia.

'In our region', the Bishops say, 'Australia is the rich man and Lazarus is at our gate.'

Christ's sacrifice and his gift of the Eucharist challenge us to bring about a conversion in our own souls, in our communities and in our nation. Pope Francis has reminded us of our mission: 'Fighting poverty, both material and spiritual, building peace and constructing bridges'.

The Statement will be launched in mid-September. Copies of the Statement can be pre-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 newsletter entry that can be used by parishes, schools and groups as Social Justice Sunday approaches.

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

Yours sincerely in Christ,

ARCHBISHOP OF MELBOURNE
President
Australia Catholic Bishops Conference