



Media Alert

Bishops say sport can make everyone a winner

Legendary Coach and AFL player Kevin Sheedy AM and renowned journalist and commentator Geraldine Doogue AO will launch the Australian Catholic Bishops' 2014–2015 Social Justice Statement. The launch will take place at 9.30 for 10.00 am on Wednesday 17th September at The Crypt, St Mary's Cathedral, St Marys Rd, Sydney.

The title of the Statement is ***A Crown for Australia: Striving for the best in our sporting nation.*** The Statement highlights the vital role that sport plays in the health of individuals, the life of communities and the inclusion of all in Australian society.

Bishop Christopher Saunders, Chairman of the Australian Catholic Social Justice Council, said, "Australians are passionate about their sport, whether as participants or as supporters, whether following the fortunes of their local club or their national team. Sport brings us together, builds communities and lets us celebrate the joy of movement and skill. Good sport makes everyone a winner.

"Sport also holds a mirror up to our society. It reflects the best in us as individuals and as a nation – but it can also reflect the worst in us. We are becoming too familiar with violence and abuse of drugs and alcohol, both on the field and off it, on the part of players and of spectators. Instances of illegal betting and corruption across different codes pose a real threat to the integrity of sport and its capacity to build community. Discrimination and exclusion undermine a key attribute of sport to build bridges across social divides and show a special concern for people who are marginalised," Bishop Saunders said.

In the Statement, ***A Crown for Australia***, the Catholic Bishops highlight the transformative power of sport and call on all levels of society to treasure and safeguard sport from those forces that undermine its integrity.

Social Justice Sunday is celebrated on 28th September 2014. The Statement and associated resources can be downloaded at: www.socialjustice.catholic.org.au from 17 September.

For more information, contact:

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