2 July 2012

Dear Friends,

Re: Social Justice Statement 2012–2013

The Gift of Family in Difficult Times:
The social and economic challenges facing families today
Issued by the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference

Social Justice Sunday will be celebrated this year on 30th 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.

In this Year of Grace, we have the opportunity to celebrate and give thanks to God for the great gift of families. The family is the basis of our community of faith and the very foundation of society. Nurturing a family is a vocation, inspired by love, which faces many challenges. In this Social Justice Statement the Catholic Bishops of Australia consider the social and economic structures of our society that impact in a significant way on the majority of families — reducing time together, making it harder to make ends meet financially, and sometimes undermining the bonds of marriage and family life.

In our prosperous nation there are many families who find themselves at the margins — vulnerable Indigenous families, single parent families, the homeless and those with special needs. It is particularly concerning that the hardship experienced by such families is now exacerbated by the global financial crisis. As Christians we are called to be supportive of families, especially those who are most vulnerable. As a society we cannot afford to ignore the fundamental needs of all families or fail to respond adequately to those families in crisis.

The Statement will be launched in the week prior to Social Justice Sunday. 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 newsletter entry that can be used by parishes, schools and groups as Social Justice Sunday approaches.

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

Yours sincerely in Christ

+ Archbishop of Melbourne

President
Australian Catholic Bishops Conference

GENERAL SECRETARIAT
GPO Box 368, CANBERRA ACT 2601

T (02) 6201 9845
F (02) 6247 6083
gensec@catholic.org.au
www.catholic.org.au