

Summary: Social Justice Statement 2017–2018

Everybody's Business: Developing an inclusive and sustainable economy

Pope Francis has called for an economic system that places men and women at the very centre – one that meets the needs of all people and is just and sustainable. He denounces economic structures that take a purely utilitarian view of human beings, treating them as mere elements of production, to be thrown away if they are not seen as useful or productive.

The Australian Catholic Bishops' Social Justice Statement for 2017–18 is titled 'Everyone's Business: Developing an inclusive and sustainable economy'. The Bishops call for an economy that is founded on justice and offers dignity and inclusion to every person.

The Bishops' Statement is built around the Gospel for Social Justice Sunday, 24 September 2017. Jesus tells the parable of the workers in the vineyard, where all are active contributors and are recognised for their human dignity.

Australia has experienced a quarter of a century of continuous economic growth, but the benefits of this good fortune have not been distributed equally. In our workplaces, conditions and security of employment have been eroded, while those who are unemployed subsist on incomes well below poverty levels. Australia is experiencing a housing crisis. And our Indigenous brothers and sisters struggle with economic and social burdens that most Australians cannot imagine.

In the light of these challenges, the Statement calls us to build an economy founded on true solidarity with those who are most vulnerable. Such a society will reject an 'ideology of the market' that forgets the principles of justice and equity. 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. God is calling us to use his bounty wisely, for the good of all and of our planet.

Bulletin note

The Bishops would welcome promotion of the Statement in the weeks leading up to Social Justice Sunday. A possible entry in your parish bulletin or newsletter could be:

We celebrate Social Justice Sunday on 24 September. This year, the Australian Bishops' Social Justice Statement is titled: 'Everyone's Business: Developing an inclusive and sustainable economy'.

The Statement calls for an economy that is founded on justice and offers dignity and inclusion to every person.

For further details about the Social Justice Statement, visit the Australian Catholic Social Justice Council website (www.socialjustice.catholic.org.au) or call (02) 8306 3499.

Associated resources

The ACSJC website (www.socialjustice.catholic.org.au/publications/social-justice-statements) will have resources available for download free of charge before Social Justice Sunday. They will include Social Justice Sunday Liturgy Notes, a PowerPoint presentation and resources for schools and social justice groups.

Prayer Cards and 'Ten Steps' leaflets can be ordered from the ACSJC on (02) 8306 3499 or by email: admin@acsjc.org.au.