

# Saint Michael's Catholic Parish



12 Sproule Street - Nelson Bay 2315  
Phone Number: 4981 1069 Mobile: 0401 233 650  
Email: stmichaelsnb@mn.catholic.org.au  
www.nelsonbaycatholicchurch.com  
Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle

## Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time Year A 15 February 2026

We acknowledge the Worimi people – the traditional custodians of this land.  
**Happy are those who follow the law of the Lord!**

### WEEKEND MASS TIMES

Reconciliation:  
Saturday  
4.00pm - 4.45 pm  
Saturday Vigil: 5:00 pm  
Sunday Mass: 8.30 am  
Exposition and  
Adoration  
One Hour before Mass

### WEEKDAY MASS

Tuesday 5.00pm  
Wednesday 9.15am  
Thursday 5.00pm  
Friday 9.15am

### NURSING HOME MASSES

Every Second Wednesday  
10.30 am Uniting.  
Muller Street  
Salamander Bay

Every Third Thursday  
10.00am Regis Aged Care  
Corlette.

Every Forth Thursday  
10.00am Harbourside  
Shoal Bay.

### PARISH CONTACTS

**PARISH PRIEST:**  
Fr. Anthony Nguyen  
Phone: 0420 401 025

**PARISH DEACON:**  
Dcn Gerard McCarthy

**PARISH SECRETARY:**  
Mrs Dianne Maricic  
Parish Office Hours  
9.30 am to 3.00 pm  
Wednesday to Friday  
Phone: 0401 233 650

**ST MICHAEL'S PRIMARY  
SCHOOL PRINCIPAL:**  
Ms Helen Bourne  
Office: 4981 1111

### COMMUNITY SAFETY AT OUR MASSES

Please be assured that we are doing all we can to ensure our gatherings are as safe as possible:

- Please do not enter the church or other parish buildings if you are unwell. This includes meetings/gatherings.
- No density limits apply in Places of Worship but please allow space between people where possible.
- Please continue to hand sanitise.
- HOLY WATER is now available and is changed regularly.

### NURSING HOME MASS

Mass at Regis Aged Care at 10.00am  
Thursday, 19<sup>th</sup> February 2026.

### AN INVITATION TO BE PART OF THE 2026 LENTEN PROGRAM

Wednesday morning after Mass Fr. Anthony hosting a 2026 Lenten Program at the Multipurpose room, will recommence on Ash Wednesday, 18 February 2026. Please contact the parish office or Fr. Anthony if you need any information.

### STATION OF THE CROSS - FRIDAY, 20<sup>th</sup> FEBRUARY 2026

From next Friday during Lent, we begin the Stations of the Cross at 8.45am before Mass. Please join us.

If you would like to lead the Stations of the Cross, please put your name on the clipboard at the church entry.

### SPECIAL RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (SRE) VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Special Religious Education (SRE) Volunteers Each week our small group of dedicated Catechists teach Scripture (SRE) go to three of our local public primary schools. We need more volunteers for 2026! Catechists have an incredible impact on the faith journey of the children that they teach. Do you have 1 or 2 hours to spare each week? Is this ministry your calling? If so, then please contact the Parish Office on 4981 1069 our SRE coordinator Kevin Locke on 0413 987 192. All training and resources are provided.

### ST MICHAEL THE ARCHANGEL PRAYER

Saint Michael the  
Archangel,  
defend us in battle.  
Be our protection against  
the wickedness and  
snares of the devil;  
May God rebuke him,  
we humbly pray;  
And do thou,  
O Prince of the  
Heavenly Host,  
by the power of God,  
cast into hell Satan  
and all evil spirits  
who roam the world  
seeking the ruin of souls.  
Amen.

**ST MICHAEL'S CATHOLIC CHURCH - NELSON BAY  
PROMOTES SAFEGUARDING, WHICH INVOLVES THE IMPLEMENTATION OF  
PROACTIVE, COMMON SENSE AND PRACTICAL IDEAS THAT ENSURE THE SAFETY  
OF CHILDREN AND VULNERABLE ADULTS IN OUR COMMUNITY.  
SAFEGUARDING PROMOTION: FOR ALL SAFEGUARDING CONCERNS WITHIN THE  
PARISH, PLEASE CONTACT: FR. ANTHONY, DEACON GERARD AND  
DIANNE MARICIC.**



**PROJECT  
COMPASSION**

**Project Compassion Sunday  
14-15 of February 2026**

This Lent, we are called to *Unite Against Poverty* through Caritas Australia's Project Compassion.

Your generosity this Lenten Season will enable Caritas Australia to provide life-changing support to vulnerable communities in need.



**Please donate today.**

You can support Project Compassion 2026 through the donation boxes, envelopes or by scanning the QR code.

Or online at: [www.projectcompassion.org.au/donate](http://www.projectcompassion.org.au/donate)

Or by calling: 1800 024 413

Thank you for standing with us, as we *Unite Against Poverty this Lent.*

**CELEBRATING ASH WEDNESDAY -  
18th FEBRUARY 2026**

The Season of Lent begins on Wednesday, 18<sup>th</sup> February with the celebration of Ash Wednesday. While Ash Wednesday is NOT a holy day of obligation, it does mark a suitable means of beginning our marking of the Season of Lent.



**Ash Wednesday Mass 9.15 am.**

The students from St Michael's School join us for Ash Wednesday Parish Mass.

**COMPASSION LENTEN PROGRAM 2026  
DIOCESE OF WOLLONGONG**

This Lent, enter into the heart of compassion-to "suffer with" a grace-filled invitation to stand with Christ and with one another. Let this beautifully designed, 76-page, full-colour companion guide you through daily reflections, Sunday Gospel readings and reflections, spiritual direction, prayers, and group discussion questions, all crafted to deepen your encounter with God's mercy. Available and Pay at Piety Stall \$8.00 per book.

**HIGH COURT DECISION INVOLVING HISTORICAL ABUSE**

You may have seen recent media coverage regarding a High Court decision involving historical abuse within the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle. We recognise this may be distressing for individuals, the broader Catholic community and particularly victims, survivors and their families. Support is available through Zimmerman Service - Healing and Support on 02 4923 0636. Any concerns for the safety of a child or vulnerable adult should be reported to the Office of Safeguarding on 02 4979 1390 or via the Diocese website.

A Statement from the Diocese was released yesterday and can be accessed at this website

<https://mn.catholic.org.au/news/statement-from-the-catholic-diocese-on-the-high-court-ruling-february-11-2026/>

**ST MICHAEL'S PRIMARY SCHOOL OFFICIAL OPENING AND BLESSING**

St Michael's Official Opening and Blessing by Bishop Michael will be 20th February 2026 at 10.00am in the hall. If you would like to attend, please call the school 4981 1111 to RSVP.

**NEXT SUNDAY**

**First Sunday of Lent  
Year A**

**First Reading**

Genesis 2:7-9; 3:1-7

**Responsorial Psalm**

Be merciful, O Lord, for we  
have sinned.

**Second Reading**

Romans 5:12-19

**Gospel**

Matthew 4:1-11

**PRAYERS PLEASE**

In your mercy, please pray for those who have died recently Jessie Attard, David Lynch, Artemia Sheather and those whose anniversaries occur around this time: Marin Skoljarev, Jack Paino, Johnny Paino, Mario Locantro, Juia Natoli, Benito Zaia, Peter Iacono, Renato Natoli, Mark Paton, Jack Allen, and for the sick in our parish: Robyn Harris, Lorraine McCourt, Carole Crowe, Max and Therese Cooper, Justin Fox, Joe Garreffa, Brenda and Brian Tucker, Sarlic Trumbli, Maureen Noonan, Clemente Quinajon, David Berkeley, Artemia Sheather, Anna Tan, Johny and Alexander Vella and David Campbell.

Masses will be offered on request. Due to privacy laws, names of the sick and deceased can only be put in the bulletin with the permission of the immediate family.

**Names on the Sick List will be removed after 4 weeks unless otherwise advised.**

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## **Parish Bulletin Notice**

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Statement from the Catholic Diocese on the High Court ruling – February 11 2026

11 February, 2026

By Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle

#### **Media Releases and Statements**

Statement from the Catholic Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle:

At 10am this morning 11 February the High Court handed down its judgement on the appeal by AA against the Trustees of the Roman Catholic Church for the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle.

The judgement is significant, running to 200 pages with dissenting opinion from some of the justices.

The Diocese respects the Australian judicial system and will require some time to work through the complexities of the judgement prior to making public comment.

Nevertheless, the Diocese is pleased that AA now has certainty as to his appeal.

The past is with us today. The Diocese continues to acknowledge the shameful aspects of its history where children and vulnerable adults suffered abuse, and some of its leaders failed to protect them from harm. The pain and damage caused is current each day for some survivors and their families.

Zimmerman Service – Healing and Support continues to provide a highly personalised pastoral response and can be contacted during office hours Monday to Friday 02 4923 0636 or via email [Zimmermanservice@healingandsupport.org.au](mailto:Zimmermanservice@healingandsupport.org.au)

If a diocesan employee, volunteer, parishioner, cleric or religious has any concerns for the safety, welfare or wellbeing of a child or vulnerable adult, please contact the Office of Safeguarding during office hours Monday to Friday 02 4979 1390, via

email [childprotection@mn.catholic.org.au](mailto:childprotection@mn.catholic.org.au) or through an online report (which can be done anonymously) Online reporting abuse page.



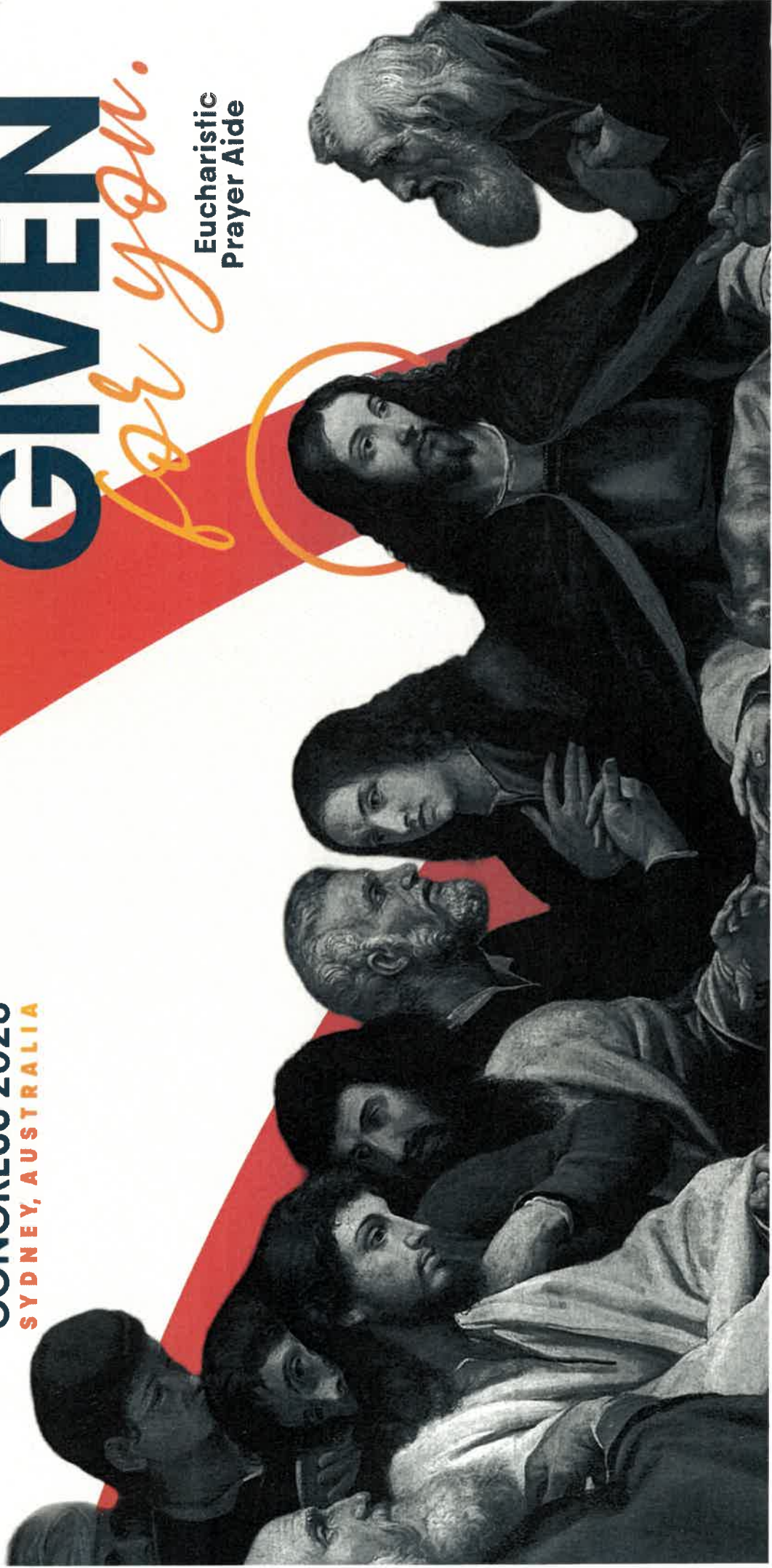


THE 54TH INTERNATIONAL

**EUCHARISTIC**  
**CONGRESS 2028**  
**SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA**

# THIS IS *my body* GIVEN *for you.*

Eucharistic  
Prayer Aide



These short passages from Scripture and from saints down through the ages are designed to help provide a eucharistic focus to prayer. Whether in adoration before the Blessed Sacrament or after receiving Holy Communion at Mass, may each of us better appreciate what we have received, and what we are called to become.

## Scriptural Passages

*for reflection*

"This is my body, given for you; do this in memory of me."

**Luke 22:19**

"Jesus and his disciples went on to the villages around Caesarea Philippi. On the way he asked them, 'Who do people say I am?'" They replied, "Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, one of the prophets." "But what about you?" he asked. "Who do you say I am?"

**Mark 8:27-29**

"Jesus said to them, 'I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me will never hunger, and whoever believes in me will never thirst.'"

**John 6:35**

"Freely you have received, so freely give."

**Matthew 10:8**

"Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."

**Matthew 28:20**

Jesus said to them, "Very truly I tell you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you."

**John 6:53**

"Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life."

**John 6:68**

"Lord, teach us how to pray."

**Luke 11:1**

"I have been crucified with Christ so that it is no longer I who live but Christ who lives in me."

**Galatians 2:19-20**

"All things work to the good for those who love God."

**Romans 8:28**

## Saintly Thoughts

*for reflection*

"Recognise in the bread what hung on the cross, and in the cup what flowed from his side."

**St Augustine**

"I am the wheat of God, so let me be ground by the teeth of the wild beasts that I may be made the pure bread of Christ."

**St Ignatius of Antioch**

"The bread of heaven came down on earth that he might feed the hungry."

**St Cyril of Jerusalem**

"Father, I am hungry; for the love of God give this soul her food, her Lord in the Eucharist!"

**St Catherine of Siena**

"Every Holy Communion fills us with Jesus and we must, with Our Lady, go in haste to give him to others."

**St Teresa of Calcutta**

"The heart of Jesus in the Eucharist is large enough to hold all our hearts in unity and is the dynamic factor that breaks open our hearts to include the poor."

**St Mary of the Cross Mackillop**

## Questions

*for reflection*

What is God asking of me personally, during this year of prayer and eucharistic renewal?

How can I live a more eucharistic life?

Do we as a community live intentionally as the Body of Christ, broken and given up for others?

## Eucharist 28

*Prayer*

Lord Jesus Christ, we thank you for the gift of your real presence in the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist.

Grant us the grace to receive you reverently, to worship you truly and serve you with hearts renewed.

By the power of the Holy Spirit strengthen us, so that as you gave yourself to the Father and to us, we too may offer our lives to God and to others.

Inspire and help us to serve you in those who are in need, especially the defenceless and homeless, the lonely and lost.

Unite us with your sacrifice of the Mass, so that we may truly become what we have received, the Body of Christ. Amen.







# The Cost of Our Living

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL JUSTICE  
FOR THE COMMON GOOD



DOWNLOAD  
RESOURCES  
catholic.au

**SOCIAL JUSTICE STATEMENT • FEBRUARY 2026**

## PREFACE

**Archbishop Timothy Costelloe SDB**

PRESIDENT, AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC BISHOPS CONFERENCE



As President of the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference, I warmly commend to you this Social Justice Statement, *The Cost of Our Living: Economic and Social Justice for the Common Good*.

It is the first of two statements the bishops will release in 2026, each inviting us to reflect deeply on the challenges facing our nation and to respond with faith, hope and love.

Across Australia, many of our sisters and brothers are burdened by the rising cost of life's necessities.

For some, this means skipping meals, delaying medical care or living without secure housing.

These are not just economic statistics - they are human stories of struggle and resilience.

As disciples of Jesus, we cannot turn away from these realities. The Gospel calls us to

*“These are not just economic statistics - they are human stories of struggle and resilience.... This statement is an invitation to listen and to act.”*

see Christ in those who suffer and to walk alongside them with compassion.

This statement is an invitation to listen and to act.

It draws on the rich tradition of Catholic social teaching, reminding us of principles that illuminate our path: the dignity of every person, the common good, solidarity, subsidiarity and the preferential option for the poor. These are not abstract ideas - they are practical ways of living the Gospel in our time.

They challenge us to share generously, to advocate for justice, and to build communities where no one is forgotten.

Our response begins in prayer and discernment, but it must lead to concrete action.

Whether through supporting those in need, engaging in advocacy, or fostering hope in our families and parishes, each of us has a role to play.

In a world that often feels fractured and anxious, we are called to be signs of God's love - a people who bring light into places of darkness and hope into situations of despair.

I invite you to read, reflect and allow this first statement to stir your heart.

May it inspire us to see with the eyes of Christ, to act with courage and tenderness and to work together for a future marked by justice, compassion and peace.





# The Cost of Our Living

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## ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL JUSTICE FOR THE COMMON GOOD

In recent years, many Australians have been struggling to cope with the cost of paying for basic goods and services. This has become known as the cost of living crisis. Some of the causes of this crisis include the COVID-19 Pandemic<sup>1</sup>, wars<sup>2</sup>, high interest rates and rising housing costs<sup>3</sup>, wage stagnation<sup>4</sup> and excessive corporate profits.

In this statement, we bishops want to address this crisis and suggest how we, in the Church, can respond to the hardship which so many of us are experiencing.

### **Struggling to Afford the Necessities of Life**

Several recent reports draw attention to the heartbreaking experiences of those struggling to cope with these pressures.<sup>5</sup>

A young woman in NSW spoke about the difficulties she faces every day:

*“In the last 12 months, yet more, the lack of money has severely affected my life. There have been times when I’ve had to skip meals just to ensure that my daughter and pets could eat. I’ve been unable to pay my electricity bills for almost two years, and relying on borrowing money has only added to my stress and anxiety.”<sup>6</sup>*

There is much evidence which suggests the pressure this young woman feels is shared by many of us. A 2024 survey showed that

over 70% of employed people and those on Government support said that the price of goods and services has outstripped increases in their pay.<sup>7</sup> Growing financial pressures have forced some to draw down on their savings or superannuation balances, to borrow money, to go without heating and cooling, or to avoid going to the doctor or purchasing medication.

In 2025, over one in three Australian households reported experiencing food insecurity, with many skipping meals or relying on emergency food relief.<sup>89</sup> People in remote and regional communities face even greater challenges with one survey reporting that the cost of basic food items in remote communities was more than double the cost of the same items in capital cities.<sup>10</sup>

The cost of buying or renting a home has risen dramatically, with more than 1.2 million low-



income households spending over 30 per cent of their disposable income on housing.<sup>11</sup>

As parents struggle to deal with rising costs of goods and services, their children's education suffers because they cannot afford to pay for educational resources and opportunities.<sup>12</sup>

Many workers on low wages simply do not earn enough to make ends meet. This was highlighted in a submission to the Fair Work Commission by the Australian Catholic Council for Employment Relations (ACCER). It argued for a 4.5% increase to the National Minimum Wage in 2025. The evidence provided in the submission suggested this wage rise was needed to ensure low paid workers could live a dignified life and avoid falling deeper into poverty.<sup>13</sup>

The consequences extend beyond financial strain. Research shows that nearly half of Australians experiencing financial stress report deteriorating mental health.<sup>14</sup>

This crisis affects everyone but falls most heavily on those already vulnerable: single parent families, people with disabilities, First Nations communities, refugees, older Australians on fixed incomes, unemployed people, and those in casual employment.<sup>15</sup>

### Addressing the Crisis

The Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church<sup>16</sup> identifies four principles of Catholic

OVER 1 IN 3 AUSTRALIAN  
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*argued by the Australian Catholic  
Council for Employment Relations*

SINGLE PARENT FAMILIES, PEOPLE WITH  
DISABILITIES, FIRST NATIONS COMMUNITIES,  
REFUGEES, OLDER AUSTRALIANS ON FIXED  
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CASUAL EMPLOYMENT ARE THE MOST AFFECTED



social teaching which are always valid and everywhere: human dignity, the common good, solidarity and subsidiarity. Along with two other principles of Church teaching, the universal destination of goods and the preferential option for the poor, they offer help in understanding the cost of living crisis in the light of the Gospel and in deciding what should be done to address it.

Respect for the dignity of the human person is at the heart of all Catholic social teaching. We believe that each person is created in the image and likeness of God and is endowed with freedom and responsibility. Each and every person is willed into existence by God and is of inestimable worth.<sup>17</sup> The evidence we have presented of the impact of rising costs clearly shows that many Australians are being deprived of their human dignity. This is not acceptable.

God intended the earth and all its goods to be available for all people and that they would be shared fairly. The principle of the universal destination of goods insists that each person must have access to what is needed to live in dignity.<sup>18</sup> The Church's commitment to the common good also requires that each and every person deserves to have all they need to flourish.

Governments cannot intervene in the current crisis in a way that creates "winners" and "losers." Everyone must be supported if the common good is to be respected.<sup>19</sup> The cost of living crisis has resulted in so many

Australians going without food and medication and even the safety of having a home. The Church cannot ignore what is fundamentally at odds with what God intended. We must ensure that no-one is left out or left behind by action aimed at addressing the crisis.

While we must ensure that every Australian matters when it comes to action to address the cost of living crisis, attention must first be given to the most vulnerable people in society. The principle of the preferential option for the poor insists that we place the highest priority on ensuring that people who are poor or marginalised have what they need to live in dignity. This requires us to not only share what we have with people who are poor, but to also challenge what causes and entrenches poverty in society.<sup>20</sup>

When speaking to young people gathered in Assisi in 2022, Pope Francis reminded them of the priority which must be given to those who are poor:

*"Developing an economy inspired by him {St Francis} means committing ourselves to putting the poor at the centre. Starting with them, we look at the economy. Starting with them, we look at the world..."<sup>21</sup>*

Pope Leo XIV reminds us that we also benefit from our service to those who are poor:

*"The poor are not a distraction for the Church, but our beloved brothers and sisters, for by their lives, their words and their wisdom, they put us in contact with the truth of the Gospel."<sup>22</sup>*

In addressing the cost of living crisis, all sectors of society - governments, corporations and businesses, churches and faith communities, civil society, and community



organisations - must be involved, including those who are most affected. The principle of subsidiarity affirms the right of people and groups to participate in decisions that affect them, but there is more to it than that. Organisations at a higher level, like governments, also have an obligation to assist those at the local level for the common good. Subsidiarity recognises that there are multiple levels of responsibility which contribute to the common good.<sup>23</sup>

Catholic social service organisations in dioceses across the country provide financial counselling, affordable housing, and emergency relief to around 700,000 people annually. The St. Vincent de Paul Society also provides many different forms of support to thousands of people struggling to make ends meet. This includes providing around \$50 million in emergency relief a year. These Catholic organisations also engage in advocacy with governments to promote better policies to address poverty.

However, we cannot leave it to these organisations alone to do all the work on behalf of the Church. All of us need to play some part in working for the common good amid the cost of living crisis. The principle of solidarity encourages us all to accompany those who are struggling to cope with the crisis. Solidarity is a firm and persevering commitment to the common good. It is not just a vague feeling of compassion. When we exercise solidarity, we see other people and groups as sisters and brothers whom we are called to love, care for and stand with. It is not only a matter of recognising our common humanity, but also of accepting and valuing others in their differences from ourselves.<sup>24</sup>

Along with prayer and the study of scripture, the principles of Catholic social teaching provide us with the guidance and support we need to strive, as people committed to the Gospel, to promote a vision of society where justice, compassion and love are the bedrock.

## Taking Action

Here are some suggestions for taking action to address the cost of living crisis:

- Take notice of people around you who may be showing signs of struggling with the cost of living.
- Offer practical help to those who are struggling to make ends meet.
- Donate money and goods to organisations providing support to people affected by the crisis.
- Volunteer your time to Church and community organisations offering practical support.
- Ask your local Council to help you find local community organisations offering support to people experiencing financial stress.
- Come together with others in your parish, school or agency to engage respectfully with people facing financial pressures and to learn more about their struggles.
- Reflect on these experiences with the guidance of scripture and Catholic social teaching principles and pray for God's guidance on what action you might take.
- Look for organisations promoting action to address inadequate support for people on low incomes and join in their advocacy campaigns.
- Join organisations promoting more affordable housing locally or nationally.
- Work with others to urge governments to prevent corporations and businesses from raising the price of goods and services excessively.
- If you run a business, ensure that you pay fair wages, charge reasonable prices and make a commitment to support your local community.
- Work with local politicians, businesses, churches and community groups to encourage the collaboration of representatives of all these sectors in community efforts to address the cost of living crisis locally;
- Ask local politicians to encourage the participation of people affected by the crisis in local efforts to address the problem.



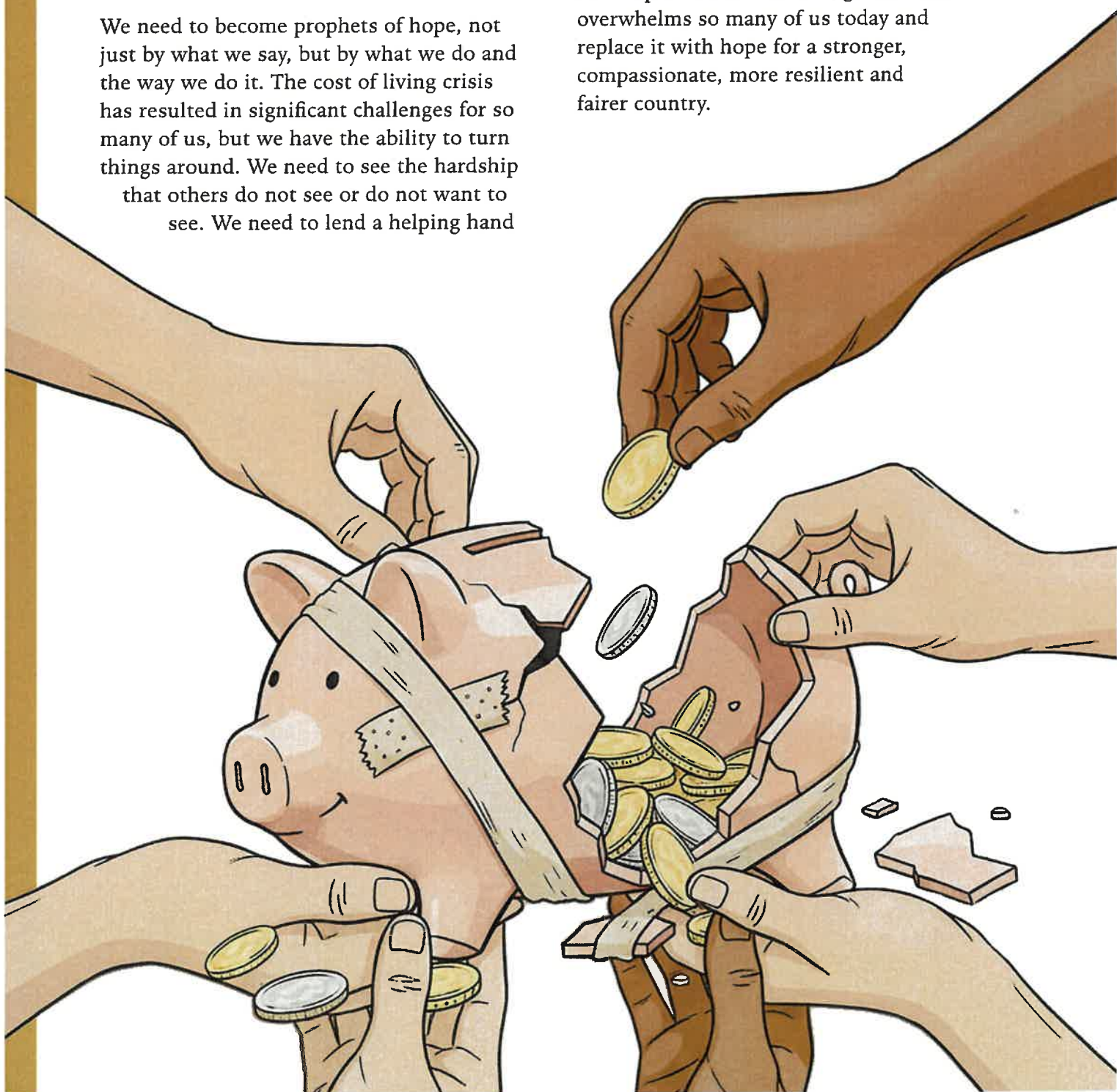
## Prophets of Hope

In a wealthy country like Australia, it seems inconceivable that there should be so much hardship. Many of us cannot see a way out of the cost of living crisis. This must change. Australia needs to learn to hope again. And we know that the Gospel of Jesus Christ is the antidote to the current struggle and despair.

We need to become prophets of hope, not just by what we say, but by what we do and the way we do it. The cost of living crisis has resulted in significant challenges for so many of us, but we have the ability to turn things around. We need to see the hardship that others do not see or do not want to see. We need to lend a helping hand

to all those around us who struggle to live with any dignity. We need to bring together people from all walks of life, including those bearing the brunt of the cost of living crisis, to develop local action as well as to promote national action to address the struggles we all face.

Trusting in the Spirit, all of us in parishes, schools and agencies across the country can help to lift the cloud of gloom which overwhelms so many of us today and replace it with hope for a stronger, compassionate, more resilient and fairer country.



## ENDNOTES

- 1 Parliament of Australia 2023, *The impact of the pandemic on the cost of living, Interim Report, Senate Select Committee on the Cost of Living*, viewed 20 October 2025, [https://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary\\_Business/Committees/Senate/Cost\\_of\\_Living/costofliving/Interim\\_Report/Chapter\\_3\\_-\\_The\\_impact](https://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/Senate/Cost_of_Living/costofliving/Interim_Report/Chapter_3_-_The_impact)
- 2 International Monetary Fund 2022, *The long-lasting economic shock of war*, viewed 20 October 2025, <https://www.imf.org/en/Publications/fandd/issues/2022/03/the-long-lasting-economic-shock-of-war>
- 3 Parliament of Australia 2024, *The cost of living crisis in housing, Second Interim Report, Senate Select Committee on the Cost of Living*, viewed 20 October 2025, [https://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary\\_Business/Committees/Senate/Cost\\_of\\_Living/costofliving/Second\\_Interim\\_Report/Chapter\\_4\\_-\\_The\\_cost\\_of\\_living\\_crisis\\_in\\_housing](https://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/Senate/Cost_of_Living/costofliving/Second_Interim_Report/Chapter_4_-_The_cost_of_living_crisis_in_housing)
- 4 ABC News 2025, *The lost decade: young Australians and home ownership decline*, viewed 20 October 2025, <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2025-03-30/lost-decade-young-australians-home-ownership-per-capita/105109248>
- 5 The Australia Institute 2024, *How Australians are experiencing the cost of living crisis, Centre for Future Work*, viewed 20 October 2025, <https://futurework.org.au/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2024/10/Polling-Report-Cost-of-Living-REVISED-1.pdf>
- 6 The Salvation Army 2025, *The Red Shield Report 2025*, viewed 20 October 2025, <https://www.salvationarmy.org.au/the-red-shield-report-2025/>
- 7 The Australia Institute 2024, *How Australians are experiencing the cost of living crisis, Centre for Future Work*, viewed 20 October 2025, <https://futurework.org.au/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2024/10/Polling-Report-Cost-of-Living-REVISED-1.pdf>
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## SOCIAL JUSTICE STATEMENT PRAYER

O God of justice and mercy,  
look upon the struggling families of Australia  
crushed by the rising cost of living –  
parents skipping meals, choosing  
between medicine and power,  
fearful that one more bill will break them.  
Lord Jesus, born in poverty,  
teach us to see You in every exhausted worker,  
every pensioner going cold, every  
young adult trapped at home.  
Holy Spirit, move the hearts of  
lawmakers, employers and landlords  
to choose fairness over profit and  
the common good over excess.  
Strengthen your Church to be  
a voice for the voiceless  
and a true refuge for the poor.  
Mary, Our Lady of Perpetual Help,  
and St Joseph, protector of workers,  
intercede for us that rents and  
wages may be just and fair  
and no child in this land go  
hungry or without a home.  
Turn our nation to solidarity and hope –  
that honest work may always provide bread,  
and no one be forced to choose  
between dignity and survival.  
We ask this through Christ our Lord.  
Amen.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians  
who have walked upon and cared for this  
land for thousands of years. We acknowledge  
the continued deep spiritual attachment and  
relationship of Aboriginal and Torres Strait  
Islander Peoples to this country and commit  
ourselves to the ongoing journey of reconciliation.

### DRAFTING PANEL

Peter Arndt  
Dr Susan Connelly rsj  
Dr Mark Copland  
Emma Carolan  
Cherie Sibasabo

### ADDITIONAL CONTRIBUTORS

Dr Jerry Nockles  
Dr Sandie Cornish  
Professor Gerard Moore

Editors: Peter Arndt, Greg Baynie & Paul Osborne  
Typesetting and layout design: Ryan Macalandag  
Images: BigStockPhoto



AUSTRALIAN  
CATHOLIC BISHOPS  
CONFERENCE

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ISBN (Print): 978-0-909246-48-8  
ISBN (Digital): 978-0-909246-49-5

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is available on the **Australian Catholic  
Bishops Conference** website:

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