



AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC BISHOPS CONFERENCE

In election statement, bishops call for ‘a better kind of politics’

MEDIA RELEASE

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Australia’s Catholic bishops have called for a shakeup that focuses the country’s politics on the common good of all, including – and especially – those who struggle to participate in the community.

Australian Catholic Bishops Conference president Archbishop Mark Coleridge said no one political party fully embodies Catholic social teaching. The bishops are, however, offering an election statement to encourage Catholics and people of good will to reflect on the good they can do for their community by using their vote for the good of all.

Archbishop Coleridge said “we all long for what Pope Francis calls ‘a better kind of politics, one truly at the service of the common good’”.

“This ‘better’ politics pursues the common good of all Australians by recognising the dignity of every individual and the solidarity we all share as a national community,” Archbishop Coleridge said.

“Since the last federal election we have seen the impact and the challenges of a global pandemic, floods, summers of bushfires, wild weather events and a world on edge because of military conflict.

“Foremost in the minds of many will be Australia’s economic recovery from the effects of COVID-19. The societal disruptions from the pandemic have revealed significant levels of poverty and disadvantage within Australia. We need a new social contract that focuses the economy more clearly on the common good.”

The statement highlights several key issues that the bishops have identified and which they encouraged readers to consider when preparing to vote.

Among them is the provision of high-quality palliative care across Australia, “to ensure that no one is pressured into choosing assisted suicide because palliative care is unavailable”.

The statement advocates for vulnerable people in the community, including those in need of aged care, First Nations peoples, asylum-seekers and refugees. It calls for a government committed to the common good that will deliver a medium to long-term plan for eradicating poverty in Australia.

The bishops also say people who have a religious faith should be protected from discrimination, “including the ability to undertake activities and form religious bodies that can pursue their religious mission”.

“This includes commonsense provisions to allow religious schools to preference the hiring of staff who support the school’s ethos,” the statement says.

Access the election statement at: <https://bit.ly/BishopsElection2022>