



FATHER FRANK BRENNAN RAISING HIS VOICE FOR THE VOICELESS

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Starting in his new role as CEO of Catholic Social Services Australia, Fr Frank Brennan – Jesuit Priest and Professor of Law – has a clear plan for what he needs to do to change Australia for the better.

“I have spent many years dedicated to the enhancement of Aboriginal rights and the rights and entitlements of refugees and asylum seekers. I have seen it as my moral duty to stand up for those in our society who are marginalised and disadvantaged,” Fr Frank Brennan, said.

“Even though Australia has become a more prosperous country since I started working in Redfern more than 40 years ago, this prosperity has not been shared across the community. I have become increasingly concerned that the gap between rich and poor in Australia is becoming unbridgeable.”

“While inequality in Australia is increasing the voice of the churches and the non-government sector have been marginalised by successive Governments along with the people they serve.”

“While our elected politicians have the responsibility for budget repair ensuring that the national debt handed onto future generations is manageable, policy initiatives and economic measures have to be both equitable and sustainable.”

“Poor and marginalised people living in Australia are finding it increasingly difficult to affect the policies of major political parties.”

“I intend to use my expertise and the lived experience of the tens of thousands of people who rely on services provided by the national network of Catholic social services to help our Federal politicians and bureaucrats to devise policies that assist those most in need.”

“In 2017 Catholic Social Services Australia will continue to work with others in the social services sector to contribute constructively to government social reforms and policies that risk being driven primarily by the budget bottom line, rather than supporting the needs of vulnerable people.”

“I intend to be a co-operative participant seeking equitable and sustainable budget repair which ensures basic entitlements for all, now and into the future.”

“I also intend to call out those politicians and media who systematically misrepresent the most vulnerable and poorest in our society as people who deserve their plight. As the gap between rich and poor has grown in Australia more and more people have been happy to believe carefully crafted stories designed to demonstrate that disadvantaged people are deserving of their plight and are therefore not deserving of assistance or support.”

“Australians, especially our leaders, need to acknowledge the complexity of the true nature of poverty and take responsibility for doing more to assist people in need rather than blaming them for their circumstances.”

“In the long run the social and economic cost of failing to address inequality far outweighs the cost of providing adequate support to those who need it. I want to work towards an Australia where everyone is seen as deserving of support when they need it and where we can all share our common good,” Fr Frank said.

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