



13 August 2025

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Earlier today, the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference released its 2025-2026 Social Justice Statement, *Signs of Hope on the Edges: Serving Homeless People With Mental Ill-Health*.

Each year, the bishops reflect on issues that demand our attention as individuals, as communities, and as a Church. This year's Statement calls us to consider how we accompany those experiencing homelessness and mental ill-health, and how we embody the hope of the Gospel in our response.

No matter our role, whether in parishes, schools, CatholicCare, St Nicholas, or shared services, we are connected by our commitment to human dignity and care for the most vulnerable. Each of us has a part to play.

I encourage you to read the statement and reflect on what it means in your own context: how it speaks to the people you serve, the work you do, and the hope you bring.

You can access the full statement here: [Social Justice Statement 2025-2026](#)

As we consider this call to serve, I invite you to support CatholicCare's [Make a Difference Appeal](#), which will run until the end of August. This appeal directly supports our unfunded community programs, helping us keep food on the table through community kitchens, mobile food services, and support hubs across the region.

We have seen firsthand the difference this support makes in the lives of so many. Every gift, no matter the size, helps us continue to meet the growing need and ensures that those doing it tough in our local communities are welcomed with dignity and care.

Let us continue to check in on our neighbours, open our hearts to the marginalised, and give generously where we can. Even what seems like the smallest act may offer great comfort and hope to someone facing hardship.

And if you yourself are finding things difficult, please know that support is available and you are not alone. Reach out to a colleague, a friend, or one of the many services in our Diocese. You are valued and loved by God.

Thank you for your continued dedication to building communities that reflect the love of Christ.

Yours in Christ

Most Reverend Michael Kennedy
Bishop of Maitland-Newcastle