



# *Good Works*

The Catholic Church as an Employer in Australia



## In memory of Michael Cusack

At the time of his death in June 2013, Michael was in his second term as a councillor of the Australian Catholic Council for Employment Relations. He brought to the council a wealth of experience in employment and industrial relations, starting from the 1970s when he was at the Postmaster-General's Department, prior to its split into Australia Post and Telecom/Telstra. He was very involved in the wide and demanding industrial issues around that separation in the 1980s. After leaving the Commonwealth he worked in a number of industries as a consultant before taking up a position with Southern Cross Care (VIC). His commitment to that work was evident as he battled cancer for many months.

For some, the practice of employment relations is combative with assumed success being measured by the ability to extract the maximum from those on the other side of the labour-capital divide. It is an attitude that is destructive of good employment relations but, with Michael, employment relations was based on principle, not opportunism.

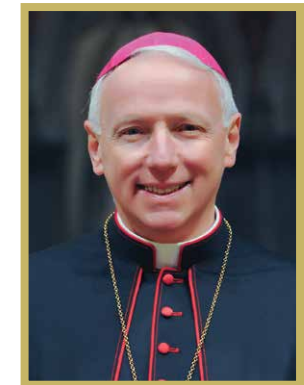


Catholics who practise employment and industrial relations, whether for workers or employers, can draw on a long history of Church teaching on the importance and dignity of work and of the rights and obligations that come with being an employer or a worker. Michael knew and lived that teaching. It was part of his deep faith; and it was seamlessly connected to his commitment to his family and community.

He is greatly missed.

## FOREWORD

The Catholic Church, through its many agencies, is one of Australia's largest employers, with about two per cent of the Australian workforce spread across a range of dioceses, congregations and agencies. Church employment provides the opportunity for many workers to be of service to others and to find satisfaction from doing that work well.



The Catholic Church, as an employer, must strive to fully engage its workers in the services that it provides. As with any organisation that seeks to engage its workers in the organisation's mission and enterprise, Church employers must articulate the values and virtues expected of its workers in delivering their services. When this is done, employment will be inclusive.

The Church's success as an employer cannot be found in some objective measure of efficiency. Part of the measure of success is in the quality of the work and the commitment of its employers.

The Church's interest in employment goes further than this: it extends to its relationship with its workers. Workers in Catholic employment cannot be regarded as resources for delivering outcomes. Catholic organisations should particularly acknowledge and manifest the Church's teachings on work and employment. The theology of work underpins Catholic social teaching on the mutual obligations of workers and employers.

Good employment relations do not just happen. If the aspirations of workers and the expectations of employers are to coincide, mission and values have to be accompanied by practical skills and hard work.

This book is a revision of an earlier publication, *The Catholic Church as an Employer in Australia Today*. It articulates the mission and values of Catholic employment and provides practical advice about how good employment relations can be achieved. This revision has been a collaborative effort involving all members of the Australian Catholic Council for Employment Relations with Dr Terry Wilson acting as our editor. I commend this publication to you as one worthy of wide distribution.

Most Reverend Leslie Rogers Tomlinson DD  
Seventh Bishop of Sandhurst



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▲ **identitywa**  
identitywa is an outreach of the Archdiocese of Perth that supports people with disabilities. identitywa's stated vision is to build a community, in partnership with people with disabilities and their families, in which "All people live with a sense of purpose, a sense of belonging and a sense of wellbeing". Photo courtesy of Tony McDonough.

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▲ Missionaries of Charity, Bourke

Mother Teresa herself walked past Bourke's designated Aboriginal reserve in 1969 and decided that something needed to be done. Between teaching scripture, providing childcare for Aboriginal families, visiting the sick and elderly around town, and running a hostel/hospice for homeless Aboriginal men, the divinely inspired sisters have many earthly demands. The sisters are cherished by the local community, but receive no government support for their work.

## INTRODUCTION

In Australia today, the Catholic Church collectively is one of Australia's largest employers with over 180,000 employees engaged in diocesan and parish administration, pastoral care and the provision of education, health, aged care, welfare and community services. While various services are provided by a number of separate employers (bishops, religious orders, incorporated and unincorporated not-for-profit organisations), all operate under the collective banner of the Catholic Church and, consequently, its social teaching. The Catholic Church's position on its responsibility as an employer is based on long-standing and well-articulated Catholic Social Teaching; that employers and employees have inalienable rights and concomitant responsibilities.

At the universal level, the Catholic Church's magisterium has been developed through a series of encyclical letters. Since the publication in 1891 of *The Condition of Labour* (*Rerum Novarum*) by Pope Leo XIII (1891), the Catholic Church has taken a leading role in developing social theory in the area of the employment relationship. Ensuing encyclicals to commemorate *Rerum Novarum* (1891), particularly *Quadragesimo Anno* by Pius XI (1931); *Mater et Magistra* by Pope St John XXIII (1961); and the two major works by Pope St John Paul II, *Laborem Exercens* (1981) and *Centesimus Annus* (1991); as well as the Second Vatican Council (1965) document *Gaudium et Spes* (1965), have continued to spell out the guiding principles that should govern the employment relationship. In an address to the factory workers of Transfield Limited in Sydney, Australia on November 26, 1986, Pope St John Paul II summed up as his first basic principle on work that "it is always the human person who is the purpose of work. It must be said over and over again that work is for man, not man for work". Most recently, Pope Benedict XVI in *Caritas in Veritate* (2009) reiterates that such work must be 'decent work'.

The Church in Australia has taken up this universal call and has both adopted and adapted these social teachings to the Australian context. In particular, the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference (ACBC) has issued a number of statements such as its pastoral letter, *The Year of the Social Teaching of the Church* (1991), and pastoral statement, *Common Wealth for the Common Good* (1992). In 1993, the ACBC's Bishops' Committee for Industrial Affairs (BCIA) focused in on the area of industrial relations within the general area of social teaching and published *Industrial Relations – The Guiding Principles*.

The formation of the ACCER in 1994 provided an ongoing focus and means of expression for Australian Catholic thought on the area of employment. The ACCER has made a number of submissions to the Australian Government and to Fair Work Australia and its predecessor, the Australian Industrial Relations Commission, such as its submission on *Special Family Leave* (1994), on *Work and Life Balance* (2004) and to annual wage reviews, where it has consistently argued to protect the interests of low-paid workers (e.g. *The Living Wage and the Needs of the Low Paid* [2002]). In addition, the ACCER has published statements such as *Ethical Principles for Church Personnel Administrators* (1995), position papers on the reforms to workplace relations legislation (e.g. *Public Statement by the ACBC in Relation to the Commonwealth Government's Workplace Relations Amendment (WorkChoices) Bill* [2005]) and the predecessor to this current document titled *The Catholic Church as an Employer in Australia Today* (2002).

Thus, there is an ongoing need to provide guidance about the conduct of the employment relationship within Church organisations in the contemporary world. In this respect, the suggested approaches to the issues discussed within this book are not intended to be prescriptive in terms of procedural detail. Rather, they are intended to articulate the foundation of values upon which the procedural detail of workplace policies and practices can be established.



# THE IMPORTANCE OF WORK

The Church has a particular view on work and why we work. Understanding this view is the key to understanding the Church's social teaching on the employment relationship.

Pope St John Paul II stated in *Laborem Exercens*:

“ The basis for determining the value of work is not primarily the work being done but the fact that the one doing it is a person.”

## ▼ Notre Dame University, Fremantle

The university is especially noteworthy for its role as a leader in the professional disciplines of Health and Education, and has assumed a special role in the education of the Indigenous people of northern Australia. The university has a strong community focus, with staff encouraged to involve their families in aspects of campus life.

The Church teaches that work is for people, not people for work, and yet work defines people in our current culture. Our work is integral to our identity but, by and large, we do not work for the sake of working. In the Catholic Church's social teaching, work is seen as a uniquely human activity, thereby aligning us more to God than the rest of His creation.

“ Work is one of the characteristics that distinguishes man from the rest of creatures, whose activity for sustaining their lives cannot be called work. Only man is capable of work, and only man works, at the same time by work occupying his existence on earth. Thus work bears a particular mark of man and of humanity, the mark of a person operating within a community of persons. And this mark decides its interior characteristics, in a sense it constitutes its very nature.”

(Introduction to *Laborem Exercens*, 1981)



## The Purpose of Work

Work is seen as having many purposes.

- to survive. We work to provide ourselves with the necessities to stay alive – food, shelter and clothing:

“ To labour is to exert oneself for the sake of procuring what is necessary for the various purposes of life, and chief of all for self-preservation. 'In the sweat of thy face thou shalt eat bread.' (Gen 3:19) Hence, a man's labour necessarily bears two notes or characters. First of all, it is personal, inasmuch as the force which acts is bound up with the personality and is the exclusive property of him who acts, and, further, was given to him for his advantage. Secondly, man's labour is necessary; for without the result of labour a man cannot live, and self-preservation is a law of nature.” (*Rerum Novarum* 1891, para 44)

- to better oneself. We work to use and perfect our God-given gifts like good stewards

“ Throughout the course of the centuries, men have laboured to better the circumstances of their lives through a monumental amount of individual and collective effort. To believers, this point is settled; considered in itself, such human activity accords with God's will.” (*Gaudium et Spes*, 1965, para 34)

- to be part of and contribute to one's community, particularly to support one's family. We work in co-operation with others, to share the produce of our labours for our mutual benefit. Inherent in this purpose is that one member of a family may engage in paid work to support the other members of his or her family

“ More than ever today, to work is to work with others and for others: it is a matter of doing something for someone else. Work is all the more fruitful and productive, the more capable one is of recognising the productive resources of the earth and of perceiving the deepest needs of the one for whom the work is being performed.” (*Centesimus Annus*, 1991, para 31)

- to evangelise. We work to give example to all to whom the work of God brings salvation. When work is done in this way it becomes a prayer, thanksgiving expressed in deeds not just words. The product becomes a sacred offering to God, sanctifying it and sanctifying himself

“ The laity, by their very vocation, to seek the kingdom of God by engaging in temporal affairs and by ordering them according to the plan of God, they live in the world, that is, in each and in all of the secular professions and occupations... There, they are called by God that by exercising their proper function and, led by the spirit of the Gospel, they may work for the sanctification of the world from within as a leaven. In this way, they may make Christ known to others.” (*Lumen Gentium*, 1964, para 31)

- to be co-creators with God. Men and women, through their everyday work, are contributing as co-workers with God the Creator to reveal His 'mysterious design'

“ For, while providing the substance of life for themselves and their families, men and women are performing their activities in a way which appropriately benefits society. They can justly consider that by their labour they are unfolding the Creator's work... Thus, far from thinking that works produced by man's own talent and energy are in opposition to God's power, and that the rational creature exists as a kind of rival to the Creator, Christians are convinced that the triumphs of the human race are a sign of God's grace and the flowering of His own mysterious design.” (*Gaudium et Spes*, 1965, para 34)

In *Laborem Exercens*, Pope St John Paul II, in commenting on how we should measure the progress of civilisation in accordance with the guidelines of Pope St Paul VI's Encyclical *Populorum Progressio*, affirms the foundational principle of the Church's social teaching – the principle of the dignity of the human person.

“ The progress in question must be made through man and for man and it must produce its fruit in man. A test of this progress will be the increasingly mature recognition of the purpose of work and increasingly universal respect for the rights inherent in work in conformity with the dignity of man, the subject of work.” (para 18)

## Reconceptualising Our View of Work

And so, we need to reconceptualise our understanding of the purpose of work. This is best illustrated by reconceptualising our understanding of the story of Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden. Because original sin introduced the need for work, work has popularly been viewed as a curse devised by God explicitly to punish Adam and Eve. Instead, if we view God the Creator as the first worker when He creates the world and all that is in it and we consider that sin causes our separation from God the Creator, then work, far from being a punishment, is instead the means for us to reunite with God, to rejoin with God the Creator by imitating His creative work.

*Laborem Exercens* clearly states that the most important reason for work is that we are co-workers with God.

“ The knowledge that by means of work the human person shares in the work of Creation constitutes the most profound motive for undertaking it in various sectors.” (para 25)

God the Creator was the first worker and continues to work today through the Spirit. All that God does is good, so work is good. However, original sin means that our work can be good or bad depending on the purpose of that work. So our work, no matter how humble or significant, will be good when it forms part of the work of the Spirit, that is, its *telos* is to build the Kingdom of God.

In the Old Testament, the Sabbath (Hebrew shabbath, cessation, rest) was a day of rest to be kept holy. “*Work must be done for six days, but the seventh day will be a day of complete rest, consecrated to Yahweh.*” (Exodus 31:15) By association, work days became ‘unholy’ given that all work was forbidden on the day designated as ‘holy’. In the New Testament, Christ rejects this notion of the day being holy because it is free from work. If the work done on the Sabbath builds the Kingdom of God then the work is holy and the Sabbath is preserved.

“ As Jesus was passing through a field of grain on the sabbath, his disciples began to make a path while picking the heads of grain. At this the Pharisees said to him, “Look, why are they doing what is unlawful on the sabbath?” He said to them, “Have you never read what David did when he was in need and he and his companions were hungry? How he went into the house of God when Abiathar was high priest and ate the bread of offering that only the priests could lawfully eat, and shared it with his companions?” Then he said to them, “The sabbath was made for man, not man for the sabbath. That is why the Son of Man is lord even of the sabbath.” (Mark 2:23-28)

If the sabbath was made for man, not man for the sabbath, then the echo in Pope St John Paul's encyclical *Laborem Exercens* (1981) is obvious ... “*work is ‘for man’ and not man ‘for work’*” (para 6).

### ► Volunteers hard at work at The Shopfront

The Shopfront is an outreach of the Archdiocese of Perth that provides help, friendship and support to those who may be experiencing difficulties dealing with problems in their life such as homelessness, depression, hunger and loneliness.

The Shopfront is a drop-in centre and referral service for these marginalised people.



## THE PRINCIPLES UNDERPINNING THE CHURCH'S SOCIAL TEACHING ON WORK AND THE EMPLOYMENT RELATIONSHIP

In 1931, when Pope Pius XI wrote his encyclical *Quadregesimo Anno* (released to commemorate the 40th anniversary of Pope Leo XIII's encyclical, *Rerum Novarum*), a widespread view underpinning the economic approach to society was (and largely still is now) that society was based on competition (for labour and capital) and that individuals competed for these resources. This economic approach was denounced as amoral by Pope St John XXIII in *Mater et Magistra* (para 11). Labour or work was a commodity that could be used or disposed of by those in power (i.e. those higher up the decision-making hierarchy) without reference to the worker or the work's intrinsic worth.

In opposition to this view of society and building on *Rerum Novarum*, Pope Pius XI stated that the dignity of the human person cannot be traded off by those in power in society so that their work became meaningless in its own right.

Pope Pius XI called for society to be governed by the four complementary principles of:

- human dignity
- solidarity
- the common good
- a new principle of subsidiarity

so that there was an ‘order’ in the way society acted. These four complementary principles are then the ones that underpin the Church's social teaching on work and the employment relationship.



## The Principle of Human Dignity

The primary principle of all Catholic teaching, including its social teaching, is the principle of human dignity based on the Church's belief in the sanctity of a human life.

“Of all visible creatures only man is 'able to know and love his creator' (Genesis 12:3). He is 'the only creature on earth that God has willed for its own sake' (Genesis 24:3) and he alone is called to share, by knowledge and love, in God's own life. It was for this end that he was created, and this is the fundamental reason for his dignity.”  
(Catechism of the Catholic Church, para 3576)

In *Mater et Magistra* (Mother and Teacher), Pope St John XXIII spells out how the principle of the common good applies to work. He outlines the important notion that work cannot be dehumanising, no matter how economically efficient or effective the produce of that work may be.

“82. Justice is to be observed not only in the distribution of wealth, but also in regard to the conditions in which men are engaged in producing this wealth. Every man has, of his very nature, a need to express himself in his work and thereby to perfect his own being.

83. Consequently, if the whole structure and organisation of an economic system is such as to compromise human dignity, to lessen a man's sense of responsibility or rob him of opportunity for exercising personal initiative, then such a system, we maintain, it is altogether unjust — no matter how much wealth it produces, or how justly and equitably such wealth is distributed.”  
(*Mater et Magistra*, 1961, paras 82 and 83)

In *Pacem in Terris* (Peace on Earth), Pope St John XXIII affirms this inviolability of human dignity when related to work. While affirming the complementary principles of the common good (paras 55 and 56), solidarity (paras 98 and 99) and subsidiarity (paras 140 and 141) he introduces a broader view on the rights associated with a person's labour.

He extends *Rerum Novarum*'s immediate purpose of labour, “to exert oneself for the sake of procuring what is necessary for the various purposes of life, and chief of all for self preservation” (1891, para 44), by not restricting “the various purposes of life” to the immediate benefits of food, shelter and clothing.

“But first we must speak of man's rights. Man has the right to live. He has the right to bodily integrity, to the means necessary for the proper development of life, particularly food, clothing, shelter, medical care, rest, and, finally, the necessary social services. In consequence, he has the right to be looked after in the event of ill health; disability stemming from his work; widowhood; old age; enforced unemployment; or whenever through no fault of his own he is deprived of the means of livelihood.”  
(*Pacem in Terris*, 1963, para 11)

Work then should provide the basis for a dignified lifestyle for the whole of peoples' lives and not just their working life. Where people has no access or capability to work, through no fault of their own, then solidarity should ensure that they preserve their human dignity.

“The social order and its development must invariably work to the benefit of the human person, since the order of things is to be subordinate to the order of persons, and not the other way around.”  
(*Gaudium et Spes*, paras 1046 and 1047)

**Because the Catholic Church is concerned with the human dignity and well-being of each and every individual, the work of safeguarding all people is rightfully part of the fabric of the mission of the Church. Consequently, the Church's employment practices must safeguard the human dignity of all people in its care and in its employment, with special regard to protecting young and vulnerable adults from any neglect and all forms of physical, sexual or emotional abuse. This protection requires ongoing vigilance by the Church to ensure the highest standards of safeguarding are upheld.**

## The Principle of the Common Good

The principle of the common good is derived from the principle of human dignity. If every person has a right to be treated with dignity, then every person has a corollary responsibility to treat all others with dignity.

“The principle of the common good, to which every aspect of social life must be related if it is to attain its fullest meaning, stems from the dignity, unity and equality of all people.” (*Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, 2005, para 264)

This principle in its infancy is found in Augustine of Hippo's *City of God* (Book XIX) written in the 5th century where he poses the question, 'Is the good life social?', and then answers in the affirmative. It is extensively developed in the 13th century by St Thomas Aquinas in his *Summa Theologica* as the basis for all law: “Law is an ordinance of reason for the common good” (I-II, 90, 4).

*Rerum Novarum* introduced this now well-known principle of the common good into modern Catholic Social Teaching by stating that “civil society exists for the common good, and hence is concerned with the interests of all in general” (*Rerum Novarum*, 1891, para 51).

*The Catechism of the Catholic Church* spells the fact that we have God-given gifts that have been provided to us not just for our benefit but for society's benefit as well.

“A society is a group of persons bound together organically by a principle of unity that goes beyond each one of them ... By means of society, each man is established as an “heir” and receives certain “talents” that enrich his identity and whose fruits he must develop. He rightly owes loyalty to the communities of which he is part and respect to those in authority who have charge of the common good.”  
(*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, para 1880).

The principle of the common good requires workers, through their participation in society, to 'order' or regulate their society so that their society becomes more than a mere aggregation but instead a force that acts with a common purpose towards a common good for all its members. All of society should benefit from the work of its participants.

The Church has always taught that the right common to all individuals was the use of the fruits of their labour, the use of the goods of the whole of Creation.

However, it has never upheld this right as absolute. An individual's right is subordinated to the right to common use, to the fact that goods are meant for everyone. Pius XII addresses this issue in his address, *La Solennita delta Pentecoste*, delivered on June 1, 1941

“The basic idea of these principles ... consists, as we said, in the assertion of the unquestionable need that the goods, which were created by God for all men, should flow equally to all, according to the principles of justice and charity.

Every man, as a living being gifted with reason, has in fact from nature the fundamental right to make use of the material goods of the earth ... This individual right cannot in any way be suppressed, even by other clear and undisputed rights over material goods.”  
(The Major Addresses of Pope Pius XII, Vol. I, 1961, p.30)

Pope Benedict XVI, in *Caritas in Veritate* (2009), extends this notion that the fruits of work should flow equally to all, according to the principles of justice and charity, stating that human work must be a genuine opportunity and means for all people to fulfil their humanity and to contribute personally to the common good. When this occurs, when 'decent work' is available for all, the common good is served.

“*Caritas in veritate* is the principle around which the Church's social doctrine turns, a principle that takes on practical form in the criteria that govern moral action... Charity goes beyond justice... To desire the common good and strive towards it is a requirement of justice and charity... (paras 6 and 7)

“What is meant by the word 'decent' in regard to work? It means work that expresses the essential dignity of every man and woman in the context of their particular society: work that is freely chosen, effectively associating workers, both men and women, with the development of their community; work that enables the worker to be respected and free from any form of discrimination; work that makes it possible for families to meet their needs and provide schooling for their children, without the children themselves being forced into labour; work that permits the workers to organise themselves freely, and to make their voices heard; work that leaves enough room for rediscovering one's roots at a personal, familial and spiritual level; work that guarantees those who have retired a decent standard of living.” (para 63)

## The Principle of Solidarity

While the principle of solidarity was used by Pope Leo XIII in *Rerum Novarum*, the term 'solidarity' arose later (e.g. Pope Pius XI in *Quadregesimo Anno* [1931], Vatican Council II in *Gaudium et Spes* [1965], Pope St Paul VI in *Populorum Progressio* [1967] and *Sollicitudo rei socialis* [1987] and Pope St John Paul II in *Laborem Exercens* [1981] and *Centesimus Annus* [1991]) to distinguish Catholic social theory's view on 'the common good' from other social theories' views, such as communism's view.

In Catholic social theory, solidarity is intrinsically linked with the principle of the common good, as the quote from Pope St John Paul II demonstrates. Solidarity is more than pragmatic interdependence; it is a moral principle that governs human behaviour.

“ It is above all a question of interdependence, sensed as a system determining relationships in the contemporary world, in its economic, cultural, political and religious elements, and accepted as a moral category. When interdependence becomes recognised in this way, the correlative response as a moral and social attitude, as a 'virtue,' is solidarity. This then is not a feeling of vague compassion or shallow distress at the misfortunes of so many people, both near and far. On the contrary, it is a firm and persevering determination to commit oneself to the common good; that is to say, to the good of all and of each individual, because we are all really responsible for all.”  
(*Sollicitudo Rei Socialis* – On Social Concern, 1987, para 38, emphasis added)

Solidarity expects us to love our neighbours as ourselves, to be our brothers' and sisters' keepers by making choices that protect the common good.

“ ... the roots of the contradiction between the solemn affirmation of human rights and their tragic denial in practice lies in a notion of freedom which exalts the isolated individual in an absolute way, and gives no place to solidarity, to openness to others and service of them ... Yes, every man is his 'brother's keeper', because God entrusts us to one another. And it is also in view of this entrusting that God gives everyone freedom, a freedom which possesses an inherently relational dimension. This is a great gift of the Creator, placed as it is at the service of the person and of his fulfilment through the gift of self and openness to others; but when freedom is made absolute in an individualistic way, it is emptied of its original content, and its very meaning and dignity are contradicted.” (*Evangelium Vitae*, para 19)

The principle of solidarity recognises that we have benefited from the work of others in the past and in the present and, therefore, we have a corollary debt to others in return.

“ We have inherited from past generations, and we have benefited from the work of our contemporaries: for this reason we have obligations towards all, and we cannot refuse to interest ourselves in those who will come after us to enlarge the human family. The reality of human solidarity, which is a benefit for us, also imposes a duty.”  
(*Populorum Progressio*, para 17)

Solidarity calls on us to address not just individual injustices but societal problems. As such, it is a key to the Church's social justice teaching and its radical preferential option for the poor and marginalised.

## The Principle of Subsidiarity

The principle of subsidiarity is one of the truly distinguishing features of the Church's social teaching. Pope Pius XI introduced this principle in his encyclical *Quadregesimo Anno* (1931) to address the balance of the power between the individual and community. The individual has rights, as illustrated by the principle of human dignity. The community has rights, as illustrated by the principles of the common good and solidarity.

The principle of subsidiarity governs the relationship and reconciles the tension between the rights of the individual and the principles of the common good and solidarity.

The principle of subsidiarity states that a central authority should always maintain a subsidiary function; i.e. performing only those tasks which cannot be performed effectively at a more appropriate lower level. It opposes unnecessary intervention by central governments and supports decisions being taken at the most appropriate local level as possible, so as to ensure the autonomy and dignity of the human individual.

“ ... that most weighty principle, which cannot be set aside or changed, remains fixed and unshaken in social philosophy: just as it is gravely wrong to take from individuals what they can accomplish by their own initiative and industry and give it to the community, so also it is an injustice and at the same time a grave evil and disturbance of right order to assign to a greater and higher association what lesser and subordinate organisations can do. For every social activity ought of its very nature to furnish help to the members of the body social, and never destroy and absorb them.”  
(*Quadragesimo Anno*, 1931, para 79)

In opposition to an economic rationalist view of society, *Quadregesimo Anno* (1931) stated that the dignity of the human person cannot be traded off by those in power in society so that their work became meaningless in its own right. In Catholic social teaching, societies should be 'ordered' or regulated. They are more than mere aggregations because they act with common purpose towards a common good for all of society's members. Thus, the principle of subsidiarity gives a complementary expression of the principle of the common good and the principle of solidarity in 'ordering' that society.

*The Catechism of the Catholic Church* states:

“ A society is a group of persons bound together organically by a principle of unity that goes beyond each one of them. As an assembly that is at once visible and spiritual, a society endures through time: it gathers up the past and prepares for the future. By means of society, each man is established as an 'heir' and receives certain 'talents' that enrich his identity and whose fruits he must develop. He rightly owes loyalty to the communities of which he is part and respect to those in authority who have charge of the common good.” (para 1880)

The principle of subsidiarity acknowledges that the parts are also individual persons who retain their own proper, inalienable functions. The principle of the common good does not mean that society can sacrifice the dignity of the individual person for the common good. Each person is empowered to contribute to the common good according to that person's proper role or function. Society cannot arrogate to itself the exercise of that function. Work is a person's way and right to contribute to society, to the common good, to the expression of solidarity in society. A human's free will allows that person to exercise proper judgement at the person's level to achieve the goal of the common good.



# HOW THESE PRINCIPLES ARE REFLECTED IN CATHOLIC WORKPLACES

What qualities do we look for in a good Catholic workplace? One could go on forever naming qualities and values that should be apparent in a Catholic workplace. Three attributes, however, conveniently sum up the essential characteristics.

## 1. Authenticity

Catholic workplaces should be places where workers expect and experience honesty, truthfulness and integrity. There can be no hypocrisy in Catholic workplaces. A number of corollary work practices follow:

- the workplace should have a Vision Statement or Mandate that clearly expresses the purpose of the organisation and that the work is being done as part of the Church's mission
- the expectations of the staff and the management in terms of procedures and processes should be fair and transparent
- staff in Catholic workplaces should be aware of the work of the organisation prior to being engaged by that workplace and should be constantly reminded of the organisation's mission by having the opportunity, not just for professional (technical) development, but for personal (spiritual) development.

## 2. Balanced values

Catholic workplaces will be places where a positive tension exists between competing, not necessarily opposite, values so that they become complementary. The modifying effect of the complementary value increases rather than diminishes the efficacy of its partner. Such values include:

- Justice and Mercy. A workplace with a rigid view on justice can be harsh and unreasonable. A workplace with an unchecked view on mercy can be unfair and unreasonable for co-workers and even the worker, if the worker develops no sense of personal responsibility as a result
- Free will and responsibility. Workers should have the right to make decisions but should be held morally accountable for their actions where they impact on co-workers
- Truth/honesty and understanding/compassion. The workplace needs to be transparent but, at the same time, understanding. Truth cannot be used as a weapon, nor can the excuse of compassion be used to avoid addressing an issue, to deceive or mislead workers.

Christ told us to *"Be wise as serpents—and harmless as doves"* (Matthew 10:16) and getting the balance right is an ever-present challenge in a workplace seeking to operate on Catholic values. *Discreta caritas*, or discerning love, should be a hallmark of Catholic workplaces. Indeed, the word 'catholic' means universal and Catholic theology has always emphasised a 'both-and' instead of an 'either-or' approach, the inclusive rather than the polarising option.

## 3. Reciprocity

All employees in all Australian workplaces have basic rights; common law rights, Federal and/or State legislative rights, rights stemming from Awards and/or Agreements and, on occasions, rights stemming from written contracts of employment. All employers also have rights arising from the same sources. Importantly, all employees and employers also have responsibilities stemming from all of the same sources that give them their rights.

Australian industrial law is increasingly recognising that employees have an implied duty to co-operate, take care and be loyal to employers; to take all reasonable steps to carry out what has been promised under the contract of employment. Similarly, with employers, a duty to co-operate, take care and be loyal to employees; to take all reasonable steps so that employees can carry out their work and, importantly, not deprive the employee of the opportunity to perform meaningful work.

The oft-quoted rule of 'a fair day's work for a fair day's pay' sums up the reciprocal obligations that should be present in all workplaces.

However, Catholic workplaces go beyond this simple obligation to comply with express and implied terms to the work contract. They should be marked not by mutual obligation but by a spirit of mutual respect so that, for every right (whether an employer or employee right), there is a corollary responsibility (whether an employer or employee responsibility), building a genuine partnership. The Church teaches that employees and employers should be regarded as genuine partners in their place of work and in their respective roles. Freely given mutual respect, esteem and goodwill should underpin the relationship between the employer and the employee.

Accordingly, Church employees should be encouraged and enabled to see their work not merely as a source of income, but as providing a service and a benefit to others in society and, in its ultimate sense, the mission of the Church. This should foster the development of personal accountability for the work to be undertaken, based on the concept of the good citizen who sees that his or her efforts have greater meaning and value in respect of the common good.

Each Church organisation should expect its employees to contribute to the maintenance and development of its being and purpose, through the development of a supportive understanding of the mission and objectives of the organisation. This requires each organisation to clarify its sense of identity and purpose with respect to the spiritual mission of the Church, so that this then informs the employment relationship as appropriate to the role being carried out by each employee. In this way, each employee will be clear about the expectations of the organisation. These expectations and obligations should be contained within the contract of employment and incorporated into the duty statement of each position.

The Code of Canon Law states:

“ Since they participate in the mission of the Church, all the Christian faithful have the right to promote or sustain apostolic action even by their own undertakings, according to their own state and condition. Nevertheless, no undertaking is to claim the name Catholic without the consent of competent ecclesiastical authority.” (Canon 216)

As Pope Francis, on his first full day as Pope, stated, *"If we do not confess Jesus Christ, nothing will avail. We will become a compassionate NGO, but not the Church"*. Accordingly, each Catholic organisation should have a written mandate from the Bishop of the Diocese in which it operates.



## WHAT DOES THIS MEAN IN PRACTICE

**James 2:14** *How does it help, my brothers, when someone who has never done a single good act claims to have faith? Will that faith bring salvation? <sup>15</sup> If one of the brothers or one of the sisters is in need of clothes and has not enough food to live on, <sup>16</sup> and one of you says to them, "I wish you well; keep yourself warm and eat plenty", without giving them these bare necessities of life, then what good is that? <sup>17</sup> In the same way, faith, if good deeds do not go with it, is quite dead. <sup>18</sup> But someone may say, "So you have faith and I have good deeds? Show me this faith of yours without deeds, then! It is by my deeds that I will show you my faith."*

*T*he proverbs "Practise what you preach" and "Actions speak louder than words" remind us that it is not sufficient in itself to have fine principles. These principles must be translated into our practices. In Matthew's Gospel, we are reminded that "you will be able to tell them by their fruits".

### ◀ Silverwater Women's Correctional Facility

A large proportion of women in prison are single parents. In contrast to many men in similar situations, they often find themselves unsupported financially and emotionally once incarcerated. Prison Chaplains help to provide a safe and humane environment, working with individuals as mediator, spiritual guide, counsellor and friend.



## 1. The employment relationship should be a genuine and reciprocal partnership based on a clearly mandated and stated mission

The Church teaches that employees and employers should be regarded as partners in their place of work and in their respective roles. Mutual respect, esteem and goodwill should underpin the relationship between the employer and the employee.

Church employees should be encouraged and enabled to:

- see their work not merely as a source of income, but as providing a service and a benefit to others in society and, in its ultimate sense, the mission of the Church
- foster a sense of personal accountability for their work, regarding their efforts as having greater meaning and value in respect to the common good
- recognise that the goals of Church organisations will be different to those of many other employers within the community and support Church organisations to achieve these different goals.

The corollary is that employers must:

- not place undue emphasis upon efficiency and productivity so that economic goals are their only goals
- recognise that there are qualitative as well as quantitative goals in the delivery of service. Work exists for the person and not the person for work so that all workplaces must encourage and support the full development of all persons serving the Church
- effectively state where the goals of their organisation are different to those of many other employers and support as well as expect its employees to contribute to the maintenance and development of its mission and objectives.

Every Catholic organisation should have a written mandate from the Bishop of the Diocese in which it operates. This mandate should state the organisation's purpose and objectives, its sense of identity with respect to the spiritual mission of the Church. This mandate must be clear to employees on commencement with the organisation and regularly reinforced so that each employee will be clear about the expectations of the organisation. These expectations and obligations should be contained within the contract of employment and incorporated into the duty statement of each position.

The *Code of Canon Law* states:

“ Since they participate in the mission of the Church, all the Christian faithful have the right to promote or sustain apostolic action even by their own undertakings, according to their own state and condition. Nevertheless, no undertaking is to claim the name Catholic without the consent of competent ecclesiastical authority.” (Canon 216)

The principle of reciprocity is critically important in this aspect of the employment relationship. The employer/organisation needs to be transparent in its purpose as an agency of the Catholic Church and the employees need to be supportive of that purpose, that ethos.

## 2. Employment Policies and Procedures in General

The fair and just administration of employment policies and procedures is essential for maintaining the integrity of the relationship with employees.

The *Code of Canon Law* states

“ Administrators of temporal goods...in making contracts of employment, are accurately to observe also, according to the principles taught by the Church, the civil laws relating to labour and social life.” (Code of Canon law. Canon 1286[1])

This means that the employment policies of Church employers:

- should not only have to comply with legislative minimums or standards
- but also adhere to the Social Teaching of the Church that often demands a higher standard than the legislative minimum.

All policies and procedures should be:

- in writing so there can be no misunderstanding as to their meaning or application
- available at any time to each employee. Consequently:
  - » Policies and Procedures may need to be published in a variety of formats, including hard copy or electronically
  - » in formats that allow employees with disabilities or non-English language backgrounds, equitable and adequate access.

### ▼ St Vincent De Paul, Bathurst

Vinnies is an Australian institution, with over 3,000 employees and 30,000 volunteers working across the country, providing support in the areas of addiction and mental health, family and youth services, refugee and migrant communities, disability care and much more.



### 3. The right to a just family wage – a 'living wage'

The primary principle of all Catholic social teaching is the principle of human dignity. By their work, employees should be able to live in a manner worthy of human dignity, in order to fulfil their family and social responsibilities.

#### (a) A just wage

“ Every family has the right to sufficient income through work. Workers have the right to just minimum wages and to just and safe working conditions.” (BCIA [1993] Industrial Relations – The Guiding Principles p.2)

The Church believes that the wages and salaries of employees should be based essentially on a strong sense of fairness and justice. That is, the market should not be the sole arbiter of the rightful salary of an employee. *Rerum Novarum* (1891) recognises the primary and fundamental purpose of work is to satisfy the very basic needs of food, shelter and clothing.

“ To labour is to exert oneself for the sake of procuring what is necessary for the various purposes of life, and chief of all for self-preservation. 'In the sweat of thy face thou shalt eat bread.' (Gen 3:19) Hence, a man's labour necessarily bears two notes or characters. First of all, it is personal, inasmuch as the force which acts is bound up with the personality and is the exclusive property of him who acts, and, further, was given to him for his advantage. Secondly, man's labour is necessary; for without the result of labour a man cannot live, and self-preservation is a law of nature.” (1891, para 44)

On the centenary of *Rerum Novarum* (1891), the Australian Catholic Bishops published a Pastoral Letter in which they summarised the central message:

“ It was his [Pope Leo XIII's] view that human society is built upon and around productive human work. When a person is employed to work full-time for wages, the employer, in strict justice, will pay for an honest day's work a wage sufficient to enable the worker, even if unskilled, to have the benefits of survival, good health, security and modest comfort. The wage must also allow the worker to provide for the future and acquire the personal property needed for the support of a family. To pressure or trick the worker into taking less is, therefore, unjust.” (*A Century of Catholic Social Teaching*)

From the beginning of the Church's social teaching on work, Pope Leo XIII, in *Rerum Novarum* (1891), has called for a **just rather than a minimum wage**. This minimum wage may be described as a 'living wage'. It is not necessarily the same as a just wage. A just wage for a particular worker may be in excess of the living wage because it will need to take into account a number of additional factors related to skills, work environment and the like.

“ Now, were we to consider labour merely insofar as it is personal, doubtless it would be within the workman's right to accept any rate of wages whatsoever; for, in the same way as he is free to work or not, so is he free to accept a small wage or even none at all. But our conclusion must be very different if, together with the personal element in a man's work, we consider the fact that **work is also necessary for him to live**: these two aspects of his work are separable in thought, but not in reality. The preservation of life is the bounden duty of one and all, and to be wanting therein is a crime. It necessarily follows that each one has a natural right to procure what is required in order to live, and the poor can procure that in no other way than by what they can earn through their work.” (para 44)

Pope St John Paul II states in *Laborem Exercens* (1981):

“ ... the basis for determining the value of work is not primarily the work being done but the fact that the one doing it is a person.”

To work to satisfy our basic physiological needs is a legitimate purpose of work to “Give us today our daily bread” (Matthew 6:11).

#### (b) A family wage

The Catholic Church has never regarded work as a selfish activity. Indeed, not to share the fruits of one's labour has been branded as sinful.

“ Anyone who does not look after his own relations, especially if they are living with him, has rejected the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.” (1 Timothy 5:8)

The wage earned by a worker with family responsibilities is not one that can be used solely or even primarily for personal use. The Catholic Church regards the family as the fundamental unit of society upon which the common good is based. Pope St John Paul II states in *Centesimus Annus* (1991):

“ work has a 'social' dimension through its intimate relationship not only to the family, but also to the common good...” (para 6)

and elaborates in *Laborem Exercens* (1981):

“ Work constitutes a foundation for the formation of family life... Work is a condition for making it possible to found a family ... two aspects of work in a sense come into play here: the one making family life and its upkeep possible, and the other making possible the achievement of the purposes of the family, especially education.” (para 10)

The notion of a 'living wage' (the minimum wage for an unskilled worker to provide food, shelter and clothing for his family) is not new and has been called for since the very commencement of the Church's social teaching on work. Pope St John Paul II (in *Centesimus Annus* [1991]) on the 100th anniversary of Pope Leo XIII's ground breaking *Rerum Novarum* (1891) re-affirmed this call for a 'living wage', harking back to that 1891 encyclical;

“ A workman's wages should be sufficient to enable him to support himself, his wife and his children. 'If, through necessity or fear of a worse evil, the workman accepts harder conditions because an employer or contractor will afford no better, he is made the victim of force and injustice.” (para 8. The citation in this quote is from *Rerum Novarum* [1891], para 45)

Nor is the notion of a 'living wage' new to the Australian scene. Pope Leo XIII's call for a 'living wage' is echoed in Justice Higgins' 1907 benchmark Harvester Decision (Higgins was familiar with *Rerum Novarum* [1891]) where he established a needs principle to determine a minimum wage to 'support the wage earner in reasonable and frugal comfort'.

The protection of vulnerable workers and their families through a 'living wage' was the subject of a Statement made by the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference on November, 25, 2005 in relation to the then Commonwealth Government's Workplace Relations Amendment (Work Choices) Bill 2005 (Work Choices). In commenting on the proposed amendments and calling for changes to them, the Bishops said:

“ Workers are entitled to a wage that allows them to live a fulfilling life and to meet their family obligations. We are concerned that the legislation does not give sufficient emphasis to the objective of fairness in the setting of wages; the provision of a fair safety net by reference to the living standards generally prevailing in Australia; the needs of employees and their families; and the proper assessment of the impact of taxes and welfare support payments...”

The ACCER, in its submissions to successive National Wage Cases, and, more latterly, Annual Wage Reviews, has consistently focused on the needs of the low paid with a primary purpose of improving the living standards of low-paid workers and their families. It has contended consistently that increased support of families through the wage packet (employment in work which pays a decent wage) will promote the proper care of children, the stability of families, social inclusion and social cohesion.



## 4. The right to work and to exercise solidarity

In *Laborem Exercens* (1981), Pope St John Paul II introduces a new explicit fundamental right for workers, the right to work. He states that man has a right to work, a right to “suitable employment for all who are capable of it” (para 18) with attendant ‘worker rights’ (Part IV) as well as obligations arising from this right to work: “Man must work, both because the Creator has commanded it and because of his own humanity, which requires work in order to be maintained and developed.” (para 16). Accordingly, to deprive workers of their right to work is to deprive them of the ability to undertake on a God-given obligation.

The corollaries to this right are the rights to freedom of association, solidarity, collective bargaining and to be safe from arbitrary and unfair dismissal.

### (a) Freedom of association and solidarity

The right of employers and employees to form trade unions and employer associations is considered to be the proper and legitimate exercise of the right to freedom of association. The right to freedom of association is considered to be a fundamental freedom of a just society. *Laborem Exercens* (1981) states that the purpose of trade unions is to defend the vital interests of employees:

“ They are... a mouthpiece for the struggle for social justice, for the just rights of working people in accordance with their individual professions.” (para 20)

Throughout the Church's social teaching, particularly the foundation encyclicals of Pope Leo XIII (1891/1960), *Rerum Novarum* (1891), and Pope St John Paul II (1981), *Laborem Exercens* (1981), the right to freedom of association has been defended and stated as a fundamental right of employees

“ Workers' associations ought to be so constituted and so governed as to furnish the most suitable and most convenient means to obtain the object proposed ... that the individual members ... secure, so far as is possible, an increase in the goods of body, of soul, and of property.” (*Rerum Novarum*, Pope Leo XIII, [1891/1960], para 53)

Pope Pius XI strengthened this call to action in *Quadragesimo Anno* (1931) by stating that not only should employees be allowed to join unions, they should be encouraged to do so by the Church

“ While readily recognising and patronising similar associations amongst other classes, with criminal injustice they denied the innate right of forming associations to those who needed them most for self-protection against oppression by the most powerful. There were even Catholics who viewed with suspicion the efforts of the workers to form such unions, as if they savoured a sort of socialist or revolutionary spirit. ... they have a still higher distinction, however; that of encouraging Christian working-men to form unions according to their various trades, and of teaching them how to do it.” (*Quadragesimo Anno*, Pope Pius XI, [1931/1960], n. 30-31)

In *Mater et Magistra* (1961), Pope St John XXIII, extended this call further by making specific reference to the need for employers to be part of that solidarity themselves;

“ 22. Pope Leo XIII also defended the worker's natural right to enter into association with his fellows. Such associations may consist either of workers alone or of workers and employers, and should be structured in a way best calculated to safeguard the workers' legitimate professional interest. And it is the natural right of the workers to work without hindrance, freely, and on their own initiative within these associations for the achievement of these ends.

Human Solidarity and Christian Brotherhood

23. Finally, both workers and employers should regulate their mutual relations in accordance with the principle of human solidarity and Christian brotherhood.” (*Mater et Magistra*, Pope St John XXIII, [1961], n. 22-23)

Pope St John Paul II states categorically in *Laborem Exercens* (1981) that a fundamental right of a worker is “the right of association, that is to form associations for the purposes of defending the vital interests of those employed in the various professions. These associations are called labour or trade unions” (n. 20). There is no exception granted for any employment relationship. All employers are called to respect the right of freedom of association. He goes on to state that this moral imperative falls on both the direct and the indirect employer of workers:

“ The concept of indirect employer includes both persons and institutions of various kinds, and also collective labour contracts and the principles of conduct which are laid down by these persons and institutions and which determine the whole socioeconomic system or its result. The concept of 'indirect employer' thus refers to many different elements. The responsibility of the indirect employer differs from that of the direct employer – the term itself indicates that the responsibility is less direct – but it remains a true responsibility: the indirect employer substantially determines one or other facet of the labour relationship, thus conditioning the conduct of the direct employer when the latter determines in concrete terms the actual work contract and labour relations. This is not to absolve the direct employer from his own responsibility, but only to draw attention to the whole network of influences that condition his conduct. When it is a question of establishing an ethically correct labour policy, all these influences must be kept in mind. A policy is correct when the objective rights of the worker are fully respected.” (*Laborem Exercens*, Pope St John Paul II, [1981], n. 17)

Thus, whether the Catholic Church is the direct employer of workers or the indirect employer, the right of the workers to association in unions is to be respected.

The principle of reciprocity means that the Church should have a reasonable expectation that trade unions should act in the interest of their members and be subject to reasonable laws:

“ It is a misuse of the power of organisations for them to be used for purposes other than those for which they were created, and for which their members freely joined them.” *ACBC's Bishops' Committee for Industrial Affairs (BCIA) in 'Industrial Relations – The Guiding Principles'*

It should also mean that Church employers should be able to expect that trade unions will respect their right to fulfil the mission of the Church. Given this, reciprocity also demands that Church employers should not use the law to render trade unions ineffective, so as to deprive them “of their proper role in the protection of rights of their members and the role they play in contributing to the common good.” BCIA (1993) p. 4

Importantly, freedom of association is based on the exercise of free will. Compulsion to join or not to join an industrial organisation is considered to be a breach of the right of individuals to choose whether and how they will exercise their right to freedom of association. In exercising their right to join or not to join an industrial organisation, employees and employers should not be harassed, victimised, intimidated, or otherwise influenced in their decisions.

#### ► Mamre House, St Mary's

The Sisters of Mercy Parramatta took on the restoration and care of the original Samuel Marsden homestead located on 86 hectares of flood plains of South Creek near St Mary's. There, they run a range of social enterprises, including programs to support the education and social integration of local refugee communities. Sudanese women in these classes learn basic English and literacy skills to enable them to gain independence in their new country.



## (b) Collective bargaining and solidarity

“ In circumstances of exploitation and coercion, the indirect employer must provide opportunities for the just settlement of disputes. They may also think it wise to set down a code of minimum standards of wages and conditions based on respect for the dignity of each human person engaged in the workplace and cognisant of the needs of the worker and his or her dependants.” (*Gaudium et Spes* [1965], para 68)

From federation, Australia has relied on industrial tribunals to settle disputes and fix the terms of employment by legally binding awards and determinations. The influence of these awards is so deep and pervasive it distinguishes Australian industrial relations from most other countries where collective bargaining operates. Through the ACCER, the Australian Bishops have supported the retention of the award system to ensure that wages do not drop to such a level that it becomes impossible to sustain an adequate standard of living. However, the setting of a statutory minimum wage by governments or industrial tribunals should not become a substitute for the moral obligation of employers to pay a just wage.

There has been a transition in Australia from a system of industrial awards, made for the benefit of union members (and those eligible to join unions), to a ‘social safety net’ based on comprehensive occupational legislation covering all employees and awards covering specific employees (both compulsory) with the option of collective bargaining in addition to that safety net.

So that, while collective bargaining has been promoted as the major means for negotiating salaries and conditions, the Modern Award system (since 2010) remains a critical feature of Australia’s industrial relations system and a safety net of terms and conditions of employment for several million Australian workers. Modern awards set minimum employment entitlements for specific occupations and apply to all employees who work in that occupation (except some higher-paid employees). They apply on top of the National Employment Standards that apply to all employees.

Cognisant of workers’ rights through the principle of subsidiarity to participate in decision making that affects them, the Australian Bishops have also supported the introduction of enterprise bargaining by Church organisations inasmuch as it:

- reflects a collective rather than an individualistic approach. Solidarity in the employment relationship should ensure that the potentially adversarial nature and conduct of enterprise bargaining is antithetical to the nature of Church organisations and their mission
- respects the fact that, in a collective framework, it should be possible to have regard to the particular circumstances and needs of individual employees. Collective bargains should acknowledge that the circumstances or needs of each workplace may lead to variations in the agreements that can be achieved between different employers and employees
- is based on a system where there is equity of power between the negotiating partners. “*No party should hold unreasonable sway over another.*” (BCIA, 1993, *Industrial Relations - The Guiding Principles*, p.4)

Given the right to freedom of association, Church employers should recognise that trade unions have a legitimate interest in representing their members, whether in relation to compliance with awards and legislation, the representation of individual employees in grievance processes or in the negotiation of enterprise agreements.

In reaching a collective bargain, Church employers:

- should be guided in their agreements by the future direction and requirements of their organisations, rather than the circumstances of external bodies
- need to be aware of industry and community standards, and the historical nexus between wages and conditions in their own and other sectors
- must acknowledge that it is in the best interests of Church organisations to ensure that their employees and their representatives understand the funding of their organisations. This enables fairness and objectivity about the financial parameters of the organisation during enterprise bargaining discussions.

## (c) The right to withdraw labour and solidarity

The right to strike or to withdraw one’s labour is considered to be a basic right of every individual. It is recognised by Catholic Social Teaching as being legitimate in proper conditions and within just limits:

“ In the case of industrial disputes, the right to strike must only be used as a last resort and in proportion to the issue. It is an ‘extreme means.’” (BCIA [1993] p.2)

The use of industrial action – by either employees or their employer – should be a last resort, when all other reasonable means for the resolution of a dispute have been truly exhausted. The taking of sympathy action, or using industrial action for political purposes that are external to the immediate employment relationship, is not considered to be appropriate.

“ Recourse to a strike is morally legitimate when it cannot be avoided, or at least when it is necessary to obtain a proportionate benefit. It becomes morally unacceptable when accompanied by violence, or when objectives are included that are not directly linked to working conditions or are contrary to the common good.” (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, para 2435)

Accordingly, it is important that there are well-established processes to enable the employer and employees, together with their representatives, to fully discuss the issues in contention without having to resort to industrial action or sanctions against each other. Therefore, it is critical that there is access to properly constituted industrial tribunals and that such bodies have the capacity to resolve all matters brought before them by means of conciliation and arbitration, if necessary.

If industrial action does occur:

- it is appropriate for Church employers to deduct pay for any strike action taken by employees
- it is legitimate for Church employers to utilise the processes of the relevant industrial tribunal when facing or faced with industrial action or disputation. This should be in order to resolve the matters in dispute with the appropriate assistance of the tribunal

- Church employers should only resort to common law remedies against the taking of industrial action if there is no other alternative and the intended action is being taken without regard for proper process or its consequences. Recourse to legal action is a drastic measure of last resort, with potentially long-term consequences for the quality of the employment relationship.

The right to withdraw one’s labour should exist without the threat of personal sanctions or criminal charges being laid against the worker and without the threat, coercion, duress or intimidation of the worker to take, or not to take, the industrial action.

In addition to the right to withdraw one’s labour, workers also have:

“ the right to refuse any activity to which they morally object, and to refuse to carry out duties which they genuinely believe to be dangerous to their health or to the safety of themselves, other workers and the community.” (*Laborem Exercens* [1981], para 20)

However, for workers undertaking essential services, special arrangements should be made in order to guard against the withdrawal of these essential services from the community:

“ It must never be forgotten that, when essential community services are in question, they must in every case be ensured, if necessary by means of appropriate legislation. Abuse of the strike weapon can lead to the paralysis of the whole of socioeconomic life, and this is contrary to the requirements of the common good of society, which also corresponds to the properly understood nature of work itself” (*Laborem Exercens* [1981], para 20)

When an issue arises where withdrawal of labour in the essential services is warranted, there is an obligation on the employees to exercise restraint, while there is also a parallel obligation to ensure that grievances are dealt with speedily and justly by the direct employer and by the indirect employer. In such a case, the indirect employer may be an industrial tribunal, government or court.



## 5. The right to work and protection from arbitrary and unfair dismissal

### (a) Dispute resolution

Both justice and reconciliation should be at the core of any grievance procedure, as required by the Code of Canon Law

“ When a person believes that he or she has been injured by a decree, it is greatly to be desired that contention between that person and the author of the decree be avoided, and that care be taken to reach an equitable solution by mutual consultation, possibly using the assistance of serious-minded persons to mediate and study the matter. In this way, the controversy may by some suitable method be avoided or brought to an end.” (Canon 1733[1])

Church employers and employees should establish consultation processes at the workplace level to prevent or to resolve any grievances or disputes between each other. Cognisant of the principles of solidarity and the common good, procedures for the resolution of grievances and disputes should:

- be based on the principles of natural justice
- be transparent and, therefore, readily available to Church employees
- be intent, in the first instance, on resolving the issue directly between the employer and employee
- when direct conciliation fails, seek the assistance of their trade union or employer adviser or a mutually agreed independent mediator
- focus on exhausting all avenues of conciliation in order to mediate diverse and/or opposed perspectives
- recognise their mutual obligation to act in a constructive and expeditious manner at all times during the disagreement or conflict
- recognise the frustration caused by human or other limitations, to heal painful experiences and to promote the full development of the employee. Justice must always be tempered by mercy.

If the matter cannot be settled by conciliation, then the relevant industrial tribunal or an independent arbitrator should be utilised.

### (b) Termination of employment

In *Laborem Exercens* (1981), Pope St John Paul II states that man has a right to work, a right to “*suitable employment for all who are capable of it*” (para 18) with attendant ‘worker rights’ (Part IV) as well as obligations arising from this right to work: “*Man must work, both because the Creator has commanded it and because of his own humanity, which requires work in order to be maintained and developed.*” (para 16). Accordingly, to deprive a worker of the right to work is to deprive that person of the ability to undertake a God-given obligation.

Employees should have appropriate redress against unfair dismissals. This does not ignore that termination of employment is justified in particular cases. When an employee is terminated and loses the right to work, it should always be because of that person's failure to maintain the attendant responsibilities associated with that person's right to work, that is, a:

- failure to respect solidarity. For example, a failure to contribute to purpose of the workplace. Catholic organisations exist to further the work of the Church. To adopt a stance that is inimical to the interests of the employer, for example, for a teacher to teach (by word or action) against Catholic doctrine on the right of the unborn child, is to abrogate the right to be part of that workforce and its mission
- failure to respect the rights of others to work, to respect their human dignity. An employee must treat employers and co-workers with the respect they seek for themselves. For example, harassment, intimidation, bullying, are unacceptable in the workplace. Similarly, dereliction of the interests of clients of the service provided is a failure to respect their human dignity
- failure to respect the common good. For example, engaging in unsafe work practices that place fellow workers' health and welfare in jeopardy is unacceptable in the workplace
- failure to respect appropriate subsidiarity. Subsidiarity requires decisions to be made at the appropriate level. It follows that some decisions can and should be made at an executive level, such as the necessity for police clearances, and an individual cannot flout that decision or circumspect it

- failure to provide a fair day's work for a fair day's pay. St Paul reminded the Thessalonians that those who were able to work but refused to work should be refused the benefits of others' work.

“ We urged you when we were with you not to let anyone eat who refused to work.” (3 Thessalonians 3:10)

However, given the Church's view of the employment relationship, any termination of employment should occur only after all other courses of action have been examined and fully considered.

It is important to note the distinction between a summary dismissal (related serious and/or wilful misconduct) and dismissal on notice (related to ongoing unsatisfactory performance). Different tests and standards apply in each situation. However, in both situations the employee who is the subject of concern, either because of misconduct or inadequate performance, must know all the allegations in relation to employee's behaviour. The duty to act fairly requires that the person who is being examined and who may be subject to some penalty:

- be aware of the exact allegations
- be aware of the evidence and the nature of the evidence against him/her
- be afforded a reasonable opportunity and time to respond to the evidence and give his/her version of the matter
- be able to arrange suitable representation, whether in the form of a lawyer, trade union official or friend
- where appropriate (e.g. inadequate performance), be given the opportunity to rectify the situation.

Redundancy is a particular challenge to Church organisations given the Church's view that work exists for people, not people for work:

“ The primary basis of the value of work is man himself, who is its subject. This leads immediately to a very important conclusion of an ethical nature: however true it may be that man is destined for work and called to it, in the first place work is ‘for man’ and not man ‘for work’. Through this conclusion, one rightly comes to recognise the pre-eminence of the subjective meaning of work over the objective one.

... each sort (of work) is judged above all by the measure of the dignity of the subject of work, that is to say the person, the individual who carries it out.

... independently of the work that every man does ... (it) does not possess a definitive meaning in itself. In fact, in the final analysis it is always man who is the purpose of the work, whatever work it is that is done.” (*Laborem Exercens*, 1981, para 6)

Redundancy (the loss of work by an individual) for a Catholic employer:

- must be an absolute last resort and not an economic choice regardless of the relative economic need
- must be accompanied by the resolution to find alternative acceptable work for the employee, including:
  - » part-time work (if the position was full time) or another position within the employer's gamut of employment
  - » training to enhance the worker's employment prospects, either within the employer's gamut of employment or in an alternative workplace
  - » assistance to the worker to gain work (e.g. with time off for interviews, CVs, interview techniques, etc)
  - » counselling to cope with the redundancy situation if requested
  - » being open to any and all reasonable suggestions to avoid the redundancy (e.g. leave without pay while the worker seeks work or reserving the next acceptable vacancy with the employer's control for the worker)
- being transparent and accountable regarding the reasons for the redundancy.

## (c) Appraisals

Performance reviews allow the employer and employee to openly discuss the expectations of the organisation and the achievements of the employee, with an emphasis on the future development of the employee within the objectives of the organisation.

Frequently, when appraisal is mentioned, people think of an annual performance appraisal or review process. Ideally, performance appraisal is, however, more than an annual event no matter how well planned that procedure might be. Genuine performance appraisals should be based on an ongoing, year-round dialogue; a continuous feedback dialogue between colleagues. In this approach, when issues arise, they are dealt with immediately and not shelved for future reference or left to fester until the annual review meeting.

Another issue with focusing only on an annual appraisal review is that often it leads to misunderstanding that unacceptable behaviour will be tolerated (tacitly approved because it is not dealt with at the time), leading to entrenching poor work practices and behaviour, consequently making them more difficult to remove.

That said, there is still an indispensable place for a formal performance appraisal procedure to be woven into this continuous feedback dialogue. However, an important distinction needs to be made between the two different kinds of formal appraisal reviews.

Reviews can be designed to develop the workers' skills (sometimes called formative) or, alternately, to judge/assess whether the worker is capable of performing the work. These two purposes are fundamentally different in their purpose and, given the potentially antithetical impact on the worker, must be conducted in fundamentally different ways:

- developmental (formative) reviews or appraisals are designed to provide feedback to both the employer and the employee on how the employee is meeting the expectations of the employer. They are open ended and aim to improve the on-going performance of the employee
- judgemental (summative) reviews or appraisals, sometimes referred to as 'due process', are designed to ascertain whether the employee's attitude or competence is wanting and, therefore, may result in the termination of the employment contract.

Developmental (formative) performance reviews or appraisals should:

- formally occur
- occur at regular, pre-determined intervals
- be transparent, that is, employees must be fully informed about:
  - » the purpose
  - » the process (timeline, personnel involved, roles of those personnel)
  - » the criteria to be used
  - » the expectations of the employee being reviewed
  - » the possible outcomes of the review
- result in honest feedback to the employee
- be affirming of any positive contribution being made by the employee
- result in assistance to the employee where areas of development are noted
- aim to benefit the employee and the whole organisation
- be at regular, pre-determined intervals.

Judgemental (summative) reviews or appraisals should only occur on an 'on need' basis as a last resort where other forms of intervention to assist the employee have failed. The same transparency of process must apply (as with formative appraisals) and the same requirements regarding the duty to act fairly (as with termination) must apply given that termination is one possible outcome. Additionally, summative reviews may be governed by an award or agreement process. The guiding principles (derived from industrial relations precedents) are that they must not be:

- harsh
- unjust, or
- unreasonable.

The Fair Work Ombudsman notes that to make a decision about whether a dismissal is 'harsh, unjust or unreasonable', the Fair Work Commission would consider a range of factors, including:

- if there's a valid reason for the dismissal relating to the employee's conduct or capacity
- if the employee is notified of the reason and given an opportunity to respond
- any unreasonable refusal by the employer to allow the employee to have a support person present at any discussions relating to dismissal
- if the dismissal relates to unsatisfactory performance, whether the employee was warned about it before the dismissal
- the impact of the size of the employer's enterprise on the dismissal process, including the absence of dedicated personnel specialists and/or expertise
- any other factors the Fair Work Commission considers relevant.

## (d) Employee access to their personal personnel file

The Privacy Act (1988) deals with public sector and private sector employees differently. The Church, as a private sector employer, is exempt from the Act, that is, it does not have to comply with the Australian Privacy Principles (APPs) when the issue directly relates to an employee's current or former employment relationship. This means that an employer does not have to grant employees access to their employee records.

Despite this legal technicality, Church employers are encouraged to grant reasonable access to an employee's personnel records as a positive aspect of good staff relations. Good practice would require that files only contain information directly related to the employee's employment and that, normally, employees would be aware of any documentation that had been placed on the file (e.g. letters of complaint).



▲ Emmaus Community, Perth

Emmaus Community in Perth provides long-term, independent community living for approximately 40 adult members who live with mental health issues. In addition, the Emmaus Community supports up to 150 family and friends of Emmaus associated with the community. The Emmaus Community is not a hostel, not a Crisis Unit, but a real home!!



## 6. The right to work assumes that work affirms, enhances and expresses the human dignity of those who undertake it

*Gaudium et Spes*, states

“Whatever insults human dignity, such as subhuman living conditions, arbitrary imprisonment, deportation, slavery, prostitution, the selling of women and children; as well as disgraceful working conditions, where people are treated as mere tools for profit, rather than as free and responsible persons: all these things and others of their like are infamies indeed.” (para 27)

Work is considered to be one of the principal means by which people seek personal fulfilment, dignity and make their contribution to the common good. Therefore, people should not be treated like any other resource or commodity in the market place.

*Laborem Exercens* states that:

“work bears a particular mark of ... humanity, the mark of a person operating within a community of persons. And this mark decides its interior characteristics; in a sense it constitutes its very nature.”

Church employers should seek to be model employers who exemplify the values of the Gospels and the mission of the Church. In *Laborem Exercens*, Pope St John Paul II stated:

“... the danger of treating workers as a special kind of merchandise or as an impersonal force needed for production ... always exists, especially when the whole way of looking at the question of economics is marked by the forces of materialistic economism”. 13

The employers and managers of Church organisations are to be leaders who ensure that there are fair, equitable and mutually respectful processes for all matters affecting employees. They need to recognise that their treatment of employees may affect others as well. The following are some hallmarks of a just and fair workplace:

### (a) Worker participation in decision making

In accordance with the principle of subsidiarity, employees should be involved in decision making at appropriate levels of the organisation. In establishing and maintaining a fair and just workplace, the Church employer is to encourage participation in decision making so that all persons may exercise their right to contribute views about how their work life is organised.

*Gaudium et Spes* (1965), states:

“In economic enterprises, it is persons who are joined together, that is, free and independent human beings created to the image of God. Therefore, with attention to the functions of each - owners or employers, management or labour - and without doing harm to the necessary unity of management, the active sharing of all in the administration and profits of these enterprises in ways to be properly determined is to be promoted.” (para 68)

Though managers ultimately make those decisions appropriate to their responsibility, participation of employees in the formulation of decisions that affect the workplace is essential for cooperative and effective implementation of change.

### (b) Recruitment, selection and appointment procedures

The recruitment of employees must be based on fair and transparent procedures, including:

- an accurate and current position description containing clear lines of accountability need to be available so that both the employer and applicants understand the expectations of the position
- the selection criteria
- the need to supply referees and/or references

- the employer needs to make applicants aware that they have a responsibility to provide appropriate documentation (e.g. registration in a profession) and an accurate account of their abilities and previous experience
- the inherent requirements of the position where they exist (e.g. the need for teachers of Religious Education to be practising Catholics)
- the employer should make explicit in writing all of the terms of employment, including:
  - » whether the position is a permanent/fixed term/casual position
  - » the probationary period
  - » the details of the remuneration package
  - » any relevant awards or agreements and, if applicable, the employee's classification
  - » the duties of the position (including the expectations of the employer in terms of the contribution of the employee to the mission of the organisation)
  - » the reporting lines and the terms of accountability
  - » any on-going expectations such as annual performance reviews, accreditation or professional association standards that are non-negotiable (e.g. the employee must maintain CPA status or registration as a teacher)
  - » any legislative requirements such as mandatory reporting associated with the position
  - » where applicable, the need to provide and maintain Working with Children and/or Police Checks
  - » any matters affecting the termination of employment.

Church employers should not seek to improperly utilise fixed term, part-time, casual and contract forms of employment so as to avoid their responsibilities to employees. While these approaches can be legitimate, they should only be used when they are the only means of meeting the needs of the organisation in particular circumstances.

### (c) Training, development and continuing education

The Code of Canon Law requires:

“Lay people who are pledged to the special service of the Church, whether permanently or for a time, have the duty to acquire the appropriate formation which their role demands, so that they may conscientiously, earnestly and diligently fulfil this role.” (Canon 231[6])

On-going training and education needs to be available for all Church employees in areas relevant to their roles and not just in their technical and/or professional skills. Given that the Church values faith development, its employees need to have the opportunity and encouragement for spiritual growth. Such opportunities will promote the understanding of each employee about his or her role in the mission of the Church.

All Church organisations should have in place appropriate induction programs for all new employees. These programs should include an introduction to the particular ethos and modus operandi of the organisation that spells out its commitment to a Catholic approach and the employees' requirements in meeting those expectations. At certain levels of some organisations, it would be necessary to ensure accreditation of staff in the ongoing requirements of the organisation:

“Maintaining employment depends more and more on one's professional capabilities. Instructional and educational systems must not neglect human or technological formation, which are necessary for gainfully fulfilling one's responsibilities. The ever more widespread necessity of changing jobs many times in one's lifetime makes it imperative that the educational system encourage people to be open to on-going updating and re-training. Young people should be taught to act upon their own initiative, to accept the responsibility of facing with adequate competencies the risks connected with a fluid economic context that is often unpredictable in the way it evolves. Equally indispensable is the task of offering suitable courses of formation for adults seeking re-training and for the unemployed. More generally, people need concrete forms of support as they journey in the world of work, starting precisely with formational systems, so that it will be less difficult to cope with periods of change, uncertainty and instability.” (*Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church* [2005] Para 290)

## (d) The Work and Life Balance

Catholic social teaching places significance on the interaction between the family, society and work. It teaches that "work is 'for man' and not man 'for work'" (*Laborem Exercens*, 1981, para 6). It is believed that the two areas of work and family life must support each other in such a way that work becomes a condition to make it possible to form a family. At one level, the family requires the wages that workers generally earn by undertaking work. At another level, family life requires something other than material resources. The time and care that parents are able to give their children is an essential element of a strong family life in which children develop as human beings and learn to take their place in society.

Every worker has the right to adequate rest. The employment relationship must take account of this right.

“ Respect for human dignity requires that working conditions, including the length of shifts and the length of a week's work, be such as to protect the health and well-being of workers and to recognise their obligations to their family and the wider community.” (BCIA, 1993, *Industrial Relations – The Guiding Principles*, p.9)

The recognition of the need for people to rest, to undertake personal development, to engage in community and cultural activities and religious belief and to take time with their families is also an important requirement in the respect for human dignity and the establishment of humane working conditions. Industrial awards or agreements and legislation establish requirements for rest periods during and between shifts. Occupational health and safety guidelines and industry standards can act also as a guide in establishing working hours and rest periods.

To this extent, it is important that family-friendly policies are implemented in the workplace to support family life and to build a healthy society.

## (e) The notion of "human resources"

From the very beginning of the Church's social teaching in the area of work in *Rerum Novarum* (1891), the Church has taught that work is to be considered one of the principal means by which people seek personal fulfilment, dignity and make their contribution to the common good. Therefore, people should not be treated like a resource or a commodity in the marketplace.

In the corporate, economic, rationalist world, 'human resources' refers to the labour part of the 'means of production'. Humans are simply treated the same as any resource that is applied to the production process; as a resource that is inherently of less value than the product. The product takes precedent over the inputs, human and physical, that are employed to produce it.

Opposed to this utilitarian view of work, in *Laborem Exercens* (1981), Pope St John Paul II affirms the dignity of work by making a distinction between:

- 'objective' work - the visible aspects of work such as the tasks done, and
- 'subjective work' - the value of the work because it is a purposeful act of a person, thereby adding a spiritual dimension.

“ The basis for determining the value of human work is not primarily the kind of work being done but the fact that the one who is doing it is a person ... even if the common scale of values rates it as the merest 'service', so that "work is 'for man', and not man 'for work'". (*Laborem Exercens*, 1981, para 6)

Accordingly, care should be taken with the use of the terms such as 'human resource' or HR in any titles or job descriptions in Church workplaces.



▲ The Hermitage, Mittagong

The Marist Hermitage is a place of spiritual formation and rejuvenation. A retreat centre extending for almost 300 acres, the working property supports livestock, a poultry farm, orchard, olive and citrus grove as well as a 13-hectare winery.

## 7. The right to a safe, supportive workplace

### (a) Safety

Church employers should make every effort to ensure that their workplace is safe and that they take appropriate responsibility for the physical and mental wellbeing of their employees.

In *Gaudium et Spes* (1965), it is stated that:

“ Since economic activity for the most part implies the associated work of human beings, any way of organising and directing it which may be detrimental to any working men and women would be wrong and inhuman.” (para 67)

The various State and Territory Workplace Occupational Health and Safety legislation and Workers' Compensation legislation aim to ensure the work-related health and safety of employees and volunteers. The legislation has particular emphasis on consultation within the processes of risk management and workplace rehabilitation for those injured at work. However, it is not sufficient to ensure that the legal minimum standards are met. As a commitment to their employees, Church employers should implement preventative strategies for the safety of their employees without the imperatives of legislation. Where appropriate, consideration should be given to Employee Assistance Programs supplied by Catholic agencies.

Employees are expected, within reason, to take proper responsibility for their personal health and safety and that of their fellow employees in the workplace.



## (b) Discrimination and Harassment

With respect to discrimination and harassment, *Gaudium et Spes* (1965) states that:

“ ... with respect to the fundamental rights of the person, every type of discrimination, whether social or cultural, whether based on sex, race, colour, social condition, language or religion, is to be overcome and eradicated as contrary to God's intent.” (para 29)

At any level, Church organisations should develop policies that prohibit discrimination (direct and indirect) and harassment (physical, emotional, racial, religious and sexual). This includes working towards a balance of men and women in the workplace, and especially of women in leadership positions. This might require the adoption of policies and practices that are flexible and accommodate the demands of family and personal life. Further, Church organisations should examine their recruitment and promotion profiles for persons from underrepresented groups to ensure that they are not being excluded from the working life of the Church.

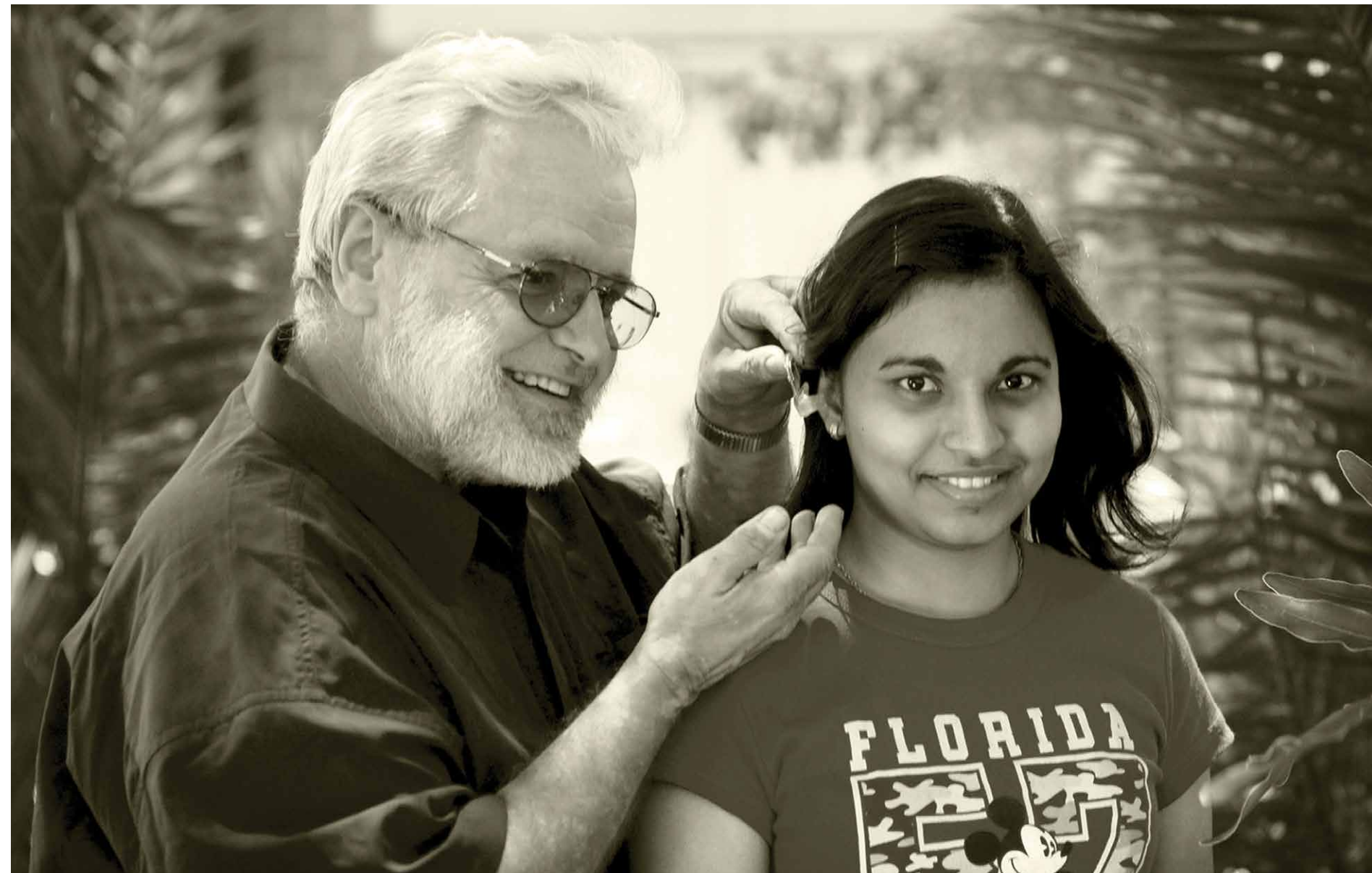
Regarding any exemptions from anti-discrimination legislation, Church organisations need to be positive and precise in their approach to employment practices:

- It is critical that Church organisations clearly articulate the inherent requirements of each position with respect to the mission of the organisation when it seeks to use an exemption from anti-discrimination legislation
- While all positions must be supportive of the aims and purposes of the particular organisation and the fact that it is part of the Catholic Church's mission, it is recognised that different roles will have different levels of expectation and commitment:
  - » some positions simply require an understanding and a willingness to advance the mission of the organisation (as with any organisation)
  - » in addition to this level of expectation, some positions, while not requiring the employee to be a Catholic, will require the employee to publicly support the Catholic ethos of the organisation
  - » in addition to these levels of expectation, some positions, while not requiring the employee to be a practising Catholic, will still require a commitment not to offend the religious susceptibilities of the organisation by the maintenance of a manner of life and stated beliefs which are in keeping with the teachings of the Catholic Church (e.g. all staff in educational institutions)
  - » finally, in addition to this level of expectation and commitment, some positions will require a commitment to the religious faith of the Church and that the employee is a practising Catholic in order to fulfil the inherent requirements of the position (e.g. teachers of Religious Education).

Accordingly, Church organisations may expect non-Catholic employees to respect Catholic religious practices and, under certain circumstances, require them to participate in their celebration or observance, particularly where that participation:

- forms part of expressing the ethos of the organisation in a practical way
- is part of the required work hours in the organisation.

Catholic organisations, conversely, should make reasonable accommodation for the religious practices of non-Catholic employees where those practices do not compromise the public ethos of the organisation.



### ▲ Catholic Ministry for People who are Deaf or Hearing Impaired

The ministry seeks to expand accessibility to deaf and hearing impaired people, and to educate the community on the needs of their clients. Its activities are varied, and include telephone support, information sharing, counselling and interpreting services.

### ◀ Notre Dame University, Fremantle

Notre Dame's School of Medicine strives to produce doctors who will practise in all geographic, socioeconomic and professional areas, especially those who will be the future medical leaders for the Catholic and value-driven healthcare sector for Australia. The university encourages students who have a genuine commitment and compassion for the community as well as high academic standards, and selection into the course takes into account the whole person, including any history of participation in the community.



# ENCYCLICALS DEALING WITH WORK

<b><i>Rerum Novarum</i></b>	In <i>Rerum Novarum</i> (1891), Pope Leo XIII examined the situation of poor workers in the newly emerging industrialised countries. He advocated the principle of the common good to guide the response to these poor workers, emphasising the need to keep a balance between labour and capital as economies emerged. He introduced what is now called the Church's preferential option for the poor and articulated the role of the Church, workers, employers and the State (laws and public authorities) in working together to build a just society. Significantly, employers were given the major role as agents for change.
<b><i>On New Things</i></b> (subtitled) On Capital and Labour	
Pope Leo XIII	
1891	
<b><i>Quadragesimo Anno</i></b> 40th anniversary of <i>Rerum Novarum</i>	Pope Pius XI, forty years after <i>Rerum Novarum</i> (1891), wrote this encyclical to address the ethical challenges facing workers, employers, the Church and the State as a result of the end of the industrial revolution and the onset of the Great Depression. He argued for a 'reconstruction of the social order' in opposition to the dominant competing paradigms of the time; unrestrained capitalism and totalitarian communism. He advocated for a unity between capital and labour to protect the poor by reconstructing the social order based on the complementary principles of solidarity and subsidiarity (introduced in this encyclical).
<b><i>After Forty Years</i></b> (subtitled) The Reconstruction of the Social Order	
Pope Pius XI	
1931	
<b><i>Mater et Magistra</i></b> 70th anniversary of <i>Rerum Novarum</i>	Pope St John XXIII, seventy years after <i>Rerum Novarum</i> (1891), noted that new political, social and economic developments had confirmed the lessons of the two previous encyclicals; work must promote human dignity through the principle of the common good. Accordingly, all employers must ensure there is just remuneration for work. He stated that all economic activity must be conducted not merely for private gain (which is acceptable), but be balanced by the need for the common good. He argues that the principles of Catholic Social Teaching require individual Christians to work for a more just world and, in doing so, particularly examined the place of agriculture (and the balance with industrialisation) and the responsibility of developed countries to provide aid to developing countries.
<b><i>Mother and Teacher</i></b> (subtitled) On Christianity and Social Progress	
Pope St John XXIII	
1961	

<b><i>Pacem in Terris</i></b>	In <i>Peace on Earth</i> , Pope St John XXIII states that peace can be established only if the social order set down by God is fully observed. He lists the rights and duties to be followed by individuals, public authorities, national governments, and the world community. In terms of work, he states that each person has the right to life and the means necessary to live that life. He states that all persons have a natural right to be respected, to worship God, to live their life as they choose, to work and support a family, to form associations, to emigrate, and to take an active role in public life. The corollary duties to these rights are the duty to preserve their lives, to respect the rights of others, work together for the common good, and maintain an attitude of responsibility.
<b><i>Peace on Earth</i></b> (subtitled) On Establishing Universal Peace In Truth, Justice, Charity, And Liberty	
Pope St John XXIII	
1963	
<b><i>Gaudium et Spes</i></b> (Joy and hope)	<i>Gaudium et Spes</i> (1965) presents an overview of the Catholic Church's teachings about society, noting that the Church has a duty to scrutinise the signs of the times and to interpret them in the light of the Gospel. With respect to work, it presents work as an unfolding of God's Creation and the resulting accomplishments, as a sign of God's grace. Every person has a duty to contribute to the common good. It states that all persons have the right to a sufficient share of earthly goods that belong to everyone. Accordingly, everyone has the right and duty to work and wages should be sufficient for workers and their dependants to live decent lives. Workers have the right to form unions without the fear of reprisal and, while disputes should be settled where possible by negotiation, strikes are acceptable in certain circumstances.
<b><i>Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World</i></b> (subtitled) <i>"The Church in the World of Today"</i>	
Vatican Council II	
1965	
<b><i>Populorum Progressio</i></b>	<i>Populorum Progressio</i> (1967) introduces the notion of the 'nobility of work'. Work is something willed and approved by God. Fashioned in the image of his Creator, "man must cooperate with Him in completing the work of creation and engraving on the earth the spiritual imprint which He himself has received." God has given all persons the tools with which to finish and perfect the work He began. All workers leave their personal, creative imprint through their work. <i>"Work, too, has a double edge. Since it promises money, pleasure and power, it stirs up selfishness in some and incites others to revolt. On the other hand, it also fosters a professional outlook, a sense of duty, and love of neighbour"</i> .
<b><i>On the Development of Peoples</i></b>	
Pope St Paul VI	
1967	





<b>Octogesima Adveniens</b>	<p>Pope St Paul VI points out that, while Leo XIII addressed one specific social problem, the need today is to address a variety of problems created by the modern economy. He indicates that there is no universal solution but calls on local Christian communities and each individual to analyse their own situation and apply to it the principles of the Church's Social Teaching. Regarding work, he states that everyone has the right to work, to grow professionally, to a fair and equitable income, and to assistance in case of need arising from sickness or age. All people are called to personal action to address injustices, including sharing the benefits of one's own labour.</p>
<b>The Eightieth Anniversary</b> 80th anniversary of <i>Rerum Novarum</i>	
<b>Pope St Paul VI</b>	
<b>1971</b>	
<b>Laborem Exercens</b>	<p>In <i>Laborem Exercens</i> (1981), Pope St John Paul II commemorates the ninetieth anniversary of Pope Leo XIII's <i>Rerum Novarum</i> (1891). It is the Church's most comprehensive reflection on the meaning of human work, which Pope St John Paul II considers to be “a key, probably the essential key, to the whole social question...”. Pope St John Paul II affirms the dignity of work, making a distinction between objective and subjective work. Objective work is simply the visible aspects of work; the tasks done, etc. Subjective work is the value of the work; it is the purposeful act of a person. Purposefulness gives any work a spiritual dimension. “<i>The basis for determining the value of human work is not primarily the kind of work being done but the fact that the one who is doing it is a person . . . even if the common scale of values rates it as the merest 'service',</i>” so that “<i>work is 'for man', and not man 'for work'.</i>” Pope St John Paul II concludes by outlining a spirituality of work.</p>
<b>On Human Work</b> On the 90th anniversary of <i>Rerum Novarum</i>	
<b>Pope St John Paul II</b>	
<b>1981</b>	
<b>Solicitudo Rei Socialis</b>	<p>Pope St John Paul II paints a sombre picture of the state of global development in <i>The Social Concerns of the Church</i>. He cites the originality of Pope St Paul VI's <i>The Development of Peoples</i> and emphasises the moral/ethical dimension of development. After surveying the difficult state of the poor countries, the Pope lays strong blame on the confrontation between the two global blocs, liberal capitalism of the West, and Marxist collectivism of the East. He refers to the obstacles hindering development as the 'structures of sin' and calls for conversion toward solidarity and the option for the poor. While he does speak of the responsibilities of the poor countries, by far his strongest challenge is to the affluent world.</p>
<b>On Social Concern</b> The twentieth anniversary of <i>Populorum Progressio</i>	
<b>Pope St John Paul II</b>	
<b>1987</b>	

<b>Centesimus Annus</b>	<p><i>Centesimus Annus</i> (1991) reaffirms the fundamental principle that work leads to the dignity of man. However, work done by people is more fulfilling when it unites them and engenders solidarity. “Man works in order to provide for the needs of his family, his community, his nation, and ultimately all humanity. Moreover, he collaborates in the work of his fellow employees, as well as in the work of suppliers and in the customers' use of goods, in a progressively expanding chain of solidarity.”</p>
<b>The Hundredth Year</b> 100th anniversary of <i>Rerum Novarum</i>	
<b>Pope St John Paul II</b>	
<b>1991</b>	
<b>Caritas in Veritate</b> In honour of the 42nd anniversary of <i>Populorum Progressio</i>	<p>Caritas in Veritate promoted the concept of “decent work”, that is, “work that expresses the essential dignity of every man and woman in the context of their particular society: work that is freely chosen, effectively associating workers, both men and women, with the development of their community; work that enables the worker to be respected and free from any form of discrimination; work that makes it possible for families to meet their needs and provide schooling for their children, without the children themselves being forced into labour; work that permits the workers to organise themselves freely, and to make their voices heard; work that leaves enough room for rediscovering one's roots at a personal, familial and spiritual level; work that guarantees those who have retired a decent standard of living.” (para 63)</p>
<b>Charity in truth</b> (Subtitled) <i>On Integral Human Development in Charity and Truth</i>	
<b>Pope Benedict XVI</b>	
<b>2009</b>	
<b>Other Papal commemorative messages on the anniversary of <i>Rerum Novarum</i></b>	<p>Plus XII stated that work was not only a duty but, more importantly, an inalienable right of every person. He affirms the principle of subsidiarity that the State should not intervene in regulating labour except where it promoted the development of the common good by fostering the social progress of all its citizens. Work was to be a means for the father of a family to provide for the physical, spiritual, and religious welfare of the family.</p>
50th anniversary Radio Message to the world on the Pentecost, in commemoration of the 50th anniversary of <i>Rerum Novarum</i>	
<b>Pope Pius XII</b>	
<b>1941</b>	



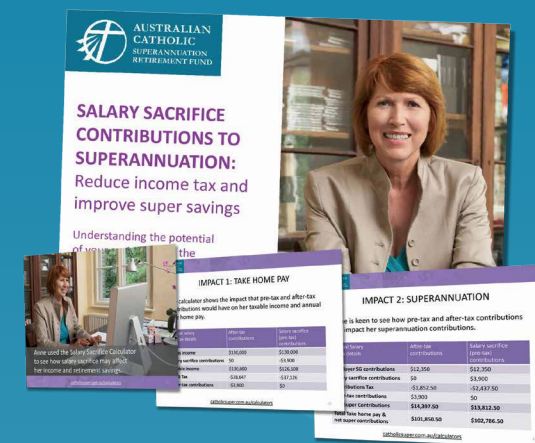


# Employees value education

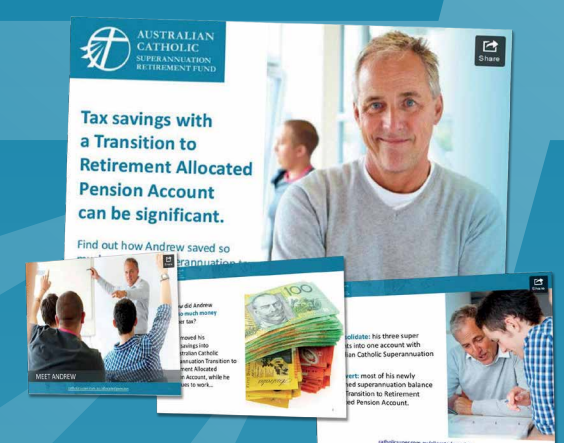
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We support a wide network of Catholic employers by making their superannuation payment processing more efficient—this helps **strengthen our relationship**. We can help you provide your employees with free educational resources so they **value your relationship**—not only as a contributor to their super, but educating them with the knowledge to achieve financial independence.

Another way we help is through on-site education – see [catholicsuper.com.au/workplacevisits](http://catholicsuper.com.au/workplacevisits)



[catholicsuper.com.au/salariesacrifice](http://catholicsuper.com.au/salariesacrifice)



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The photographs used have been sourced from *Faith at Work*. *Faith at Work* was an exhibition, a photographic essay, commissioned by CCER NSW, which captured the range of Catholic work taking place throughout NSW and included workplaces as diverse as Silverwater Women's Correctional Facility and the closed order of the Discalced Carmelite Nuns in Goonellabah.

Photographs supplied represent the work of LifeLink social services agencies within the Archdiocese of Perth. Collectively, LifeLink agencies reach out to help more than 34,000 people in need, delivering \$54m in caring services and professional programmes throughout Western Australia. LifeLink is a positive expression of 'Faith at Work'.



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