



ARCHDIOCESE OF BRISBANE  
CATHOLIC EDUCATION COUNCIL

POLICY

STATEMENT

Justice Education

FOR BRISBANE CATHOLIC  
EDUCATION SCHOOLS



*Catholic  
Education  
Council*

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This policy statement reflects the Archdiocese of Brisbane's commitment to the principles and practice of justice education within Brisbane Catholic Education. It has been developed through a consultative process involving classroom teachers, school principals, senior administration staff, and others in the Archdiocesan community.

The recent post-synodal document *Ecclesia in Oceania* highlights the need for a commitment to social justice and peace as an integral part of the church's mission in the world. It states:

*"The Church regards the social apostolate as an integral part of her evangelizing mission to speak a word of hope to the world; and her commitment in this regard is seen in her contribution to human development, her promotion of human rights, the defence of human life and dignity; social justice and protection of the environment."* [para 26]

The Archdiocese affirms its commitment to the promotion of justice education through implementing this policy within Brisbane Catholic Education schools. As stated in *Centesimus Annus ... the Church's social teaching is itself a valid instrument of evangelisation*. [para 54]

Our young people must be taught the church's message of social justice and given opportunities to engage in social justice activities. By assisting them in this way their faith will be enlivened and the credibility of the Church as an evangelising agent will be enhanced.

I commend this policy to all staff engaged in the ministry of Catholic Education in our schools. I have no doubt that through the implementation of this policy our commitment to justice education as part of the overall mission of the Archdiocese will be renewed.

Sincerely in Christ,

Most Rev John Bathersby DD  
ARCHBISHOP OF BRISBANE

May 2002

## JUSTICE EDUCATION POLICY

**POLICY** | Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Brisbane will integrate justice education into all areas of the curriculum

### INTRODUCTION

A commitment to justice is fundamental to the Catholic Christian tradition. It finds its origins in scripture and is developed through the moral and ethical teaching of the Church. Catholic schools as an integral element of the Church's mission must then be committed to justice both within classroom teaching and learning activities and in the other structures and activities of the school. An appropriate and effective model of justice education must be implemented within the school.

### RATIONALE

The Gospel of Jesus is a call to "be just as your heavenly Father is just" (Matthew 5:48). The standard by which entry into God's kingdom will be judged is love for one another (Matthew 25:34), together with a willingness to share freely and to restore what rightfully belongs to others (Luke 19:8-9). Jesus proclaims that his role is to set people free (Luke 4:16-21). The just person strives to establish right relationships.

Justice in action requires that people work for fair treatment of all, an equitable distribution of natural resources and collectively produced wealth, and the restoration of that which has been unfairly removed. This approach to justice is in accord with the long tradition of the Church's social teaching, which is a rich resource of principles and applications of justice in the world.

In Catholic education, people witness to Christ's call to be just when, as individuals and community, they act fairly, share freely, and willingly repair any harm that has been done.

The call to justice is a call to apply the command of love within the structures, institutions and systems of society and the world (*Education for Justice and Peace*, QCEC, 1987).

Catholic education is committed to promoting just practices as well as holistic teaching and learning which encompass the principles of justice.

Justice education is to be integrated into all areas of the curriculum.

### CONSEQUENCES

- ~ the curriculum content of school programs, both classroom programs and those beyond the classroom, will be regularly reviewed and updated to incorporate justice education
- ~ staff will be in-serviced regarding the principles of justice and the social teaching of the Church, the implications of this policy in teaching and learning, and the application of the policy across the curriculum
- ~ schools, as part of their regular review and evaluation of plans, policies and programs will evaluate their witness to justice regarding matters of equity of access, sharing of resources and staffing.

### References:

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- The Catechism of the Catholic Church*. (Part 3). (1994). St Paul's. N.S.W.
- E. Deberri et al. (1992). *Catholic Social Teaching: Our Best Kept Secret*. Orbis Books, New York.