



Tuesday 28 April 2020

MEDIA RELEASE

CRA Voices Grave Concern for those Facing COVID-19 with No Safety Net

Catholic Religious Australia (CRA) has joined a coalition of 44 Catholic leaders, including 14 religious institute leaders, who have written to the Prime Minister advocating for the most vulnerable people in our community to receive government support as the impacts of COVID-19 continue to wreak havoc.

Refugees, asylum-seekers, temporary visa holders and migrants in vulnerable situations have not been extended government funding. The letter asks that the Morrison Government provide them temporary access to a financial safety net, Medicare and adequate shelter if they are homeless.

“Whilst the Australian government has moved quickly to support many in our community in the face of the COVID-19 - and they should be applauded for doing so – these actions have shone a light on the millions in our community left to fend for themselves. Action is needed now,” said the CRA President, Br Peter Carroll FMS.

“Religious have always sought to protect and speak up for vulnerable people and in this instance, that includes trafficked people, victims of modern slavery, refugees, people seeking asylum, those experiencing domestic violence, amongst others. We ask the Government to take more steps to support the often hidden and marginalised in our country,” said Anne Walker, National Executive Director of CRA.

The open letter to the Prime Minister identifies two main groups of people that remain on the margins of our community and whose vulnerability to COVID-19 is heightened: 1.5 million temporary visa holders who work in our community but may be losing their jobs, have no access to any form of financial safety net, to Medicare, to temporary shelter or fundamental support services and cannot return home; and people who came seeking Australia’s protection who are currently being held in detention centres across Australia and have no choice to exercise social distancing, hygiene protocols or avoid exposure to guards and service providers.

To read the letter to the Prime Minister, [click here](#).



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