



**Media Release  
October 13**

**International Day of People with Disability to focus on poverty**

Catholic parishes across Australia will be encouraged to prayerfully consider the link between disability and poverty as the focus for this year's celebration of the International Day of People with Disability.

The day will be celebrated on 3 December, coinciding with the beginning of Advent and focuses on promoting issues affecting those living with disability and affirming their unique contributions to the Church and the world.

The theme this year is *Empowering people with disabilities and their families*. It focuses particularly on people with disability who live in poverty.

This theme recognises that people living with disability are among the poorest both nationally and internationally.

To coincide with this event, the Bishops Commission for Pastoral Life has prepared a bookmark, which will be distributed to parishes in the coming weeks.

The bookmark is beautifully designed with a version of the *Beatitudes* written especially for those living with disability.

Bishops' Delegate for Disability Issues, Bishop Peter Elliott, says that this day is a chance to consider and promote a pastoral response which recognises each person as part of the Living Body of Christ.

"We are called and challenged to take action to ensure our communities are open and active in promoting opportunities that include people with a disability," he said..

"In particular we need to ensure that people with disability living in remote and rural areas, those who are new to our country and those struggling with the ever increasing daily expense of living are supported and encouraged in the most practical and appropriate manner."

The theme is meant as a timely challenge to an increasing societal attitude, which sees disability as a burden rather than a blessing.

For more information, please contact the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference.

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Please contact the Secretariat for Pastoral Life to order the bookmarks on [disability@catholic.org.au](mailto:disability@catholic.org.au) or (02) 6201 9868.