

1971

Statement

Racialism

Conference of Roman Catholic Bishops of Australia

August 1971

Debate on aboriginal land rights, Australia's immigration policy, racism in sport and other world events has this year highlighted, the problems of racial division. These problems call for a positive response from Christian people. [2818]

St. John wrote: "Anyone who says 'I love God' and hates his brother is a liar, since a man who does not love the brother that he can see cannot love God, whom he has never seen. So this is the commandment that he has given us, that anyone who loves God must also love his brother." (1 Jn. 20-21.) [2819]

Pope Paul has emphasised that "every man is my brother". The Vatican Council stated: "The Church rejects, as foreign to the mind of Christ, any discrimination against men or arassment of them because of their race, color, condition of life, or religion." [2820]

These truths are easily stated. But it is not enough to recall principles or point to injustices. Words lack conviction unless they flow from an awareness of personal responsibility. It is easy to blame others for injustice. But each one of us can help to build a genuine spirit of brotherhood. [2821]

To draw attention to our obligations, the National Commission for Justice and Peace has planned a week of prayer, study and action in conjunction with the programme of the United Nations to combat racism and racial discrimination. We, the Bishops of Australia, urge you to participate. [2822]

Source: Archives of the Australian Catholic Migrant and Refugee Office (ACMRO), Canberra, Australia.
