MEDIA RELEASE

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Human rights champion to advocate for Australia’s disadvantaged

In an unprecedented move, respected human rights advocate Father Frank Brennan has been appointed an official advocate for four of Australia’s leading health, social services, aged care and education bodies.

As Catholic Advocate in Residence for the St Vincent de Paul Society, Catholic Health Australia (CHA), Catholic Social Services Australia (CSSA), and the Australian Catholic University’s Public Policy Institute (PPI), Fr Brennan will endeavour to raise awareness and drive change on the health and welfare of disadvantaged Australians.

A combination of various social determinants such as childhood experiences, level of education, employment status, income and access to social support have a direct bearing on a person’s health, quality of life and capacity to participate in their community.

In appointing Fr Brennan, the St Vincent de Paul Society, CHA, CSSA and the PPI have signed a Memorandum of Understanding, committing to work together to improve the lives of people who are disadvantaged and marginalised by addressing issues that undermine their health and welfare.

A Jesuit priest, lawyer and Professor of Law, Fr Brennan is a passionate campaigner for social justice who spent many years working with indigenous communities throughout Australia. He is an officer in the Order of Australia for services to Aboriginal Australians, and was named a National Living Treasure for his involvement in the Wik debate.

Fr Brennan has worked with refugees in East Timor and recently chaired the Government’s National Human Rights Consultation Committee.

CSSA, PPI, CHA and the St Vincent de Paul Society are excited that he has agreed to work with them to help Australia’s most disadvantaged people.

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