

Rerum Novarum Awards for social justice have been re-launched

The Rerum Novarum Awards for 2020 have been re-launched as a result of the disruption to the school year caused by the COVID-19 virus.

The competition is open to groups of Years 10-12 students in Catholic schools in Victoria for projects on a social justice issue, using the *See, Judge, Act* method to apply the principles of Catholic Social Teaching.

The Gold award in the competition is \$10,000, which will be paid to the school to fund a social justice project undertaken by the school. There will also be a Silver award (\$5,000) and a Bronze award (\$2,500).

Entries will comprise a research paper, a video presentation, a project impact report and a funding proposal in the event that the entry is awarded a cash payment.

The relaunching will also make it possible for school groups to work on an issue that has emerged as a result of the COVID-19 virus or which has been compounded by the virus.

In re-launching the 2020 Awards, the chairman of the Rerum Novarum Foundation, Brian Lawrence, said :

"When we launched these inaugural awards we could not have anticipated the disruption that would be caused to the school year. Rather than being a distraction in a difficult year, the re-launched awards will give schools the opportunity to focus on a project that will help students to better understand this new world, the social justice impacts of the virus and how the application of the principles of Catholic Social Teaching might be applied to alleviate injustice and deprivation."

"The virus has brought the greatest threat to social justice that Australia has seen in generations. It has laid bare and exacerbated many social justice issues, sometimes raising deeper and more complex questions about fairness and justice and suggesting that more complex solutions are required."

Because there will also be many issues that will continue or re-emerge during and after the virus emergency the topics that may be chosen are not limited to those raised by the COVID-19 virus.

Rerum Novarum was the encyclical letter written by Pope Leo XIII in 1891 to address important social issues of that time. It was the seminal document in the development of the Church's social teaching in the modern era. Successive popes have issued encyclicals addressing a broader range of important social issues and further developing the principles of Catholic Social Teaching. Each year the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference releases a social justice statement on a contemporary issue of social justice, based on these principles.

Expressions of interest are to be lodged by Friday 19 June 2020 and entries are to be lodged by Friday 6 November 2020.

Further information is available at <https://resourcecem.com/rerum-novarum-awards/>

Email inquiries may be made to: rerumnovarumawards@cem.edu.au