

## **CHARITY & JUSTICE –a reflection!**

I was recently told of a homeless man who had a sign draped over his shoulders that said, *“Please don’t give me your coins, I just need more people to give me an opportunity.”* I hope that this man did not have to wait too long for this to happen.

There is a big difference in life between giving people justice and giving them charity. When someone is given justice, it’s often associated with redressing an unfair economic, political, religious, or social environment so they are given a *fair go*. I can assure you in the Catholic Church I have often seen where women in ministry and governance have not been given justice. When people are given charity, it is when they are given an appropriate form of nourishment to survive. This is not a healthy position for anyone to have to be in over the long term. There is a famous saying; *that if you give a man a fish you nourish him only for a while but if you teach him out to fish you can nourish him for a lifetime.*

Jesus of Nazareth often looked to redress unjust forms of religious and civil living structures that oppressed people. A case in point was when he challenged the religious and political leaders of his time to answer the question; *“Is it lawful on the Sabbath to do good, to heal and to save life?”* (Matthew Chapter 3 verse 4) *Fr Martin R Maunsell*