THREE MILLION AUSTRALIANS, INCLUDING NEARLY 750,000 CHILDREN, LIVING IN POVERTY

10 March 2022

Just under 3 million Australians, including nearly 750,000 children, are living in poverty, according to a major new report from the Bankwest Curtin Economics Centre.

According to the report released this week, nearly 11.8 per cent of the population are living on less than half of Australia's median income.

Ms Monique Earsman, Executive Director, Catholic Social Services Australia, said that as shocking as the report is, the findings for women are even worse.

"The report reveals a clear gender gap in poverty in Australia, with young women and women approaching retirement much worse off," Ms Earsman said.

"Women are three times more likely to fall into poverty following separation or divorce and twice as likely to descend into poverty following the death of a partner," she said.

According to the report, one in five people in poverty in Australia are in low-paid employment. One in eight agriculture workers and 10 per cent of workers in the accommodation and food services sector have earnings that come in below the poverty line.

"High rents play a significant part in the impact the overall poverty levels across Australia," Ms Earsman said.

"High rents have increased poverty levels among renters, with the poorest families in Australia scraping by on less than $150 per week after housing costs.

Other key findings in the report include:

- Over a quarter of single parents are in poverty, with one in ten experiencing severe poverty
- Single people in severe poverty have to live on less than $150 per week after housing costs are paid
- 575,000 people have been in poverty for at least five of the last ten years
- Poverty scars children and affects their economic, social and health outcomes in adulthood
- People who experience childhood poverty are up to 8 percentage points more likely to remain in poverty in adult life

Media Contact: Michael Salmon | 0417 495 018

The national network of Catholic social services

PO Box 6067, O'Connor ACT 2601. Lvl 1, 3 Sargood Street, O'Connor ACT. **T** 02 6285 1366 **E** admin@cssa.org.au **www.cssa.org.au**