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Australia

**Statement of Archbishop Denis Hart
6 October 2015**

Melbourne's Catholic Archbishop Denis Hart has today urged the parliament to protect the Catholic Adoption Service of 80 years, CatholicCare as it prepares to deal with a Bill changing the Adoption Act of 1984 to permit the adoption of children by same-sex couples.

Archbishop Hart says he is hopeful that if the proposed changes are accepted as law, protection will be provided to CatholicCare to continue its valuable work as has occurred in New South Wales.

The Catholic position on marriage and family holds that the well-being of the community and children are best served when they experience the love of both a mother and father in a safe, secure and stable relationship.

He says he completely understands that some people will disagree with the Catholic position but has appealed for 'fair play' to ensure the many children (Catholic and non-Catholic) who continue to benefit from the outstanding work of CatholicCare are not unnecessarily disadvantaged.

CatholicCare commenced as an adoption agency in 1935 and has built an enviable reputation for acting with great integrity in finding stable and loving homes for some of the most disadvantaged children in society especially children with complex needs and disabilities.

The Archbishop says he acknowledges the alternative point of view and while not agreeing, is asking for the mutual respect of those arguing for same-sex adoption that any changes in the law will still allow CatholicCare to continue its outstanding work in the community within the tradition of the Catholic Church.

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