Frank Costigan's long association with the Jesuits dated back to his time as a student at St Patrick’s College, East Melbourne (1942-7). He was influential in many areas of public life and was a true champion of social justice. Noted for his integrity, strong character and immense wisdom, he had great compassion for marginalized people. Frank’s sense of what was right and just was inspiring.

Jesuit Social Services and the wider Australian Jesuit Province were fortunate to have Frank as a friend and supporter. He was involved with Jesuit Social Services from 1987, when he joined the Management Committee of the Brosnan Centre. The Provincial appointed him as an inaugural member of the Board when Jesuit Social Services was incorporated in 1995. He resigned in October 2008 due to ill health.

For twelve years Frank was a Director and the Deputy Chair of the Jesuit Social Services Board, where his advice was sought at the highest levels of the organization in the day-to-day challenges of working with disadvantaged people in the justice system. His personal commitment to Jesuit Social Services and its staff was uplifting to all. With grace and humour he shared generously his insight, intellect and wise counsel.

Frank read widely, assembling a considerable library. He had a great interest in history, public policy, the events of the financial and commercial worlds, and media ownership and policy. At Melbourne University he was a foundation member of a Centre for Philosophy and Public Issues. Frank was Secretary of the Newman Society, an intellectual group concerned with issues of social justice, supported by the Jesuits.

Frank was well-known for the Royal Commission he headed between 1980 and 1984 into the activities of the Federated Ship Painters and Dockers Union, following concern over mounting violence and corruption on Melbourne's waterfront. The Commission exposed tax evasion rorts and led to significant legislative changes.

Frank championed a range of social justice issues. A former President of the Australian Bar Association and Chair of the Victorian Bar Council, he served as Chair of the Victorian Drug Rehabilitation Fund and Chair of the Victorian Government Sentencing Task Force. Frank was an inaugural member of the Youth Substance Abuse Service Board, where he served for ten years.

We were honoured to have Frank participate in our work through his involvement with Jesuit Social Services. We thank God for giving us so much through Frank’s inspiration and devotion. He was a true companion in our mission. We now wish to bestow the Companions Medal of the Australian Province of Society of Jesus in his memory. Since Frank died on Easter Monday, his son, Joseph, will accept this award. Moreover, we are delighted that Frank’s twin brother, Michael, is present with us today. He, too, has served the Church very generously in the area of social justice.