

Frank Costigan



The Jesuit Social Services community is very saddened by the news of Frank Costigan's death. Frank had been involved with Jesuit Social Services since 1987 when he joined the Management Committee of the Brosnan Centre. He was appointed by the Jesuit Provincial as an inaugural member of the Board when Jesuit Social Services was formed in 1995. He resigned in October 2008 due to ill health. With grace and humour he shared generously his insight, intellect and wise counsel.

Frank was probably most 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. Arguably the Costigan commission's most valuable work came in exposing what became known as "bottom of the harbour" tax evasion rorts which involved using shell companies to commit tax fraud on an extensive scale. The revelations eventually led to a raft of legislative changes. The commission focused attention on the growing role of white-collar criminals in organised crime in Australia and the need to combat this threat.

Frank championed a range of social justice issues. A former president of the Australian Bar Association and chair of the Victorian Bar Council, Frank served as chair of the Victorian Drug Rehabilitation Fund, chair of the Victorian Government Sentencing Task Force and director and vice-chair of Jesuit Social Services. In his role as a director of Jesuit Social Services, Frank was an inaugural member of the YSAS (Youth Substance Abuse Service) Board where he served for ten years.

Frank was a true champion of social justice and a man of integrity.

We were honoured to have him as part of our organisation.

We will miss him. A good man.

Julie Edwards, Chief Executive Officer

During his [eulogy](#) at Frank Costigan's funeral on 20th April 2009, Fr Frank Brennan SJ said *"Carry his non-judgmental commitment to a fair and just society for all with you all your days. Never forget his gentle smile and the glint in his eye."*