

WOLLONGONG CENTRAL COUNCIL NEWSLETTER



St Vincent de Paul Society
good works

October 2024



WOLLONGONG CONFERENCE CELEBRATES 100 YEARS

Dear Sisters and Brothers

Welcome to the first newsletter under our new restructure. A warm welcome to all new Members, Volunteers and Staff.

Congratulations to our own Peter Houweling on his election to State President.

The Rule assists us by laying out key values to shape our lives and direct our good works. Commitment, Compassion, Respect, Integrity, Empathy, Advocacy and Courage. Christian love is the thread that holds all these together.

I would advise all Members to read page 70 and 71 of the Rule, 7th Edition 2012 Australia.

From Frederic Ozanam, Systemic Thinking and Systemic Change (Raymond L Sickinger) we read: Ozanam diligently worked to make the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul such a learning organisation.

It would be equally disingenuous, then, to fail to recognise that Ozanam was attuned to the realities and need for fundamental change in the religious, political, economic and social systems of his day, and that he sometimes thought systemically, planting seeds which grew into genuine hope for those living in poverty.

As Seeds of Hope proclaims: "Hope is a tiny seed that contains the germ of life. When watered, it sprouts and generates sturdy plants, beautiful flowers, fruit bushes and trees." In thought and through his works, Frederic Ozanam brought such hope to a despairing world.

As Pope Saint Pius XII said of him: "The mustard seed sown by Ozanam in 1833 is today a mighty tree."

Enjoy our Good Works newsletter!

Peter Doris
Central Council
President



In this quarterly newsletter you can expect:

- Conference updates
- Pastoral care
- Useful resource
- Member spotlight
- Upcoming events

Vinnies staff contacts

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Member Support Days

Members are invited to meet your South Region member support staff to get in-person help with IT, Finance, MAVS & CAMS, update your compliance checks and complete your training. This is also a great opportunity to catch up with your fellow conference members over lunch.

27 Sep | Illawarra
22 Oct | Nowra & Ulladulla
28 Oct | Campbelltown
7 Nov | Southern Highlands

RSVP to Alisha | alisha.way@vinnies.org.au or 0491071890

ST VINCENT DE PAUL SOCIETY NSW

ROSALIE RENDU FORUM 2024



Anti-Poverty Week

The annual Rosalie Rendu Forum exploring rental reform, including the end of 'no grounds' evictions, will be held during Anti-Poverty Week, Wednesday 16 October 6:00 - 7:30pm.

This free community event will hear from leaders and experts advocating for a range of reforms to make renting fairer, more affordable and of an acceptable quality for low-income households.

Join online <https://bit.ly/3yLwJn5> or visit the Nagle Centre to watch the live broadcast with the Campbelltown Conference. RSVP to Nat | nat.nicastri@vinnies.org.au



Brain teaser

Maureen is following up on a referral from Vinnies Assist. She needs to confirm some details, including the date of birth, so she calls the number provided. The person's housemate answers and explains that the referred person is currently out. Maureen thinks that she may as well complete the form while she's got someone on the phone.

Can Maureen ask the housemate to provide the date of birth instead?

NO - we must collect personal information directly from the individual concerned unless it's unreasonable or impracticable to do so. In this case, it shouldn't be unreasonable or impracticable to try to contact again later.

Do you want to know more about how you can respect our client's privacy and confidentiality? Read the Society's Privacy Policy or for help, contact svdpwollongong@vinnies.org.au



Member spotlight

Betty Cotter, a former Australian Woman of the Year recipient for the Southern Shoalhaven District, has been part of the St Vincent de Paul Society for over 30 years.

As well as being an active Member, former President and Vinnies retail store coordinator, Betty managed reservations for the Mollymook Holiday Flats, made available to those who could not otherwise afford a beach holiday.

Now in her 90s, Betty says volunteering her time has kept her "young and fit". "Just being involved - available whenever and wherever there is need - is something that brings me great joy."

Thank you Betty!



Useful resources



Trauma training

Blue Knot Foundation is running a series of free online workshops for those who are helping people experiencing different types of trauma.

Further information is available on the Blue Knot Foundation website
www.blueknot.org.au/supporters/supporter-workshops/



Support program

The Society has partnered with Converge International to provide you with free, confidential coaching support for up to 4 sessions per issue to help you deal with the challenges, concerns or issues that may be affecting you.

Call 1300687 327 or visit
www.convergeinternational.com.au



A few reminders:

- Handy forms, templates, order forms and guidelines can be accessed on MAVS
www.mavs.vinnies.org.au
- Family Assistance Forms will be discontinued from 1 November. Be sure to place your order for gift cards before 14 October.
- The Code of Conduct should training should be completed every 2 years. For assistance call Nat 0429656886.
- The 2024 Christmas Appeal launches on 1 November. Resources should be sent to Conferences from 14 October. Any enquiries can be sent to alisha.way@vinnies.org.au



Follow us on Facebook

Information on the Wollongong Central Council area is being updated regularly on the Vinnies Wollongong Facebook page.

If you have an event or good news story to share, please contact Nat | nat.nicastro@vinnies.org.au



New Members needed

The St Vincent de Paul Society only exists through the action of our Members and Volunteers.

If you know of someone willing to give a hand up as a Member, retail volunteer or as part of the Vinnies Van team, please encourage them to contact
membership@vinnies.org.au or scan the QR code above.





Upcoming events

Wed 16 Oct | Carers Week Expo, Oran Park
 Wed 16 Oct | Rosalie Rendu Forum, Campbelltown
 Sun 19 Oct | Campbelltown Festival Mass, Rosemeadow
 Tue 22 Oct | Illawarra Services Expo, Berkeley
 Tue 22 Oct | Member Support Day, Shoalhaven & Ulladulla
 Sat 26 Oct | Holy Family Parish Fair, Ingleburn
 Mon 28 Oct | Member Support Day, Campbelltown
 Mon 4 Nov | REGIONAL COUNCIL MEETING, Campbelltown
 Thu 7 Nov | Member Support Day, Southern Highlands
 Fri 8 Nov | Captain Charles O'Neill Mass
 Wed 13 Nov | World Kindness Day, Claymore
 Sat 16 Nov | Kaleidoscope Festival, Mittagong
 Sat 16 Nov | REGIONAL COUNCIL MEETING, Shoalhaven
 Wed 20 Nov | CENTRAL COUNCIL MEETING, Warrawong
 Wed 27 Nov | Festival of Fun, Bargo
 Thu 5 Dec | Wollongong Social Justice Network Meeting
 Sat 7 Dec | Bikers Toy Run, Wollongong
 Thu 12 Dec | Macarthur Interagency Celebration, Campbelltown

Conference Milestone

The St Francis Xavier Conference celebrated their 100 year anniversary at the St Vincent de Paul Festival Mass held at the Wollongong Cathedral on 22 September.

The St Francis Xavier Conference was formed in August 1924. Since then, the Wollongong Central Council has established more than 30 conferences present in communities across the Illawarra, Shoalhaven, Southern Highlands, Campbelltown and Camden regions. Last financial year, members in this region assisted over 12,000 people, providing more than \$1.55 million worth of assistance. In Wollongong's St Francis Xavier Conference alone, we have 11 members working in their local community who provided support to 316 people.

We thank all Members past and present who have contributed to the work of the St Francis Xavier Conference over the last 100 years.

Mission, Spirituality & Pastoral Care

Employees, Members and Volunteers of the St Vincent de Paul Society are driven by our values. Key amongst our values is compassion – welcoming and serving all with understanding and without judgment. Fr Gregory Boyle is a Jesuit priest who founded Homeboys Industries, a US-based organisation dedicated to rehabilitating former prisoners and gang members.

In his book *Tattoos on the Heart* he wrote:

“Here is what we seek: a compassion that can stand in awe at what the poor have to carry rather than stand in judgment at how they carry it. Kindness is the only strength there is.”

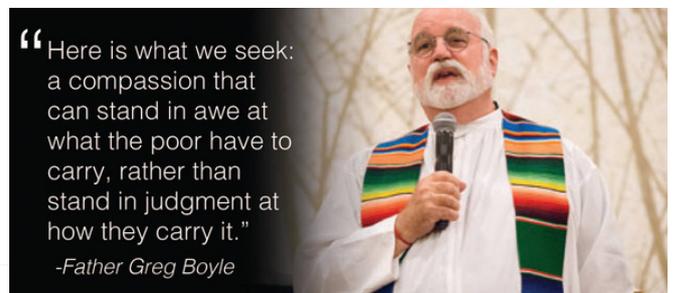
He goes on to talk about “inching ourselves closer to creating a community of kinship such that God might recognise it. Soon we imagine, with God, this circle of compassion.

Then we imagine no one standing outside of that circle, moving ourselves closer to the margins so that the margins themselves will be erased. We stand there with those whose dignity has been denied. We locate ourselves with the poor and the powerless and the voiceless.

At the edges, we join the easily despised and the readily left out. We stand with the demonised so that the demonising will stop. We situate ourselves right next to the disposable so that the day will come when we stop throwing people away.”

“Compassion isn't just about feeling the pain of others; it's about bringing them in toward yourself. If we love what God loves, then, in compassion, margins get erased. 'Be compassionate as God is compassionate,' means the dismantling of barriers that exclude.”

Leonie Duck | Mission, Spirituality and Pastoral Care Partner - South



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