



Newsletter

April 2023

Sydney Archdioceses Central Council President - John Walden's Message

The Sydney Archdiocese has had to deal with two main issues over the last month or so. These are gaining full accreditation for members and filling all Regional Council positions. In addition, there has been some progress with the re-entry into providing EAPA assistance.

Member accreditation

It is a (NSW) legislative requirement for members who perform home visitations, attend Conference meetings where cases are discussed, have dealings with Society funds or interact with other members and discuss client matters, must be fully compliant across all three areas. These areas of compliance are Working with Children Checks, Police Checks and Child Safe training.

The Central Council decided at its meeting in late February 2023 that full compliance would be required by 1 April and non-compliant members after that point in time would be placed into the category of being Inactive. Between the date of the resolution and 1 April non-compliance dropped by almost 60%. This number of non-compliant is dropping again since members have been placed into the Inactive status.

It is an easy exercise to reinstate members to being active if they complete all their compliances checks. This compliance is not a Vinnies' requirement, but is mandated by (NSW) Legislation following the Royal Commission into Child Abuse.

New Regional Presidents

Since the last newsletter there have been two Regional Presidents elected. These are Peter Marshall in Northern Suburbs and Tom Story in Sydney. We wish them well in their endeavours and representing their members in their Regional Councils.

EAPAs

We are hopeful of re-entering the offering of EAPAs to people in need of assistance with energy costs. This could be around mid-year. Soon members will be given an insight into the new streamlined process and can decide whether they wish to participate in offering the service.

More details about the process to deliver EAPA assistance will be sent to Conferences and members in the coming weeks. They will be asked to indicate whether they would like to participate in offering EAPA assistance. Participation is not mandatory and joining later may be an option.

Thanks to all for your efforts, your service and deeply meaningful work, and your ongoing support.

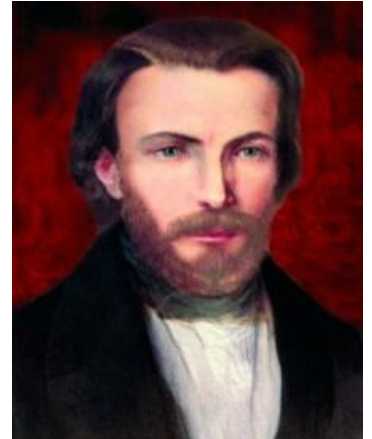
John



YOUR GOOD WORKS ARE OUR MISSION, IN ACTION –THANK YOU!

*Faithful
to the spirit of its founders,
the Society constantly strives for renewal,
adapting to changing world conditions.
It seeks to be ever aware of the changes that occur in human society
and the new types of poverty that may be identified or anticipated.
It gives priority to the poorest of the poor
and to those who are most rejected by society.*

The Rule, p. 16



WINTER APPEAL 2023



Winter Appeal Ready!

As the temperature begins to drop and we start to feel a chill in the air, for many who are homeless or struggling with higher energy bills, this winter will be particularly bleak. This year’s Vinnies Winter Appeal focuses on a fast-growing cohort of people experiencing homelessness in Australia: women over 55.

We know homelessness can affect anyone, but women over 55 are particularly vulnerable. The 2021 census showed the number of older women experiencing homelessness continued to grow after ballooning by more than 30% between 2011 and 2016. In 2023, this is a more concerning issue due to additional stress brought on by the cost of living and housing affordability crises causing more older women to find themselves homeless or at risk of homelessness.

The Society thanks our dedicated Members for the important role they play in raising funds for the Winter Appeal so we can continue give a hand up to those in our community who need it the most. The Winter Appeal will launch on 1 May 2023. Materials to support your Winter Appeal efforts, such as posters, donation envelopes and conference booklets should be available from Monday 17 April.

- Ai-Lin Crisford, Manager, Direct Marketing

Envelopes, information kits and posters ordered by each Regional Council (and terminals by some) will be put to good use, promoting awareness of the good local works across Sydney Central Council and raising valuable funds to sustain and improve support of those you assist.

Lead by Conferences, the support of Parishes and clergy and schools is invaluable.





A message from

Paul Burton and Richard Stewart State Council President and Board Chair

Dear all,

It gives us great pleasure to announce Yolanda Saiz as the new Chief Executive Officer of the St Vincent de Paul Society NSW.

Yolanda has been acting in the role of CEO since January. Yolanda first joined the Society in 2011 as Head of Communications. She has been a member of the Executive Leadership Team since 2016, most recently in the role of Executive Director, Commercial Enterprise, Fundraising and Communications from late 2019.

Yolanda has demonstrated a deep commitment to the Society's mission and vision for many years, and has ably led our retail, commercial enterprise, fundraising and communications functions through the very significant challenges of the past few

years. We are very grateful to Yolanda for the leadership that she has shown since January as Acting CEO in this period of transition.

This appointment has been made following a comprehensive and competitive search process.

The State Council and the Board look forward to working with Yolanda in this role and wish her every success. Please join us in congratulating Yolanda on her appointment.

Kind regards

Paul Burton, State Council President
Richard Stewart, Board Chair



A message from

Paul Burton, Richard Stewart and Yolanda Saiz State Council President, Board Chair and Acting CEO

Yamma all,

We are pleased to announce the Society's new [Strategic Plan 2024-2028, 'Strengthening communities, transforming lives'](#), has now been approved by the Board and State Council.

The approval of our new strategy is an important milestone for the Society – its goals are firmly focussed on the people we assist and delivering service excellence and growth.

This plan was developed following extensive research, consultation and engagement with members, volunteers and employees across the Society.

We are excited to bring you a plan that reflects a whole of Society approach and that is supported by the Board, the State Council and the Executive Leadership Team in equal measure.

Our strategic goals – Excel, Grow and Cultivate – articulate our commitment to respond to both the existing and emerging needs that we see in our community. We will do this by delivering service excellence, growing our footprint so we can assist people in their communities and cultivating our capacity and capability to do so effectively.

We will continue to ensure our work supports increased security, stability and social connectedness for the people we assist – and we will focus on supporting people to sustain these outcomes over time.

Each of us now has a role in taking the strategy forward and working towards delivering on our shared goals. The Executive Leadership Team has prepared a [joint video message](#) speaking to what this moment means to them and their teams.

We look forward to the months ahead as we plan for the implementation of our new strategy.

A launch event will take place in April with the new strategy coming into effect on 1 July 2023.

Thank you all for your important work in building the Society's ambitious strategy which works towards a greater future in partnership with and for the people we assist, to strengthen their communities and transform their lives.

Regards

Paul Burton, State Council President
Richard Stewart, Board Chair





Conference News

Waiting for Vinnies to Call

Up two flights of stairs past a bike and discarded toys
When they knock and he sees who they are he turns down the TV noise
I have an old injury he says that gives me a lot of pain
And I can't get out much lately and the TV keeps me sane
Money's tight when you don't have a job and I'm up against the wall
I need help to pay my bills and I've been waiting for Vinnies to call

*Waiting for Vinnies to call
And whoever they are, if they're needy
St Vincent de Paul helps them all.*

Put off work by a company that has moved its base offshore
With a wife and kids to support and bills that he can't ignore
His wife brings in a small amount from a part time job at the pool
But this doesn't go very far when your kids are still at school
It's hard to find another job with the economy reduced to a crawl
And he's finally bowed to the need for help; he's waiting for Vinnies to call.

*Waiting for Vinnies to call
And whoever they are, if they're needy
St Vincent de Paul helps them all*

A visit from a volunteer, a friendly face at the door,
A hand up for the hard up, a help at hand for the poor.

She changes from her bedclothes and clears the things from the chair
She hides the bottles under the bed and tries to tidy her hair
She catches sight of her room in the mirror then looks back at her face
And sees her life is falling apart just like her place
She goes and opens the door onto a dingy hall
Then thinks about the story she'll tell, she's waiting for Vinnies to call.

*Waiting for Vinnies to call
And whoever they are, if they're needy
St Vincent de Paul helps them all.*



Conference News

SUTHERLAND REGIONAL COUNCIL

What a year for 100th Birthday Celebrations

A long time member of Sutherland Conference Mr Frank McLaughlin celebrated his 100th birthday on 9 November at a special morning tea in his home, St Vincent's Retirement Village, Heathcote. Shire Regional Council President, Pat Cudmore thanked Frank for his 30 years plus of service, and presented him with a letter from Paul Burton (State Council President), membership award and Rosary Beads. Frank was very surprised and grateful that his humble work had been recognise on this special milestone birthday.



Sutherland Shire Outreach Teams Growing

The Sutherland Conference has had an Outreach Team supporting the work of the Conference for over five years. They are an amazing group of people who assist the Conference on a needs basis.

Mouna Roache's vision, at the time a Family Educator in our Catholic schools, believed in the importance of bringing younger parents into the Mission work of the Society in a manageable and meaningful way.

Looking towards the future, President of Menai Conference, Rob Van Den Nouwelant met

with Mouna and Family Educator Kaye Palmano and Pat Cudmore to discuss establishing an Outreach Team in 2023, engaging parents.

These parents from Holy Family Catholic Primary School, Menai were so keen to discover how they could contribute and serve the community in a different way.

The energy and enthusiasm for this new venture was well received, continued to grow and be spoken about, and has now commenced with Members completing Application forms and completing their Member compliance background checks and Child Safe training.



These new Members like all, walk the Mission of Frederic Ozanam:

In my life I want to become better and do a little good...

Yours must be a work of love, of kindness, you must give your time, your talents, yourselves.



Conference News

CARINGBAH CONFERENCE UP AND RUNNING!

We are only a recently new Conference at Caringbah Our Lady of Fatima Parish.

Leading up to Christmas we had a Christmas tree in the foyer of the church decorated with red envelopes which included a non identifying description of one of our Caringbah clients, eg. single mum with two year old, single man in his 50s, etc.

We requested that the Parishioners fill the envelope with a gift card.

We were overjoyed to receive over \$2000 worth of cards, ranging from movie vouchers, Bunnings vouchers, David Jones cards etc.

Many included positive messages and blessings for the receiver.

Not only did this give us an opportunity to give people some power and dignity, in giving them the ability to choose gifts for their families and loved ones, but also greatly supported our new Vinnies Ministry members.



BERALA CONFERENCE, LIBERTY PLAINS REGIONAL COUNCIL

On Sunday, 19 March the St Vincent de Paul Conference of Berala worked with the parish and schools to 'Fill the Van'!

The children from **St. Joseph the Worker Catholic Primary School, South Auburn** had been collecting donations for Night Patrol throughout the season of Lent. They were excited to help the team promote this cause on Sunday.

They wore the vest, served the community with drinks for the Night Patrol van, collected items to be taken to the office and on the Night Patrol service, as well as collect monetary donations.

On Monday, we had Member, Mr Arthur Doumit visit the school to collect all the donations for the office which filled up his whole car!

St. Peter Chanel Primary, Berala also gave most generously as they always do and we, on behalf of those we assist, offer our great thanks!





Caringbah Conference - New Friends

The new Caringbah Conference in the Sutherland Shire Regional Council in 2022, focused on engaging with the residents of Amelie Housing complex at Mt St Vincent, Burraneer. Jorge Gascon, the Tailored Support Worker for Mt St Vincent, organised their first event which was a 'meet and greet BBQ' in October. Everyone was introduced and Pat Cudmore, Regional Council President, spoke of the members' companionship role and led a discussion among those gathered about moving forward with future gatherings.



Pat shared her impression of the event, "We had a very successful couple of hours with the residents enjoying each other's company. They were very welcoming and gave us a guided tour of the facility which we really so appreciated."

Following this successful event, the Conference invited Paul Kearney, a brother to one of the members, to present a 60's musical evening on 5 November which he did graciously. It was good fun! There was a very friendly atmosphere and laughter with some dancing and foot-tapping as you can see from the photo.

The newly elected Conference

President, Lisa Overton, shares that more events for 2023 are underway and the Conference members are looking forward to engaging with the residents and hearing their ideas of what they would like to do.

More details about the project are on MAVS <https://mavs.vinnies.org.au/conferences/member-engagement-vinnies-tenants/>. If members are interested in getting involved with residents living in Amelie Housing, please contact Kate Scholl at POD@amelie.org.au

Kingsgrove Conference

Each week, Kingsgrove Conference Members deliver meals to local homes. Our Lady of Fatima Parish with the support of the Primary School and St Ursula's College communities organise and prepare 250 meals.

Conference President, Bernie Deady said that the 'One Meal, Kingsgrove' service was invaluable in providing the Conference with meals every week to issue to those they assist, offering tremendous support for families in the local community that are doing it tough.

These include families under severe financial, accommodation and psychological stress; single mums with young babies and homeless people.

Our clients really appreciate the thoughtfulness of those providing the service. The quality, quantity and variety of food offers them great support and are a real comfort to know that others are thinking of them through their difficult times. For them, the One Meal team are 'their angels'.

THE HISTORY OF



EARLY 1960'S MUSIC VIDEO SHOW 1

SAT 5TH NOV 2022

06:30PM - 07:30PM

MOUNT ST VINCENTS

IN THE FOYER

Paul will present the artists history & a selection of their great old music-video clips from the early 1960's



Presented by
Rock Historian
"Paul Kearney"

Featured Artists
Include:
Neil Sedaka
Roy Orbison
Beach Boys
The Shadows
Elvis Presley
Chubby Checker
Ricky Nelson
Bobby Rydell
Dion
The Crystals
Cliff Richard
Nancy Sinatra
The Ronettes
Shangri-Las
Dixie Cups
Supremes
Sonny & Cher

Plus, some short comedy clips.



Conference News

RANA'S STORY

*Rana is a 36-year-old man who has spent more than half his life studying and working in Australia. Sadly in 2018 he was detained by Immigration for a visa breach and is on a temporary protection visa without work or study rights and without access to Medicare, living in 'limbo land'. **This is Rana's story:***



Rana was born on 25 June, 1986 in Bangladesh and grew up in a strongly Islamic family in Dhaka. He attended a strict Islamic school from age 10 years. At school, corporal punishment was common to which Rana was subjected. For the last two years of High School, Rana attended a Catholic senior High School (Notre Dame, Dhaka) as a non-Catholic student, after convincing his parents that it had superior facilities, courses and results. During his two years there, Rana was impressed by the example of the teachers and became interested in Christianity.

Rana completed his school studies in 2004, then undertook an intensive English course. He applied for and was offered entry as an international student to a Diploma in Information Technology at Sydney's Global College. Shortly after his arrival, he commenced part-time work with an Electrical Maintenance firm. Rana's interest in Christianity continued to grow in Australia and he started Bible study in 2006 developing a network of Christian friends and started attending services.

Unfortunately for Rana, Global College lost its registration in 2011 and Rana was forced to suspend his studies and seek fee-recovery through the Government. The lengthy process in refunding fees delayed Rana's studies but by the time he was able to enrol into an Electrical and Telecommunication Diploma to Degree course through Bankstown TAFE/University of Western Sydney, **his parents withdrew financial support following his conversion to Christianity.** He was ostracised by his family and intimidated by Islamic community members. Rana did not have enough money to pay the full cost of tuition, leading to him suspending his studies.

Rana continued to work as an Electrical assistant until 2017 and acquired a range of other skills in the building industry. **In March 2018, Rana was detained by Department of Home Affairs at Villawood due to a visa breach.** He applied for protection, given the risk to him of returning to Bangladesh following his conversion to Christianity. **He was granted a temporary bridging visa** following support by community members and sponsorship **but is not permitted to work; study or access Medicare. He has used his time doing volunteer work for Vinnies and other agencies.** His application for protection was rejected by the Department of Home Affairs but Rana has appealed to the Administrative Appeals Tribunal. **It is now five years since his original application for protection.**

Vinnies Kingsgrove Conference and Our Lady of Fatima Kingsgrove have undertaken a petition on Rana's behalf to the Minister for Immigration, the Honourable Andrew Giles for a visa and work and study rights. This petition has been supported by other parishes in the region including St Declan's Penshurst; Our Lady of Fatima Peakhurst; Our Lady of Lourdes Earlwood and St Bernadette's Clemton Park. Rana has over 1000 supporters including these parishioners and online supporters. The Government skills and jobs summit has identified the shortages in the area that Rana has skills. It makes no sense to prevent him studying and working -allowing him would alleviate the skill shortage and save the Government (and taxpayers) the cost of the Status Resolution Support Payment he receives.

We are hopeful that the Government's decision to allow 19,000 refugees to stay permanently in Australia will be extended to Rana.

GYMEA CONFERENCE – A CLIENT'S WISH IS GRANTED

At the Easter Vigil ceremony at St Catherine Labourer Church, Gymea, one of our clients Wilma Cunningham was Baptised, Confirmed and received her first Holy Communion. Wilma attended with her family and St Vincent de Paul friends who have looked after her needs over the years.

In conversation with me before Christmas, Wilma mentioned that she would like to be Baptised into the Catholic faith.

Following this, our Gymea Conference enrolled Wilma in the Rite of the Christian Initiation of Adults programme. Our Members took on the responsibility in getting Wilma to the RCIA lessons every Sunday morning and to attend Mass.

The ceremony on Saturday night was such a wonderful, joyous occasion for Wilma and family, supported by her St Vincent de Paul friends and many parishioners.

It was truly a holy and blessed night.

Frank Tierney- President, Gymea Conference





Conference News

CRISP Program-Community Refugee Integration Support Pilot

Over the past months discussion has taken place with the Sutherland Regional Council members regarding the possibility of engaging with the CRISP program. This is a Federal Government program that enables groups of everyday Australians to welcome refugees into their local area from 'day one' of their Australian journey. Our group will assist one of these families, referred by UNHCR and identified as in urgent need of resettlement.

The support is for a minimum of 12 months, and the CRISP program requires us to having funding available to support the family until their Centrelink and Medicare benefits are established, and until the family is able to source an income. It provides them with practical resettlement and integration support, in line with other community sponsorship programs operating successfully around the world. The CRISP program is run by Community Refugee Sponsorship Australia and UNHCR.

The Vinnies CRISP Conference has now formed with eight core members who are in the process of completing six hours mandatory training. The Vinnies CRISP Conference is grateful for the support of the Regional Council.

Later in the year De La Salle Caringbah is going to hold a benefit night, organised through their music department. We hope to make this a community event. More information to follow.

Please share this good News story with your Conferences, and keep this refugee family and the CRISP members in your prayers, as we journey together, in hope and justice, by introducing them to a better life here in Australia.

The assistance of members at our fundraising efforts with Bunnings BBQs is greatly appreciated, some pictured: Clarissa Cranney (L)

Pat Mahony, Pat Cudmore, Jo Simpson, Olivia Norris.



ON THE LIST OF UNUSUAL REQUESTS...

Life on the margins is always tough. One thing that can't be taken away are memories.

Menai Conference had a call from a lady they assist to dismantle a garden shed so that she could take it to a new and hopefully, happier, home. The garden shed was a gift from her mother who had passed away recently and so it represented a link to the past for her.

Rob and Allen were happy to provide the labour. Dealing with heat, red back spiders and a confined space made the job more difficult. Nevertheless, after four hours, the shed was reduced to a small package that the removalist could handle.





Conference News

MANY HANDS AND “TEAMWORK” MAKE LIGHT WORK

There are times when a Conference needs to call on the skills and ingenuity of others to get a seemingly difficult task done. A new Menai client had to relocate from a nearby region after her house was ransacked and the furniture vandalised. The woman was elderly and had no one to help her.



Menai Conference member, Allen, displaying some of the item supplied.

Lots of furniture and support was needed to settle her into a new home. It took a few members to get the job done. Furniture was sourced and Allen from Menai Conference assembled kit furniture for the bedroom.

Ken from Engadine Conference was available to test and Tag the electrical equipment.

Not to be outdone, Allen’s wife, Teresa was able to put her adept skills to good use as well. Spotlight had large premade Block Out curtains on special which Teresa had

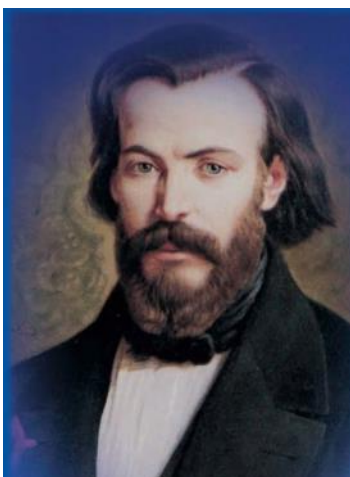
to be recut and sew to suit the Windows. Both she and Allen installed curtains for much appreciated privacy.

Together this wonderful group was able to install the furniture and turn a house into a home. **That’s what I call TEAMWORK.**

Thank you team!



Ken from Engadine Conference testing



Knowledge of the poor and needy is not gained by pouring over books or in discussions with politicians, but by visiting ... where they live,.... feeling the cold they feel and learning from their lips the causes of their woes.

Blessed Frederic Ozanam



Conference News

OYSTER BAY CONFERENCE—LOCAL SUPPORT

The **Our Giving Tree** tradition started 19 years ago. We at The Point Preschool had a dream to support those in need in our community at Christmas. Since then, each year our children, families, staff and community support and bring joy to local families through our Giving Tree.

Our conversations with our children were filled with questions as to why some families in our community needed support and why we going to support them. The children's understanding grew and deepened with each conversation.

A few days later a 4 year old child explained, "Some families don't have enough money to buy food and presents so we are going to buy them for them. We are going to be like Santa to lots of families."

We knew the children were also having conversations at home with their families about the joy of giving. Each day the children would excitedly tell us about the food and gifts they had bought for the families. It was such a privilege to hear the children's conversations. Another child explained, "I bought a ball and a colouring-in book and pens and a book for a girl who is 5 because I'm 5 and those things are my favourite things. I hope she loves them like I do".

Watching our children place gifts under our tree that they have chosen with their families brought us great joy. The children proudly placed their presents as their families and friends looked on.

"I wish everyone in the world has a present under their tree like we have for them here" a 5 year old boy reflected.

We are always in awe of our children's understanding of altruism and their delight in spreading joy.

Catherine Lee- Director The Point Preschool, Oyster Bay

GYMEA CONFERENCE- A VERY HAPPY CHRISTMAS

The response to our Appeal was overwhelming with a total of \$10,219.85

CHURCH -Donations from all Masses:::\$10,219.85

ST CATHERINE LABOURE PRIMARY SCHOOL- Friday 9th Deheld a market stall run by the children **and** the school generously donated the proceeds to St Vincent de Paul.-\$3108

CHRISTMAS HAMPERS- The teachers and parents of the school children donated and put together 46 Christmas Hampers for our clients. (Leftovers delivered to the Support Centre).

The school Mini Vinnies group assisted with the packing of the hampers over the few days and taking them to the cars in the school ground on the day of pick up then our Members then delivered the hampers .

CHRISTMAS LUNCH- On Tuesday 13th Dec, we had a Christmas lunch at the GyMEA Bowling Club. We had 28 people attend along with Fr Greg (Parish Priest), Fr Noel (Assistant Priest) and seminarian, Daniel O'Kelly.

Advent Liturgy Wednesday- On Wednesday 14th Dec. our Conference was invited to the school Advent liturgy held in the church. Each grade was involved in the Advent Christmas presentation. At the end of the service, the market stall money was presented by the school captain, and I was invited to say a few words.

GRAY'S POINT PRIMARY SCHOOL- On Friday 16th Dec. the school children of Gray's Point donated 50 wrapped Christmas Gifts for children less well off. Member, Denis O'Brien delivered the gifts to the Sutherland Support Centre. *On a personal note,*

I am very grateful for the wonderful "connect" that we have between our St Vincent de Paul Conference, our Catholic Church and School. It has always been my view, what an important part this plays for the spiritual success in assisting the people we do.

Thank you all, for everything that you do.

We are indeed blessed with a conference (abundance in numbers) that have so many individual personal skills, coupled with spirituality and most of all "a sense of humour". God Bless you all and your families.

Frank Tierney –Conference President





Regional Council

NORTHERN SUBURBS

All three Conferences collected hampers through schools and the response as always was remarkable.

Also, Client Support staff ran a “Christmas Gift Drive” on a local community social media page to add items to hampers and to meet requests from people we assist request.

Gifts were also given to the Jesuit Refugee Service for their Christmas Present Stall on behalf of our Regional Council.



Macquarie Regional Festival Mass

On Sunday 16th October 2022, the Macquarie Region held its first solo Festival Mass and Meeting in many years. We had noticed a drastic fall off in attendance by Macquarie Region members at multi region Festival Mass’. Accordingly,, we decided to go alone and hold it on a Sunday afternoon.

We had a fantastic attendance of 53. Father Greg Walsh CM, a Vincentian Father, officiated, and it was a very reverent and happy Mass. The Festival Meeting was held immediately after Mass. Our Regional President John Lumley thanked everyone for their attendance and their excellent service of Christ through the poor.



Macquarie Region have been blessed with donations from St Charles Borromeo Parish at Ryde and St Therese’s at East Denistone. We have been able to assist those experiencing financial hardship with donations of toiletries, clothing, toys and gift cards. It is so generous in today’s climate where the cost of living has soared, that Parishioners’ are staying faithful to Jesus’ message to care for the poor.



New members were blessed and 17 awards were presented for long service and outstanding dedication across our call centre and conferences. One member had over 70 years service and another over 60.. All were given the recent book on Charles O’Neill. A scrumptious afternoon tea was held with the vast majority of attendees staying until the end. Big thanks to Jenny Strong (CSO), Sister Gwen Tamlyn, Kevin Lyons (Marsfield Conference President), Billie Hurst and Trish Strong, for a lot of work. Given the strong result we will hold our next festival mass around the same time this year, on a Sunday afternoon.



Conference News

North Ryde Conference

Thank You to Holy Spirit Catholic Primary School Community!

New Principal Mr Brian Story augmented the school's annual Christmas Appeal with the carols' night BBQ proceeds also going to the Vinnies.

Members of the North Ryde Conference received an amazing \$4,743 (\$4,393 in cash and \$350 in gift cards) on 14 December 2022.

Photo shows Conference President Lorenzo Escalante receiving the funds raised from 2022 School Captains Ava Bruno and Hayden Boyd; School Principal Brian Story, Conference Treasurer Peter McConnell, Conference Vice-President Bob Holland, and Member Irma Escalante. Conference Secretary Mariola Zarzycki took the photo.



Special THANKS to Kindergarten Teacher Mrs. Gina Fisher and Year 6 Teacher Mrs Deanna Mangan who have been running the annual Christmas Appeal for the Vinnies.

What an awesome achievement in immersing young children and their families to charity!

'Leading for Impact', the Society's New Leadership Program is open for Registrations

We are pleased to announce the rollout of a new leadership program, co-created with the University of Notre Dame.

This program is specifically designed for aspiring and current Regional and Central Council Presidents, as well as any interested member of the Society thinking about future leadership positions. It provides a unique opportunity to develop the knowledge and skills necessary to lead with purpose and impact from a Vincentian perspective. The course draws on the University's vast experience in leadership development for Catholic organisations.

Participants will gain formation and a deeper understanding of leadership theory, while also learning practical strategies and best practices for leading and managing service-orientated organisations.

The program will be delivered in person at the University of Notre Dame in Sydney and is broken down into seven face-to-face modules of 6-7 hours each that explore:

Formation, which focuses on Catholic Social Teaching and encourages participants to make connections between the experiences of poverty, disadvantage and marginalisation that they encounter in their everyday work and the unjust structures that contribute to inequality and exclusion.

Leadership and management, which explores contemporary business leadership and management practice in the context of Catholic leadership.

Governance, which explores principles of governance and regulation particularly as it applies to not-for-profit organisations.

Financial reporting, which helps participants develop applicable finance, accounting and business skills.

Counselling skills for leaders, which provides participants with skills to enhance relationships and improve our capacity to serve the poor and marginalised with compassion, respect and empathy.

Supporting member and volunteer engagement, which addresses factors that help sustain volunteer engagement.

Digital communication and security, which provides the knowledge and skills to effectively communicate and collaborate in a digital environment while also keeping sensitive information secure.

We are currently looking for the first cohort of participants. These will be delivered at Notre Dame, Broadway on Friday 28th and Saturday 29th April for the initial sessions, with a follow-up session to be held on the 16th June. Participants can be current leaders, those who aspire to be in a leadership position, or those who demonstrate leadership skills but may not yet recognise themselves as a leader. Young Vincentians are encouraged to apply.

If interested, please contact Linda Paull linda.paull@vinnies.org.au to secure a place.



Conference News

Club 'Norths' Grant makes huge difference to homeless people

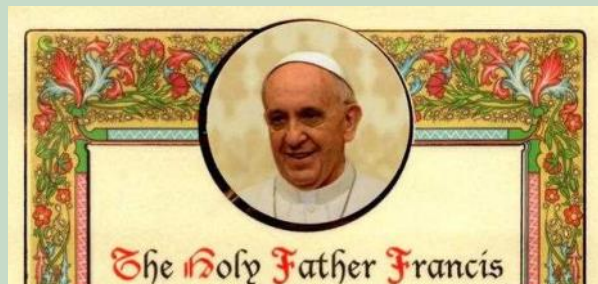


Norths gave Vinnies a grant of \$15,000 to help its work in dealing with people who are homeless, evicted or escapees from domestic violence situations. When people are desperate, so often they turn to Vinnies. Some need accommodation in a budget motel or guesthouse for a few days, while a longer term solution can be developed. The pleasure and gratitude of someone able to sleep securely in a clean bed, without fear of assault or robbery, commonly

experienced by those sleeping 'rough', is overwhelming. Some challenges are more complex and take more time – and money. Vinnies was caring for a family escaping domestic violence. The family of four was squeezed into a one-bedroom flat in poor condition, surviving through the help of Vinnies and the kindness of family friends. Vinnies was able to locate more suitable accommodation on a secure basis, enabling the mother to resume work and become independent again. This could not have been achieved without the Norths' grant.'



Vinnies expresses its profound thanks on behalf of all those who have been able to sleep more soundly through the generosity of the Norths' grant. Well played, Norths.



PAPAL BLESSING –IMELDA AND JOHN O'NEILL, CRONULLA CONFERENCE MEMBERS HONOURED BY THE HOLY FATHER!

As highlighted in the Catholic Weekly late last year, it was with thanksgiving and prayer that I informed our Members of this wonderful news for John and Imelda.

In humility, John and Imelda are the quiet achievers whose dedication to their Faith and support for the needy in our communities is an inspiring gift to us all.

On behalf of the Regional Council, many congratulations on this wonderful life achievement.

Blessings,

Pat –Sutherland Shire Regional Council President

:



SPECIAL WORKS AND SERVICES

Inner West Community Support Service

Team Leader, Marie Crotty reports:

It has been a very busy month in the Inner West, we were so fortunate to receive so many beautiful donations.

A very big Thank you to our amazing staff for sorting, packing & delivering to all our lovely families in-houses & in the Community

Winky our resident Elf also keep staff on their toes

Wishing everyone a Happy & fun Christmas & New year, see you all in 2023



Yours must be a work of love, of kindness, you must give your time, your talents, yourselves.

The poor person is a unique person of God's fashioning with an inalienable right to respect

Blessed Frederic ozanama

Our Lady Mercy College Burraneer has had a long relationship with Mount St Vincent housing in Wooloware.

Over the years, we have baked cakes, given housewarming gifts, and visitors with the residents.

This Christmas we made home-made cookies and visited each of the residents. The girls were thrilled to bring some Christmas joy to all .



DOING GOOD TOGETHER

makes a difference



*Be part of our social and affordable housing
POD project, a partnership for good*

Conference led community development

Amélie Housing seeks partners willing to support delivery of the NSW Social and Affordable Housing (SAHF) program. The program requires collaboration between the various arms of the Society to support safe engaged communities in Society owned housing developments.

Our SAHF promise requires we fully utilise Amélie Housing staff, SVDP Support Services including Tailored Support and local Conferences to enhance the housing tenants' lived experience. (Strategic Directions 2015-22)

Experience has shown that safe engaged neighbourhoods require broad community involvement and our Conferences can spearhead locally relevant engagement activities. This collaboration is the Point of Difference our wider network can offer those suffering housing stress. You are invited to be part of the POD Project. This could be an activity for new and experienced members.

Amélie Housing, with local Conference members, are conducting discussions to explore this unique collaboration. The POD projects sets us apart from other community housing providers. Share your thoughts and explore how we can formalise this vital point of difference.

The POD Project is a positive opportunity designed to provide companionship to our tenants. This is how we build safe engaged communities.

Want to know more?
Contact: POD@amelie.org.au

Member Support for Compliance

St Vincent de Paul Society NSW is a committed registered child-safe organisation. So that we can meet this commitment, we have developed support for Members. The following compliances are required for Members, volunteers, and employees:

- NSW Working With Children Check (every 5 years)
- Police Check (every 3 years)
- Vinnies NSW Child Safe Familiarisation Training (every 2 years).

Need assistance applying for your online Police Check?

Membership and Community Engagement staff across Metro Region attend some Vinnies Support Centres (VSCs) to assist Members apply for their online Police Checks. Thank you to the VSC Coordinators for opening their doors for to all Members who have taken up the offer so far.

Vinnies Support Centre Coordinators are also able to assist.

Members can simply RSVP to MetroMembers@vinnies.org.au with name, time preferences, Conference for completing checks.

Applying for Background Checks

- Instruction documents are available – just ask your Conference President or Member & Community Engagement Coordinator (MCEC) at MetroMembers@vinnies.org.au.

Online Police Check

- Go to: <https://svdpmetroregion.nationalcrimecheck.com.au/>
- You'll be asked to enter a Site Code which is 'Sydney Arch'
- Results go to Vinnies. Once applied, advise your Membership and Community Engagement Coordinator.
- Your clearance number and expiry date will be added to your Society records.

Working With Children's Check (WWCC)

- Go to <http://www.kidsguardian.nsw.gov.au/>
- Once a new or renewed WWC is received: Results go to you. Advise your President and MCEC of: WWCC number, expiry date and confirm your DOB.
- We use these details to verify and register you with The Office of Children's Guardian as a volunteer.
- Your WWCC clearance number and expiry date will be added to your Society records.

Vinnies NSW Child Safe Familiarisation Training

Online- Vinnies Learning Centre: Instructions are available. Log in to your account: <https://vinnieslearningcentre.litmos.com.au/account/Login>

Extra Support:

Face-to-Face training

These have been offered to Regional Councils and most have held sessions, some still to come and some yet to be set. At least 10 people are required. Presidents are kept updated and offered nearby opportunities for Members too.

Zoom sessions

As used previously during COVID, these Zoom sessions are becoming a popular way to complete Child Safe familiarisation Training. Sessions are being run regularly each week. Each session runs for 1.5 hours.

Contact your friendly MCEC Team at MetroMembers@vinnies.org.au and we'll assist you in registering and attending a session of your choice.

We're always happy to be of service!

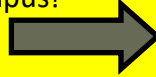


YOUTH NEWS

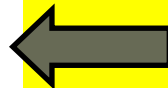
UNIVERSITY O WEEKS

The first AGM meeting for the Australian Catholic University Strathfield Vinnies coincided with the group being officially registered as a society on campus! YAY!

All the hard work at O-Week has paid off!



What a beautiful day for an O-Day! The University of Sydney had a massively successful day with 82 expressions of interest!



The team can't wait to see these eager young adults getting involved in Vinnies volunteering opportunities.

Come rain or come shine, we have had an amazing turn out from students at Macquarie University, showing an interest in getting involved with Vinnies youth programs.

We had a whopping 431 expressions of interest which shows the reputation of Vinnies and the desire to find out more.



UNSW Young Vinnies

Over the weekend of 4 March, UNSW Vinnies' students had their follow up event to O-week where new members went on an Op Shop crawl!



In true Vinnies fashion (pun intended) they found fabulous pieces of fashion at great prices, while also learning about the importance of giving back to their community and sustainability.

They brought interest and joy from passers by who sensed something fun yet meaningful was occurring in the name of Vinnies!



SCHOOL NEWS



Dressed by Vinnies at St Bernard's Catholic Primary School, Botany

At the end of 2022, St Bernard's Catholic Primary School, Botany, held their inaugural 'Dressed by Vinnies Day Fashion Parade'. In the lead up to the day, students learned about Vinnies Retail Stores and the process that occurs after donating to a charity bin.



On the day, Mini Vinnies students had the opportunity to either wear something they purchased from Vinnies or something they later donated to Vinnies and showcased their items through a Fashion Parade for students and families. Students also visited their local Vinnies Store as part of the experience – many for the very first time – and were thrilled to find the treasure trove inside. Thanks to the St Bernard's school community for supporting Vinnies.

Christmas Appeal – Contribution of Schools

Once again, the Metropolitan Schools and Youth Engagement Team were overwhelmed by the support of schools at the conclusion of the 2022 Vinnies Christmas Appeal. Last year was a challenging year for many individuals and families across NSW. Between the natural disasters that occurred, the COVID-19 hangover and the cost of living crisis, thousands of households across the state were



heading into the festive season with uncertainty looming over them. Despite these challenges, school communities across Sydney exhibited great generosity and kindness in their response to the Christmas Appeal.

Across the Sydney Region, a total of 94 primary and secondary schools contributed to the 2022 Christmas Appeal as well as one Out of Schools Hours Centre and one Tutoring Company. Ensuring that local needs were

met first and foremost, most schools donated to their local Conference and/or Vinnies Support Centre Christmas Appeal through means of gift cards, toys, gifts and food. Other Vinnies Services that received support from school communities included Metropolitan Vinnies Van Services, Marian Centre and Matthew Talbot Hostel.



We are deeply grateful to all schools across the Sydney region for their contributions to the Vinnies Christmas Appeal. As always, the outpour of compassion to people experiencing hardship was beyond noteworthy and epitomises what being a Vincentian is all about!

Donations-Aquinas College, Menai (left); St John's Primary, Auburn (left)



SCHOOL NEWS



Other Vinnies Services that received support from school communities included **Metropolitan Vinnies Van Services, Marian Centre and Matthew Talbot Hostel.**

We are deeply grateful to all schools across the Sydney region for their contributions to the Vinnies Christmas Appeal.

As always, the outpour of compassion to people experiencing hardship was beyond noteworthy and epitomises what being a Vincentian is all about!

< Donations from De La Salle College, Caringbah

New Census homelessness figures: A national crisis

Action on homelessness and housing must be made an immediate priority for all levels of government following the alarming figures on homelessness released as part of the Australian Bureau of Statistic's [latest census](#).

"It is not an overstatement to say that this is a national crisis and drastic action has to happen right now to ensure everyone has a safe and secure place to live," said Yolanda Saiz, St Vincent de Paul Society NSW then Acting CEO.

"Homelessness across Australia has risen by 5.2% from 116,427 to 122,494 people during the course of the last census. It was pleasing to see the number of people experiencing homelessness in NSW decreased from 37,692 to 35,011 since 2016, down 7%.

Homelessness in NSW from 2001 to 2021



"However, the number of people experiencing homelessness is still 27% higher than the 2011 census.

"It is unacceptable that the number of people experiencing homelessness remains so high, especially given the efforts made during the height of the pandemic, when the census was taken, to ensure our most vulnerable were housed. The Government set precedent, providing people sleeping rough with emergency accommodation during the worst of the COVID lockdowns.

"We know it is possible, when there is political will, to provide greater assistance to people experiencing homelessness. We've seen at a state level that targeted programs such as Together Home for rough sleepers and the Social and Affordable Housing Fund (SAHF) have helped contribute to a 7% decrease in the number of people experiencing homelessness in NSW. We need to keep working on reducing homelessness in NSW and around Australia," Ms Saiz said.

The ABS statistics reveal that there has been a 63% decrease in rough sleepers throughout NSW from 2,588 in 2016 to 963 in 2021, while the homeless rate was 43 persons for every 10,000 persons in the 2021 Census, down from 50.4 in 2016 Census.

"Our members are seeing the reality of the housing and homelessness crisis every day in the communities where they live and work," said Paul Burton, St Vincent de Paul Society NSW State President. "Around a quarter of the people we've assisted this year have sought help for the first time, including a growing rate of families and people working full-time, because there is simply not enough money to make ends meet.

"We cannot allow things to continue as they have been with housing; we need to see major reforms and investment to give the most vulnerable in our communities safety now and hope for the future. The Society commissioned research from UNSW last year which showed that if the NSW Government built 5,000 new social housing dwellings every year for a decade, the NSW social housing waiting list would be reduced by three quarters.

"We've also called for an increase in funding for Specialist Homelessness Services which will be vitally important as a necessary measure to ensure services are properly funded to meet the growing demand for assistance.

"We cannot wait any longer to address the homelessness and housing crisis – action is needed now," Mr Burton said.



SHOP NEWS

Surry Hills Crown Street Shop

Generous New Season Donation at Crown Street!

Stylish new season looks are on the floor at our newest store Crown Street!

The boys have been decked out head to toe in Nana Judy's most recent collection, bringing fresh Aussie streetwear to the suburb of Surry Hills.



A generous donation of new condition and tags on 'Judy' have let us dedicate a whole rack space to the style which has been popular for its tees and detailed jumpers as the season turns.

Next time you're in the Hills, watch out for the Nana Judy look near you!





CLEAR PATHWAY TO VOICE REFERENDUM

Following months of consultations with the Referendum Working Group, the Government has announced the wording of the referendum question and draft constitutional amendment for the proposed Indigenous Voice to Parliament. The question the Parliament will now consider to be put to the Australian people will be:

A Proposed Law: to alter the Constitution to recognise the First Peoples of Australia by establishing an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Voice.

The Government hopes to have Parliamentary approval by the end of June, with the referendum to be held between October and December.

Earlier this year, representatives of the Society of St Vincent de Paul participated in the 'Yes 23' campaign launch in Adelaide. The launch saw over 100 grassroots organisations come together to support the campaign for a First Nations Voice to Parliament.

The breadth and diversity of these organisations reflect a strong backing of the Call of the *Uluru Statement From the Heart* as well as the commitment to build community understanding, awareness and support for the referendum.

The Society of St Vincent de Paul in NSW and across the nation supports the call for a First Nation's Voice enshrined in the Constitution. This derives and is informed by our Good Works of charity and justice.

We support the Voice because we aspire to a society transformed by compassion and built on justice – where the dignity and hope of all people is respected by ensuring they have control of their own destiny. We know the importance of vulnerable people having a voice. As The Rule states,

The Society helps the poor and disadvantaged speak for themselves. When they cannot, the Society must speak on behalf of those who are ignored. (I #7.5)

A Voice to Parliament is about ensuring the First Nations people have a real say in the

decisions that affect their lives permanently.

The Society's support for the Voice is a matter of social justice – not politics.

One in five people seeking our support in NSW identify as being Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander. In their hardship we witness the long-term impact of the dispossession and powerlessness endured since the earliest days of colonisation.

Giving First Nations peoples a voice will help break this vicious cycle and lead to better laws and policies for the wellbeing of their families and communities.

The Society's Social Justice Team have developed a suite of resources to support our networks to better understand and take action in support of the *Uluru Statement from the Heart*, and the Voice to parliament.

These resources are on our [website](#), including a list of trusted resources to learn more about the issues in the lead up to the referendum

If you would like hardcopies of any of these resources, please contact us at: social.justice@vinnies.org.au

Now is the time to get informed about Constitutional recognition and a Voice to Parliament.



July 2022 - NSW CEO, President and Chair of the Board sign the Uluru Statement



Spiritual Reflection - A Voice Calls Out

ISAIAH 40: 3-5

- 3 The voice of one calling out, "Clear the way for the Lord in the wilderness; Make straight in the desert a path for our God.
- 4 Let every valley be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low; And let the uneven ground become a plain, And the rugged terrain a broad valley;
- 5 Then the glory of the Lord will be revealed, and all flesh will see it together; For the mouth of the Lord has spoken."

When we think of the wilderness sometimes, we are reminded of rough terrain or barren deserts. We see the wilderness again in New Testament before Jesus is crucified, he is led by the Spirit into the wilderness. This time was one of immeasurable pain for Jesus.

So, when we hear about the wilderness in this passage from Isaiah, we also hear that a voice of one cries out right here. What is the pain in this wilderness? From this place of pain, where there is isolation and harsh conditions, a voice of one cries out!

We can view this as a single voice, like the voice we recall from Exodus with Moses and the burning bush, or the still small voice of God in a rushing wind. Or, we can see this as one united voice! A voice of unity from the places of pain and despair, within this wilderness comes a collective cry to make the paths straight.

We are asked in the *Uluru Statement from the Heart* to walk with our First Nations peoples in unity with them for truth seeking, treaty and A VOICE.

From our very own wilderness within our Nation's brutal history we are called to raise the valleys and smooth out the uneven

ground and take our part in a more just and compassionate society.

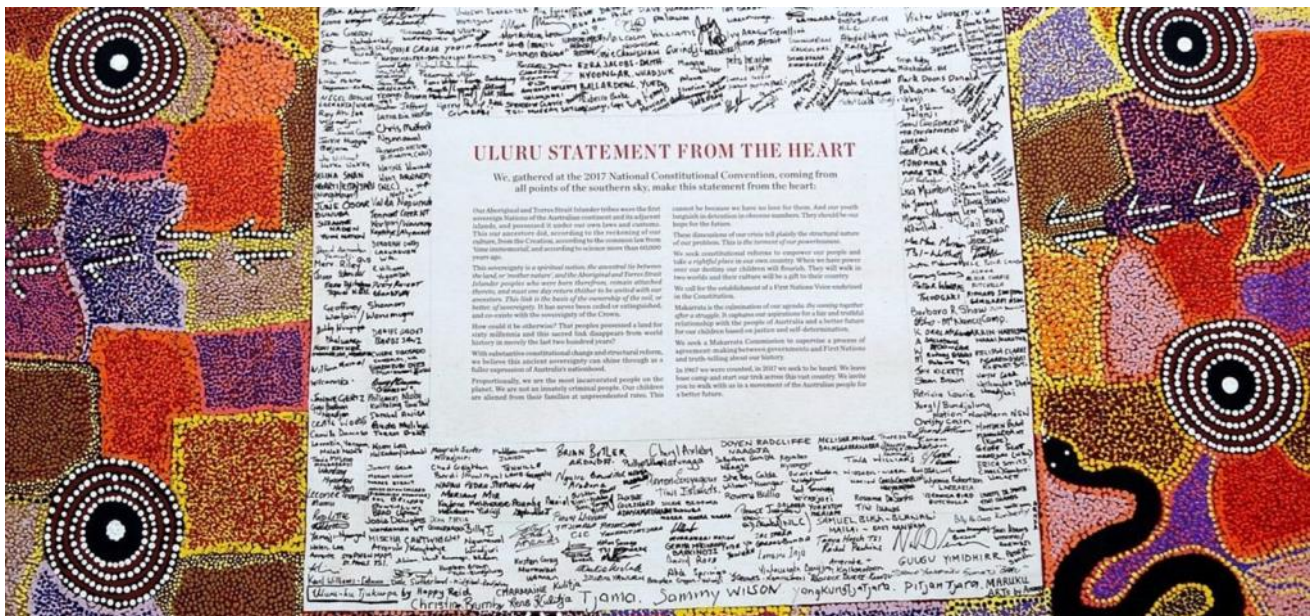
This passage of scripture finishes with what we can reflect on as a commissioning from God for this most important demand. Preparing these paths, walking in unity and being a voice of one will then reveal the glory of the Lord, that the Lord has spoken.

We must always look for opportunities where we can speak into the darkness of the wilderness of our days and do whatever good works are at our hands for sake of dignity, truth and restoration.

- Corinne Lindsell, Mission, Spirituality and Pastoral Care Partner

REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS

1. In what ways have you been led by the Spirit into the wilderness?
2. What aspects of the wilderness can you connect to the pain our First Nations Peoples have endured?
3. What actions can we do as Vincentians to show our united support for a Voice?





Sydney Alliance Unites for the Common Good

St Vincent de Paul Society NSW members and leadership were among over 45 diverse community organisations, unions and religious organisations united in an Assembly calling for social justice in the lead up to the 2023 State Election. The over 900-strong Assembly was held in Westmead on Tuesday 28 February.

Matt Kean (NSW Treasurer), Daniel Mookhey (Shadow Treasurer) and Jenny Leong (NSW Greens spokesperson on Housing) headlined the political attendees, while speakers with lived experience shared moving personal testimonies highlighting why our politicians need to act.

With the current cost of living and housing crisis leaving a growing number of people in precarity, including many needing to seek assistance from organisations such as the Society for the first time, the Assembly called on the State's political leaders to commit to eight asks on social and affordable housing, climate and cost of living, and belonging and democracy.

On the night, both major parties said they understood the need to boost the supply of social and affordable housing so that key workers, people on low incomes, and the growing number of people experiencing homelessness have a place to call home. Regrettably though, neither committed any figures on funding or social housing places that would back this shared concern.

Both parties agreed any new social and affordable homes delivered through development partnerships will remain so in perpetuity.

They also agreed to meet with the Sydney Alliance within the first 100 days after forming government to discuss issues facing temporary migrants. Both parties also agreed to consultation on minimum energy efficiency standards in rentals.

While Labor stated its commitment to ending no-grounds evictions on fixed term and rolling leases, the Treasurer would not be drawn on rental policy. Three days after the Assembly the Liberal Party announced it would introduce reasonable grounds evictions on rolling leases.

The Society has been a part of the Sydney Alliance since its Founding Assembly in 2011. In this 2023 State Election Assembly, Vinnies has worked closely with other organisations to bring its policies on social housing, rental security and homelessness services to the negotiating table.

Our thanks to all the Society's members, volunteers and staff from across the metropolitan Central Councils who attended this important Assembly. The Vinnies 'sea of blue' was unmistakable!

- Rob Crosby, Communications Coordinator



THANK YOU!

Over the last six months, our Members, Volunteers and Staff have been writing to and meeting with their local MPs and candidates about the need for safe, affordable and healthy homes.

Through your efforts, MPs and candidates in around one-third of electorates across NSW have heard directly about how vulnerable people are suffering from a lack of secure and affordable housing, from rental stress, and a lack of homelessness services.

You also told them about the solutions needed to meet these challenges.

We would like to thank each and every one of you for the role you have played in the fight for **Housing Justice: A Home for Everyone**. A particular shout out to Central Council, Regional and Conference Social Justice Representatives who actively engaged in organising meetings in their electorates. You continue to show us how our good works are complete.



CUSTOMISED VINNIES FUNDRAISING PAGES FOR CONFERENCES

**When using our Community
Fundraising Portal, you can:**

- Update and personalise your page at any time
- Share your personalised URL or QR code for quick and easy online donations
- No cash handling required by your conference and all donors will receive a receipt automatically via email
- Saves you time and paperwork

Please see here for other conference pages:

fundraise.vinniesnsw.org.au

If your Conference is interested in having a customised page or just want to have a chat about fundraising, please don't hesitate to reach out to Caroline on caroline.casse@vinnies.org.au.



St Vincent de Paul Society
good works



Vinnies NO INTEREST LOANS

**A safe way to borrow.
An affordable alternative to credit.**

Borrow up to \$2000 for essential goods and services. Repay only what you borrow over a term that suits you*.

*limits apply

**NO FEES
NO CHARGES
no worries!**



What is NILs?

No Interest Loans (NILs) provide individuals and families on low incomes with access to safe, fair, affordable credit with no fees or charges – ever.

Am I eligible?

- ✓ I hold a Health Care Card / Pension Card OR earn less than \$70,000 before tax (\$100,000 for couples or people with dependants)
- ✓ I have lived at my current or previous address for at least 3 months*
*exceptions can apply
- ✓ I can show that I can afford to repay the loan

What can I use NILs for?

Loans are available up to \$2000 for essential goods and services including:

- Household Items
- Car Repairs & Registration
- Medical & Dental
- Technology
- Furniture
- Education

Loans are not available for:

Bills, cash, debts, food, fines or penalties



Call : **1800 484 664**

Email: nils@vinnies.org.au

Visit: vinnies.org.au/NILS



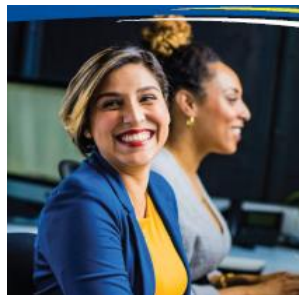


Vinnies Assist—13 18 12

WHAT IS VINNIES ASSIST?

Vinnies Assist provides information, referral pathways and resources that can be accessed by, our Members, Conferences, Volunteers, Staff and external stakeholders to obtain up to date information from across all the Society's 7 Directorates:

Office of the CEO, Vinnies Services, Finance, Membership, Volunteers and Regional Operations, Corporate Services, Commercial Operations, Fundraising and Communications.



WHAT WE CAN PROVIDE:

Vinnies Assist aims to bridge the gap for members, volunteers, staff and the general public requiring up to date information, guidance and support to assist the People we Assist:

- Telephone support to meet immediate needs
- Access to crisis and short-term accommodation
- Immediate referral services to our Welfare services
- Support to access Vinnies Services across NSW
 - Homelessness & Housing
 - Disability & Inclusion Services
 - Health Services
- Support in accessing external services

The Vinnies Assist operational hours 8.30am - 4.30pm

ACCESSING INFORMATION OR REFERRAL SERVICES

can be made by contacting **13 18 12** pressing **option 5**, emailing vinnies@vinnies.org.au for general information or to make a referral to our Vinnies Services or Member support services — intake.officer@vinnies.org.au.

Member and Volunteer Recognition of Service

The St Vincent de Paul Society NSW acknowledges the great contribution members and volunteers make to the work of the organisation and the people it serves.

It has a Member and Volunteer Recognition of Service (Badges and Certificates) procedure to recognise members and volunteers who have provided 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30, 35, 40, 45, 50, 55, 60 or 65 years of service to the Society.

The five-yearly anniversary badges and certificates were introduced by State Council in 2021.

Central Council, Regional Council and Conference Presidents, supported by staff in regions, may also like to hold local events such as morning teas; arrange for special mentions at Mass; or organise a card and gift for members reaching significant milestones in their service.

2023—Key Social Justice dates

These social Justice days throughout 2023 provide a great opportunity to promote Vinnies awareness in your local community and to highlight both the good works and the policy advocacy of the Society.

26 January: Survival Day/Australia Day	2 - 9 July: NAIDOC week
20 February: World Day of Social Justice	27 August: Social Justice Sunday
21 March: National Harmony Day	24 September: Migrant and Refugee Sunday
15 - 21 May: National Volunteer Week	10 October: World Mental Health Day
26 May: National Sorry Day	15 - 21 October: Anti-Poverty Week
27 May - 3 June: Reconciliation Week	19 November: World Day of the Poor
5 June: World Environment Day	5 December: International Volunteer Day
18 - 24 June: Refugee Week	10 December: Human Rights Day
20 June: World Refugee Day	
2 July: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Sunday	

For suggested content to be added to your Parish bulletins, to talk at parish Masses, to run recruitment drives, and for ideas for your Conferences, please refer to the MAVS social justice page: <https://mavs.vinnies.org.au/social-justice/>



Please ASSIST A STUDENT

The **Assist A Student** program gives you the opportunity to provide funding to support the education of a student in one of our partner countries for one year.

In many Asia Pacific countries, poverty excludes individuals from reaching their full potential by being a barrier to opportunities, including accessing education.

Your donation of \$100 or more will make all the difference for a primary, secondary or tertiary student in one of our partner countries.

Think of the great opportunities that you or you Conference can make in bringing education into the reach of young people around the world.



Naw* is 22 years old and lives with her Aunt while attending West Yangon University in Myanmar.

She is studying Translation and Interpretation, as well as Burmese, Short Stories, Poetry and Drama, English and Communication Skills.

Naw knows that an education will help her "earn money and I, too, will support others".



Andre* is in 3rd grade and lives in Indonesia with his family.

He likes playing football and wants to become a policeman one day. He likes helping his parents and goes to Sunday School.

Andre says "thank you and God Bless all the people who have helped me."

Nur* is in Year 12 and studies at a Vocational High School in Bandung, Indonesia. She lives with her mother who has recently lost her job.

Nur says that the support "helps her mother to worry less about fees". Nur wants to be a Tour Director and travel around the world. She thanks all donors to the *Assist A Student* program who help young people to achieve their goals.



**all names have been changed*

- I am an individual assisting a student; OR
- I am assisting a student on behalf of a group

NAME (group or individual): _____

CONTACT NAME (for group): _____

TELEPHONE: _____

ADDRESS: _____

SUBURB: _____

STATE: _____ POSTCODE: _____

EMAIL: _____

I would like to donate (Donations over \$2 are tax deductible):

\$100 \$200 \$300 OR \$ _____

I would like to receive a certificate for this donation.

Thank you for your support.

Payment method:

- Debit my credit card (details below)

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- Mastercard Visa Card Expiry: __ / __

NAME ON CARD: _____

SIGNATURE: _____

- Cheque, payable to 'St Vincent de Paul Society'

Please complete your details and send to:
 Assist A Student Program,
 St Vincent de Paul Sate Council Office
 PO Box 5
 PETERSHAM, NSW 2049

Community Connections – Does this interest your Conference?

Is your Conference looking for ways to engage with your community, promote the Vinnies brand and let people know what your Conference is about?

We have various options available to Conferences, all with support from your Member and Community Engagement team. Consider the following:

Vinnies Market Stalls

If you have a local market that is regularly held, then a Vinnies stall may be just the thing needed to let your local community know about the various works of Vinnies.

Contact MetroMembers@vinnies.org.au and we can liaise with the Market Organisers to arrange a date for the Vinnies stall to be held. We can provide flyers, merchandise, tables, tablecloths and a Vinnies marquee. We will assist with setup and pack down on the day. All you need to do is ensure a few Members (at least 2 at all times) are available for the duration of the markets to talk to the community about the good works that our wonderful Members and Services provide.

Shopping Centre tables

One way for the community to get involved with Vinnies as well as learn about the works that Vinnies do, is through shopping centre tables. If your local Shopping Centre looks like a great location to host a Vinnies table for a day, please let your Member and Community Engagement Coordinator know. We will contact the Shopping Centre to request permission to setup a Vinnies table. On the day, we will provide tables, chairs, Vinnies tablecloth, merchandise and a list of groceries that the Community can donate to provide support to your local Vinnies Support Centres (VSC). As shoppers enter the Shopping Centre, they may like to take a slip of paper that contains a list of desired groceries for donation.

Shoppers can buy as little or as much as they like, and then leave their donated grocery item in a shopping trolley next to the Vinnies table. At the same time, they may like to have a look at some of the Vinnies flyers, utilise some of the merchandise, and

chat to a Vinnies Member. The Member and Community Engagement team will provide all materials to Members and liaise with the Shopping centre. All you need to provide is a few Members (at least 2 at all times) to be available for the duration of the day, and to drop off the donations to the closest VSC. Our team can be available on the day to assist if you prefer.

Vinnies Awareness Campaign at Parishes

Are you considering a recruitment/information weekend at your local parish? These can be held at any time of the year, but there are significant social justice days in the national and international calendar that can provide that extra opportunity to highlight the good works of the Society. Approaching social justice events include National Volunteer Week (Monday 15 – Sunday 21 May).

If you would like to consider having a recruitment/information campaign at your local Parish at any time during the year, you can receive support and planning help from your Member and Community Engagement team. Notices can be provided for inclusion in Parish bulletins in the lead up to the Vinnies weekend, and on the weekend itself, suggested speaking notes can be provided to a Vinnies Member to speak at the Masses, a Vinnies table can be setup with flyers, information packs and membership application forms.

Parishioners will have an opportunity to meet with Conference Members before and after Masses to ask questions and explore Vinnies as an opportunity for them to get involved.

School Fetes

Vinnies Marquee, flyers and merchandise can be available for your local school fetes – a wonderful way to let the parents and staff of your schools know about Vinnies. Please contact your Member and Community Engagement Coordinator.

Using the MAVS social justice updates

Take the opportunity to speak about Vinnies at Mass. Member speaking notes, bulletin summaries and ideas for action on key days for social justice are regularly added to MAVS and can be found at <https://mavs.vinnies.org.au/social-justice/>.





HAVE ANY OF YOUR DETAILS CHANGED RECENTLY?

It's vital we keep updated data on all of members, so if you have changed any of the following, please let us know:



Address



Phone number



Email address



Conference



Membership status



Changes to name

Reminder to Members

We are constantly updating our records in the Society People system. It is important that Vinnies has your most recent and current details, so that we can advise you of any Society news, changes, etc.

Have you changed any of the following recently?

- phone number and email address
- membership status and Conference
- address
- changes to first/last name

Have you left the Society and are still receiving information?

Please let us know by contacting your Member and Community Engagement Coordinator at:

MetroMembers@vinnies.org.au

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

MATTHEW TALBOT HOSTEL OZANAM LEARNING CENTRE

Calling all Members and Volunteers. The Matthew Talbot Hostel and Ozanam Learning Centre are seeking your support in their good works assisting the homeless and vulnerable people of Sydney.

The three types of roles available are:

Community Support Volunteer—Ozanam Learning Centre (weekdays 10am-4pm)

- Greeting and assisting all who visit the Centre
- Handling phone enquiries and providing administrative support

Dining Room Attendant—Matthew Talbot Hostel (weekends only)

- Capacity to lift e.g. chairs onto tables, trays of cutlery
- Helping to set, clear and clean tables

Kitchen Support Attendant—Matthew Talbot Hostel (weekends only)

- Assisting in preparing, serving and clearing tea service
- Assisting with vegetable preparations

If you are interested in lending a hand and would like to find out more, please contact the Volunteer Engagement Coordinator—Metro, Christopher Stevens at

Christopher.Stevens@vinnies.org.au

THANK YOU

MAVS Platform

Have you visited the Member and Volunteer Support website?

This site exists to share resources, news, contacts, and events with our members and volunteers. We want to provide members and volunteers with the tools, information and resources that will assist you in your service.

<https://mavs.vinnies.org.au/home/>

We really want to know what you like and want in the Member and Volunteer online resources platform. Sydney Central Council has its own page:

<https://mavs.vinnies.org.au/conferences/sydney-central-council/>

For requested updates, please email MetroMembers@vinnies.org.au

There are also lots of other updates happening on MAVS which you can check in on anytime here:

<https://mavs.vinnies.org.au/mavs-latest-updates/>