

# Group Profile: Conversations Conference

## TELL US ABOUT THE CONVERSATIONS CONFERENCE GROUP

Conversations Conference is a free service of St Vincent de Paul Society that aims to break down the language barriers in our community through conversations in a friendly environment.

We encourage non-English speaking immigrants or people of any religion, age, gender or race to participate and gain confidence in conversational English to integrate in the Australian community.

## WHAT DO YOU ENJOY THE MOST ABOUT CONVERSATIONS CONFERENCE?

We enjoy the nature of conversations as we discuss different topics each week and learn from each other.

Everyone is encouraged and supported to speak as much or as little as they feel comfortable. There is a distinct lack of judgement of peoples' stories, experiences or language ability, altogether it is a very positive, friendly and supportive environment.

## HOW DO THE ACTIONS OF THE GROUP SPEAK ABOUT THE LOVE OF JESUS?

Through the kindness and empathy shown to one another. The mentors are there to provide a supportive environment for participants to be able to build more confidence in speaking in a social environment. Also as a mentor we learn from our participants as they share their culture and experiences.

## DO YOU HAVE A FAVOURITE MEMORY OR EXPERIENCE IN THE GROUP?

There are many occasions but we particularly remember the 'Dragon Boat Festival' where one of the members brought a traditional food to share with everyone, moon cake for the special occasion.

## WHAT ARE YOU PASSIONATE ABOUT?

We are passionate about helping others to improve their communication skills and integrate in the Australian society.

Being involved in Conversations Conference is a great opportunity to help people improve their confidence in conversational English while being able to learn about their interesting backgrounds and experiences which helps in learning our view of the world.

## IF YOU COULD ASK JESUS TO CHANGE ONE ISSUE IN THE WORLD TODAY, WHICH WOULD IT BE?

We pray for the people in the world to shake off poverty and find comfort wherever they are, free from diseases and for the wars to stop and create harmony in the world so that everyone can live a peaceful life and enjoy pure bliss.

## BEING PART OF THE CONVERSATIONS CONFERENCE HAS MADE A DIFFERENCE IN OUR LIVES AND THE LIVES OF OTHERS BECAUSE...

Of the friendship and care that we offer, we are able to help non-English speaking people to integrate in the Australian society. We are able to break the language barrier in a small scale and we see the growing confidence of our participants each and every week. It's quite a satisfying experience.

## HOW CAN PARISHIONERS GET INVOLVED?

Conference meetings are held every Thursday from 6.30pm to 8pm. Due to Covid-19, all meetings are currently held online via Zoom.

If you know friends or family members who may benefit from meeting new friends, who are keen to learn conversational English or if you would like to participate as a mentor, please contact Christian by calling 9568 0288 or emailing [christian.salandanan@vinnies.org.au](mailto:christian.salandanan@vinnies.org.au)

