



Vinnies
good works

SOCIAL JUSTICE
NETWORK

Welcome to the Social Justice Newsletter for September 2020

Register NOW for our annual Rosalie Rendu Forum!

Over recent months, the strength and resilience of our communities has been tested. First floods, then drought and fires, and now a global pandemic. Each of these has exposed the flaws in the social and economic systems that should protect the most vulnerable among us.

Out of crisis however, comes opportunity.

At this year's **Rosalie Rendu Forum**, we are honoured that an impressive line-up of inspirational female leaders will join us to reflect on the theme: *Reimagining the future: Can we create more equitable communities post pandemic?*

Hosted by Australian journalist, radio and television presenter Geraldine Doogue, we will hear from Jody Broun, CEO of the Aboriginal Housing Office, Nicki Hutley, Partner, Deloitte, and Kirsty Robertson, CEO of Caritas Australia.

The event will be an opportunity to better understand how recent crises have exacerbated poverty and disadvantage, and to consider how we can work together to achieve an Australia that doesn't merely return to normal, but embodies the compassion and justice we strive to live out every day as Vincentians.

Rosalie Rendu Forum will look a little different this year, and will be held as a webinar on Thursday 15 October at 6pm. [Please click here to register.](#)



Can you help us collect petition signatures?

On 17 November the NSW Government will deliver the State Budget. With more than 100,000 people waiting for social housing and many more families struggling to make ends meet, it is the ideal time for NSW to invest in more social housing.

To convince the NSW Government to make this much-needed investment, St Vincent de Paul Society members and supporters have been collecting signatures on a hard copy petition that we hope to have tabled in NSW Parliament before the Budget.

So far, we have collected more than 7,250 signatures – a remarkable effort given the challenges posed by COVID-19. But for our petition to be eligible to be debated in Parliament it needs a minimum of 10,000 signatures.

This means we have just four weeks to collect another 2,750 signatures.

Can you help us by collecting as many signatures as you can from people at your workplace or household with whom you are already in contact?

If you could collect 30 signatures it would go a long way to helping us reach our target of 10,000. If you could collect 20 or 10 signatures that would also be of great support.

To help, [please click here to download the petition](#) or email social.justice@vinnies.org.au with your address if you'd like us to mail the petition to you.



Get on board with Vinnies Virtual Community Sleepouts

Following the success of the *Virtual Vinnies CEO Sleepout*, our *NSW Vinnies Community Sleepout* is also going virtual!

On Friday 23 of October, participants across NSW will come together in a state-wide effort to raise important funds and awareness for those in our local community who need it the most.

Registrations are now open and we urge all members, volunteers and supporters to [click on this link](#) to find your nearest location and join us!

By choosing to sleep out in your car, backyard or on your couch, vital funds can be raised while connecting you with some of the realities faced by those experiencing homelessness and disadvantage.



Raise the Rate

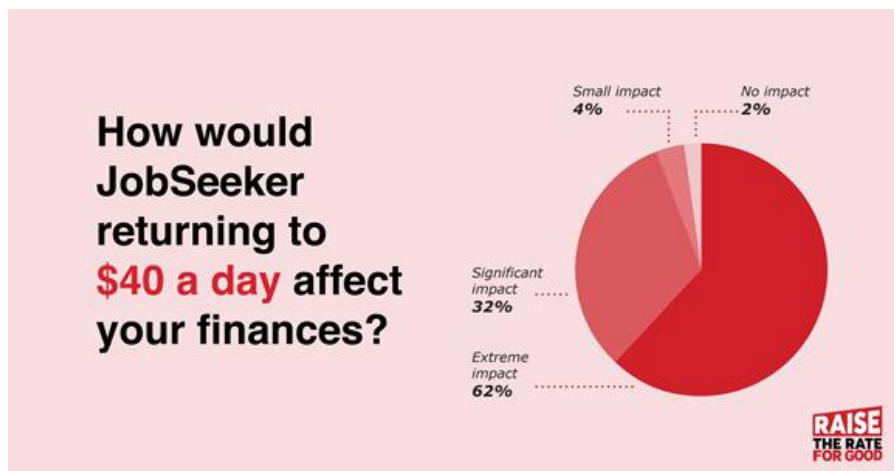
News that a permanent increase to the JobSeeker payment (formerly Newstart) [will not feature in the Federal Government's October 6 budget](#) is of deep concern to the growing number of people without work.

While the Minister for Social Services, Anne Ruston, has indicated that support will likely be extended into the New Year, people currently relying on JobSeeker face a bleak Christmas and will find it hard to make plans for the future in the meantime.

Over the last six months, people on JobSeeker have reported being able to buy healthier food, pay for much needed health and dental care, and pay their bills. As one person told us, the coronavirus supplement has meant she could 'live like a human being'. The prospect of returning

to live on only \$40 a day will fill many with dread. It is 'psychologically inconceivable' according to another person we've assisted, particularly given the current state of the labour market.

The St Vincent de Paul Society continues to call on the Federal Government to permanently increase the JobSeeker payment to a rate that allows people to cover the basics. This is needed more than ever before, with the number of people on JobSeeker having doubled to over 1.6 million people following the bushfires and the pandemic. If you would like to make sure your Federal MP understands the importance of adequate unemployment payments, and the number of people in their electorate who will sink below the poverty line without additional support, email social.justice@vinnies.org.au and we will share relevant information and statistics.



Events on Migrant and Refugee Sunday

Sunday 27 September is **Migrant and Refugee Sunday** when we come together to celebrate the contribution of migrants and refugees to our society.

This year, *Social Justice Around the Bay* and *Jesuit Refugee Service Australia* invites you to attend their webinar **Forced to Flee like Jesus**. Join Zaki Haidari, a community leader with lived experience; Phil Jones from Social Justice Around the Bay; and Nishadh Rego from the Jesuit Refugee Service, from 2pm to 3pm this Sunday to discuss what we can do today to support people who have been forced to flee like Jesus. [Click here to register](#).

Later that afternoon, at 5pm, join us online for **A Time for Grace** to explore how the pandemic affords us an opportunity to extend grace to the most vulnerable. An expert panel will consider what this looks like for public policy, our theology and our own actions. The Bishop of Parramatta, Most Reverend Vincent Long Van Nguyen OFM Conv will introduce the webinar. Australian Jesuit Priest, Human Rights Lawyer, and Academic Fr Frank Brennan SJ AO will also speak. [Click here to register](#).



Register for the Justice and Peace Office mental health gathering

The new Bishop's Social Justice Statement, *To Live Life to the Full: Mental Health in Australia Today*, was launched in parishes on Sunday 30th August 2020 – Social Justice Sunday.

Next week, on Wednesday 30 September at 6.30pm, the Justice and Peace Office of the Catholic Archdiocese of Sydney will hold a Social Justice Gathering on the Statement via zoom. The evening will include presentations by Dr. Robbie Lloyd, Research and Project Officer, who has extensive experience in mental health care. The Justice and Peace Office will also formulate a set of supportive fact sheets focused on how you can get actively involved at the local parish and school level in improving support for those living with mental health challenges and their carers.

[Please click here to register for the evening](#) and you will be sent a zoom link shortly before the event.



Upcoming dates and events

Rosalie Rendu Forum

6pm Thursday 15 October

[Register here](#)

World Mental Health Day

Saturday 10 October

[For more information](#)

Anti-Poverty Week

Sunday 11 - Saturday 17 October

[For more information](#)

Vinnies Community Sleepout

Friday 23 October

[Register here](#)

NAIDOC Week

8 - 15 November

[Click for information](#)

Do you know of a local social justice event or news item that you'd like everyone to know about?

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