



St Vincent de Paul Society

NSW

good works

VINCENTIAN WEEKLY NEWS WOLLONGONG CENTRAL COUNCIL

Second Edition: Monday 1st March 2021.

Hello Fellow Vincentians

On Thursday 18th February along with Peter Doris (Twining) and Tom Gersbach (Social Justice, the driver of the petition in WCC) I attended State Parliament House where the Vinnies Social Housing petition was presented. Firstly, let me thank you all for the great effort made in gathering signatures! It was an amazing Statewide effort and Wollongong played no small part in its success. However, as Jack de Groot pointed out this was a big step but the first step.

It is beholding on us all to keep pressure on our parliamentarians through conference writing and individual pressure. This is a long-term Vinnies campaign.

On behalf of the Wollongong Diocesan Central Council

Peter Houweling
President
Wollongong Central Council

We prayer for

We prayer for those who have recently died.

- Peter Lindwall
- Peter Quarmby
- Natalie Prentice
- Stephen Harding

REGIONAL SENIOR CARD HOLDERS.

1. NSW Government Regional Seniors Card

Eligible seniors who live in regional, rural and remote NSW can obtain a \$250 prepaid card to ease the cost of travel for use on NSW Train link Regional trains and coaches, fuel and taxis. More information can be found here:

<https://www.service.nsw.gov.au/regionalseniorstravel>

2. NSW Government is offering the following energy rebates:

- a. Family Energy Rebate
- b. Low Income Household Rebate
- c. Medical Energy Rebate
- d. Life Support Energy Rebate

Further information may be found here:

<https://www.service.nsw.gov.au/transaction/apply-family-energy-rebate-retail-customers>

REFLECTIONS



We are now entering lent, to prepare ourselves for Easter. Lent means, to prepare for a new season.

Over the last few weeks, I have been reflecting on the apology that Kevin Rudd gave in parliament on the 13th of February 2008. This was a steppingstone to develop a new way of building connections and bridges with the Aboriginal people, and to unite all Australians.

Kevin Rudd spoke about the hurt and pain caused to the Aboriginal people by the laws of previous parliaments that have been enacted. Shelly Rey AO spoke about the loss of language that has been taken away, and the stories that could not be told; they “mourn what they have lost”.

In so many ways, systems go wrong in providing care and inclusion to the Aboriginal people, and many minority people. When I stop and reflect on the different minority people, I am conscious that at Vinnies we advocate for the vulnerable in our communities. We are their voice, one of the greatest strengths and value we give to people we serve.

As I turned my eyes to Easter, it is a time for personal and church renewal. How do we move to a position of transparency, to the Aboriginal people, and broader communities? Kevin Rudd has laid down a new platform for renewal. How do we embed this into our future, our culture, and the church. The reading in Marks Gospel talks about a time to be tested that stands strong and powerful.

“Lent is a time of renewal for the whole Church, each community and every believer. Above all it is a ‘time of grace.’ God does not ask of us anything that he himself has not first given us. ‘We love because he first has loved us.’ He is not aloof from us. Each one of us has a place in his heart. He knows us by name, he cares for us and he seeks us out whenever we turn away from him. He is interested in each of us; his love does not allow him to be indifferent to what happens to us”. Pope Francis, National Catholic Reporter.

There is a lot of pain and suffering in our society, it is easy to place judgement or blame on individual people, but we know it is a much bigger story than that. It is about courage, and taking risk, and becoming transparent and accountable to our families, our communities and each other.

As we prepare for lent there are small things we can do. Our prayers, and our availability to be present to the people we meet. It may be about writing a pray to someone you know or someone you know who needs your prayers. To stop, and pause it is often the little things we do that creates the greatest healing for people.

A QUESTION TO PONDER

1. In what small way, can I find a space of renewal, for myself personally over the next week?

St. Francis Prayer

Lord, make me a channel
of thy peace
that where there is hatred,
I may bring love
that where there is wrong,
I may bring the spirit of
forgiveness
that where there is discord,
I may bring harmony
that where there is error,
I may bring truth
that where there is doubt,
I may bring faith
that where there is despair,
I may bring hope
that where there are shadows,
I may bring light
that where there is sadness,
I may bring joy.
Lord, grant that I may seek
rather to comfort
than to be comforted
to understand,
than to be understood
to love, than to be loved.
For it is by self-forgetting
that one finds.
It is by forgiving
that one is forgiven.
It is by dying that one
awakens to Eternal Life.
Amen.

I do hope you all have a wonderful week and look forward to meeting you over the coming weeks, and months ahead.

Kindest Regards

Peter

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