



MISSION IN PRACTICE MISSION STRATEGY

2024 - 2028



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MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Mission and Formation

"And no one pours new wine into old wineskins... No, they pour new wine into new wineskins." Mark 2.22

At the heart of the work of the Society is the contemporary expression of what Jesus revealed in the Gospels as a pastoral approach of **radical inclusion** of those marginalised and rejected, **accompaniment** in their journey and the **restoration** of lives.

These pillars encourage us as an organisation to answer that pastoral call of service, a love without measure. This is our new wine for new wine skins. But this means that we come together, each of us, as broken, vulnerable, listening and understanding another's perspective, deeply reflective and prayerful.

This Mission Strategy opens these conversations and outlines the key role and function of the Mission and Formation Directorate. The structure of the directorate is expressed in our traditions and heritage, our Vincentian spirituality, and faith in action through Catholic Social Teaching principles.

The purpose of the Mission Strategy is to deeply embrace the overall Strategy of the Society to Grow, Excel and Cultivate. It aims to provide an opportunity for our people to increase their knowledge and understanding of this mission-led organisation, excelling our best practice for the people we serve and cultivate a culture of compassion working always to shape a more just and empathetic society.



Leo Tucker Executive Director, Mission & Spirituality



MISSION & FORMATION STRATEGY

The Mission and Formation Directorate:

- Living out our mission: Support the Society in our mission by enabling all our people to appreciate, articulate and be accountable to a contemporary understanding of our mission and identity,
- Delivering on our mission: Contribute to the delivery of the Society's strategic plan by implementing initiatives that embed the Society's mission, vision and values in our everyday practice,
- Enhancing our mission: Commit to quality care and compassionate support by being attentive to the well-being of those supporting the people we assist, and increase our mission maturity by working with members, employees, volunteers and external stakeholders.

Mission and Formation Key Activities

Mission

- Embed the mission focus across the Society
- Engage in cross directorate collaboration
- Active in working groups and relevant networks
- Promote organisational identity
- Innovative apporaches to have shared ownership of the Society's mission



Formation

- Programs for staff and members
- Vincentian spirituality resources & engagement
- Commitment to pastoral care support
- Establish and implement key frameworks guiding mission integration



MISSION EXPLORATION

When looking at the mission and identity of the organisation, it's important to note that it does not exist in a vacuum. The mission for the Society has a strategic drive, a spiritual foundation and an ethical conscience. The Society's mission therefore in this sense, has its own identity.

This identity is made up of our mission, vision, values and principles that guide our work and direction. It looks to its foundational document in The Rule of the St Vincent de Paul Society and to the aspiration to contribute to a nation being transformed by justice. We have a strong commitment to inclusion, restoration and accompaniment to live out the Gospel message.

Our Mission

The St Vincent de Paul Society is a lay Catholic organisation that aspires to live the gospel message by serving Christ in the poor with love, respect, justice, hope and joy, and to bring about a more just and compassionate society

Our Vision

The Society aspires to be recognised as a caring Catholic charity offering "a hand up" to people in need. We do this by respecting every person's human dignity, sharing our hope, and encouraging them to take control of their own destiny.

Our Values

Our advocacy work and support services are guided by seven key values:

OUR VALUES



COMMITMENT
Loyalty in service to our
mission, vision and values.



COMPASSION

Welcoming and serving all with understanding and without judgement.



RESPECT

Service to all regardless of creed, ethnic or social background, health, gender or political opinions.



INTEGRITY

Promoting, maintaining and adhering to our mission, vision and values.



EMPATHY

Establishing relationships based on respect, trust, friendship and perception.



DVULVLA

Working to transform the causes of poverty and challenging the causes of human injustice.



COURAGE

Encouraging spiritual growth, welcoming innovation and giving hope for the future.

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Our Philosophy

Our organisational philosophy is the why behind what we do and how we do it. A philosophy is defined as "a theory or attitude that acts as a guiding principle for behaviour".

The philosophical culture of the St Vincent de Paul Society NSW is inspired by the founding story of the Society, the Catholic identity shaping its mission, and its adaptability being attentive and responsive to the most vulnerable in the community.

Our mission significantly highlights that we work to advocate for broader social justice issues and to cultivate hope by building capacity in individuals and communities. Aligned to this, as a faith-based organisation, the Society is foundationally underpinned by Catholic Social Teaching (CST) principles. Therefore, the Society has a clear Catholic heritage and a rich spirituality which is embraced by Vincentians worldwide, and equal to that a strong commitment to inclusion and social justice.

"Our challenge is to bring this ethos into the operations of the Society. Not only by identifying those who are most rejected by society, but to shape our attitude of care and assess how we provide our services and assistance to those impacted by the marginalisation facing our community today".



The Rule

The Rule of the St Vincent de Paul Society serves as a guide for Vincentians worldwide, helping them understand and uphold the principles and values of the Society. It provides a structured framework for the membership's operations and ensures that its activities are aligned with its core mission of helping those in need. It is a three-part document guiding Conferences and Councils and connecting to the international network.

1. Part one

The Origins of the Society, Vincentian Spirituality, Vincentian & Catholic networks, ecumenism and interfaith dialogue, and the work for Social Justice

2. Part two

Council General, the International Service Structure, Conference aggregation, and statutes

3. Part three

Australian Context and Procedural Guidelines

Catholic Social Teaching Principles (CST)

Catholic Social Teaching Principles are a set of moral and ethical guidelines embedded in Catholic contexts that promote social justice and human flourishing, by emphasising universal values which fundamentally align with our organisational values.

The principles that are *highlighted* are the most relevant to the Society.

- 1. Dignity of the Human Person
- 2. The Common Good
- 3. Subsidiarity
- 4. Solidarity
- 5. Preferential Option for the Poor and Vulnerable
- 6. Care for the Environment (our common home)
- 7. Participation
- 8. Rights and Responsibilities
- 9. Economic Justice
- 10. Promotion of Peace

Principle	Definition	The Rule reference	Currently in Practice
Human Dignity	Recognising the sacredness of life and that every person has inherent dignity and worth. Our human rights are founded on this shared dignity.	1.3, 1.8 7.2, 7.7	Vinnies Services – Conference Support – Social Justice – Diversity & Inclusion – Procurement practices
The Common Good	We have a responsibility for one another and are called to work for the common good of all. Advocating for a just society in which all people are able to flourish and meet their needs.	1.3 2.4 6.1 7.1, 7.7	Vinnies Services – Social Justice – Diversity & Inclusion – Retail – Sustainability practices – Procurement practices
Subsidiarity	Local solutions for local problems. People and communities are respected, and everyone should have the opportunity to contribute to decisions that closely affect them. Decisions to be made at the lowest local level possible	3.9, 3.10 7.4	Conference Support – Social Justice – Membership Structure – Diversity & Inclusion
Solidarity	Human beings are social by nature and depend on each other. We stand in unity with each other, particularly with those who are powerless. We recognise the rights of every individual.	2.4 4.1 6.1 7.4, 7.5, 7.9	Social Justice – Diversity & Inclusion – Retail – Youth Engagement
Preferential Option for the Poor and Vulnerable	The needs of those who are experiencing disadvantage and most vulnerable are prioritised. A basic moral test of how a society is faring is in its treatment of those in most need	1.5, 1.6, 1.8, 1.10 2.5 3.11, 3.12 7.5	Vinnies Services – Conference Support – Social Justice – Retail
Care for the Environment (our common home)	Stewardship of creation is recognising that all of creation is interconnected, and we are part of and dependent on the environment	1.3, 1.6 4.1 7.3, 7.4	Procurement Practices – Sustainability Practices – Diversity & Inclusion – Retail – Social Justice – Youth Engagement

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Living the Gospel Message

Living out our mission embraces the Society's call to 'live the Gospel message', which, put simply, is the attitude of care embracing the three pillars of service: of radical inclusion, accompaniment, and restoration.

Radical inclusion

- Radical inclusion is a mindset and practice that goes beyond tolerance or acceptance. It is about embracing and celebrating the inherent worth and diversity of every individual, regardless of their race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, socio-economic background, or any other aspect of their identity.
- It requires actively creating spaces where everyone feels welcomed, safe, respected, and valued, and where their voices are heard, and their experiences validated. Radical inclusivity challenges societal norms and systems that perpetuate discrimination and exclusion, aiming to dismantle barriers and ensure equal opportunities for all.
- It is a commitment to breaking down divisions, fostering empathy, and building a more just and equitable world where everyone has a sense of belonging and can authentically thrive in society.

Accompaniment

- Is a compassionate, empathic and supportive approach that involves walking alongside individuals and communities in their struggles and journeys. It goes beyond providing assistance or charity and builds genuine connection based on mutual trust and respect.
- Accompaniment provides a space for listening, understanding, and validating the experiences and

- perspectives of those who have been marginalised or oppressed. It involves advocating for their rights, amplifying their voices, and working collaboratively to address systemic injustices.
- This approach recognises the dignity of life, honouring autonomy, and respecting that they are experts of their own lives. Accompaniment fosters empowerment, solidarity, and transformation, striving for meaningful and sustainable change that addresses the root causes of disadvantage.

Restoration

- Restoration for those experiencing isolation and disempowerment involves a holistic process that aims to heal, uplift, and empower individuals and communities. It goes beyond addressing immediate needs and focuses on restoring dignity, quality of life, and self-sufficiency.
- Restoration involves providing access to essential resources such as education, healthcare, and housing, as well as offering opportunities for skill development and economic empowerment. It also fosters social inclusion, promoting mental and emotional well-being, and addressing barriers that perpetuate poverty and disadvantage.
- Restoration allows for the inherent resilience of individuals, seeking to create a supportive environment that enables them to thrive and participate fully in society. It is a process of addressing the underlying causes of poverty, challenging stigmatisation, and working towards a world where everyone can experience a sense of wholeness.



MISSION AND FORMATION OUTCOMES

Alignment to the Strategic Plan

This Mission Strategy "Mission in Practice" for 2024-2028 supports the organisational strategic plan "Strengthen Communities Transforming Lives" by giving a direction to the Mission & Formation Directorate to enhance the three success drivers:





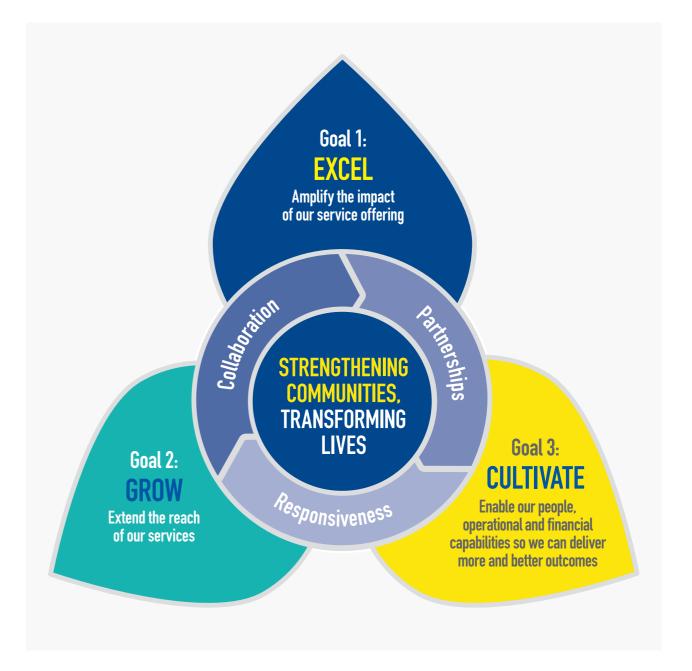
Partnerships



Responsiveness

By directing the Mission and Formation outcomes to enhance these success drivers, we will be supporting Society towards achieving our strategic goals.

The Mission Strategy will drive a yearly action plan aligning key initiatives linked to the directorate's OKRs to the three strategic goals of Excel, Grow, and Cultivate.



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Success Driver	Strategic Markers	Mission Outcomes
1. Collaboration	 Successes will be driven by collaboration. Members, volunteers and employees work together more effectively Led by our mission and values Increase collaboration between our services, advocacy and enabling functions to increase our impact in communities 	 a. Key activities for Mission and Formation partners include cross directorate collaborations and being active in organisational working groups. b. There is an increase in mission led culture and mission literacy in the Society
2. Partnerships	 Partnerships will be key to our successes Partner with the people we assist, to co-design services and evaluate service provision. Work with other organisations to provide integrated services. Partnerships with both state and federal government agencies, and corporate partners to support the best community outcomes Visible in communities throughout NSW Working with local organisations Engaging with local First Nations communities and conducting local advocacy. 	 a. The Society's mission is externally and internally promoted in various ways. b. There is an increase in external stakeholders engaged in mission-based activities. c. Mission resources are available in multiple platforms for members, staff and volunteers as well as various stakeholders. d. There is an increase in inter-agency networks within mission activities
3. Responsiveness	 A strong aspiration for the Society to continue to adapt to the changing world, and to increase our capacity to understand and respond to the needs of the most disadvantaged. Increase our research and evaluation capability to ensure our services are contemporary, leading practice and informed by evidence. Service design and implementation will be underpinned by data and evidence. Ongoing community needs analysis, increase our analytics Capability and monitor and evaluate the impact and responsiveness of our services. 	 a. There has been a continuous improvement mechanism introduced to the mission directorate b. Directly support change management approaches of the organisation and increase the receptivity of best practices c. Formation of members to increase fidelity to The Rule, values and code of conduct d. Tracked engagement of mission activities e. Deliver a wraparound framework for worker wellbeing and psychological safety

Living Our Mission

The St Vincent de Paul Society's heritage shapes and inspires a living and contemporary tradition. It is a heritage of which we are proud – it is faith in action to address poverty and inequality.

We are inspired by the basic tenets of our mission and vision: to work 'to shape a more just and compassionate society' and to offer a 'hand up' to people experiencing disadvantage. We respect the dignity of the people we assist and encourage them to take control of their own destiny.

We are spiritual and connected. Our spirituality is guided by the ministry of Jesus – radical inclusivity, restoration and accompaniment. We aspire to live values of commitment, compassion, respect, empathy, advocacy and courage each day. We are committed to those people who live on the margins of our community and are guided by Catholic social principles of dignity of the human person and solidarity. All of our people contribute to the common purpose of serving the most disadvantaged in our community, providing a 'hand up' and helping them to rebuild their lives.

MISSION DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORKS

Our competency markers for a mission led organisation is held in the strength of two important development frameworks within organisational leadership.

- The Vincentian Mission Framework
- The Mission Integration Framework

"Daring leadership is ultimately about serving other people, not ourselves."

- Brene Brown

Vincentian Mission Framework for Trustees, Board of Directors, and Executives

This is an essential guideline for the behaviours, values and expectations of those within the highest leadership of the organisation; this includes, the State Council (Trustees), the Board, and the Executive Leadership Team.

Domain	Description		
Personal Commitment DISPOSITION	 You value and are committed to a personal spirituality You demonstrate a strong sense of purpose in the restoration and dignity of the human person You demonstrate integrity, humility, and self-awareness You evidence strong understanding of servant leadership You model reflective practice within your leadership You commit to contemporary understanding of the Society's mission and vision You enable visionary leadership responding to the needs of those we serve 		
Governance and Stewardship RELATIONSHIPS	 You understand how the Society is described in accordance with canon law You approach planning, decision making and service delivery utilising the key principles of human dignity, solidarity, and social justice You foster mutual relationships with the local leadership of the Catholic Church You demonstrate a commitment to collaboration with a range of stakeholders with other faithbased organisations and Catholic agencies. 		
Catholic Heritage and Moral Theology KNOWLEDGE	 You understand the Society's relationship with the Catholic Church You are familiar with the structures and key relationships within the Catholic Church You use Catholic Social Teaching as key principles in decision making You understand the importance of the founding story of the Society and respect its legacy You are familiar with The Rule and Vincentian Spirituality 		
Authentic Integration ACTION	 You integrate core elements of catholic moral theology with strategic, financial and corporate obligations You sustain and influence the cultural development of the Society to uphold the mission, vision and values You actively support and encourage the development of future leaders within the Society You commit to strategic and critical thinking in decision making and reviewing service direction to always maintain the mission of the Society You actively promote and develop inclusion and diversity in all areas of influence within the Society You are committed to the ethical, financial and environmental sustainability of the Society 		

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The Mission Integration Framework

This is a self-scoring framework for people leaders, (Managers, Directors, Executive leadership etc) within the organisation allowing for development within mission focused leadership. People leaders receive this framework as part of the Mission Masterclass.

Level	Leadership and Integration	Evidence of knowledge and/or experience in the Mission, Vision, Values and principles of the Society	Self-Score
Knowledge and understanding of the core values, Society structure and founding st.		 Examples Exposure to services and programs within each directorate of the Society. Understanding of the Vincentian values as core to the works of the Society. Knowledge of the Society's strategic plan to deliver on our mission. Knowledge of The Rule of the Society. 	Level 1
2. Developing	Experience with the application of how the mission, vision and Values apply to service delivery.	 Examples Can reflect how decisions are made within your directorate with consideration of the mission of the Society. Site visits to services/programs in other directorates Provided volunteer hours to the Society. Engaged with Membership and/or other Vincentian activities. Attend Society Social Justice event(s) 	Level 2
3. Embedding	Responsibility for the application of the mission and social principles of the Society within your team.	 Examples Attend formation in the Society's mission &/ social principles. Commitment to volunteering within the Society. Subscribed to the Society's Social Justice Newsletter. Partnering with various directorates for values-led outcomes within your team Consistent engagement with Membership locally and regionally. Have PPG goals reflecting the mission, vision, values and principles of the Society. 	Level 3
4. Advanced	Play a lead role developing the mission within your directorate	 Examples Guide leaders and team members within your directorate in mission literacy, formation and professional development options. Deliver papers/ presentations reflecting values-led activities and/ Social Justice priorities within your directorate. Business cases reflect the advancement and/benefit of the Society's mission to the desired outcomes. 	
5. Strategic	Contribution to the mission, vision, values and principles at an organisational level.	 Examples Significant contribution to mission-led strategic consultations ELT/Directors integrating the Society's mission in decision making. Promote formation opportunities across the organisation as a key competency expectation for people leaders. Actively contribute to/sponsor working groups (e.eg RAP, DIAP, Modern Slavery). 	Level 5

CONTEMPORARY PASTORAL CARE APPROACH

Part of the value-add we have as an organisation, is that we take seriously being a compassionate organisation. One that looks holistically at the needs of all our people. Our point of difference here is that we uphold a commitment to Pastoral Care.

The word charity comes from the Greek word Charis or the Latin Caritas. Charis meaning grace and kindness and Caritas meaning love and compassion. When reading this well-known quote from The Rule in this light, we can see the importance of a Pastoral Care approach.

"No work of charity is foreign to the Society. It includes any form of help that alleviates suffering or deprivation and promotes human dignity and personal integrity in all their dimensions"

The Rule 1.3

Elements of Pastoral Care			
To be a sign of hope, to bring comfort, to transform	To cultivate courage and trust	To be with and for others; to enter their story and accompany them	To suspend any judgement and to uphold their dignity

As a mission-led and faith-based organisation we extend the pastoral care approach in the following ways:

- Members well-being and spirituality
- Worker well-being and psychological safety
- Client pastoral support (integrated wraparound approach)

Member's Well-being and Spirituality

The pastoral approach for Vincentian members involves providing empathetic and compassionate support to members who may be facing personal, emotional, or spiritual challenges within the context of their service to the Society. It emphasises a holistic and caring response to the well-being of Vincentian members, recognising that their commitment to helping others may also lead to their own difficulties or emotional burdens. This may also involve connecting

members with appropriate resources or counselling, (within and outside the Society) to address their specific needs. Pastoral Care to our members is offered to foster a sense of community, support, and care among Vincentians, encouraging their own emotional and spiritual well-being as they continue their mission of service to those in need.

This reflects the strategic goal of CULTIVATE and COLLABORATION for mission formation.

Worker Well-being and Psychological Safety

The provision of compassionate and holistic support to employees in their professional and personal lives to help workers navigate challenges, achieve work-life balance, and cultivate a sense of purpose and fulfilment in their roles. Pastoral Care facilitates opportunities for reflection, self-care, and personal growth. This approach assists the integration of values and ethics into the workplace, emphasising the principles of human dignity and compassion. It encourages workers to align their personal values with the organisation's

mission and values, fostering a sense of belonging, ethical decision-making, and a shared commitment to the common good. This approach recognises that worker well-being is not solely limited to physical and material aspects but also encompasses the spiritual and moral dimensions of human experience.

This reflects the strategic goal of CULTIVATE and our RESPONSIVENESS to building capacity.

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Client Pastoral Support

The Pastoral support we can offer to the people we assist is one that is integrated with the service they are receiving from the Society. Within Vinnies Services, Pastoral Care can support those we serve when responding to a particular incident or when they are seeking a spiritual dimension within their recovery and restorative journey. This could be linking them with the appropriate chaplaincy support reflective of their faith tradition, providing opportunities for spiritual expression or compassionate listening. It will be following the principle of person centred practice and responding to the needs of the person the Society is supporting.

This approach reflects the strategic goal of EXCEL and the RESPONSIVE approach to holistic care. The Rule outlines the importance of this pastoral approach for the people we assist:

"Vincentians are sincerely concerned with the deeper needs and the spiritual well-being of those they help, always observing a profound respect for their conscience and the faith they believe in..." The Rule 1.11

Therefore, we open this pastoral approach as core work of members of the Society for the people we serve. With the support, training and supervision from the Mission and Formation team

"Knowledge of the poor and needy is not gained by poring over books or in discussions with politicians, but by visiting the slums where they live, sitting by the bedside of the dying, feeling the cold they feel and learning from their lips the causes of their woes" – Frederic Ozanam

Vincentian Spirituality Resources

These are the resources developed and led by the Mission and Formation directorate to support our members in the Vincentian Spirituality and to sustain the rich heritage and charism of the Society.

The Well	 Weekly online meetings Vincentian connections to Christian Scripture 	
Sacred Space - Online	 Members in Memoriam Prayers for the sick and virtual prayer candle 	
Spiritual Reflection Guide	Quarterly publicationReflecting on the Sunday Gospel Readings	
Vincentian Spiritual Reflection Podcast	 Audio version of the Spiritual Reflection Guide Targeting youth members and having an accessible format of reflections 	
Organisational Reflections	 Leadership/Board/State Council meetings Local conference & Central Council meetings. As well as workplace/MAVS posts 	
Publications	 Reflections for broader social issues (e.g. Uluru Statement) Member & Staff newsletter input 	
Retreats and Commissioning	 Regional/Central/State Council retreats/reflection days Liturgical support for commissioning services 	
Memorial Services	 Services in memory of residents or staff Memorial events e.g. Interment of Ashes, Homelessness memorial etc. 	
Facilitating Faith in Action	 Members' Vincentian Formation Course Spiritual Advisers, leadership/office bearers and emerging leaders. 	
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CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the Mission Strategy for 2024-2028 for the Society represents our unwavering commitment to ensuring there is a marked improvement in mission literacy and maturity within the organisation which supports our people making a positive impact in our communities.

With a focus on compassion, collaboration and innovation, we are dedicated to enhancing our values across the broad network of the Society. As we embark on this mission, we are inspired by our rich tradition, heritage and spirituality and the tireless dedication of our members, volunteers, and staff. Together, we will continue to work towards a more just, caring, and inclusive society, where every person's dignity is recognised and honoured.

We look forward to contributing to the organisation's strategic plan for progress, growth, and profound social change as we extend our hand to those seeking assistance and transform lives through our collective efforts. "In my life I want to become better, and do a little good"

Blessed Frederic Ozanam Founder,
 St Vincent de Paul Society



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