



St Vincent de Paul Society
good works

Sydney Archdiocese NEWSLETTER

Sydney Archdiocese Central Council

St Vincent de Paul Society NSW

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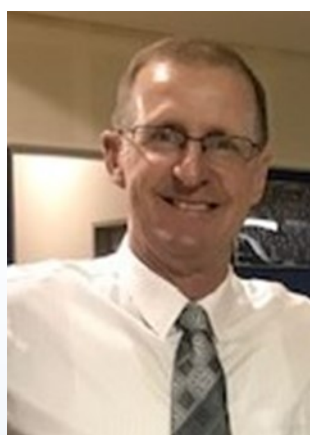
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AUGUST 2020

Central Council President's Message



Dear Brothers and Sisters,

I hope and pray that you and your loved ones are well.

I wish I was writing at a time when the world was in a better condition, but the reality is that there is much pain and suffering in the community around us and the likelihood is that this will only increase in the weeks, months and possibly years ahead.

Saint Teresa of Calcutta said, "We can do no great things, only small things with great love". Well it is my great honour to be President of the largest Central Council in the country and to have the opportunity to witness so many doing so much for all who call upon us in their hour of need. From keeping the lights on or the heater on in the Winter, to ensuring that there is food on the table, all the way up to helping avoid eviction, to much, much more.

Our Founder, Blessed Frederic said that there is no aid foreign to the St Vincent de Paul Society and of course by using our faith to give hope and love, we assure those doing it tough that they are not alone.

While I certainly don't have all the answers in these uncertain times, I urge you all to continue to deepen your Faith by involving yourselves in all that the St Vincent de Paul Society has to offer and lead by example.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all Members, volunteers and staff for their ongoing efforts in addressing the pain, suffering and injustice in which many find themselves facing in these unprecedented times.

God Bless.

Regards,
Tony Cranney
Sydney Archdiocese Central Council President

Regional Director's Message

Our staff and Members continue to support those vulnerable in our community seeking assistance through the new methods of delivery of service as a response to the Covid-19 Pandemic.

During this time, Sydney Vinnies Van Services have been suspended however we have been able to continue to ensure that those seeking assistance have access to their daily meals and essentials from central pick up locations across Sydney, largely through the generosity of our membership and school communities.

Assistance has been inspiring as we have not had to purchase any extra supplies for the 1600 snack packs we hand out each week as they have all been donated by Sydney Catholic schools across Sydney Archdiocese.

Vinnies Service Centres continue to remain open, with only 4 centres closed currently due to being located in hotspot areas. These Centres will reopen after we have received advice that it is safe to do so.

There is a need more than ever for us all to remain connected and to assist with this we have updated COVID-19 advice on the MAVS site at <https://mavs.vinnies.org.au> to ensure Members are kept up-to-date on current services and our new ways of delivering assistance.

Regards,
Gayl Purchase
Regional Director - Metropolitan





SOCIAL JUSTICE

BUILD homes
build **HOPE**

What's On !

SOCIAL JUSTICE WEDNESDAY WEBINAR

Vinnies NSW now runs monthly Webinars from 12-1pm (with replays to view any time, to be confirmed). Drawing on the perspectives of people with lived experience, frontline workers and experts, the webinars are a chance to deepen understandings of contemporary issues in our communities, shape our response, and become part of our network for change. Themes include: Advocacy: Speaking out against injustice; The Uluru Statement: Time to be heard; Drug Law Reform; People seeking asylum: Protection and the pandemic; Build Homes, Build Hope campaign; Raise the Rate: Towards a stronger social security system.

Updated schedules of Webinar dates and topics along with registration details, will be forwarded to Social Justice Reps.

Sydney Central Council Social Justice Network Kick-Off

On Wednesday, 5 August, our inaugural meeting was held via Zoom, the beginning of our Social Justice Network for the Sydney Archdiocese Central Council.

It was great to hear about what made them get involved in Vinnies and why they were passionate about Social Justice. There were strong and similar themes around addressing inequality in our society, ending homelessness, justice for our refugees and asylum seekers, and helping people out of poverty.

The Social Justice Network is made up of Regional Council Social Justice Reps and people interested in participating, along with our two Central Council Social Justice Reps, Mary Yaager and Michael Murrie.

It was great to have Tony Cranney, Central Council President, who quoted from Frederic Ozanam, *"You must not be content with tiding the poor over the poverty crisis: You must study their condition and the injustices which brought about such poverty, with the aim of a long term improvement."* We were also privileged to have Jack De Groot, CEO of Vinnies NSW, who commented that Social Justice is in the DNA of Vinnies.

We're very excited to launch this Social Justice Network. Look out for more news from your Social Justice Reps to Conference Presidents at Regional Council meetings.

We are looking forward to receiving the feedback from them in what they need going forward to assist them in their new roles.

Michael and Mary are looking forward to working with these Social Justice advocates and as a network team now, we hope to achieve good outcomes together for the most vulnerable and needy in our society.

What does a Social Justice Rep do?

- Keep informed about local and state-wide Social Justice issues
- Take action to overcome social injustices
- May choose to take part in local Social Justice events representing Vinnies
- Encourage fellow Members of the Society to take advocacy action too.

The Social Justice team at State Support Office prepares and provides briefing papers, letter templates and other resources to support Reps to take action on all state-wide campaigns.

The Metro Membership team will assist with advocacy actions and provide details for advocacy support along with suggestions and materials for any upcoming events that can be distributed to Conferences.

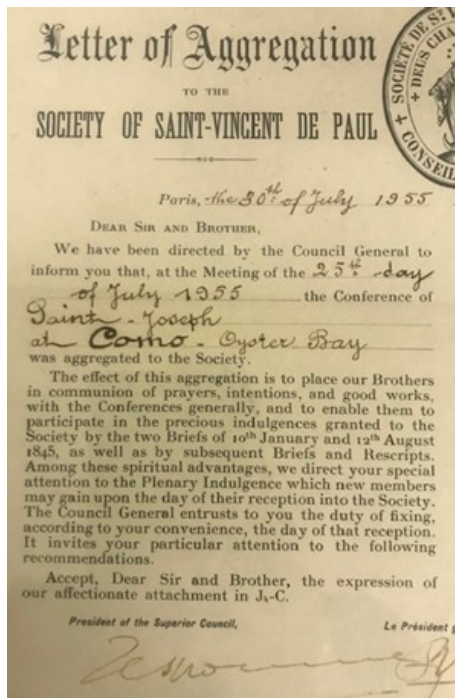
You may wish to join the [Vinnies Social Justice Advocacy Network](https://mavs.vinnies.org.au/social-justice) or check out <https://mavs.vinnies.org.au/social-justice>

We are all in this together !





CONFERENCE



65th Anniversary of Aggregation of St Joseph's Oyster Bay Conference

It is a time to reflect with pride (and modesty) the current and past efforts of dedicated Members who made a decision to put into action their Christian faith by serving our dear companions who have fallen on tough times.

Interestingly, it was 18 months prior to the actual Aggregation when the first Conference meeting was held on 12 January, 1954 in the old Church Hall, located where the current St Joseph's Church now stands. That first meeting was chaired by the inaugural President, Frank Diskon with 16 people in attendance, including the Parish Priest of Sutherland, Father Patrick McManus.

Today that tradition lives on as we offer all we do to the Lord while remembering all Members who have gone before us. Dedicated Members exercise their faith by offering hope while freely giving their love to all those who call upon us.



Ted Bacon AQ, CBE. Pro Ecc. et Pontifice

Ted Bacon was one of the outstanding Vincentians of the 20th Century. As the President of Sutherland Conference from 1947 and later President of Sutherland Regional Council, he was largely responsible for the establishment of conferences (branches) in most suburbs of the Shire as they developed and the supporting Special Works that care for the homeless, aged and disabled. He was an inspiring example to all conferences.

In addition to his local activities he became both Secretary and President of the National Council of the Society and was involved in adoptions and foster homes, literature distribution, hospital visitation and for many years was editor of the Society journal, the "Record".

Ted is best known for his work for refugees. While National President, he met the first of the boat people in Darwin and recognized them as the poorest of the poor but without the charitable support of people who should have cared. With the help of his wife Eileen he fought their battles for justice against the odds, devoting the last twenty years of his life to their needs.

As a Vincentian, Ted Bacon was a man without guile.

John Morahan

Author: John Morahan, Sutherland Member and former National President

Enriched by Tradition in Sutherland

A GOOD NEWS STORY



Arthur Doumit - President Liberty Plains Regional Council

DONATION OFF TO LEBANON

Through the generosity of the Royal Agricultural Society, St Vincent de Paul Society, Liberty Plains Regional Council received 2000 items of R. M. William clothing. This goes as a donation to Beirut, Lebanon and will be received by those in need in Lebanon through non government representatives.

Vinnies
changes
lives
everyday.



GOOD WORK CONTINUES.....

BEFORE



Lane Cove Conference Member's Good Works

A Member collected 2 items of furniture from a kerbside clean up and used the COVID-19 lockdown to restore them. Both items are now in the home of a newly housed mum and baby.

AFTER



Message of Appreciation to Twinning Officer Barbara Schofield

Barbara Schofield who has meticulously managed the responsibilities of Twinning Officer for Oyster Bay Conference for over 20 years, has recently decided to step aside from the position and hand over to fellow Conference Member, Karin Marshall.



Barbara joined the Society as a trainee Conference Member on 28 July, 1992 as the first female Member of Oyster Bay Conference which was founded in 1954. As Twinning Officer, she has been responsible for all regular communication between Oyster Bay Conference and St Thomas' Conference in Mundankal, Kerala, South India. Then in 2011, Barbara also took on the responsibilities of a second Twin when the Conference adopted St Teresa's Conference in Kerala.

Barbara, please accept our sincere thanks and appreciation from your fellow Vincentians for an outstanding effort- you have been a fantastic Twinning Officer. Our best wishes for the future, as you continue in your role of being an active Member of Oyster Bay Conference.

Terry O'Hara

Conference Vice President (Oyster Bay Conference)

RECONCILIATION WEEK

As at May, it was 20 years since 250,000 Australians walked across the Sydney Harbour Bridge and bridges in other cities around the country, to 'bridge the gap' between Indigenous Australians and non-Indigenous Australians.

Dr Peters, who is a proud Wurundjeri and Yorta Yorta man, said it's an important event all Aussies should know about.

"We're all on Aboriginal land, and it all contains story and history that we can all connect to. This isn't a culture that was imported – it's been a part of this land from the beginning," he explained. "It belongs to the land we now call Australia, so all of

us are connected to it today....It's important to know that the next chapter of Australia's history can only happen if we understand the truth of our past and while many of these truths are hard to accept, many are stories of resilience, triumph and Indigenous excellence."

"Reconciliation Week is a great time for Australians to start, continue, or strengthen their own journey of learning that the world's oldest living culture is right here, and a part of us all. I think if all Australians look at the land as something to work with, and not on, these connections can start for anyone."



COMMUNITY SUPPORT

COVID Response in Rozelle



When the pandemic hit, many people in our community become unemployed, others were scared, lonely and remained inside. A group of locals formed 'Peninsula Caring' as a way to harness the generosity of individuals and organisations to support the likes of Vinnies Rozelle. This resulted in daily support of specified food donations from the community and combined with another partnership with the wonderful Harris Farm Markets that donated fresh fruit and vegetables daily, these donations

continue - no one reaching out to us for support is left out.

Members, volunteers and staff worked tirelessly packing the food which included recipes from our Members for meals that could be made from the products being provided. Members continue packing fruit and vegetable trays as well as staple food hampers daily.

Warm and Woolly Wellness Packs



Thanks to the initiative of Lauren Leahy of the Northern Suburbs Centre, Vinnies' Warm and Woolly Wellness Packs were created. It started with a generous donation from Our Big Kitchen at Bondi arranged through Katrina Ortolan (Vinnies NSW Community Fundraising, Events Manager). Further donations were sourced by Lauren and a collaboration with Donna Boyd of the Rozelle Centre grew the initiative, with Members from each Conference helping to create about 400 packs.

These packs were designed solely to lift the spirit of each recipient with items to warm the heart and a few tasty treats. The Vincentian Mission is being fulfilled with many within the community benefiting greatly from the knowledge that the great and varied work of the Society continues even at the most difficult of times.



COMMUNITY SUPPORT

Redfern Community Support Centre says "Thank you!"

Frances Vella, the Head of Mission and the school community of St Scholastica's College in Glebe, have been most generous with wonderful food donations delivered to the Redfern Centre. The photo is the latest in a few awesome deliveries they have made to us as a part of a food drive at the school. May God bless and replenish all those who cheerfully gave to support the people we assist!



Guardian Angels Exist

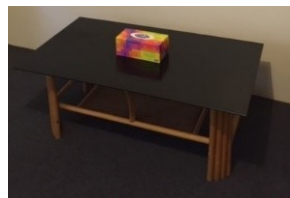


This Good News story was shared by Sacha Chetwynd, Administrative Assistant at Burwood Community Centre.

On 3 April *Anna was pulled unconscious from her burning Strathfield unit. She required surgery and skin grafts to treat her burns. *Anna lost every possession that destroyed her humble Community Housing home.



As she recovered in hospital, the Burwood Office received notification of the incident and a request to furnish a new unit that had been made available following her hospital stay. Due to reduced services during COVID-19, the ability to provide some basic furnishings was compromised. I received a phone call from a local lady, *Tracy, who was planning to move interstate and since we were unable to accept or collect large donations of furniture, she asked me for ideas on how she could give her furniture to a person in need and even offered to deliver herself. At that same time, Bridge Housing asked how quickly we could get furnishings for *Anna as a new home had been found, but was due to be discharged from hospital.



In total, *Tracy gave *Anna a lounge, fridge, microwave, TV, jug, toaster, washing machine, table, linen and kitchen utensils. Delivery was arranged within 2 days. The Burwood Centre helped with additional food and other items.



What a terrific result and an amazing story of hope demonstrated in the face of a pandemic - there are beautiful souls so willing to reach out to strangers.

Support of International Students

A Leichhardt Conference Member was alerted to a group 24 international students who had each lost their job during COVID-19. The Rozelle Centre provided food parcels, fresh fruit & vegetables, Woolworths' cards and credit for pre-paid mobiles, plus information of where further supports may be available. Following is a thank you from the referring member to Gerry O'Brien (Regional Council President) and Centre staff:

"I wish to again thank Rozelle Vinnies for assistance given to the international students... Words of gratitude still echo in the Filipino community. Vinnies is a byword in Filipino communities, in Sydney and Manila. Right at the onset of COVID-19, displaced international students who couldn't return home looked to Vinnies. Although sheltered across Sydney, those in urgent need got their basic supplies at Rozelle. Even to all others who didn't have to ask help anymore, Vinnies is no longer a spoken byword, but now comes with a shout of gratitude."





COMMUNITY SUPPORT

Temporary Food Bank Blessing

The Food Bank at the Sutherland Centre helped a couple who found themselves nearly out of food. They live on the 3rd floor of a block of units at Jannali with no family in Australia - the husband had a stroke last year and his wife is not very mobile either. They have no car, walking to the shops had become difficult and in isolation they had limited options, but for one- Vinnies.

One Member stepped in on the day she heard and together with another Member, collected and delivered items from the Food Bank. They later returned after a trip to the shops with milk, eggs, bread and meat. They were so very, very grateful and were also invited to phone for assistance when needed. They now receive fortnightly phone calls to see how they are and if anything they may need.

Community Spirit

Again, the faith in Vinnies that we offer a hand up to the most vulnerable in each community, was in evidence when a lady made a delivery to the Sutherland Centre.

During and since lockdown, she got busy knitting many pairs of booties and beanies for mums who she knew that Vinnies would be helping.



IGA Partnership



IGA supplied and delivered eskies of goods and \$500.00 vouchers to family clients in need, identified and accompanied by Rozelle Support Centre Coordinator, Donna Boyd.

The photo shows one such grateful and relieved mum and daughter (who has Cystic Fibrosis) along with representatives from IGA.

Schools Support St George Region



St Mary's Star of the Sea Primary School, Hurstville, continued to gather and deliver generous donations of toiletries and cleaning products to suit the Region's needs and assist in the local COVID response by the Vinnies' Centre at Hurstville.

The note, written by a Year 1 boy, was in amongst one delivery "Dear Vinnies, Keep safe and may God bless you, love Riley"

Mummies Paying It Forward

This volunteer-run service for expectant mothers, supplied baby products and supplies for a Redfern client with no family support and who had lost her job due to COVID-19. Mummies Paying It Forward is a free service that takes referrals from community agencies such as our Redfern Community Centre.



Happy National Volunteer Week

To our wonderful Members and volunteers, "Nothing beats harder than the heart of a volunteer". ❤️



SHOPS/RETAIL

Newly Reopened Lane Cove Store

On 7 August, Theresa Hughes (Store Manager), her team and Tanya Vella (Area Manager North) opened the doors to the community, having worked hard to reopen the store with a focus on best-selling categories and maximising and reinventing the space, giving it a fresh new look.

Our first three days of trade brought in \$2538 (Friday), \$3008 (Saturday), \$1738 (Sunday)- such a fantastic result and 20% up on last year's figures which is sensational.

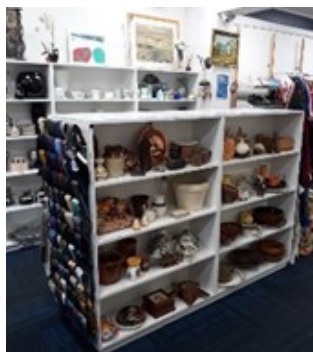
During the internal facelift, Lane Cove Council

concluded works in the rear lane way which now affords much needed improved access for customer donations and pick-ups.

We are excited about the ongoing potential of the store. Theresa has been with Vinnies for more than 25 years and has a wealth of experience managing stores and driving her team to get the most out of our donations hence supporting her community. The 8 volunteers and staff who have all returned after the closure, are super excited about what's ahead.



Staff team members Theresa and Jenny



Crows Nest's Best



Vinnies Crows Nest has been lucky to have worked with some incredible volunteers in its time.

In October of last year, Mitsu joined the Crows Nest team in a volunteer role with the hope of improving her English and assisting the local community to raise much needed funds for support services.

The first couple of weeks were difficult for Mitsu to understand all there is to know about working in a Vinnies Shop. She found it challenging as English is her second language but made an incredible effort to

improve her skills by talking to team members and customers. This is her favorite part of the role! All of the team came together and supported Mitsu and she is now one of our strongest volunteers. Mitsu's English has improved significantly and she loves talking with customers and staff. Her attention to detail and visual merchandising skills are great and Mitsu has continued to volunteer throughout the pandemic and did not take time off. She was a crucial support for the store during this time and the entire team is so grateful that she has chosen to volunteer at Crows Nest.

A Big 'Thank You' to Diane Maher!

Affectionately known as "Te3ddy", Te3ddy has been a great help to both myself and her colleagues in the re-opening of stores in our Metro Southern Area and assisting with the closing down of our Engadine store. Te3ddy is an employee at the Caringbah Store and has been her wonderful self for her 14 years with Vinnies.



Te3ddy brought the music, her famous rock cakes and her 'can do' attitude to each and every store in which she helped- a real diamond.

Christine McGowan (Area Manager Retail)
and everyone!

SCHOOLS AND YOUTH UPDATE

Birthday Fundraiser for Vinnies

Long-time Vinnies Youth member and volunteer, Dr Simon Lew has, for the third year, exhibited utmost selflessness. In the lead-up to his birthday, Simon asked his Facebook friends to donate to a Vinnies fundraiser instead of giving him gifts so that the money could go towards people who needed it more. This year, Simon's Birthday Fundraiser raised a staggering \$2500! Thanks Simon!

If you or anyone you know is interested in starting a Facebook Birthday Fundraiser for Vinnies, head over to <https://fundraise.vinniesnsw.org.au/fundraise-your-way/> to set up your fundraising page and access heaps of resources to help make your fundraiser a success.

Sydney Catholic Schools- fundraiser for Winter Appeal

As part of their Outreach component, the Sydney Catholic Schools' team worked tirelessly to coordinate the #FAMILYWINTERSLEEPOUT@HOME initiative that invited their Primary Schools to donate funds and supplies to the COVID Winter Appeal. With an initial goal of \$20 000, the initiative proved more than successful, having raised over \$67 000. To all the incredible schools who participated, THANK YOU!



Head over to the [Fundraising Page](#) to take a look.

Mini Vinnies Formation Program

The program, launched in July, is available to all students from Years 4-6 (regardless of whether or not they are a part of Mini Vinnies or from a Catholic school). It will nurture students to be a light in the world, inspired by the spirit of Blessed Frederic Ozanam. Students who participate in the program will engage in activities from four areas: Personal, Local, Environmental, Global. Participation in the Program is voluntary and students will make their way through three awards: Bronze, Silver and ultimately Gold.

Our Lady of the Rosary Fairfield

Students and staff rallied together on their Pyjama Day to donate snack supplies to Sydney Vinnies Van Services, delivering three separate car loads of stock to us at Liverpool.

Find out about more School news:

<https://bit.ly/vinniesMetroSchoolsNewsletter2020Term3>



Sydney Vinnies Vans Services

The Schools Engagement Team has been working hard to support Sydney Vinnies Van Services during COVID. These times of uncertainty have caused many families and individuals to experience financial and emotional hardships.

On average per week, Sydney Vinnies Van Services are distributing 1500 snack packs. These have been generously prepared and donated by schools in the Metropolitan Region. Centacare has also been contributing packs. At Eastlakes, clients are given 5 snack packs for the week, along with additional items including bread and milk. Hot meals are being donated by Campaign Monitor and then distributed to St Peter's Parish along with sandwiches and snack packs. Snack packs are also being dropped off to Matt Talbot, Lou's Place and the Liverpool Men's Shelter.



SCHOOLS AND YOUTH UPDATE

Metro Schools and Youth

Vinnies Youth Conference Connect

Over the past few months, Vinnies Metro Youth responded to the changing needs of those we support and the work done by Conferences, by participating in the Vinnies Youth Conference Connect Project. It is an initiative developed by the Vinnies State Youth Team, which facilitates the matching of willing young volunteers to support Conferences in continuing their work during these challenging and uncertain times.

As part of the project, Conferences have been able to ask for Vinnies Youth to be involved with their Conference work. The 'Helping Hand' volunteers have been helping to pack hampers and drop off food vouchers. The 'Listening Ear' volunteers have been working with Conferences to make social phone calls to people to help address the loneliness and uncertainty that these times bring, thus complementing the work being by Conference Members. As part of the project, volunteers participated in an online training course, facilitated by Joy Bowden (Vinnies Mission, Spirituality and Pastoral Care Partner). Volunteers were able to develop and gain new skills in the areas of pastoral care, listening, boundaries and self care.

Our volunteers are available and ready to be matched up with new ways of supporting Conferences. We are excited about this great opportunity to bring our younger volunteers together with experienced Members, with the potential to lead to ongoing and deeper relationships with Conferences.



Photos - at training and in action

Why do Vinnies' people love what they do?



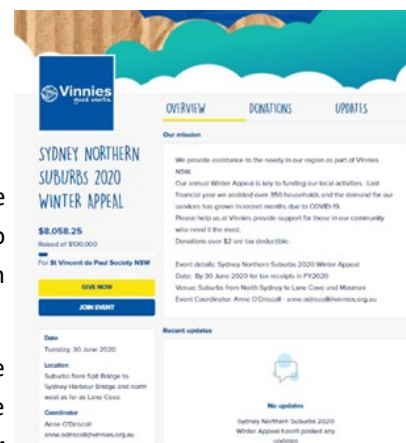
[Click here](#) to view a short clip of Vinnies Youth NSW volunteers and Members, sharing why they give their time to support people in their local communities, and what these opportunities mean for them. If you have any enquires about Vinnies Metro Youth, please contact Kate Conroy – Metro Youth Engagement Officer at kate.conroy@vinnies.org.au

Fundraising

Community Fundraising Website

Vinnies NSW is proud to have launched a state-based Community Fundraising Website with fantastic results! Our Conferences and others can create a personalised page to raise funds through a collection or event. All funds raised in the local area will remain in the local area, providing much needed assistance to those we support.

As we continue to experience restrictions on social gatherings, this is a simple and safe way to connect with donors and remind them that we need their support now more than ever. If you would like to create a personalised fundraising page for your Conference, go to <https://fundraise.vinniesnsw.org.au/> or contact Olivia – olivia.andrews@vinnies.org.au





NSW Vinnies Community Sleepout – Event Update



The annual Western Sydney Vinnies Community Sleepout is going ahead but it will be a little different this year. We're going virtual! On Friday 23 October, participants across NSW will unite in a state wide effort to raise important funds and awareness for those in our local community who need it the most. This year, participants will choose from a number of locations across NSW to support local Vinnies services and programs in that region. Sleepers will nominate a sleeping option – your car, your backyard or couch - connecting you to some of the realities people face when times are tough. Tune in to the event's live stream and let's come together on one night in solidarity to make a difference in your patch of NSW.

Registrations are now open and your support is needed more than ever. To select a location to join, click here

<https://fundraise.vinniesnsw.org.au/joinnow>

"re/CYCLE@Vinnies"

IT'S HERE!

Introducing Vinnies first sustainable range of homeware basics and classics re/CYCLE. While nearby 100% of



textiles and clothing are recyclable, right now 11.7 million tonnes of fashion waste ends up in landfills globally every year! Made from 100% preloved textiles, the new range of blankets, throws, rugs, and cushions is making the most of all donations by sending many of our unsaleable clothes overseas where, along with many other materials, they are turned into new products we know you'll love.

Read the full story on our blog at <https://bit.ly/vinniesrecyclerange>. Sold at selected Vinnies Shops throughout NSW you can now purchase the range at our Brookvale, Sutherland, Nowra and Lavington shops, which are now open for business. For more info go to www.vinnies.org.au/re/CYCLE

Member and Volunteer Support (MAVS) website

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

[home/](#) contains updates to latest news as well as information on Social Justice; Spirituality; Schools and Youth and much more. It may help, if prior to every Conference/ Regional meeting, MAVS is checked for any relevant updated material. The home page contains latest news items (bottom of the home page) as well as a link to find what the latest updates to MAVS are (circled at the top of the Home page here):

