



St Vincent de Paul Society
good works

Newsletter

Broken Bay Central Council

St Vincent de Paul Society NSW

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Broken Bay Central Council President - Michelle Chahine's Message

As Christmas approaches, we at Vinnies hope you and your family are all safe and well in these challenging times. We are all very aware of the difficult year we have had and the impact COVID-19 has had on us, both personally and as an organisation.

Despite all the challenges and uncertainties, we have found comfort and hope in the spirit of Christmas and the joy of giving. Christmas is a time to be thankful for the things we have and to show kindness and compassion to those who are less fortunate.

Our members, staff and volunteers are the driving force behind Vinnies and we thank you for your unwavering commitment and dedication.

As we look towards the new year, let us remain hopeful and positive that 2023 will bring brighter days and fewer challenges. Let us remember to lean on those we love and find strength in our collective spirit.

As we move into 2023, we also bid farewell to our CEO, Jack de Groot. Jack has made a lasting impact on our organisation and will be greatly missed. We are grateful for his leadership, compassion and ongoing support and commitment to Vinnies and we wish him all the best in the future.



We wish you all a safe and happy Christmas and a prosperous New Year.

May the joy of Christmas fill your hearts and your homes with peace, love, and laughter.

Michelle Chahine, Broken Bay Central Council President

Regional Director Metropolitan - Kate Lee's Message

As we come to the end of the year, I thought I would share with you a lovely interaction I had recently.

This week I had the opportunity to sit for a meal with many of the visitors to our van service. On the first Tuesday of every month, the Grill'd Burger closes their restaurant in the city, and serves visitors to our vans a meal of their choosing for free. Our guests order whatever meal they want, and when the food is ready, it is brought to their table.

For many of our guests there, this is one of the only times they get to sit in a restaurant, order whatever they want, and have someone serve them at their table. The place was absolutely packed! There were people sitting in groups and pairs, enjoying their meals but also enjoying the social connection and inclusion that the night invited.

As I was eating my meal, I had the privilege of meeting a man who has been a regular visitor to our van service over the years. He had been homeless for many years. He told me that visiting the van was more than about the meal, that the social connection, the feeling that he mattered was worth more than the meal. Through his visits to the van he had been connected to a conference who had continued to support him. With members' support, he's been

able to find and furnish a house and now has a job. The pride he had in himself was just incredible. He was so grateful for the role that Vinnies had played in his life. He said 'When you are homeless, you just feel sad, and like you have no purpose. But you helped me, and now I have a job, and I love it.'

He described so perfectly, the 'hand up' mission of the Society and the work of Members all over the state. It is a testament to the work that you do each day. I know that stories like these are the reason we all do this work. I hope that each of you has a wonderful Christmas and New Year.



Thank you for the work you do, and for the profound impact you have on the lives of so many people in our community.

I look forward to working with you again next year to continue the mission and work of the Society.

Kate Lee, Regional Director Metropolitan



VINNIES SUPPORTS THE ULURU STATEMENT



At the end of July, the Federal Government released recommended wording for a referendum question on enshrining a First Nations Voice to Parliament in the Constitution. Establishing a Voice is one of three elements outlined in the *Uluru Statement from the Heart*. The government has committed to hold a referendum in this term of Parliament.

The Society's leadership has re-affirmed their support for the Uluru Statement at this year's NAIDOC Week event, *Get Up! Stand Up! Show Up!*, when the NSW CEO and President along with the Chair of the Board all co-signed a copy of the Uluru Statement.

The Uluru Statement calls for the establishment of a First Nations Voice to Parliament to be enshrined in the Constitution. It also calls for the establishment of a Makarrata Commission to undertake a process of treaty-making and truth-telling. This agenda is represented in the calls for Voice, Treaty, Truth.

Five short and easy-to-use resources have been produced to help inform members, volunteers and staff and assist us to take action in support of the Uluru Statement's call.

- The [Social Justice Statement: The Struggle for Recognition](#) covers the experience of First Nations people since colonisation and shows why we should lend our support to the call for constitutional recognition – as Vincentians, as Church goers and as Australian citizens. A document for distribution to Conference Members and your parish community.
- The [Uluru Statement from the Heart – Vincentian Reflection](#) is a great resource for your Conference to reflect on and bring to prayer. Consider devoting one of your Conference meetings to discussing the *Uluru Statement from the Heart*.
- The [Uluru Statement from the Heart explainer](#) provides a brief background on the Uluru Statement and the importance of a Voice, Treaty and Truth. A great read for people on the go.
- [Why the Society supports the Uluru Statement](#). This very accessible statement sums up the Society's position. Consider distributing this to all Members, Volunteers and Staff for quick reference. Post it on your notice board in your retail outlet, service centre or workplace.
- [FAQs about the Uluru Statement and First Nations Voice](#) will keep you up to date with current debate and provide the answers to questions commonly asked in the community.

We are proud to support the call of the *Uluru Statement from the Heart* and hope these resources will be useful for all who are associated with the St Vincent de Paul Society as we walk together towards the coming referendum.





Colin McKenna - A great life

The Society mourns the loss of a great colleague and friend. Colin McKenna passed away on the 24 August 2022. It is difficult to put his contribution to the Society in simple terms, as that contribution was so great. He was a man of deep, practical faith. He respected and listened to what people had to say. He was instrumental in forming the Broken Bay Social Justice Committee. And he had the vision to see that we needed other organisations to join the Committee to give their input.



He enjoyed all sports and usually supported Australia in contests where Australia came up against England. He had a fabulous knowledge of Australia, including the outback where he undertook many road trips and camping expeditions. Colin was successful and hard work was the key to that success – having only recently fully retired for approximately two years.

In his personal life, Colin was a devoted husband to Linda and a hands-on father and grandfather. His battle with cancer

Colin has been Past President of the Hornsby Regional Council, an active Member of St Agatha's Pennant Hills Conference and on the Society's State Social Justice Committee. His contribution to all three enhanced the work of the Society in each sphere he was able to influence. He encouraged Members to contribute but was never overbearing.

Born in England, Colin earned an academic scholarship as a young student and later studied accountancy at university. He migrated to Australia as part of the English migrant programme. He immediately found work on his arrival, but felt others needed the Government assistance afforded migrants more than he did.

was a determined one. He took on the dreadful task he was confronting with such great faith in God and determination to have as much family time as possible.

He continued with his role as Social Justice Representative for Broken Bay until his unwellness dictated he had to step down. Colin's commitment to serving the most vulnerable members of society and fighting for justice – always with compassion, hope and faith – is a legacy we honour and share.

Rest in peace Colin.

- Denis O'Rourke, Elemer Turchanyi and Bob Mostyn

Thank you Jack

After six and a half years of leading the St Vincent de Paul Society NSW, Jack de Groot is leaving to take up the position of Executive Director of Catholic Schools for the Diocese of Parramatta.

Our State President, Paul Burton, thanked Jack for his commitment and dedication to the role over this time, and for his leadership of the organisation.

"He has focused on building the organisation's capacity to deliver on its mission of assisting people experiencing poverty and disadvantage. Jack also led a transformation of the organisation's governance and management structures and delivered an ambitious strategic plan and moved us to a position of financial sustainability.

"I commend Jack's professionalism and the personal courtesy he has afforded me in the time I have been involved at State Council. However, most of all, the friendship and integrity evident at all levels of our personal and professional engagement," Mr Burton said.

Reflecting on his time with the Society, Jack said, "I am in daily admiration of what the Society achieves every day for people in need throughout NSW - this is done humbly with an unrelenting focus on the dignity of each woman, man, and young person we

serve. The interactions are so often characterised by love, compassion, and respect.

"I am thankful for the opportunity to lead and learn from so many colleagues, many with passions that are life-long including so many of the members and volunteers who have given multiple decades to the cause of the Society's imperative to give a hand-up. And this includes our staff whose compassionate professional care, pursuit of quality and unyielding sense of service is a source of pride."

Jack concluded, "The people we serve invite us into their lives at times of extraordinary vulnerability. They do reflect the face of God's enduring love for our human condition. They show us not only humanity but hospitality, love, and humour.

"They always accompany me in my work and are at the centre of what you all do and what I am most proud of."

Thanks from all of us Jack.

All the best for the future!





Congratulations Michelle!

One of the great joys of the lifting of COVID restrictions has been the ability to once again meet in person as Vincentians. And the organisation of quite a few Festival and Commissioning Masses in recent times is a hopeful sign that we are gathering more often in our Conferences.

One such celebration was the Mass of Commissioning for Broken Bay Central Council President Michelle Chahine. After all the lockdowns we were able to finally gather on the evening of Thursday 6 October for Michelle's Commissioning – over a year after she was elected to the position in June 2021.

Broken Bay Diocese's Bishop Anthony Randazzo presided at Mass, with the assistance of his clergy Fathers Sam French and Paul Durkin and Deacon Adrian Gomez. Attending the Commissioning were the Society's State President Paul Burton, members, senior staff and friends.

The ceremony for the commissioning of a Vincentian president begins a journey in leadership embracing faith and spirituality, the heart of true servant leadership.

Michelle was called and her

vocational calling was declared publicly by the Bishop and State President. She received the symbols of office: the Bible, the candle, the loaf of bread and glass of water, and the Vincentian Rule.

Some of the words we heard during the service – and which reflect Michelle's great gift of service – included: compassion, peace, faith, dignity, charity, justice and friendship.

Former Central Council President John Donnelly summed up the spirit of celebration and thanksgiving on the evening, "Michelle's Commissioning Mass was an outstanding and impressive ceremony. It has been extremely beneficial for Broken Bay Central Council that Michelle has taken on this task especially as she has

many excellent qualities to ensure the leadership of the Society in Broken Bay develops in many areas.

"One of the major qualities is the enthusiasm and successes she already has illustrated in our youth groups particularly the Youth Conferences. Another great aspect that Michelle has brought to her role is that she was elected to the St Vincent de Paul NSW Board," John said.

Congratulations from all of us Michelle!



Spiritual Reflection

What an amazing blessing for Vincentians all over New South Wales to have celebrated so many Commissioning Masses!!! I can only be drawn to the scripture of the Acts of the Apostles 2:42–47:

"And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. And awe came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles. And all who believed were together and had all things in common. And they were selling their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to all, as any had need. And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts..."

How this passage could be describing the Vincentians! Yet, of course, that is when all things are flowing well. The challenge is how do we continue to love, empathise, understand and respect others despite disagreements, diametrically opposed views and frustration, perhaps even anger?

Those occasions are regular in every human organisation/ gathering

including our own families, it is where the "rubber hits the road", it's where we are given an immense opportunity to check in on ourselves, to look inward and be aware of our internal geography, why we might be so frustrated.

It's the opportunity to ask, "How can I love this other in the way I speak, listen and behave?"

Certainly not an easy task at all, maybe it's then we focus on and remember: "And all who believed were together and had all things in common." Just like regular family life, Vincentian family life is filled with ups and downs, disagreements and (hopefully) forgiveness.

May our God bless us all in his ways and have us experience "awe coming upon every soul!" A hearty congratulations to every single Vincentian recently Commissioned!

Know that the Mission and Spirituality team are at your service.

Peace

- Joy Bowen, Mission, Spirituality and Pastoral Care Partner



Northern Beaches Festival Mass

On Friday 28th October we celebrated our first Festival Mass in three years. It was held at St Martin's parish, Davidson. After all of the disruptions of the COVID lockdowns, it was fantastic to all come together again for a beautiful celebration.

The Mass was well attended, with over 70 people there. During the Mass we said thanks to three retiring presidents – Bill Eyre, Sue Bowra and Pat Cooper – for their hard work in the Conferences.

We also celebrated a huge milestone for John Parnell. John has been a Vincentian for 63 years and was given a certificate for his outstanding contribution to the society. I would like to share a few facts about John.

John joined the Mosman Conference 63 years ago. He volunteered at Mathew Talbot for over 30 years, back when it was run by the Conferences. John would be there on Sunday nights. He is still an active member of Narrabeen Conference and still doing home visitations.

John studied law and became a Criminal Barrister. He served as a magistrate for a while before finishing his career and retiring at 65. After this he started to assist the migrant communities with free legal aid. His son Rowan told me he did not lose a case in 20 years. John still enjoys walking and swimming. He is the oldest living member of the Bondi Icebergs.

I would like to thank Carmel and Tony Smith and their Davidson Conference members for their hard work in hosting the Mass and the great supper afterwards. A highlight of the Mass was when 13-year-old Kai (Carmel and Tony's grandson) played Amazing Grace on the flute. It was mesmerising!

- Mick O'Farrell, Northern Beaches Regional President



MATTHEW TALBOT HOSTEL						
Committee Brothers in Charge of Hostel - Evenings						
Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
McGlynn I/C H. Lancaster	Vince Buck Jim Johnson	Leo Forster Joe Lewis Bruce Robertson	Fred Gallagher Kevin Timbs	Keith Roberts Ross Canham	Joe Pinn Tony Kiely	Jim Slattery Jack Fox
McGlynn I/C H. Lancaster	Tony Still Leo Forster Aub Downing	Joe Lewis Bruce Robertson Peter Kaye	Fred Gallagher R. Shields Dick McNamara	Jim Hodges	Jim Slattery Peter Kaye	Bill Harkin Clem Wegan
McGlynn I/C H. Lancaster	Leo Forster Tony Still	Joe Lewis Bruce Robertson	Fred Gallagher Fred Walker	Gordon Thomas Ross Canham	Joe Pinn Tony Kiely	Clem Wegan Kevin Timbs
Keith Roberts McGlynn I/C H. Lancaster	Vince Buck Leo Forster	Joe Lewis Bruce Robertson	Fred Gallagher Aub Downing Martin Budgen	Dick McNamara Kevin Timbs	Jim Slattery F. Walker	John Parnell Ross Clifton
McGlynn I/C H. Lancaster	Keith Roberts Leo Forster Aub Downing	Joe Lewis Bruce Robertson	M. Bartlett Fred Gallagher	J. Fox G. Thomas	Jim Slattery Tony Kiely	Vince Buck Ross Clifton
N.B. - PLEASE RECORD:- Roster Brothers attending.						



Forestville: One of a Kind

When imagining what a Vinnies Conference is, one conjures up a group of three, four or even five well-intentioned people meeting regularly to share what **Good Works** they have accomplished in the previous two weeks or what they plan on accomplishing in the following two weeks. Obviously, some conferences have more than five active members but, by today's standards, that is becoming a rarity.

This seemingly irreversible trend is mostly attributable to "natural attrition": advancing age has its inevitable consequence. As a result, there are now conferences that "exist in name only". For these "phantom" conferences and, indeed, other conventional conferences, the one in Forestville provides a curious contrast and an envious comparison. For example, at its recent commissioning ceremony at Our Lady of Good Counsel, 14 people were inducted as either full or associate St Vincent de Paul Society members.

At its scheduled fortnightly meetings, there are at least nine, and regularly more, active members present. Attendance is mostly in person or, for those who occasionally find this impractical, via ZOOM. If you were a fly on the wall, you would notice that The Forestville Conference is no longer made up of the traditional WASCs (White Anglo Saxon Catholics) but is a microcosmic reflection of multi-cultural Australia.

The attendees can identify their diverse ethnic backgrounds as Chinese, Danish, Dutch, French, German, Greek, Indonesian, Malaysian, Singaporean, Sicilian, Sri Lankan and the odd, but now rare, dinky die Australian. If associate members are included in the reckoning, then one has to add Chilean, Fijian, Filipino and Scottish backgrounds to their ethnic origins.

During its most recent count, The Forestville Conference lists 15 full active members and 17 associate members – and this total of 32 does not include "auxiliary" members who turn up to volunteer for our weekend fund-raising

efforts. "No, this is not an illusion," we often have to confirm for disbelieving Vinnies from other conferences whose invariable follow-up query is, "How do you get such a huge number?" How indeed!

It is not just the number of members that is impressive. Whereas members of a conference are drawn from within a small circle radiating from a local church, those of The Forestville Conference are not enlisted from the immediate suburbs of Belrose, French's Forest and Forestville but enlisted from as far afield as Artarmon, Beverly Hills, Chatswood, Eastwood, Katoomba, Lane Cove, Milson's Point, Neutral Bay and Turramurra.



Obviously to attract such a large number of members that are culturally and ethnically diverse, and dispersed over such a vast area, The Forestville Conference evidently has qualities and ministries - and leaders - that appeal to those who simply want to belong.

Unavoidably, there are the conventional ministries of visiting the sick, housebound and lonely; helping with school fees and uniforms; giving assistance for payment for utilities; and subsidizing of removal costs. Less routine ministries include manning the Interview Room in Chatswood, serving One Meal to residents of Department of Housing in Forestville, providing refreshments to mass attendees on Sundays, acting as waiters at Matthew Talbot Hostel for homeless men, making weekly deliveries of groceries to at least seven families, collecting pre-loved clothing for resale in our centers, contributing Spiritual advice, visiting and bringing holy

communion to country folk recovering in North Shore Suburbs hospitals, taking aged-care residents of Wesley Gardens to weekly chapel services, giving weekly lessons on Life Style English Conversation to adult migrants and, with the help of many associate and auxiliary members, fund raising at Bunnings by the sale of our BBQ sausage sandwiches twice or thrice a month.

With such a variety of ministries on offer, it is understandable why The Forestville Conference attracts such a large following of varied devotees. But that's not all that brings and, more importantly, retains members.

As its own history testifies, The Forestville Conference is easily recognizable as a sprouting ground for outstanding Vinnies. Not so long ago, William Fitzgerald (now fast approaching his innings of 100) was our State President for the years 1974–1979. With a trail blazed for him, Robert Fitzgerald followed in the footsteps of his exemplary father and served as our State President for the years 1989–1994.

Within its current ranks are two long-term senior members who have stood more than once as Conference Presidents, Regional Presidents and as Broken Bay Diocesan Presidents. Is it any wonder why these two have been awarded the prestigious Order of Australia Medal? Now waiting in the wings, and destined for high office, is the current Conference President, a young lady of drive and devotion, whose every waking moment is focused on the acquisition of more volunteers and the expansion of ministries.

As one observant senior member intimated, "She is a dynamic, dedicated and visionary president." Doesn't this sanguine assessment bode well for the Conference and for the Society?

Satisfy your curiosity, check out The Forestville Conference and sign up: it's One of a Kind!

- Huang Zhi-Wei aka Reg Wong



From JobSeeker to Hired!

This month, one of the People We Assist, has asked me to share her story of how she has struggled on the JobSeeker Payment to obtaining new employment with an affordable income. She would like to thank the Chatswood Vinnies Support Centre and the Lindfield Holy Family Conference for providing her with essential food, rent, utility and car registration support during her time of need.

During COVID-19, our PWA lost her job in hospitality due to the cancellation of cruise ships. She had applied for the JobSeeker Payment and was living in a boarding house where she paid rent via a Rental Rewards program.

Centrelink had informed her that she was not eligible for COVID-19 disaster payments, which would have given her much needed support in catching up on rental arrears of \$400. Her phone bill and her car registration were all due at the same time, all of which she needed to look for work and attend job-retraining courses.

Our Lindfield Conference stepped in with home visits for food vouchers to assist in her saving some money as well as payment of rental arrears. They also paid her outstanding phone bill and car registration to help her get back on her feet.

When the real estate agent did not acknowledge the payment and



threatened eviction, the Conference stepped in to advocate for the client and secure her tenancy.

The Chatswood Vinnies Support Centre was able to assist the Conference with processing and following up the payments as well as providing some emergency food vouchers during the lockdowns. They also gave her some much-needed referrals and active listening to support her in looking for a new career.

Recently, she contacted us to let us know that she has secured a job as a visual merchandiser, earning over \$50,000/yr.

- Christine Anthony, Vinnies Support Centre Coordinator, Chatswood & Brookvale

Thanks for volunteering Kim!



Gosford Vinnies Support Centre recently celebrated their volunteer, Kim's, five-year anniversary of volunteering at the VSC. Kim came to Vinnies after having previously volunteered at WOW Girls.

Kim started helping out in the office when we found that she had an aptitude for using our then database, GKO.

Kim now helps out in the background of our Centre four hours per week, keeping our storeroom tidy (no mean feat!) and carrying out some office duties such as scanning and photocopying.

Our support centre couldn't run without the help of volunteers like Kim, who is a very appreciated member of our team.

Congratulations Kim and thanks for your great contribution!

The Society can only be effective in assisting the most vulnerable individuals and families in our community with the great support you and all our volunteers make.

- Lisa Dalton, Vinnies Support Centre Coordinator, Gosford



Housing Advocacy win on the Central Coast

Over the last four years, Denis O'Rourke, Vinnies' Social Justice Representative for Broken Bay, has patiently and persistently advocated for more social and affordable housing in his community. As the Central Coast Council considered its Affordable Housing Strategy, Denis expressed his support for some of its more ambitious - and initially controversial - initiatives, including dedicating at least three Council-owned sites for affordable housing partnerships.

On Wednesday 23 November, Council Administrator Rik Hart announced the first of these partnerships, which will deliver 40–50 affordable homes in The Entrance at a site on Ashton Avenue.

"This Council program is a key initiative from the Central Coast Affordable and Alternative Housing Strategy and is a truly ground-breaking initiative which directly addresses the critical need for housing here on the Central Coast.

"Council's Strategy provides a comprehensive plan addressing initiatives across the housing continuum, from homelessness through to home ownership, providing pathways for a range of households from very low through to moderate incomes," said Mr Hart.

Denis O'Rourke said, "We, as Members of the Society, see the stress of homelessness and those with rental stress in the people we encounter when they ask for our assistance. The waiting list for social housing in every Conference area is growing. The risk of homelessness for young families, women fleeing domestic violence and elderly women has been well documented in the media.

"The Society has an obligation to address the needs of these people. But we can't do it alone. The collective call for more social and affordable housing on the Central Coast has grown as the housing crisis has worsened.

"We really welcome the Central Coast Council's announcement. It's Affordable Housing Land Proposal program is such an important first step to easing the burden of the housing crisis and ensuring the right to a home," said Denis.

The Society recognises the good works of members, volunteers and staff who daily assist people in housing stress and homelessness. Congratulations to the local champions for social and affordable housing. Your advocacy is much needed, and it is great to see your determination resulting in this wonderful commitment of Central Coast Council!

Housing Justice: A home for everyone

The St Vincent de Paul Society's [2023 Election Statement](#) outlines key steps the next NSW Government should take to create a housing system that works for everyone. As the number of people experiencing housing stress, or without a safe and stable place to call home, continues to grow, it is clear a new approach is needed to avoid widening inequality and a future in which high rates of poverty and homelessness become the norm.

The Statement outlines three headline priorities: creating a housing system that delivers on the right to home; protecting renters through fairer tenancy laws; funding specialist services for people who are homeless.

In the lead-up to the election, Society members, volunteers, employees and supporters are encouraged to take action in support of its recommendations. If you are willing to meet with sitting MPs and candidates in their electorate to discuss the statement, email social.justice@vinnies.org.au. You can also [endorse the Statement here](#).



**URGENT WE NEED
YOUR HELP!!**



We **really** need the assistance of every brother and sister Vincentian, volunteer and staff member. Can you please write a letter to the Premier?

The Vinnies Social Justice Team has developed a Reflection and Action kit to assist Conferences consider the impact of the housing and homelessness crisis in the light of everyone's right to a secure and affordable home.

The kit – **Addressing the Housing and Homelessness Crisis** can be downloaded [here](#). The key action is the call for more social housing – 5,000 new social housing homes each year for the next 10 years – through the *Build Home, Build Hope* letter writing campaign.

Can you and your Conference join the call by writing letters to the Premier? You can find the letter writing guide [here](#).



WINTER APPEAL AND SLEEPOUT

As Coordinator of the Wyong Vinnies Support Centre (VSC) and an advocate for helping, supporting, and raising awareness for the homeless every day, I gladly took part again in my 3rd Vinnies Community Sleepout 2022, which was held virtually via Zoom on Friday 19th August.

The Sleepout commenced at 6pm. Vikram Pitre, The Hills Regional President in Sydney, and Annette Johnstone, Gosford Regional President in Broken Bay, Co-hosted the event. The acknowledgement of country was done by BJ Duncan, who is a great supporter of St Vincent de Paul. We were also welcomed by Local MP for The Entrance, David Meehan, who talked about all the good work Vinnies provides and the impact of homelessness he sees and hears about in the community.

Wyong Regional President, Dennis Brady, also spoke about his time with St Vincent de Paul and offered huge thanks to the Wyong VSC for supporting the Conferences during the 3 years + COVID pandemic – offering support to the community that would usually get a home visit.

Warnervale Conference Member/Volunteer Wyong Support Centre Lisa Kingdom (and her two children: Mini Vinnies Wyong) and Wyong VSC Volunteer Stephen Hill also joined the virtual community sleepout and showed their support for people who are homeless and the work of Vinnies. I spoke about a single mother who was forced into homelessness after a violent domestic relationship resulting in her fleeing with her one-year-old son.

We also heard from other Central Coast Support Centre Coordinators in Gosford (Lisa Dalton) & Woy Woy (Nikki Willmette) who shared similar stories and experiences.

For my sleepout location I choose the floor with a shared accommodation setting (two other people were also in the house).

No luxuries like pillows or heaters. With just a blanket, scarf, beanie and 1 layer of clothing, the night was cold. I ate a small amount of food for dinner, which is a small sample of the provisions Wyong VSC provides from our Homeless Food Cupboard to people who identify as homeless and who have no or limited access to

cooking facilities.

I chose this sleepout location and setting. Many of the people we assist who identify as homeless are often left with no choice but to sleep on the floor (no matter the surface) and often in an overcrowded accommodation setting. I put myself in a similar situation.

For my night, I experienced some of the impacts of homelessness, which included:

- Back pain, leg pain and sore joints (shoulder)
- Feeling anxious, vulnerable and isolated
- Uncomfortable and cold
- Noisy environment (hearing every noise, inside & out, unable to relax and sleep).

I couldn't relax, be comfortable and especially get adequate restful sleep. I quickly put myself in the shoes of the countless people who are homeless that the many VSCs support. It's unfortunate that they must endure this situation (and many other situations) every night. The next morning at 5am, I woke up feeling sore, hungry, cold, exhausted and in need of a shower and a change of clothes.

Homelessness can impact anyone at any time for any reason. Nobody is excluded from being homeless. Homelessness doesn't discriminate, it can happen at any time to any of us, our friends, our families, our colleagues, our neighbours or even ourselves.

Reasons Homelessness occur include:

- Domestic violence
- Inability to maintain rental property or mortgage payments
- Mental ill-health &/or addictions, or
- Family breakdown

The Central Coast region desperately needs more affordable stable housing options. The Vinnies Support Centres all assist people daily who identify as homeless and in need of such supports as housing, food, clothing, blankets, showers, hygiene products, travel supports (Opal cards/fuel cards) and many more services, referrals and supports from the community for the holistic assessment of our most vulnerable members of our community.

The feedback I receive through talking to the community who are homeless and who present at the Wyong VSC – the majority say they just want someone to listen, or they just want to be heard. Vinnies Wyong does that without judgement.

- Bradley Dingle, Vinnies Support Centre Coordinator, Wyong





WINTER APPEAL AND SLEEPOUT

Our First Community Sleepout



This year I decided to participate in my first Vinnies Community Sleepout.

The decision to participate was because I have a big passion to make a difference with homelessness in our community. I was invited by Wyong Support Centre Coordinator, Brad Dingle to join in the Zoom session which opened my eyes to a bigger insight. While watching and setting my bed for the night on the floor, my 7- and 6-year-old children set up next to me.

My daughter asked "can we join you mummy? We want to help the man sleeping at the library." So they joined in.

They both had their pillows and blankets and fell asleep. In the morning I began to think of ideas about how our Wyong Vinnies Support Centre could do a little more for our people who are homeless.

My daughter woke up later. I asked, "how did you sleep?" I got the reply, "Mum it was hard. No comfy bed. I love my bed. But I want to help the man to get a bed and food at the library."

We only had to sleep rough for one night. Some people do it nightly with NOTHING. But a little bit of change/support can go a long way!



- Lisa Kingdom, Warnervale Conference Member & Wyong VSC Volunteer Team Leader

Anti-Poverty Week / Beyond Blue - Wyong VSC

On Thursday 20th October 2022, St Vincent de Paul Wyong Support Centre hosted an event "Anti-Poverty/Beyond Blue Event" during Anti-Poverty Week & Beyond Blue Mental Health Month.

The event was organised and hosted by Wyong Support Centre Coordinator Brad Dingle and Volunteer and Conference Member Lisa. It was a huge success and attended by many St Vincent de Paul Staff, Members and Volunteers. Also in attendance were other external organisations and supporters of St Vincent de Paul Wyong.

We Care Connect, EWON, Legal Aid, Services Australia & Uniting Doorways were all on site to talk with the community about the wonderful services they offer and how they can support the community to alleviate the impact of Poverty and Mental Health.

Local Central Coast Labor Member for Dobell, Emma McBride, spoke with multiple community members about how she can support the community. Emma also spoke with many workers of St Vincent de Paul and heard about the work Wyong Vinnies Support Centre provides the community.

The Vinnies Ozanam Outreach Team had a 'Rock Painting' activity available to all community members on the day. Many people engaged with this activity, even Emma McBride participated by painting a rock.

All the rocks painted during the activity (if not taken by the participant) will be placed in the community garden at Wyong VSC when it is completed later in 2023.

A BBQ, run by Wyong Volunteers & Members was offering sausage sandwiches and drinks. All the sales raised money for Beyond Blue for Mental Health Awareness – a total amount of \$160.

Thanks to all the St Vincent de Paul Workers, Members, Volunteers, all the external organisations that attended and the following local businesses who donated towards or promoted the event:

- JT Providores, Tuggerah (donated fresh fruit & vegetables)
- Coles Wyong (Secondbite), (donated bread, rolls and pastries)
- Grill'd Restaurant, Tuggerah (donated lunch for all the event stall holders & Vinnies team)
- Coast FM, 96.3
- Triple M, Central Coast

The event was attended by many people we assist (PWAs) and/or community members who all left with useful information based on their current situation and a handful of goodies, including clothing, food hampers, hygiene products, books, toys, fresh fruit/vegetables, bread/rolls/pastries & brand new "Sunbeam" toasters.



WINTER APPEAL AND SLEEPOUT

ASQUITH YOUTH HAVE DONE IT AGAIN



Members of the Asquith Youth Conference were again in force to assist Waitara Our Lady of the Rosary Conference and Normanhurst Queen of Peace Conference with the winter appeal.

Regional President Shirley Kelynack said, "Come rain, hail or shine – the wonderful members of the Asquith Youth Conference always manage to help us out with the heavy lifting of the big appeals!"

And rain it did! They worked over two weekends through the pouring rain.

Shirley spoke of the great impression Asquith Youth make on everyone they meet.

"The Parishioners who dropped off the goods to them were most impressed with our Youth. People just keep on saying – 'they are so polite, well-mannered and charming'.

"The Members of the Waitara and Normanhurst Conferences are most grateful for their assistance. They collected an amazing amount of goods for us. Nothing was a trouble for them.

"We really appreciate their assistance and we do not know how we would have managed without them. And we look forward to working with them again at Christmas time," Shirley said.

WELL DONE ST LEO'S!

For a second year in a row, St Leo's Catholic College, Wahroonga, has been recognised by the St Vincent de Paul Society as the top fundraising school in NSW, with over \$22,500 being raised. These events were led by the Year 11 Vinnies Conference and the Year 12 Student Leaders who have driven this huge effort with a mufti day, BBQ, the Winter Sleepout itself and gathering donations from families for our own Vinnies Op Shop style Market Day and crazy sock day.

The Sleepout involved 75 students from Years 7 to 12, having a simple soup and bread roll for dinner and sleeping overnight on the verandah of the school hall.

The night began with some ice-breaker games, music and a talk by Vinnies Youth Representative, Luke Antoun. It was a cold and rainy night, but we managed to have some toasted marshmallows around a fire. It was challenging sleeping on concrete with just cardboard and sleeping bags but a rewarding experience for the students who participated.

Zinta in Year 11 really summed up the feelings of everyone:

"Sleeping outside for only one night and feeling the cold and discomfort has really heightened my appreciation for a warm bed and a roof over my head and made me realise the continuous impacts of homelessness on the health and wellbeing of affected individuals and has reminded me of the significance of our fundraising efforts."

The Vinnies Op Shop Market Day was also a great success, with \$1,600 being raised from selling goods that students had donated. The leftover donations were then sent to the Vinnies Shop in Hornsby.

Thank you and well done St Leo's!





WINTER APPEAL - DOING SOMETHING ABOUT IT *Mackillop Catholic College*

Here at Mackillop Catholic College, our Mini Vinnies Group and Mini Mack's Group follow the motto of Saint Mary MacKillop: "to never see a need without doing something about it". We try to live by this motto by participating in numerous initiatives in our local and wider community, volunteering and running charity events to support organisations like the St Vincent de Paul Society.

We are very blessed to have had not one, but two nuns who help guide and shape us as young people and on our faith journey. Sister Marea Ross and Sister Jennifer Cannilas have been a big part of our schools Mini Mack's and Mini Vinnies groups. Our school is the only K-12 Catholic School on the Central Coast; we have two Vinnies groups. Mini Mack's was developed for our Primary aged students; Years 4 - 6, and Mini Vinnies in the Secondary.

Meetings for each of these groups run fortnightly with the assistance of Sr Marea and Sr Jennifer, along with a number of staff members. Sr Marea has been instrumental to the success of so many initiatives including 'Reverse Santa' where our Primary students' provide gifts to the elderly in nursing homes and preparing Easter gifts with hand-written messages and chocolate eggs.

In June this year, Mackillop Catholic College had our biggest event with our Vinnies Winter Appeal. The Winter Appeal is where students dress up in their cozy pyjamas and fluffy Oodles both at school and on the night of the winter sleepout. We raise money as well as awareness on the impacts of homelessness. This year we also invited other Broken Bay Catholic schools to join us. Students and teachers from St. Peter's Catholic College, St. Bridget's Catholic College, St. Joseph's Catholic College as well as people from Gosford Parish attended this event, along with about 50 Year 6 MacKillop Catholic College Primary students too!

We had the pleasure of Wyong Regional President of Vinnies, Dennis Brady come and open our event and David Harris MP also presented, speaking about domestic violence and different types of homelessness. There were a number of guest speakers who spoke about their experiences with homelessness, explaining that we should treat people equally. We all enjoyed yummy soup and rolls or noodle cups for dinner. This provided a more authentic experience.

We finished off the evening with an uplifting dance party before all the students from Years 6-9 departed. Senior students stayed and

braved the cold, sleeping rough outside for the night to get a glimpse of the reality of being homeless.

Currently we have our Vinnies Christmas Appeal with all of the students across both Primary and Secondary working hard to rally their donations in our House Groups. We have 6 Houses at our school and we use the House Spirit to help promote charity events at times. This often work, especially if we allocate BIG house points.

Each House and Year Group has been given certain items to donate; canned foods, Christmas decorations, lollies and our Year 12s have been asked to donate a toy suitable for a child aged 0-15 yrs. We then present and donate our Christmas Hampers in Pastoral Groups at the end of the school year. Our College Staff also get in on the joy of giving and Christmas Spirit, donating vouchers which can be used to buy fresh

food items. This is probably our favourite Vinnies Appeal. It's a real community effort.

We're really excited for what 2023 will bring and have started brainstorming some exciting new initiatives that the Mini Mack's and Mini Vinnies will work on. Together, our Vinnies Groups came up with the idea to transform a vacant area in the primary into a Safe Space. This area will include a buddy bench and beautiful mural painted by some of our Secondary Art students and teachers. The Vinnies will lend a hand of course to create the space, but our real aim is to make sure that no one feels like they don't belong.

Students who feel isolated, or alone, or perhaps just want to sit down and chat will have this area to use. A roster will be created and a Vinnies team member will always be there for support.

The Mini Vinnies have also been upset by the growing rubbish problem. We have decided "to do something about it" and bring in yellow recycle bins in addition to the red bins, preventing as much as possible the amount of plastics from ending up in landfills. Lastly, our Vinnies leadership group will receive badges in order to have their hard work recognised, and to show their commitment and pledge to the St. Vincent de Paul Society.

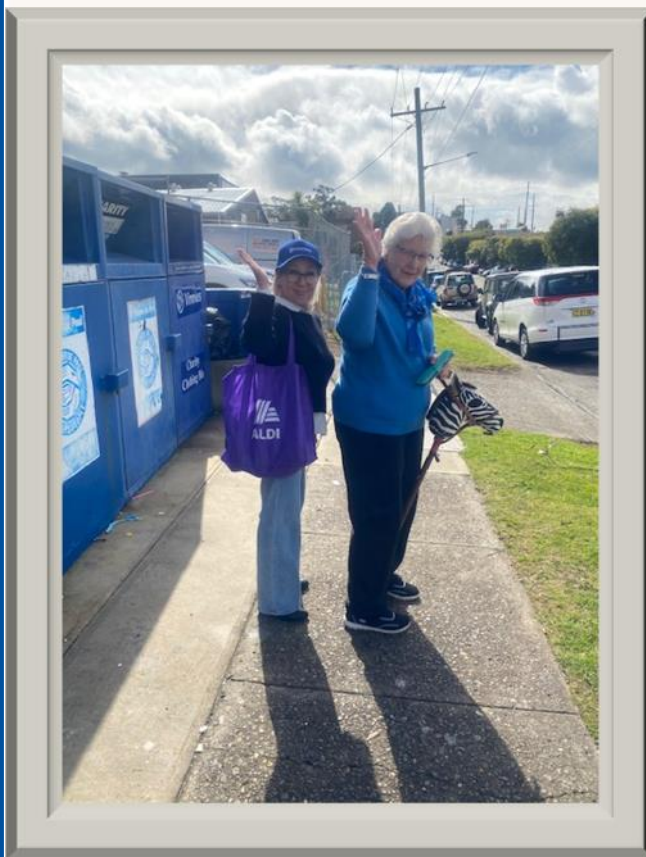
Another busy but exciting year ahead and we're ready for the challenge!

- Ruby M, Mikayla H and Charlize S - Year 8 Students,
Mackillop Catholic College, Warnervale





WHEN SHIRLEY RIDES INTO TOWN



Howdy pardners! Thangs just ain't beeeeen the same since Sherriff Shirley Kelynack 'n her trusty Deputy Jodie Davidson rode into town.

At first, the locals had doubts this duo could bring compassion and justice to the unruly Hornsby outpost. But they soon won over the crowd with their Jersey Street horse-racing spectaculars. Not to mention the riding skills and lassoing workshops. Don't mind sayin'... went down a treat!

There's no doubt – they're a permanent presence in the community and it's impossible to imagine Hornsby without them.

Harking back to yonder horse-and-cart collections by Vinnies shops in the 1920s, Shirley says, "Jodie and I are off to do a home visit on the hobby horse. Nothing has changed over the years – we're still delivering by horse, saving on fuel as well as looking after the planet!"

If you happen upon Shirley's posse out on the range for this year's Christmas Appeal, be sure to dip your lid graciously, y'hear. And donate generously.

Yee-Haaaw! There are so many ways the Society supports the community. But I know one thang for sure: – And I don't mind tellin' y'all:

Where there's hardship and folk are down on their luck, this duo offer a hand up. Where there's injustice, well, Vinnies members, volunteers and staff just work hard to make thangs right. And where there's sorrow and tribulations, Shirley's always there to bring a good measure of joy.

I won't cuss, compadres. But tarnation! Where would we be without them? Happy trails hombres! 'be seein' y'all back at the ranch...

- Tumbleweed MacFergus, Member & Community Engagement Coordinator

Vinnies Recycle Range – Selling Fast

Every item has an impact. With the current fast pace of fashion consumption, nearly 6000 kilograms of clothing and textile waste goes to Australian landfills every 10 minutes.

re/CYCLE is our new eco-friendly range. Made from recycled textiles and materials, our new circular approach means some of our pre-loved items along with many other diverted textiles are being used to create a range of classic yet colourful styles with minimal impact on the environment.

The re/CYCLE range has just been refilled across 16 locations in

metro Sydney. The range includes woven rugs, Turkish towels – and bathmats are a much welcome addition to our donations in store.

Selling fast in all locations. This is another great initiative in becoming more eco-friendly in our approach to revenue building!

Much like all items sold in our shops, profits from re/CYCLE sales will support people experiencing poverty, homelessness and hardship throughout the state.

To find out more, visit: https://www.vinnies.org.au/page/Shops/NSW/Vinnies_re_CYCLE_Range/



Climate Justice: working together for a more equitable and sustainable future

As extreme weather events occur more frequently and with greater intensity, October's Rosalie Rendu Forum highlighted Climate Justice: working together for a more equitable and sustainable future.

More than 90 people from across New South Wales and beyond joined the annual forum, named in recognition of Sister Rosalie Rendu, to hear from an acclaimed group of women who are leading the way in responding to climate change.



Kellie Caught from the Australian Council of Social Service commented, "people experiencing poverty and disadvantage are being left worse off and [climate impacts] can drive people into poverty. [We need to be] putting people with the least at the front and centre of these policies."

Dr Kim Loo from Doctors for the Environment spoke of how increased living costs linked to climate change are directly impacting on people's health and well-being. "People who are already depriving themselves of energy are trying even harder - taking fewer showers, going to bed earlier - I'm seeing my patients

having to choose between turning on their air conditioning or paying for their medication. People are living in precarity."

Issues raised during the course of the 90-minute discussion included the relationship between humans and the environment, the impacts of climate change on disadvantaged communities and on health and wellbeing, the response of St Vincent de Paul Society members in disaster-affected areas, and government policies that should be enacted to address these issues.

St Vincent de Paul Society NSW would like to thank Professor Anne Poelina, Dr Kim Loo, Ms Kellie Caught, Ms Suzanne Nichols, Ms Saimi Jeong, Ms Yvonne Weldon and Ms Jacinta McGrath for their involvement in another important and thought-provoking Rosalie Rendu Forum.

You can view the full recording of the 2022 Rosalie Rendu Forum [here](#).

- Rob Crosby, Communications Coordinator – Communications and Marketing

Mission and Spirituality: Planting Seeds of Hope

On Saturday 12th of November a mix of Vincentians gathered at Winbourne, Mulgoa for a Vincentian renewal day. There were approximately 20 people gathered - all eager to connect, reflect and renew their Vincentian heart.

The Mission and Spirituality team organised the day with the theme of the Parable of the Sower. This bookended the wonderfully inspiring words of the Vincentian saints.

The day was primarily for deep personal reflection with lunch providing a welcomed time of camaraderie.

Each Vincentian listened carefully to the input around Spirituality and Vincentian spirituality.

They then took their scroll with them out into the beautiful grounds to reflect,

coming back to share their wisdom.



Our closing ritual saw each person, individually, laying down their stones, (the things they wish to put down) and scattering their seeds, (the things they wish to grow) on the parable of the Sower artwork, then they lit their candle.

How refreshing it is to gather in person, together and to remember why we do what we do.

Many thanks to the Mission team and all those that travelled far and wide and gifted their time to make the day such a memorable event.

- Joy Bowen, Mission, Spirituality and Pastoral Care Partner

DOING GOOD TOGETHER

makes a difference



*Be part of our social and affordable housing
POD project, a partnership for good*

Conference led community development

Amélie Housing seeks partners willing to support delivery of the NSW Social and Affordable Housing (SAHF) program. The program requires collaboration between the various arms of the Society to support safe engaged communities in Society owned housing developments.

Our SAHF promise requires we fully utilise Amélie Housing staff, SVDP Support Services including Tailored Support and local Conferences to enhance the housing tenants' lived experience. (Strategic Directions 2015-22)

Experience has shown that safe engaged neighbourhoods require broad community involvement and our Conferences can spearhead locally relevant engagement activities. This collaboration is the Point of Difference our wider network can offer those suffering housing stress. You are invited to be part of the POD Project. This could be an activity for new and experienced members.

Amélie Housing, with local Conference members, are conducting discussions to explore this unique collaboration. The POD projects sets us apart from other community housing providers. Share your thoughts and explore how we can formalise this vital point of difference.

The POD Project is a positive opportunity designed to provide companionship to our tenants. This is how we build safe engaged communities.

Want to know more?
Contact: POD@amelie.org.au

Member Support for Compliance

St Vincent de Paul Society NSW is a committed registered child-safe organisation. So that we can meet this commitment, we have developed support for Members. The following compliances are required for Members, volunteers, and employees:

- NSW Working With Children Check (every 5 years)
- Police Check (every 3 years)
- Vinnies NSW Child Safe Familiarisation Training (every 2 years).

Need assistance applying for your online Police Check?

Membership and Community Engagement staff across Metro Region attend some Vinnies Support Centres (VSCs) to assist Members apply for their online Police Checks. Thank you to the VSC Coordinators for opening their doors for to all Members who have taken up the offer so far.

Vinnies Support Centre Coordinators are also able to assist.

Members can simply RSVP to MetroMembers@vinnies.org.au with name, time preferences, Conference for completing checks.

Applying for Background Checks

- Instruction documents are available – just ask your Conference President or Member & Community Engagement Coordinator (MCEC) at MetroMembers@vinnies.org.au.

Online Police Check

- Go to: <https://svdpmetroregion.nationalcrimecheck.com.au/>
- You'll be asked to enter a Site Code which is 'Broken Bay'
- Results go to Vinnies. Once applied, advise your Membership and Community Engagement Coordinator.
- Your clearance number and expiry date will be added to your Society records.

Working With Children's Check (WWCC)

- Go to <http://www.kidsguardian.nsw.gov.au/>
- Once a new or renewed WWC is received: Results go to you. Advise your President and MCEC of: WWCC number, expiry date and confirm your DOB.
- We use these details to verify and register you with The Office of Children's Guardian as a volunteer.
- Your WWCC clearance number and expiry date will be added to your Society records.

Vinnies NSW Child Safe Familiarisation Training

Online- Vinnies Learning Centre: Instructions are available. Log in to your account: <https://vinnieslearningcentre.litmos.com.au/account/Login>

Extra Support for Members:

Available for Members only has been Face-to-Face training

These have been offered to Regional Councils and most have held sessions, some still to come and some yet to be set- Presidents are kept updated and offered opportunities for Members. These will conclude soon. Sessions are COVID-appropriate in terms of numbers, seating and on entry, and attendees are requested to have a RAT test in 24 hours prior.

Zoom sessions

As used previously during COVID, these Zoom sessions are becoming a popular way to complete Child Safe familiarisation Training. Sessions are being run regularly each week. Each session runs for 1.5 hours.

Contact your friendly MCEC Team at MetroMembers@vinnies.org.au and we'll assist you in registering and attending a session of your choice.

We're always happy to be of service!



St Vincent de Paul Society
good works

Vinnies NO INTEREST LOANS

**A safe way to borrow.
An affordable alternative to credit.**

Borrow up to \$2000 for essential goods and services. Repay only what you borrow over a term that suits you*.

*limits apply



**NO FEES
NO CHARGES
no worries!**



What is NILs?

No Interest Loans (NILs) provide individuals and families on low incomes with access to safe, fair, affordable credit with no fees or charges – ever.

Am I eligible?

✓ I hold a Health Care Card / Pension Card OR earn less than \$70,000 before tax (\$100,000 for couples or people with dependants)

✓ I have lived at my current or previous address for at least 3 months*

*exceptions can apply

✓ I can show that I can afford to repay the loan

What can I use NILs for?

Loans are available up to \$2000 for essential goods and services including:

- Household Items
- Car Repairs & Registration
- Medical & Dental
- Technology
- Furniture
- Education

Loans are not available for:

Bills, cash, debts, food, fines or penalties



Call : **1800 484 664**

Email: **nils@vinnies.org.au**

Visit: **vinnies.org.au/NILS**



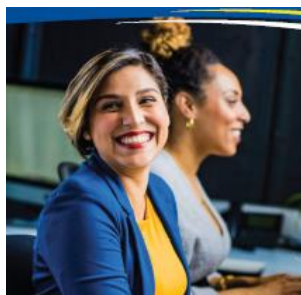


Vinnies Assist—13 18 12

WHAT IS VINNIES ASSIST?

Vinnies Assist provides information, referral pathways and resources that can be accessed by, our Members, Conferences, Volunteers, Staff and external stakeholders to obtain up to date information from across all the Society's 7 Directorates:

Office of the CEO, Vinnies Services, Finance, Membership, Volunteers and Regional Operations, Corporate Services, Commercial Operations, Fundraising and Communications.



WHAT WE CAN PROVIDE:

Vinnies Assist aims to bridge the gap for members, volunteers, staff and the general public requiring up to date information, guidance and support to assist the People we Assist:

- Telephone support to meet immediate needs
- Access to crisis and short-term accommodation
- Immediate referral services to our Welfare services
- Support to access Vinnies Services across NSW
 - Homelessness & Housing
 - Disability & Inclusion Services
 - Health Services
- Support in accessing external services

The Vinnies Assist operational hours 8.30am - 4.30pm

ACCESSING INFORMATION OR REFERRAL SERVICES

can be made by contacting **13 18 12** pressing **option 5**, emailing vinnies@vinnies.org.au for general information or to make a referral to our Vinnies Services or Member support services — intake.officer@vinnies.org.au.

Member and Volunteer Recognition of Service

The St Vincent de Paul Society NSW acknowledges the great contribution members and volunteers make to the work of the organisation and the people it serves.

It has a Member and Volunteer Recognition of Service (Badges and Certificates) procedure to recognise members and volunteers who have provided 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30, 35, 40, 45, 50, 55, 60 or 65 years of service to the Society.

The five-yearly anniversary badges and certificates were introduced by State Council in 2021.

Central Council, Regional Council and Conference Presidents, supported by staff in regions, may also like to hold local events such as morning teas; arrange for special mentions at Mass; or organise a card and gift for members reaching significant milestones in their service.

2023—Key Social Justice dates

These social Justice days throughout 2023 provide a great opportunity to promote Vinnies awareness in your local community and to highlight both the good works and the policy advocacy of the Society.

26 January: Survival Day/Australia Day	2 - 9 July: NAIDOC week
20 February: World Day of Social Justice	27 August: Social Justice Sunday
21 March: National Harmony Day	24 September: Migrant and Refugee Sunday
15 - 21 May: National Volunteer Week	10 October: World Mental Health Day
26 May: National Sorry Day	15 - 21 October: Anti-Poverty Week
27 May - 3 June: Reconciliation Week	19 November: World Day of the Poor
5 June: World Environment Day	5 December: International Volunteer Day
18 - 24 June: Refugee Week	10 December: Human Rights Day
20 June: World Refugee Day	
2 July: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Sunday	

For suggested content to be added to your Parish bulletins, to talk at parish Masses, to run recruitment drives, and for ideas for your Conferences, please refer to the MAVS social justice page: <https://mavs.vinnies.org.au/social-justice/>



Please ASSIST A STUDENT

The **Assist A Student** program gives you the opportunity to provide funding to support the education of a student in one of our partner countries for one year.

In many Asia Pacific countries, poverty excludes individuals from reaching their full potential by being a barrier to opportunities, including accessing education.

Your donation of \$100 or more will make all the difference for a primary, secondary or tertiary student in one of our partner countries.

Think of the great opportunities that you or your Conference can make in bringing education into the reach of young people around the world.



Naw* is 22 years old and lives with her Aunt while attending West Yangon University in Myanmar.

She is studying Translation and Interpretation, as well as Burmese, Short Stories, Poetry and Drama, English and Communication Skills.

Naw knows that an education will help her "earn money and I, too, will support others".



Andre* is in 3rd grade and lives in Indonesia with his family.

He likes playing football and wants to become a policeman one day. He likes helping his parents and goes to Sunday School.

Andre says "thank you and God Bless all the people who have helped me."

Nur* is in Year 12 and studies at a Vocational High School in Bandung, Indonesia. She lives with her mother who has recently lost her job.

Nur says that the support "helps her mother to worry less about fees". Nur wants to be a Tour Director and travel around the world. She thanks all donors to the *Assist A Student* program who help young people to achieve their goals.



**all names have been changed*

- ☐ I am an individual assisting a student: OR
☐ I am assisting a student on behalf of a group

NAME (group or individual): _____

CONTACT NAME (for group): _____

TELEPHONE: _____

ADDRESS: _____

SUBURB: _____

STATE: _____ POSTCODE: _____

EMAIL: _____

I would like to donate (Donations over \$2 are tax deductible):

☐ \$100 ☐ \$200 ☐ \$300 OR ☐ \$ _____

☐ I would like to receive a certificate for this donation.

Thank you for your support.

Payment method:

- ☐ Debit my credit card (details below)

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☐ Mastercard ☐ Visa Card Expiry: __ / __

☐ NAME ON CARD: _____

SIGNATURE: _____

- ☐ Cheque, payable to 'St Vincent de Paul Society'

Please complete your details and send to:
 Assist A Student Program,
 St Vincent de Paul Sate Council Office
 PO Box 5
 PETERSHAM, NSW 2049



Community Connections – does this interest your Conference?

Is your Conference looking for ways to engage with your community, promote the Vinnies brand and let people know what your Conference is about?

We have various options available to Conferences, all with support from your Member and Community Engagement team. Consider the following:

Vinnies Market Stalls

If you have a local market that is regularly held, then a Vinnies stall may be just the thing needed to let your local community know about the various works of Vinnies.

Contact MetroMembers@vinnies.org.au and we can liaise with the Market Organisers to arrange a date for the Vinnies stall to be held. We can provide flyers, merchandise, tables, tablecloths and a Vinnies marquee. We will assist with setup and pack down on the day. All you need to do is ensure a few Members (at least 2 at all times) are available for the duration of the markets to talk to the community about the good works that our wonderful Members and Services provide.

Shopping Centre tables

One way for the community to get involved with Vinnies as well as learn about the works that Vinnies do, is through shopping centre tables. If your local Shopping Centre looks like a great location to host a Vinnies table for a day, please let your Member and Community Engagement Coordinator know. We will contact the Shopping Centre to request permission to setup a Vinnies table. On the day, we will provide tables, chairs, Vinnies tablecloth, merchandise and a list of groceries that the Community can donate to provide support to your local Vinnies Support Centres (VSC). As shoppers enter the Shopping Centre, they may like to take a slip of paper that contains a list of desired groceries for donation.

Shoppers can buy as little or as much as they like, and then leave their donated grocery item in a shopping trolley next to the Vinnies table. At the same time, they may like to have a look at some of the Vinnies flyers, utilise some of the merchandise, and

chat to a Vinnies Member. The Member and Community Engagement team will provide all materials to Members and liaise with the Shopping centre. All you need to provide is a few Members (at least 2 at all times) to be available for the duration of the day, and to drop off the donations to the closest VSC. Our team can be available on the day to assist if you prefer.

Vinnies Awareness Campaign at Parishes

Are you considering a recruitment/information weekend at your local parish? These can be held at any time of the year, but there are significant social justice days in the national and international calendar that can provide that extra opportunity to highlight the good works of the Society. Approaching social justice events include National Volunteer Week (Monday 15 – Sunday 21 May).

If you would like to consider having a recruitment/information campaign at your local Parish at any time during the year, you can receive support and planning help from your Member and Community Engagement team. Notices can be provided for inclusion in Parish bulletins in the lead up to the Vinnies weekend, and on the weekend itself, suggested speaking notes can be provided to a Vinnies Member to speak at the Masses, a Vinnies table can be setup with flyers, information packs and membership application forms.

Parishioners will have an opportunity to meet with Conference Members before and after Masses to ask questions and explore Vinnies as an opportunity for them to get involved.

School Fetes

Vinnies Marquee, flyers and merchandise can be available for your local school fetes – a wonderful way to let the parents and staff of your schools know about Vinnies. Please contact your Member and Community Engagement Coordinator.

Using the MAVS social justice updates

Take the opportunity to speak about Vinnies at Mass. Member speaking notes, bulletin summaries and ideas for action on key days for social justice are regularly added to MAVS and can be found at <https://mavs.vinnies.org.au/social-justice/>.





HAVE ANY OF YOUR DETAILS CHANGED RECENTLY?

It's vital we keep updated data on all of members, so if you have changed any of the following, please let us know:



Address



Phone number



Email address



Conference



Membership status



Changes to name

Reminder to Members

We are constantly updating our records in the Society People system. It is important that Vinnies has your most recent and current details, so that we can advise you of any Society news, changes, etc.

Have you changed any of the following recently?

- phone number and email address
- membership status and Conference
- address
- changes to first/last name

Have you left the Society and are still receiving information?

Please let us know by contacting your Member and Community Engagement Coordinator at:

MetroMembers@vinnies.org.au

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

MATTHEW TALBOT HOSTEL OZANAM LEARNING CENTRE

Calling all Members and Volunteers. The Matthew Talbot Hostel and Ozanam Learning Centre are seeking your support in their good works assisting the homeless and vulnerable people of Sydney.

The three types of roles available are:

Community Support Volunteer—Ozanam Learning Centre (weekdays 10am-4pm)

- Greeting and assisting all who visit the Centre
- Handling phone enquiries and providing administrative support

Dining Room Attendant—Matthew Talbot Hostel (weekends only)

- Capacity to lift e.g. chairs onto tables, trays of cutlery
- Helping to set, clear and clean tables

Kitchen Support Attendant—Matthew Talbot Hostel (weekends only)

- Assisting in preparing, serving and clearing tea service
- Assisting with vegetable preparations

If you are interested in lending a hand and would like to find out more, please contact the Volunteer Engagement Coordinator—Metro, Christopher Stevens at Christopher.Stevens@vinnies.org.au

THANK YOU

MAVS Platform

Have you visited the Member and Volunteer Support website?

This site exists to share resources, news, contacts, and events with our members and volunteers. We want to provide members and volunteers with the tools, information and resources that will assist you in your service.

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

We really want to know what you like and want in the Member and Volunteer online resources platform. Broken Bay Central Council has its own page:

<https://mavs.vinnies.org.au/conferences/broken-bay-central-council/>

For requested updates, please email MetroMembers@vinnies.org.au

There are also lots of other updates happening on MAVS which you can check in on anytime here:

<https://mavs.vinnies.org.au/mavs-latest-updates/>