



## ONE SOCIETY – A UNITED VOICE

### STRATEGIC PLAN 2016 to 2020

#### Preamble

- This Plan is a high level summary of the priorities of the Society in Australia over the next four years.
- The Plan seeks to safeguard our unique Mission, following the example of the young Catholic students who, imbued with the Spirit, founded the Society – remaining ‘young, independent, vigorous and member driven.’
- This Plan speaks to and is focused on everyone engaged in the work of the Society – members, volunteers, staff, supporters and members of the broader community– at all levels.
- This Plan aims to nurture our people; ensure a sustainable future for the Society; and better respond to, and advocate for, the people we serve.
- All Councils and Conferences are asked to incorporate relevant objectives from this Plan into their planning priorities.

#### Our Mission

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

#### Our Vision

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

#### Our Aspiration

An Australia transformed by compassion and built on justice.

#### Our Key Values

**Commitment** – Loyalty in service to our mission, vision and values.

**Compassion** – Welcoming and serving all with understanding and without judgement.

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

**Integrity** – Promoting, maintaining and adhering to our mission, vision and values.

**Empathy** – Establishing relationships based on respect, trust, friendship and perception.

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

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

# Strategic Focus Areas & Objectives 2016 to 2020:

## FOCUS AREA 1: OUR MEMBERS

*(Ensuring a Spiritually focussed and fully engaged Society)*

### 1.1 With the support of State & Territory Councils, Conferences will:

**1.1.1** Increase the engagement, retention and satisfaction of current Conference members by supporting their spiritual development and acknowledging, nourishing and celebrating their commitment to our Mission.

**1.1.2** Continue to support and enhance visitation by providing Vincentians with training and resources on the practice of personal engagement.

**1.1.3** Regularly reflect on and discuss the meaning of the Society's key values, promoting a culture of recognition of Christ in each other and in the people we serve.

### 1.2 Each Council and committee within the Society will review and improve its two way communication with members, Conferences, Councils and the wider community so that information is quickly, freely and effectively shared.

## FOCUS AREA 2: OUR FUTURE

*(Ensuring a young, innovative, unified and sustainable Society)*

### 2.1 All Councils will identify and use opportunities to communicate, reinforce and apply the principles of *One Society – a united voice* at all levels.

### 2.2 In consultation with all States and Territories the National Council will develop a consistent, nation-wide, Mission-focussed membership strategy for recruitment, induction, training and formation that will be implemented by the States and Territories and that will enable members, volunteers and staff to be fully engaged in, and be understanding of, the work and culture of the Society.

### 2.3 National Council will develop strategies to create a greater awareness within the Australian community of all that we do and why we are impelled by the Gospel to stand with people who are disadvantaged, isolated or marginalised.

### 2.4 With the support of National Council each State and Territory Council will:

**2.4.1** Significantly increase Conference membership by developing innovative ways to attract members of all ages (especially young members) from across the diverse Australian society.

**2.4.2** Develop, trial and review new and innovative models of Conference work that are consistent with, and reflective of, the spirit of The Rule and which could subsequently be introduced on a wider basis throughout the Society.

### 2.5 All State and Territory Councils will continue to support the work of the Retail Centres and fundraising activities; ensuring that the Society maintains the financial independence and sustainability necessary to fulfil the Mission.

## **FOCUS AREA 3: OUR WORK**

*(Serving Christ in the poor and working to shape a more just and compassionate community)*

### **3.1 National Council will work with all Councils to:**

**3.1.1** Implement a Reconciliation Action Plan with measurable targets for the participation of Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander people in the Society, so that we may work together to address injustice and dispossession.

**3.1.2** Support Vincentians to advocate with both government and non-government agencies for the human right to housing.

**3.1.3** Develop the community housing capacity of the Society, through both consolidation of current practices and innovation.

**3.1.4** Actively raise awareness, both within the Society and across the broader community, of homelessness and housing services, including alternatives and innovations.

### **3.2 National Council will:**

**3.2.1** Enable and support Vincentians to engage in grass-roots advocacy for social justice, ensuring that this advocacy is guided by rigorous standards of research and policy consistency.

**3.2.2** Continue to conduct high profile campaigns to raise awareness of issues of social injustice.

**3.2.3** Continue to actively support our brothers and sisters across the global Vincentian network while strategically influencing the direction and development of the Vincentian Mission throughout the world.

### **End Note**

This Plan will be actively monitored by National Council over the next four years by reviewing strategic progress at all National Council meetings and taking account of the outcomes of the 2017 Regional Presidents Congress.

The Plan will also be reviewed annually by National Council to ensure it remains a living guidance document.

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