Our conference members and volunteers provided over $11.6 million of emergency assistance to adults and children in their local communities.

Our Vinnies Shops provided material aid valued at $2 million to people in need and over $13.5 million was made available to conferences for community assistance programs.

Our 240 Vinnies Youth members provided children’s activities such as Roadshows, Kids’ Camps and Kids’ Days Out to over 350 disadvantaged children and teenagers.

With the assistance of 1,150 volunteers, our six Soup Van Operations provided 256,672 meals this year.

Our Education Programs provided over 6,600 study hours to 175 students, from a diverse range of backgrounds.

Our Box Hill Call Centre received 44,324 calls for assistance this year, averaging 182 calls per day.

Often our greatest impact cannot be measured. Taking the time to meet people in their homes. Restoring a person’s dignity over a shared meal. Taking utmost care to upcycle goods in our Vinnies Shops. Ours is a community based on giving to people in need, wherever the need may be. Thank you, Victoria, for supporting our mission.
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 St Vincent de Paul 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 VALUES
• Commitment
• Compassion
• Respect
• Integrity
• Empathy
• Advocacy
• Courage

Patron of the St Vincent de Paul Society Victoria Inc.
The official Patron of the St Vincent de Paul Society Victoria Inc. is The Governor of Victoria, The Honourable Linda Dessau AM.

OUR HANDS AT WORK
The hand of Christ that blesses the cup
The hand of suffering that receives the cup
The hand of love that offers the cup

Annual Report Editorial Team
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CONTENT: St Vincent de Paul Society Victoria Inc. Communications & Marketing Manager, Haley Price
DESIGN: Bile Visual Communications Group
PRINTING: Doran Printing
PHOTOGRAPHY: Consent is required to reproduce images within this report. Please note generic online library images have been featured to protect the identity of the people we assist.

The St Vincent de Paul Society Victoria Inc.’s Annual Report editorial team would like to thank the vast community of writers and photographers who have contributed to capturing our year in review.
ABOUT US

“Let us do without hesitation whatever good lies at our hands.”

Blessed Frederic Ozanam
Founder, St Vincent de Paul Society

ABOUT THE ST VINCENT DE PAUL SOCIETY

The St Vincent de Paul Society and its wide network of volunteers provide practical frontline support, advocacy and friendship for the most vulnerable members of the community. Key services include home visitation; regional assistance centres; youth programs; soup vans; assistance for asylum seekers and refugees; programs for people experiencing mental illness; education and tutoring; overseas development programs; and a range of accommodation and social services through VincentCare Victoria.

Volunteer service is the backbone of the St Vincent de Paul Society. The Society has a number of dedicated members, all who volunteer their time to undertake a range of community support activities at a local level (conference), semi-regional level (regional), regional level (central), and state level (state). There are also a number of volunteers who form part of collaborative state and national committees, specific Society works and also service the Vinnies Shops.

The St Vincent de Paul Society in Victoria has more than 3,458 members and 8,660 other volunteers. In Australia, there are 19,950 members and 38,025 volunteers. Internationally, the Society operates in 150 countries and has over 800,000 members and volunteers.

Our core services

The Society’s members, volunteers and employees reach out and serve the most vulnerable in our community through:

**Home Visitation**
Visiting people in their homes, we extend the hand of friendship, material aid and offer practical support to people who seek our assistance. In some rural areas, help is provided through a local conference assistance centre.

**Vinnies Youth**
Supporting and encouraging young people in schools, universities and youth conferences to be active in assisting people in need in their local communities and learning the skills of advocacy.

**Soup Vans**
Offering meals, friendship and referral services to people living on the streets or in insecure or unsafe accommodation. The first of the six Soup Van Operations commenced in Fitzroy in 1975.

**Refugees, Asylum Seekers & Migrants**
Providing a range of services to support and assist refugees, asylum seekers and migrants to rebuild their lives and establish a home in their new country.

**Compeer**
Supporting one-to-one friendships between caring volunteers and people living with mental illness, through regular contact and activities.

**Vinnies Shops**
Providing quality clothing, furniture and household goods to people in need who are being supported by their local conference. Donated goods not required for supporting people in need are offered for sale to the public and the revenue generated supports local conference work.

**Education & Tutoring**
Assisting students from a wide range of backgrounds and ethnic groups to embrace and develop their educational experience through reading and tutoring programs.

**VincentCare Victoria**
Established in 2003 by the Society to provide a range of accommodation and social services to people who are experiencing hardship throughout metropolitan and regional Victoria. VincentCare has developed a service delivery model known as ‘hubs’. Each hub comprises a different mix of accommodation, support and health services driven by the needs of the catchment population. These include:
- Hume Community Hub
- Inner Melbourne Community Hub
- Northern Community Hub
- Seniors Living Hub
- Social Enterprises Hub
STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

UNITED IN STRATEGY AND INNOVATION

The St Vincent de Paul Society Victoria Inc. is now in the second year of implementing its guiding governance document, Strategic Direction 2015-2019, *Better Serving People in Need*. The four key focus areas include:

1. **SPIRITUALITY & SUSTAINABILITY**
   - Building a unified, spiritual, vibrant and sustainable Society.

2. **SERVICE & MEMBERSHIP**
   - Exploring the Society’s responses to those we serve to improve the effectiveness of our services.
   - Ensuring a strong, effective collective group of people who are competent, trained and empowered to fulfil our mission.

3. **GOVERNANCE & COMMUNICATION**
   - Building strong and effective organisational structures and communication processes through investment in information and communications technology.

4. **ADVOCACY & PARTNERSHIPS**
   - Working to shape a more just and compassionate Society in partnership with like-minded organisations and providing a voice for the voiceless.
MESSAGE FROM THE STATE PRESIDENT

With over 12,000 members and volunteers the St Vincent de Paul Society continues to provide essential assistance to people across Victoria.

Continuing to fulfill the mission of the St Vincent de Paul Society has been our objective and focus throughout the 2015-2016 financial year.

It is important that we seek to better understand the needs of the people we serve, to develop our capabilities and resources, and continue to live out our calling as members of 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.

This financial year, State Council has progressed a number of initiatives and programs aligned with the Society’s Strategic Direction 2015-2019, Better Serving People in Need.

The Social Justice & Advocacy Committee has made significant contributions to the work of members throughout the year and also nationally through The Ache for Home report, published by the Society’s National Council in March 2016. This attracted significant media attention and helped to elevate the issue of homelessness and housing insecurity within Australia.

The Society is collaborating with VincentCare Victoria on an innovative housing project, HomeDirect, which will assist up to 150 families or individuals experiencing housing stress to secure stable accommodation. This will be achieved by securing head leases on rental properties throughout Victoria and assisting the transition to independent living. State Council has committed up to $1.3 million per annum for three years to support this project, which was partially funded by revenue generated by participants in the 2016 Vinnies CEO Sleepout.

State Council initiated Emeritus Vincentians in recognition of long-serving Society members who are no longer active in the work of their conferences, but who wish to retain a bond with the Vincentian family. To date 242 have been honoured.

A values-based Vincentian Leadership Program, established in 2014, was conducted at level 1 (30 participants) and level 2 (23 participants) for members and employees during 2015-2016, including interstate participants from New South Wales, Northern Territory and Queensland. The program was developed and delivered in partnership with De Paul University in Chicago, USA.

State Council commissioned a Membership Services Review, the findings and recommendations of which were presented to State Council early in August 2016. This review will help us to remain at the forefront of delivering best practice membership support models and facilitate continued innovation.

A significant focus for State Council during the year has been on governance. The Governance Committee has revised the Privacy Policy and the Code of Conduct for Members, both of which have been approved by State Council, published and disseminated.

State Council officially welcomed Kevin O’Callaghan as President of Eastern Central Council and farewelled Legal Advisor Brendan McCarthy, who has provided valuable advice to State Council.

The Society’s Chief Executive Officer, Cam Battaglia, departed in September 2015. Following Cam’s departure, VincentCare Victoria’s Chief Executive Officer, John Blewonski accepted additional responsibilities in the interim until an appointment was made. We thank John for working closely and constructively with State Council during his seven months as Acting Chief Executive Officer.

After a rigorous recruitment process, it was with pleasure that State Council announced the appointment of Susan Cattermole to the role of Chief Executive Officer for the St Vincent de Paul Society Victoria Inc. Susan commenced her new role on 26 April 2016 and brings a wealth of experience, professionalism and enthusiasm to the role.

I would like to thank fellow members of State Council and the Senior Executive Group for their dedicated efforts and support throughout the year.

I also thank our donors, benefactors and supporters; with your continuing generosity we are transforming the lives of disadvantaged and marginalised members of our community who seek the Society’s assistance.

Michael Liddy
State President
Since joining the St Vincent de Paul Society on the 26 April 2016 I have taken the opportunity to experience our services on the frontline and have been truly inspired every step of the way.

The diverse work of our members and volunteers, and the stories of how we help people in our communities, are a testament to the Vincentian spirit on which we are founded. The Society’s strengths are reflected in the commitment, care and compassion of those who willingly give their time to serve people in need.

During the 2015-2016 financial year our conference members undertook in excess of 130,000 home visits across Victoria and provided assistance to the monetary value of $11.6 million. Much of this was spent on food, which continues to be a major, basic need for the people we assist. The introduction of the Vinnies Material Aid Gift Card has also assisted in providing $806,207 in material aid directly through Vinnies Shops.

The financial results of the Society for the year saw our annual revenue increase to $50.9 million and deliver a surplus of $1.8 million (prior to consolidation). To ensure the long-term sustainability of our revenue streams during the year, the Society committed to ongoing investment in both the Vinnies Shops network and the Society’s fundraising and marketing capabilities. This has included existing shop refurbishments, and the opening of three new ones, as well as investment in our stakeholder communication through increasing our digital presence and raising the profile of our bequest and donor programs. In meeting the growth in need of those we work with, the Society provided an increase in assistance of $1 million in 2015-2016.

Our work also relies heavily on the generosity of our donors. During the course of the year we have again been overwhelmed with support given by the Victorian public, corporate donors and participants in the Vinnies CEO Sleepout. Each year we benefit from financial donations, gifts in kind, food, clothing, furniture and homewares, which enable us to support our Vinnies Shops and other works of the Society.

I would like to acknowledge and express the utmost gratitude to every individual and organisation that has assisted us to continue our important work in the community.

Over the past year we have achieved many things and continue to lay the foundations for a sustainable future. Poverty remains a real challenge to many people in our community living on fixed incomes and experiencing increased living costs. The ongoing work of the Society plays a key role in preventing homelessness, addressing inequalities and supporting individuals to overcome disadvantage.

Our advocacy work, particularly in the area of the cost of utilities, remains strong. Our disconnection report, Households in the Dark, attracted significant media activity which is indicative of the economic hardship facing our most vulnerable citizens.

In the 2015-2016 financial year we have seen further growth in the area of youth and education; momentum is growing with our Mini Vinnies, youth conferences and other youth works. These activities are helping us to build a thriving young Vincentian community to carry on the tradition of our founders in offering a hand up and breaking the cycle of disadvantage for many young people.

We have also continued to invest in the completion of our program to have over 12,000 staff, members and volunteers complete Working with Children Checks and National Police Checks. This has been a commitment to ensure we protect vulnerable people with whom we come into contact on a regular basis. We wish to thank all of our volunteers and members for their participation in this project.

I would like to take the opportunity to recognise the contribution of our small number of talented staff members who work in our shops, support our members and volunteers, and provide much of the corporate support to our assistance programs.

We are now in the second year of our current Strategic Plan and the coming year will see us building on our achievements to date. This will include expanding our services in partnership with VincentCare Victoria and other like-minded partners, growing and developing support for members speaking out against injustice and increasing the footprint of our Vinnies Shops. We are confident that these actions will further position us to respond to the challenges that lie ahead.

Susan Cattermole
Chief Executive Officer
GOVERNANCE & MANAGEMENT

The St Vincent de Paul Society is a lay Catholic organisation made up of over 12,000 members and volunteers as well as a small number of staff.

In Victoria, the Society is governed by State Council consisting of 14 members, representing the members and volunteers, and overseeing the strategic direction of the Society.

STATE COUNCIL

The 14 members of State Council are made up of eight elected members and up to a further seven appointments that may be made by the State President (at the time of this report six appointments have been made). The term of office for elected members is for up to four years with retirements occurring at any time during the year.

In addition State Council relies on external expertise for specific roles. Advisers are appointed and attend State Council as required to assist our work in legal, risk management, spiritual and other special areas.
The St Vincent de Paul Society has volunteer committees to oversee and assist the work of specific areas of service within the organisation. The committees provide advice and recommendations to the Society’s State Council and Executive, so informed decisions can be made for ongoing policy, strategic and operational development.

ADVISORY COMMITTEES TO STATE COUNCIL

Audit, Risk & Compliance
This committee provides assistance to the Society’s State Council in fulfilling its corporate governance and oversight responsibilities in relation to financial reporting, internal control structure, risk management systems, and the external and internal audit function.

Finance
This committee’s primary role is to monitor and review the effectiveness of controls in the areas of operational and balance sheet risk, legal/regulatory compliance and financial reporting. The overriding objective is to provide a review of budgeting, financial and other information provided by management. The committee provides advice on any specific financial proposals which occur, is responsible for overseeing the development of treasury policy and monitoring its operation to ensure that an effective policy of delegated authorities is in place and that it is effectively monitored. The committee also advises on business risk management.

Governance
The purpose of the committee is to ensure that State Council fulfils its legal, ethical and functional responsibilities and facilitates the Board in its work of governance through governance policy development, training programs for State Councillors and monitoring of State Council activities.

Membership & Leadership
This committee ensures that the Society remains an effective force in its service to people who are disadvantaged and marginalised in our community. It oversees the programs for the recruitment, induction and ongoing training of new and existing members in all Victorian conferences. It is also responsible to State Council for preserving the Society’s ethos, mission and spirituality for its members.

Overseas Development
This committee provides advice to State Council on all matters relating to our responsibilities in providing support and assistance to Vincentians in developing countries of the Asia-Pacific region. The committee is charged with the responsibility of ensuring that the three major support programs Twinning, Assist a Student and Projects continue to grow and develop, with support from the Society and its members.

Refugees, Asylum Seekers & Migrants
This committee seeks to promote a sense of compassion and dignity towards new settlers while also providing a range of support services, advocacy and material assistance as people rebuild their lives in a new country.

Social Justice & Advocacy
This committee’s purpose is to engender in the Society’s members the recognition, understanding and appreciation of social justice issues as they arise in the day-to-day work of the Society. It assists State Council to be an effective force at all levels, for the promotion of social justice in Victoria and part of national social justice activities in Australia.

Soup Van
This committee reports to State Council for all soup van operations and makes recommendations for the improvement, efficiency and best practice of the Vinnies Soup Van Program in Victoria.

The committee monitors vehicle safety and maintenance, financial expenditure and facilities management including locations, food handling compliance and other regulations. It also develops and maintains a Strategic Plan, annually reviews each soup van, ensures policies, procedures and instructions are in place and observed.

State Youth Team
This committee provides strategic planning for Vinnies Youth initiatives as well as reporting on activities and discussing issues relevant to the Society’s youth members. The team is chaired by State Council’s Youth Representatives and comprises youth representatives from all central councils. All initiatives developed by the team are actioned through the Youth & Development team.
GOVERNANCE & MANAGEMENT

CORPORATE STRUCTURE

ST VINCENT DE PAUL SOCIETY VICTORIA INC.

State Council

VINCENTCARE VICTORIA
Board of Directors

VINCENTCARE COMMUNITY HOUSING

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
St Vincent de Paul Society Victoria Inc.

Membership & Development
Vinnies Shops
Compeer
Finance, Information Communication & Technology & Facilities
Human Resources
Marketing & Fundraising
Policy & Research
Internal Audit & Risk Management
Mission & Spirituality

Hume Community Hub
Inner Melbourne Community Hub
Northern Community Hub
Seniors Living Hub
Social Enterprises Hub
Corporate Services
Internal Audit
Service Quality & Integration

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
VincentCare Victoria
The Senior Executive Group of the St Vincent de Paul Society in Victoria is responsible for managing nine separate departments and guiding the strategic direction of the organisation. These leaders report directly to the Chief Executive Officer, Susan Cattermole, and provide monthly departmental updates for the Society’s State Council. We are proud to have brought together a talented group of industry professionals, who are committed to collaboration and ensuring the organisation’s business activities support our goal to help people in need.
### TOTALS

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<tr>
<td>Vinnies Shops</td>
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### NORTH WESTERN

- **6** Regions
- **42** Conferences
- **414** Members
- **135** Associate Members
- **15** Mini Vinnies Conf.
- **7** College Conf.
- **2** Youth Conf.
- **17** Vinnies Shops

**Area Covered:** West Victoria

### WESTERN

- **5** Regions
- **55** Conferences
- **613** Members
- **134** Associate Members
- **21** Mini Vinnies Conf.
- **6** College Conf.
- **4** Youth Conf.
- **18** Vinnies Shops

**Area Covered:** West Metro
**NORTHERN**
- 3 Regions
- 30 Conferences
- 301 Members
- 55 Associate Members
- 15 Mini Vinnies Conferences
- 1 College Conferences
- 1 Youth Conferences
- 8 Vinnies Shops

**Area Covered:** North Metro

**NORTH EASTERN**
- 5 Regions
- 36 Conferences
- 416 Members
- 90 Associate Members
- 5 Mini Vinnies Conferences
- 4 College Conferences
- 18 Vinnies Shops

**Area Covered:** North East Victoria

**GIPPSLAND**
- 3 Regions
- 19 Conferences
- 318 Members
- 118 Associate Members
- 4 Mini Vinnies Conferences
- 9 College Conferences
- 18 Vinnies Shops

**Area Covered:** South East Victoria

**SOUTHERN**
- 5 Regions
- 47 Conferences
- 680 Members
- 188 Associate Members
- 19 Mini Vinnies Conferences
- 7 College Conferences
- 3 Youth Conferences
- 16 Vinnies Shops

**Area Covered:** South Metro

**EASTERN**
- 7 Regions
- 65 Conferences
- 716 Members
- 329 Associate Members
- 28 Mini Vinnies Conferences
- 9 College Conferences
- 16 Vinnies Shops

**Area Covered:** East Metro
The Eastern Central Council covers the regions of Box Hill, Camberwell, Knox-Sherbrooke, Melbourne, Ringwood, Waverley and Yarra Valley. It is a diverse area of service, which assists people living in rural communities and high density areas.

Over the course of the 2015-2016 financial year the Eastern Central Council has provided over $1,764,500 in material assistance to local residents in need.

Pressing social issues in this region include:

- A lack of affordable housing
- High utility bills
- Jobs for unskilled workers, which is particularly vital for those exiting the prison system

It has been a successful year in the Eastern Central Council, marked by several major achievements and initiatives. These include:

- A scholarship program was launched in the Dandenong Hills area to assist struggling parents with educational expenses. Fifteen primary schools with 72 students received a total of $16,845 in assistance and five secondary schools with 35 students received $8,380 in assistance.
- One conference hosted a very successful Winter Appeal raising $7,620 and delivered almost a tonne of donated food together with blankets, doonas and winter clothing to the Collingwood Assistance Centre.
- As a regular activity, one conference conducts a weekly fruit and vegetable run to provide fresh produce to over 20 families with children under 16 years of age.

Eastern Central Council members also took the time to assist a young woman for over six months who had been a victim of domestic abuse. She moved into another house only to be confronted with further mental and physical abuse. At this point, the conference sourced a unit in regional Victoria, members took a trailer load of her goods to her new residence, and the local Vinnies Shop provided new bedding and clothing. The move to a safe environment has had a profound effect on her life and health, and is a proud outcome for the Society.

Thank you to all the dedicated members who have provided outstanding service to the people we serve over the past 12 months.

Kevin O’Callaghan
Eastern Central Council President
NORTHERN CENTRAL COUNCIL

The Northern Central Council covers the regions of Brunswick, Diamond Valley and Preston. The area stretches, in each of these three regions, from Brunswick to Fawkner, Alphington to Diamond Creek, Thornbury to Whittlesea.

Over the course of the 2015-2016 financial year the Northern Central Council has provided over $921,834 in material assistance to local residents in need.

This is made possible by the generosity of conference members, office bearers and volunteers who give their time and energy to meet the needs of people who ask for help. It is also supported by ongoing financial and material donations from the community.

Pressing social issues in this region include:
• Pay day lending
• Inadequate pension amounts
• Public housing availability
• Money management counselling

It has been a successful year in the Northern Central Council, marked by several major achievements and initiatives. These include:
• Moving celebrations for the recognition of our local Emeritus Vincentians.
• Recognition of long service to the Society at our Festival Mass.
• Introduction of education grants for families with students entering Year 7.
• Establishment of scholarships and growth of our Reading Club in West Heidelberg.
• Diamond Valley Community Sleepout raised funds in support of local homelessness services.
• Supporting a community lunch and a breakfast club in a local primary school, run by the Anglican church.
• Strong support for the Shillong Dispensary project, and increased adoption of the Twinning and Assist a Student programs.
• Healthy discussion and modelling to improve assistance given during home visits.

The dedication of our members to fully support the needs of people we visit is a true witness to the gospel values we espouse.

Kevin McMahon
Northern Central Council President

SOUTHERN CENTRAL COUNCIL

The Southern Central Council covers the regions of Berwick, Dandenong, Hampton, Mentone and Mornington.

Over the course of the 2015-2016 financial year the Southern Central Council has provided over $2,189,682 in material assistance to local residents in need.

Pressing social issues in this region include:
• Unemployment
• Homelessness
• Single parent families
• People seeking asylum

It has been a successful year in the Southern Central Council, marked by several major achievements and initiatives. These include:
• There are now close to 2,000 visits undertaken each month from Hampton to Langwarrin and across to Pakenham.
• The work undertaken with refugees and people seeking refugee status is supporting the Society’s commitment to social justice.
• The introduction of the HomeDirect Housing project. This excellent initiative allows members to assist with placing people in need in secure accommodation.

Our Society members undertake a range of practical works with Syrian and Afghan families, as well as people from other lands, which strengthens our understanding of their specific needs. This includes seeking citizenship, which has been highlighted as an integral focus area by the Refugee Council of Australia.

The election of new Presidents in the Berwick Region and the Dandenong Region, has produced a new dynamic, consistent with the challenge of the growth corridors throughout Hampton Park, Berwick, Hallam and Cranbourne.

I would like to thank them for giving their time to the Society.

We are indebted to the Membership & Development team for their support in organising our Office Bearers’ Day in Aspendale and the many training workshops for our members. Thank you.

Each year we are sincerely grateful to our members for their ongoing support and assistance to people in need. Bless you all.

Michael Cashman
Southern Central Council President
CENTRAL COUNCILS

WESTERN CENTRAL COUNCIL

The Western Central Council covers the regions of Altona, Broadmeadows, Central Highlands, Essendon and greater Geelong, stretching from Seymour to Torquay.

Over the course of the 2015-2016 financial year the Western Central Council has provided over $1,790,236 in material assistance to local residents in need.

Pressing social issues in this region include:

- Increase in callers impacted by domestic/family violence.
- Individuals and families who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless.
- People who are struggling to achieve food security – they simply do not have enough money to pay their bills, rent and utilities, and then put food on the table.

It has been a successful year in the Western Central Council, marked by several major achievements and initiatives.

These include:

- Conferences proactively assisting families; providing more resources to ensure hope is restored to people’s lives; and building strong referral networks with other welfare agencies to support a holistic approach to their care.
- Prioritising training and development with members, which has included offering Child Protection training and Members Skills and Assessments. These sessions are well attended and further maximise the abilities of conference members to provide exceptional service to the community.
- Participation in two important trial programs:
  1. Providing new furniture to families in need through a collaborative program with Super AMart; and
  2. HomeDirect Housing project in conjunction with VincentCare, which provides rental lease subsidies for people seeking to secure permanent accommodation.

Throughout the year our conferences have received many messages of thanks from the people we have assisted. As Western Central Council President, I extend my thanks to all members, volunteers and staff who have worked so hard to ensure the mission and values of the Society are upheld.

Wendy Buchanan
Western Central Council President

GIPPSLAND CENTRAL COUNCIL

The Gippsland Central Council covers the eastern suburbs of Melbourne to the New South Wales border, and from the Great Dividing Ranges and Mount Baw Baw in the north, to the Bass Strait Coast and Wilson’s Promontory in the south.

Over the course of the 2015-2016 financial year the Gippsland Central Council has provided over $1,067,957 in material assistance to local residents in need.

Pressing social issues in this region include:

- Shortage of public and private affordable housing. People often relocate from the CBD to find local accommodation in rooming houses; however, this is often sub-standard and they return to Melbourne.
- People sleeping rough in parks, buildings and couch surfing.
- Abuse of drugs including methamphetamine and other addictive issues including gambling and alcoholism.

It has been a successful year in the Gippsland Central Council, marked by several major achievements and initiatives.

These include:

- Meals: Providing a regular source of food for people in need through the Vinnies Soup Van, Conference Assistance Centres and Neighbourhood Houses, which are partnered with conferences.
- Maffra Market: The conference operates the market once a month between the hours of 9.00am and 10.30am, which provides funding for conference welfare activities.
- Mick’s Kitchen: St Michael’s parishioners, teachers from Lavalla College and conference members prepare meals for people in need on Thursday nights.
- Prison Visits: Members of the Sale Conference attend the local prison to assist inmates in connecting with their families and often care for their children during meetings. The Society also provides Christmas presents for inmates. In 2015, 820 presents were provided.
- Dairy industry crisis: Conference members are supporting local dairy farmers who are having difficulty coping with their young families, due to tougher industry pricing.

I sincerely thank all members for their continuing support and care to people in need.

Doug Knez
Gippsland Central Council President
NORTH WESTERN CENTRAL COUNCIL

The North Western Central Council has an extensive footprint across Victoria, covering regions including Avoca-Tyrrell, Ballarat, Corangamite, Glenelg, Sunraysia and Wimmera.

Over the course of the 2015-2016 financial year the North Western Central Council has provided over $1,690,117 in material assistance to local residents in need.

Pressing social issues in this region include:

- **Lure of affordable housing**: Many country towns with declining populations are magnets for those seeking affordable housing. These people are often ill-equipped to cope with the demands of living in regional areas.
- **Illicit drugs**: Illicit drugs are impacting on the ability of some parents to properly care for themselves and provide for their children.
- **Lack of services in smaller towns**: The gradual withdrawal of rail and bus transport has resulted in the need for residents to own vehicles and often pay higher prices for fuel. Young people are also required to leave home for further education, thus incurring living away from home costs and isolation from family and friends.

It has been a successful year in the North Western Central Council, marked by several major achievements and initiatives. These include:

- **Assistance Centres**: Due to an increased demand on our services, Regional Centres have been set up in Sunraysia, Corangamite, Avoca Tyrell and Ballarat to provide assistance.
- **No Interest Loans Scheme (NILS)**: Since the inception of the Ballarat NILS program, the team has issued over 1,000 loans. This scheme allows people struggling to solve an immediate financial problem with a program of structured repayments and an opportunity to borrow again.
- **Scotsburn Fires**: The Ballarat Conference has been working with families who lost their homes in this fire.
- **Drought**: With the support of the Ballarat Diocese we have responded to increasing demand on our services in drought-affected areas of Sunraysia, Avoca Tyrell and Wimmera.
- **Dairy industry crisis**: Conference members are supporting local dairy farmers who are having difficulty surviving with their young families, due to tougher industry pricing.

Thank you to all members for your continuing support and advice throughout the year. Our work continues to make a difference for which the people we assist are sincerely grateful.

Marie O’Brien
North Western Central Council President

NORTH EASTERN CENTRAL COUNCIL

The North Eastern Central Council covers towns stretching along the Murray River from Corryong to Swan Hill, and Mansfield to Castlemaine.

Over the course of the 2015-2016 financial year the North Eastern Central Council has provided over $2,199,762 in material assistance to local residents in need.

Pressing social issues in this region include:

- **Homelessness**: 63 people were counted sleeping rough in the bush between Shepparton and Mooroopna. The lack of social housing is a major problem with many others couch surfing, sleeping in cars, and crowding into homes of relatives and friends.
- **Dairy industry crisis**: The drop in the price of milk for dairy farmers is a challenge, particularly for those still paying off their mortgages. Conferences in Rochester, Numurkah and Kyabram have been prominent in galvanising their communities to support the farmers.
- **Impact on jobs**: A trend towards automating farm work and associated industries is posing a major re-training challenge for rural towns and cities. As farms increase in size, the population shrinks, with a big impact on the local culture and economy.

It has been a successful year in the North Eastern Central Council, marked by several major achievements and initiatives. These include:

- **Mini Vinnies**: Three new Mini Vinnies Conferences launched this year, with long-term plans to operate one in each Catholic Primary School in the Diocese.
- **Social Justice Research Centres**: Plans are underway to establish a trial Social Justice Research Centre in Shepparton. Due to the strong social justice culture in the Catholic High Schools in the Sandhurst Diocese we hope to recruit students from the local high schools, TAFE and university campuses to help parishes identify disadvantage in their communities.
- **Special Works**: A husband and wife duo (who are conference members in their early 80s), Sheila and Garth Bennett, realised the extent of domestic violence in the community and pioneered a 24-hour on-call domestic violence service. Today VincentCare manages this service, which handles 300 referrals annually.

Through our work the spirit of Frederic Ozanam continues to help people in practical ways. Thank you all for another year where you have brought hope to people and families in need.

Frank Purcell
North Eastern Central Council President

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AUDIT, RISK & COMPLIANCE

The Audit, Risk & Compliance Committee assists State Council in ensuring that strong governance is in place across the St Vincent de Paul Society so that risks are being managed and controls are working effectively.

The committee’s purpose is to advise State Council in its responsibilities for external financial reporting; maintaining its system of internal control; management of risk; internal and external audit procedures; compliance with laws and regulations; and adherence to internal policies. This excludes VincentCare Victoria, which has its own Risk Audit & Finance Committee.

TERMS OF REFERENCE

The committee’s Terms of Reference provides clarity on its authority, composition, meeting structure and responsibilities. As is the requirement, the Terms of Reference was reviewed again during this financial year. The committee’s Terms of Reference specify that membership of the Audit, Risk & Compliance Committee shall consist of no more than six members, including at least two members from State Council; one of which is the Society’s Treasurer & Corporate Secretary; and three externally appointed, appropriately qualified members. The chair of the committee is independent and must not be a member of State Council.

WORKING COOPERATIVELY

The committee works closely with the Society’s Finance Committee, with financial reporting and minutes of the Finance Committee meetings provided at all Audit, Risk & Compliance meetings. Each year, members of the Society’s Finance Committee and Audit, Risk & Compliance Committee meet together with members of VincentCare’s Risk Audit & Finance Committee and External Auditor, to review the end of year statutory financial accounts, and audit findings and recommendations.

ASSURANCE

The committee also assists in supporting a proactive risk management culture, together with a focus on risk-based auditing. This approach helps provide clarity and transparency, which assists in good decision making and the Society’s objectives being achieved.

Key achievements for the Audit, Risk & Compliance Committee for the financial year ending June 2016 include:

- Overseeing the year-end audit and consolidated statutory accounts for St Vincent de Paul Society Victoria Inc.; Society of St Vincent de Paul (Victoria); St Vincent de Paul Victoria Endowment Fund; VincentCare Victoria; and VincentCare Community Housing.
- Providing further oversight and assistance in the development of the Risk Management Framework and subsequent Risk Registers, which are all expected to be finalised during the next financial year.
- Review of internal audit reports and managing the oversight of senior management’s response and implementation to specific recommendations.
- Appointment of a new Internal Audit & Risk Manager who commenced in May 2016.
- Oversaw the introduction of a more focused risk-based approach to internal audit.
- Introduced improved transparent reporting by internal audit and the committee.

Marcia O’Neill
Chair, Audit, Risk & Compliance Committee
The Overseas Development Committee has faced many challenges in recent times as global instability, climate change and natural disasters impact so many countries.

The refugee crisis and terrorist attacks have been unprecedented in modern times. There are also staggering rates of violence, government corruption and human rights issues encountered on a daily basis.

Natural Disasters in Nepal, Vanuatu and Fiji have left a trail of destruction with many families still struggling to find permanent housing. It has been disappointing that a lack of planning and transparency has hindered the distribution of relief funds in these countries.

These horrific world events compound profoundly on those who face hardship, suffering, uncertainty and poverty in their lives. These are the people we are committed to helping.

TWINNING PARTNERSHIPS

The Twinning Partnerships program allows conferences to partner with developing countries and assist them to improve their lives, break the cycle of poverty and move towards self-sufficiency.

It is pleasing to report that Twinning Partnerships have now increased to 591 this year and $188,800 has been transferred to our Twins in neighbouring countries.

During special times such as Christmas and Easter our conferences provide additional support. This financial year we transferred $111,000.

PROJECTS

Members have responded very generously this year to a number of large Projects:

- Approval has been given to build a shop to raise funds for Southern Sudan. Unfortunately this Project has been delayed due to tribal unrest at the present time, but we hope to resume work on this soon.
- Approval has been given to build a medical facility in Lyngkhoi village 65kms from the city of Shillong, India. This very remote farming area is highly populated by surrounding villages who are currently experiencing inadequate medical support. An appeal is currently underway to raise $60,000 to provide a dedicated dispensary building in this region.
- Three major Projects in Pakistan with the School of Midwifery, the Centre for Academic Excellence, and the School for Youth Development received a total of $110,000. We contributed a further $12,704 to the Pakistan Housing Project.
- Recently we supported the Sri Lanka Light Up a Home project providing electricity to the homes of families in need for 12 months, at a cost of $24,000.
- Smaller Projects such as Cow and Goat Banks and small business loans have also been well supported. A total of $161,945 was provided in support of these key activities.

ASSIST A STUDENT

The Assist a Student program providing education sponsorships to disadvantaged children is highly valued and continues to support children whose parents are unable to provide funds for their education.

Strong emphasis was placed on increasing student scholarships this year, and it is pleasing to report that we managed to fund 2,213 sponsorships at a cost of $154,910. We gratefully acknowledge the support of private donors who see education as a pathway from poverty.

I also acknowledge the dedication of the Overseas Development Committee and thank conference members and donors, for without their passion and generosity, the level of assistance we provide would simply not be possible.

John O’Brien
Chair, Overseas Development Committee
ADVOCACY IN ACTION: EXPERIENCES OF BEING AN ASYLUM SEEKER

This story highlights a common scenario faced by refugees, asylum seekers and migrants in our community – their finances are so strained due to ingrained social disadvantage and it can often take just one incident to leave them in dire circumstances.

In early 2016, a local conference was asked to visit a family of asylum seekers, two parents and four children, living in the community on bridging visas.

The father had work rights and had been working; but needed to have an operation and was unable to generate income at the time. After the operation, the father was unable to work for three months. However, because he had been working, Immigration had cut off his Status Resolution Support Services payment (equivalent to 89 percent of Centrelink Special Benefits).

They asked the Society for help with back-to-school expenses. Through the Northern Central Council’s Year 7 education subsidy, the conference was able to help with providing textbooks, stationery and uniforms for the children. The conference also put them in contact with the school’s Welfare Officer to facilitate ongoing support.

They began to regularly call on the conference for food and to cover their utilities bills; but now their monthly rent was due and they feared being evicted. Their rent was $350 per week, leaving them with only $280 per week to cover food, clothing and utilities for six people.

In these sorts of scenarios, a number of key actions are considered by conference members to ensure families are well supported. These include:

• Firstly, secure their housing. Perhaps pay the rent up to their next payment date. Ask the real estate agent if they can pay fortnightly. Get them to CentrePay their rent.

• Make sure they are getting all their entitlements. Advocate to Centrelink and get a Centrelink social worker involved. Run through a budget with them and suggest ways they may be able to save money.

• Encourage them to draw on other services in the area for food parcels and vouchers to free up money for other living costs. Reassure them that they can call on the conference for food, clothing and furniture.

• Consider giving them a special treat, such as movie tickets, every so often, to raise their morale.

Remember: No work of charity is foreign to the Society.
The purpose of the Refugees, Asylum Seekers & Migrants Committee is to promote a sense of compassion and dignity towards new settlers, while also providing a range of support services, advocacy and material assistance.

While the terms refugee, asylum seeker and migrant are used interchangeably, there is a difference:

- An asylum seeker is any person who has sought protection as a refugee but whose claim for refugee status has not yet been assessed.
- A refugee is any person who, owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside their country of nationality and is unable, or owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail themselves of the protection of that country. (United Nations definition)
- A migrant is any person who has left their country of birth or place of usual residence and travelled to another country. This could be on a temporary basis (e.g., as international students or sponsored workers) or on a permanent basis (e.g., under family reunion or skilled worker). Due to changes in their circumstances, persons in any of these groups may need the assistance of the St Vincent de Paul Society.

There are three particularly pressing issues for the Refugees, Asylum Seekers & Migrants Committee, which include:

- Inhumane treatment of people who came to Australia seeking our protection.
- Inadequate income support and government services for asylum seekers and refugees living in the community.
- Problems faced by skilled workers and international students whose circumstances have changed threatening their visa status.

In seeking to address these issues, there were two key achievements for the committee this year:

- Reviewed the Terms of Reference.
- Developed a working relationship with State Council and the Social Justice & Advocacy Committee, which provides a means to convey the work of Refugees, Asylum Seekers & Migrants Committee.

**ADVOCATING FOR A BETTER FUTURE**

The treatment of asylum seekers in Australia is mostly determined by Federal Government policy. Though there was a change of Prime Minister in September, the Immigration Minister remained the same and so too did the policies.

At state level, local conferences have an important role to play in supporting the thousands of asylum seekers living in the community on 70-89 percent of what an Australian welfare recipient receives. Our members see the reality of these unfair policies as they are lived out in our local areas.

Unfortunately, there appears to be no end in sight; people have been forced to live like this for years. Over the last 12 months, the Immigration Department resolved 5.2 percent of cases. At that rate, people could be forced to live in legal limbo, increasingly reliant on charitable organisations for survival, for the next 15-20 years.

**GRATITUDE AND UNDERSTANDING IS UNIVERSAL**

On the whole, most people are very thankful for the assistance they receive, the relief it provides and the hope it brings, which provides an overwhelming sense of satisfaction for our members.

In the coming year, it is our goal to raise the profile of the Refugees, Asylum Seekers & Migrants Committee within the Society and in the broader community. We will also encourage more consistent and creative responses to the needs of refugees, asylum seekers and migrants.

Brenda Hubber
Chair, Refugees, Asylum Seekers & Migrants Committee
The purpose of the Social Justice & Advocacy Committee is to increase awareness and understanding of social justice issues as they arise in the day-to-day work of the Society. It assists the organisation to effectively promote issues of importance and to offer a voice for people who are often powerless to articulate their concerns.

There are three particularly pressing issues for the Social Justice & Advocacy Committee, which continue to impact vulnerable members of the community:

- Inadequate income for people we assist
- Lack of affordable housing
- Difficulties with budgeting and managing finances

KEY ACTIVITIES

In seeking to address these issues, there were a number of focus areas and key achievements for the committee in the 2015-2016 financial year:

- The Social Justice Forum in September 2015 included a survey to examine structural issues faced by low income and disadvantaged households in accessing services. This resulted in the publication of a report entitled Social Justice in Conferences: Perceived Challenges faced by people seeking assistance.
- The Energy Forum in Ballarat was highly successful and attracted over 60 conference members from local and outlying areas. The fact that the committee responded to requests to address regional as well as metropolitan areas was very well received.
- The booklet The Role of the Regional Social Justice Officer was developed and it is hoped that this publication will encourage regional councils to nominate a person to address social justice issues and provide a useful resource for those who may lack confidence in dealing with these issues.
- Production of Social Justice Speaking flyers that highlight key issues faced by the people we assist and provide essential information, useful tools and advice to conference members on the various support systems available. This year the flyers have focused on assisting people with back-to-school expenses, dealing with issues relating to utility bills as well as credit and credit providers. The Social Justice Speaking flyers are developed in conjunction with the Manager of Policy & Research and highlight the ongoing advocacy role undertaken by the Society.
- The compilation and analysis of survey data submitted by central councils led to a small advocacy campaign during the federal election, where conferences used this information to approach local candidates to question their plans for addressing the inadequacy of support and income for those on government benefits.

ADVOCACY IN ACTION: THE QUANDARY OF PAY DAY LOANS

Amanda’s story outlines a common problem experienced by vulnerable members of the community – exploitation by pay day lenders. It is a prime example of where the St Vincent de Paul Society’s advocacy work can help to change lives, with proactive assistance and sound advice.

Early in December 2015, on a visit to a woman who had been receiving assistance for approximately 10 years, conference members were saddened when she presented six loan contracts requiring immediate attention and payments.

On examination of the receipts, it was calculated that she owed $270 in interest on loans obtained from three different loan provider stores or ‘pay day lenders’.

The conference members learned that she had total trust in this means of raising money quickly and urgently. She stated that the staff at the pay day shops were really helpful and eager to offer her twice the amount she requested. She had no idea that the larger the sum, the larger the interest owed, and that each time she was unable to pay the interest due, the amount was then recalculated at 35 percent. Indeed, one of the providers’ annual interest rates appeared to be in excess of 400 percent.

On a return visit one week later, conference members checked in to see if she had paid the first two interest payments. Unfortunately, she had not been able to do so and as a result, the pay day lender was now threatening to sell the items she had pawned.

In an effort to assist, the conference engaged the Consumer Action Law Centre, which was a tremendous source of advice and assistance. The centre has a financial counsellor available through its MoneyHelp service, which provides advice about rights and options when people owe money; how to prioritise and manage debts; and a list of services and organisations which can help.

Amanda has a long way to go before becoming debt free and independent of pay day loan providers; however, she is well on her way, thanks to the connections and support provided by the local conference.

Margaret Gearon
Chair, Social Justice & Advocacy Committee
AMANDA IS WELL ON HER WAY TO BEING DEBT FREE THANKS TO THE LOCAL CONFERENCE
In May 2016 the national *Households in the Dark* report was launched which analysed and mapped approximately 200,000 electricity disconnections for non-payment in Victoria, South Australia, New South Wales and South East Queensland between July 2012 and July 2015.

This report was the first of its kind and explored when, where and why households are disconnected from electricity and where assistance needs to be better targeted. Six broad categories of postcode types were identified that are likely to have higher disconnection numbers. These postcodes have a higher proportion of:

1. Low income families experiencing housing stress
2. Median income families experiencing housing stress
3. Low to median income families with lower housing costs but greater transport costs
4. Low income small households (couples, sole persons and sole parents) experiencing housing stress
5. Small households with median income experiencing housing stress
6. Small households with low to median income with lower housing costs but greater transport costs

In Victoria of the top 50 disconnection postcodes, the following characteristics were identified:

**Housing Tenure**
- 62% had a higher number of renters than average
- 22% had a higher number of home buyers than average

**Household Income**
- 52% had a low household income defined as 10% less than the state’s median
- 28% had a high household income defined as 10% more than the state’s median

**Employment**
- 50% had a higher number of families where both parents are not working

**Housing Stress**
- 60% had more rental related housing stress than average

**Families**
- 70% had a higher number of sole parents than the average

- **Metropolitan postcode hotspots with more than one disconnection included:** Werribee, St Albans, Tarneit, Melbourne, Sydenham, Sunshine, Cranbourne East, Burnside and Melton
- **Rural & Regional postcode hotspots with more than one disconnection included:** Corio, Shepparton, Ballarat, Morwell, Warrnambool and Bendigo
The key goal of the Policy & Research unit is to undertake research and analysis that identifies and proposes solutions to the structural drivers of poverty and inequality within the Australian community.

Through our structured research program, the Society has built a unique area of expertise that is recognised by politicians, public servants, the energy industry and other key decision makers. Consequently, the Society participates in a number of energy industry and government forums and working groups, including the Victorian Government’s Ministerial Advisory Committee on Advanced Meters, COAG Energy Council Stakeholder Roundtable, AEMC Reliability Panel, AEMO’s Energy Markets Leaders Forum, AER’s Consumer Consultative Group and numerous energy industry customer forums and working groups.

SPECIALITY AREAS

- Continuing development of the relative price index: This research looks at changes in prices of goods and services and how these cost changes impact various households and living situations. This research links directly back to the emergency relief and material aid provided by the St Vincent de Paul Society’s conferences.
- Continued analysis of the changes in gas and electricity pricing in the national energy market: The Society documents these changes and its impact on households, with regard to both price and the new emerging products and services being offered, as well as how these are impacting vulnerable households.

ENERGY PRICING REPORTS

The Policy & Research unit produced six state-based Energy Pricing Reports that highlight changes in gas and electricity prices, and the corresponding impacts in Victoria, New South Wales, Queensland, South Australia, Tasmania and the Australian Capital Territory.

These reports also included spreadsheets that are available for use by the general public to gain a better understanding of the energy market.

These reports have attracted significant media attention and provide the basis for advocacy action to improve the outcomes for low income and disadvantaged households.

HOUSEHOLDS IN THE DARK REPORT

The national Households in the Dark report mapped disconnections by postcode across Victoria, New South Wales, Queensland and South Australia. This disconnection report is the first of its kind, showing detailed household characteristics and specific postcodes with higher disconnection rates.

The Households in the Dark report also attracted extensive national media coverage.

ADVOCATING FOR A BETTER FUTURE

Structural change that is occurring in the Australian economy has placed significant new expectations on households. This has occurred in two distinct ways:

- The changing nature of the labour market in Australia has resulted in rising levels of income insecurity. Due to the deregulation and commercialisation of many services, consumers now have to shop around to avoid paying premium prices. This is challenging for many people who are disadvantaged.
- These structural changes have often resulted in a mismatch of traditional social supports undermining their effectiveness and relevance in the changing economy.

Our goal for the Policy & Research unit is to continue to build our knowledge base and advocacy efforts, while proposing viable solutions for vulnerable individuals. This will be done in a collegiate manner working constructively with industry, government and other community welfare agencies.

The Society’s Policy & Research unit acknowledges and is grateful for the working partnership and support of Alviss Consulting on all state-based energy pricing reports and, this year, the well-received Households in the Dark report.

Gavin Dufty
Manager, Policy & Research
97 PERCENT OF OUR WORKFORCE ARE VOLUNTEERS
Our success as an organisation is built on the capability and commitment of our people. With a view to strengthening our capacity to attract, develop and retain our paid and volunteer workforce we spent considerable effort this year reviewing our Human Resources processes.

OUR WORKFORCE
Along with the entire community, we face the challenge of having an ageing workforce and have commenced our efforts in achieving our vision of having generations working side-by-side. This is important as it will ensure critical knowledge and history is passed on, and will work toward enabling our services to continue throughout Victoria for many years to come. Our recruitment function and Human Resources team will play a strategic role in achieving this.

SAFETY & WELLBEING
Safety continued to remain an important focus of our activity this year. The St Vincent de Paul Society is committed to employment and safety practices that achieve minimal harm (both physical and psychological) to any persons within our workplaces. To this end, our Safety & Wellbeing strategy was refreshed and a revised assurance program was implemented. The Safety team has been successful in raising the profile and importance of safety across the organisation and promoting a positive safety culture.

The team also engaged the workforce in various wellbeing initiatives throughout the year. Providing information and resources, scheduling seminars, providing flu-shots and creating opportunities for participation in physical activities; all done with a view to provide a prevention-focused pathway for our members, volunteers and staff to improve their health and wellbeing.

CHILD PROTECTION
Our efforts in fostering a child-safe environment in all of our operations continued with the rollout of Child Protection training for members, volunteers and staff across Victoria. We conducted several sessions throughout Victoria and over 150 members of our workforce completed this training.

NATIONAL VOLUNTEER WEEK
Each year we celebrate National Volunteer Week to acknowledge the generous contribution of our nation’s volunteers. The Society has over 12,000 volunteers and we take time to say thank you to the people who give their time to make the Society great.

This year, the theme of the event was Give Happy, Live Happy promoting the positive impact that volunteering has on an individual’s wellbeing. We were able to acknowledge our volunteers with certificates, service awards, and morning and afternoon tea celebrations (where plenty of tea and cake was consumed). We thank all our volunteers for their support and work throughout the year.

ONLINE RECRUITMENT
We moved a large part of our staff recruitment functions online enabling us to provide a far more efficient service and experience to candidates and hiring managers alike.

Looking ahead, we are excited to continue building upon our platform to provide a great service to our organisation and therefore, the people we serve.

“The strongest bond of true friendship is charity, and the exercise of good charity is the practice of good works.”

Blessed Frederic Ozanam
Founder, St Vincent de Paul Society

Cassandra Hatton
General Manager, Human Resources
In Victoria, we are privileged to work alongside and support over 12,000 volunteers in the St Vincent de Paul Society. Every contribution is appreciated and makes a difference in hundreds of local communities. Here are just a few of the many stories representative of our volunteer workforce.

**OUR VOLUNTEERS**

**MEET PAUL...**

I am cognisant that all social and community programs can only operate on the goodwill, enthusiasm, empathy and care of members of the community. It is part of our social fabric and our willingness to roll up our sleeves and provide assistance where required. Volunteering is vital to give something back to the community, it's a small commitment of your social and family life to get involved.

**Why I volunteer**

I have been very fortunate in my life, in my upbringing, professionally and financially. Being a volunteer with the St Vincent de Paul Society is my small contribution and gratitude to society. I enjoy the interaction with the people we see, the camaraderie and vibrance of my fellow volunteers and I am very appreciative of their efforts. Sunday nights on the soup van is a very big part of my life now, I wouldn’t know what to do if I wasn’t on the van.

**A time that I feel I have made a difference**

Being thanked continuously for going out on the soup van by the people we assist is music to my ears. The banter about football, cricket, all sorts of sport and other topics of conversation we have is one of the most rewarding aspects of the night. Just listening and talking to people is great and, for some, it’s the only conversation they engage in. Being there for them and sharing some of our views on topics of interest, makes a difference to their day and my night. I am forever grateful that Vinnies gave me the opportunity to volunteer.

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**MEET GERALDINE...**

Geraldine is the Manager of Vinnies Mont Albert and a dedicated and committed volunteer. Geraldine is rarely seen without her hat (unless it’s hair appointment day on Thursdays or the annual Christmas party) and she is a well-known personality in the Hamilton Street shopping area. Everyone adores Geraldine! Vinnies Mont Albert is a busy store with a large team of hard-working and loyal volunteers but Geraldine seems to make it all happen effortlessly and always has time for a friendly word with customers and her team alike. She’s been volunteering at the shop for almost 17 years, and pre-dates the present location back to the old Vinnies shop in Surrey Hills. In fact, Geraldine has been part of the St Vincent de Paul Society since 1993.

**Why I volunteer**

I just love it – we are family and everyone gets on so well (mostly)! It’s not just about making money, we’re here to help people who really need it. Every day holds so much variety and there are plenty of laughs along the way.

**Day in the life of volunteering**

I’m usually here every day and some Saturdays too. Every day is different – different customers, different volunteers and different stock coming through. A typical day might involve some sorting, pricing, rostering and dealing with customer issues. Each day is wonderful and I have a great team of volunteers in Mont Albert.
Why I volunteer

I volunteer with the Society for many reasons. I find it fulfilling to work with a global organisation that still focuses on grassroots community work. I think a lot of us are overwhelmed by the problems of the world but working for the Society has shown me the incredible difference individuals can make in their community. I love the attitude of a hand up, not a hand out and the Society’s inclusiveness to all members of the Australian community. It has challenged my prejudices and opened my mind to different opinions. I continue to volunteer with the Society because it’s so flexible and there are so many different things to do depending on your interests. Of course I have also made many friends through the Society and enjoy the sense of community among the volunteers.

Day in the life of volunteering

I’ve done a lot of different works in the Society, but I currently do home visits once a month in Port Melbourne. I go to St Anthony’s Parish in Port Melbourne and meet up with one to three other volunteers. After catching up we discuss the list of people to visit for that day and the type of assistance they have requested. It’s a privilege to work for an organisation as trusted as the St Vincent de Paul Society. It’s humbling to have a stranger in your home, which we refer to as the Glass House, and get a big smile and hello from the kids and their parents, I can’t help but smile myself and I remember why I love to volunteer.

A time that I feel I have made a difference

This one wasn’t just me, but it was an incredible moment. I was doing home visits with another volunteer and we visited a young woman who was a few weeks away from giving birth to her first child. Upon visiting her she remembered my fellow volunteer from her only other call to the Society. She spoke about how when she first called she had just found out about her pregnancy. She was alone, scared and unsure what she was going to do. However, the woman remembered being visited by us and feeling reassured that she could face the challenge because there were services to support her and her baby. When we visited her she was living in safe accommodation and was requesting vouchers to obtain nappies and formula. I remember when we left, my fellow volunteer and I were nearly in tears because of this woman’s story. It was an incredible blessing to meet her again and know that we had made such a positive change.

Why I volunteer

Volunteering, particularly with the Dandenong Tutoring Program, provides me with an indescribable sense of purpose, satisfaction, perspective and most of all, grounding. Often, after a particularly busy and stressful working week, the last thing I want to do is wake up early on a Saturday. However, the moment I drive into the school and get a big smile and hello from the kids and their parents, I can’t help but smile myself and I remember why I love to volunteer. These children are our future and knowing that I can use my skills and knowledge to positively impact another human – even if it’s simply getting a particularly shy or withdrawn child to smile and speak with another student – is a true blessing.
## 2015-2016 CONFERENCE STATISTICS

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<td>11,498</td>
<td>3,198</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>414</td>
<td>135</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>TOTALS</strong></td>
<td><strong>124,560</strong></td>
<td><strong>173,059</strong></td>
<td><strong>131,611</strong></td>
<td><strong>$11,624,088</strong></td>
<td><strong>3,781</strong></td>
<td><strong>35,443</strong></td>
<td><strong>9,158</strong></td>
<td><strong>294</strong></td>
<td><strong>3,456</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,049</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
MEMBERSHIP & DEVELOPMENT

The Membership & Development department has continued to offer and provide a range of targeted responses to support and resource member services, while being effective in offering assistance to vulnerable people in Victoria.

The breadth of programs and services offered by the department is quite diverse. It includes our welfare assistance line; targeted training and development; the oversight of our Soup Van Program; provision of Youth & Education programs; social inclusion and social justice.

OUR IMPACT

It is the call of people in need, right across Victoria, that motivates the Membership & Development team to offer flexible, comprehensive and innovative support to conference members on the frontline. Our members are the eyes and ears of the Society, providing support where it is needed most. Here is proof that they are changing lives every day:

"In 2003, I was awarded the St Vincent de Paul Society’s Tertiary Educational Sponsorship while at our local Catholic College. I was always extremely grateful for the chance that you allowed me to have by providing the financial opportunities that you gave through the scheme. The scholarship from St Vincent de Paul Society really impacted my journey and I wanted to express my gratitude to Vinnies for providing such services. I can’t wait until the wheel turns to the point where I can give back completely and fully to the community and those around me. I will never forget the hand-ups I have been given along the way and remain forever grateful and humbled by the generosity of so many. I think the scholarship program that you run is fantastic."

– Letter of thanks from a recipient of a Tertiary Educational Sponsorship

CONFERENCE ASSISTANCE

Over the 2015-2016 period, our members provided over 130,000 visits and over $11.6 million in welfare assistance. This care model is delivered in a variety of forms, including our core response of home visitation, which allows us to meet with people to offer our hand in friendship and to deliver practical assistance.

Our commitment to assisting people in need with compassion and by offering a ‘hand up’, means that our members and volunteers across the state are committed to continuous development of their skills and responses.

Opportunities for sharing experiences, sector networking and skill development are central to being able to resource and sustain the diverse works undertaken by our members and volunteers. Our provision of support through learning and development opportunities, event planning, project support and resource development, help our members on the ground to provide the best possible service to people in need.

WELFARE ASSISTANCE LINE

The Welfare Assistance Line provides many Victorians with their first point of contact to the Society. Our workforce consists of dedicated volunteers committed to providing a positive and engaging introduction to people seeking our assistance.

Over the past financial year a number of system improvements have been made to the assistance line, including the introduction of a free call 1800 number; volunteer training and development; and improvements to policy and service practice.
YOUTH & EDUCATION

This year has been an exciting time of growth and development in the area of Youth & Education, with a consolidation of programs run for young people and by young people.

STATE YOUTH TEAM

The State Youth Team continues a vibrant tradition of responding to community needs, particularly through youth focused activities. Vinnies Youth provides services which encourage young people in both metropolitan and rural Victoria to engage socially and to build their confidence and community involvement through programs such as Roadshows, Kids’ Days Out and Kids’ Camps.

The establishment of two new advisory committees to the State Youth Team provide leadership in the areas of Mission & Spirituality and Membership & Leadership, that have helped to drive a number of key youth activities for our young adult members and volunteers, including retreats, leadership days, Youth Ball and other gatherings.

EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Our Dandenong Tutoring Program and West Heidelberg Reading Club continue to thrive in helping to build the social and academic confidence of young people. Our endeavour to tackle long-term disadvantage was explored at two Education = Opportunity forums. These forums brought together Vincentians from across the state to discuss the impact of education support and opportunities for learning from each other about how to best support families in educational community settings. Ideas and responses from these forums have led to the start-up of two new education support programs.

YOUTH COLLABORATION NETWORK

In the spirit of engaging in richer conversations and responses to youth disadvantage, which continues to have a growing impact on our community, the Youth Collaboration Network was established. This network has brought together a number of key organisations to explore opportunities to share information and plan collective responses to youth disadvantage. They have explored opportunities for collaboration, the impact of collective advocacy and the importance of including the voices of young people when discussing and formulating responses to issues which impact young people.

SOCIAL JUSTICE AND OUTREACH THROUGH SCHOOLS

Our youngest Vincentians and our next generation of leaders have been inspiring and motivating in their desire to understand and respond to social justice issues. Social Justice Workshops for schools have been designed by the Youth & Education team to invite both primary and secondary schools into conversation and response on a number of social issues including homelessness, asylum seekers and refugees, disadvantage and advocacy.

With over 120 schools actively participating, the Vincentian framework continues to provide an exciting pathway for young people to nurture and develop their passion for justice and grassroots community responses.

JUST ART – ADVOCACY THROUGH ART

The St Vincent de Paul Society launched the inaugural Just Art project in 2016. This initiative aims to make advocacy accessible to people of all ages through the artistic representation of social justice issues. This year, people from across the state addressed the theme Asylum Seekers: Stories of Humanity to advocate for a more just and compassionate response to people seeking asylum on Australian shores.

Over 260 artworks were displayed at the exhibition from artists as young as seven contributing to a discussion based on the values of compassion, respect, and dignity. The pieces included both challenging and inspiring motifs.

See pages 32-33 for a selection of the exhibition artworks.
“BECAUSE OF THE TUTORING PROGRAM, I AM MORE CONFIDENT IN CLASS.”

“I’M GLAD THAT MY TUTORS WERE THERE TO HELP ME BECAUSE IF THERE WAS NO TUTOR, I WOULDN’T BE ABLE TO COMPLETE MY HOMEWORK.”

“I AM MORE CONFIDENT TO PLAY WITH DIFFERENT PEOPLE AND DISCOVER MORE ABOUT MY SCHOOLWORK AND HOMEWORK.”
2016 JUST ART — ADVOCACY THROUGH ART

Over 260 works of art were received for the inaugural Just Art competition from primary students, secondary students and open age entrants from across the state. From such diverse ages, the pieces created an inspiring glimpse into how our community sees the issue of people seeking asylum. All participants have provided a tribute to social justice and advocacy through these thought-provoking, emotive, challenging and diverse pieces.

“The Crying Dove was a symbol of hope, freedom and peace when people were trapped in the process of seeking asylum.”

Lucia Roohizadegan
McKinnon Secondary College
OUR VINNIES SOUP VANS

DURING 2015–2016 OUR 1,150 SOUP VAN VOLUNTEERS PROVIDED 256,672 MEALS TO PEOPLE EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS AND DISADVANTAGE.

**BERWICK**
- Years of operation: 7
- Meals provided: 10,920
- People assisted per night: 70
- Volunteers: 158
- Operating nights per week: 3

**COLLINGWOOD**
- Years of operation: 18
- Meals provided: 41,808
- People assisted per night: 134
- Volunteers: 182
- Operating nights per week: 6

**ENDEAVOUR HILLS**
- Years of operation: 2
- Meals provided: 6,760
- People assisted per night: 65
- Volunteers: 102
- Operating nights per week: 2

**FITZROY**
- Years of operation: 41
- Meals provided: 146,328
- People assisted per night: 402
- Volunteers: 504
- Operating nights per week: 7

**FOOTSCRAY**
- Years of operation: 27
- Meals provided: 43,680
- People assisted per night: 120
- Volunteers: 183
- Operating nights per week: 7

**MOE**
- Years of operation: 19
- Meals provided: 7,176
- People assisted per night: 69
- Volunteers: 21
- Operating nights per week: 2

WHEN VINNIES SOUP VANS HIT THE ROAD:
- **FITZROY**: 1975
- **FOOTSCRAY**: 1989
- **MOE**: 1997, 1998
- **COLLINGWOOD**: 1998
- **BERWICK**: 2009
- **ENDEAVOUR HILLS**: 2013

18 Years of operation
41,808 Meals provided
134 People assisted per night
182 Volunteers
6 Operating nights per week

158 Volunteers
3 Operating nights per week

27 Years of operation
43,680 Meals provided
120 People assisted per night
183 Volunteers
7 Operating nights per week

6,760 Meals provided
65 People assisted per night
102 Volunteers
2 Operating nights per week

DURING 2015–2016 OUR 1,150 SOUP VAN VOLUNTEERS PROVIDED 256,672 MEALS TO PEOPLE EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS AND DISADVANTAGE.

27 Years of operation
41 Years of operation
146,328 Meals provided
504 Volunteers
7 Operating nights per week

1975
1989
1997
1998
2009
2013

St Vincent de Paul Society Victoria Inc.
On any given night in Victoria, over 22,000 people are experiencing homelessness or housing stress. Many people are sleeping rough without any accommodation at all. For them, access to the basics of life, including food and somewhere to prepare food, is often out of reach.

The Vinnies Soup Van Program provides practical and immediate assistance to people experiencing or at risk of homelessness and disadvantage, which includes isolation and disconnection from others.

The Society’s six Soup Van Operations are based in Footscray, Fitzroy/CBD, Collingwood, Berwick, Endeavour Hills and Moe. The soup vans journey the streets, parks, boarding/rooming houses, public and community housing delivering soup, sandwiches, fruit, other food and hot/cold beverages.

Our volunteers come from diverse walks of life. Each volunteer is valued for the individual gifts, skills and knowledge they contribute to the Vinnies Soup Van Program and in turn they offer compassion, genuine concern and connection to the people who seek our service.

The publication featured four articles compiled by the St Vincent de Paul Society in relation to its Soup Van Program. These included two stories of people assisted by the Vinnies Soup Van and the longest serving Soup Van volunteer, Frank Mullins, who has been serving marginalised members of the community their dinner every Thursday for 40 years.

This was a particularly special project for the Soup Van Program, as it provided a respected platform for advocacy around the issues of food shortages, poverty alleviation and economic disparity within the community.

A corporate engagement package has been created and trialled for corporate donors wishing to experience A Night on the Soup Vans. The experience has been successful in increasing the level of exposure to this important community program among our generous corporate partners. It has also provided a rewarding and insightful extension to the strong relationships established through the Vinnies CEO Sleepout event.

In 2015 the Footscray Soup Van Operation was faced with the need to move from its premises of over 12 years and to find a more suitable location. The City of Maribyrnong generously offered the use of the Activity Centre in Maribyrnong, which soon became the new home of the Footscray Soup Van kitchen. The volunteers are extremely grateful and enjoying the site, as it provides an industrial kitchen, clean facilities, parking for three Soup Van vehicles on site, and a storeroom for all the provisions for the Soup Van Operation.
SOUP VANS

40TH ANNIVERSARY FOR THE FITZROY SOUP VAN

The Vinnies Soup Van Program reached an exciting milestone in 2015, celebrating 40 years of service in Melbourne.

To mark its big birthday, a 40th Anniversary BBQ was hosted at the Fitzroy Soup Van Operation, now based in North Melbourne. This special event united over 100 past and present volunteers to celebrate the spirit in which the Soup Vans serve the community and the lifelong friendships it has supported over many years.

Volunteers were awarded and recognised with medals and service awards. Top tier media including the ABC and Herald Sun attended, and the event received extensive profiling within the community.

We thank photographer and soup van volunteer, John Nazloomian, for capturing the event.

VINNIES CEO SLEEPOUT: DINNER WITH THE ‘VANNIES’

In 2015 and 2016 the Soup Van Program supported the Vinnies CEO Sleepout event by serving meals to participants and engaging in meaningful conversations about their work on the streets. This real-life experience of how Soup Van volunteers interact with people in need and sharing the food they serve 365 days a year, is a significant highlight at this event.

Their involvement has helped to support ongoing advocacy on behalf of this service and people experiencing homelessness within the corporate sector.
This is what Brother Doug Walsh said to us before we set off to distribute the food from the Vinnies Soup Van. I took this on board, but didn’t fully understand the true meaning of it until I’d volunteered a couple of times on the streets and in the boarding houses.

Having never volunteered before, I was unsure and a little apprehensive about what to expect the first time I helped out on the street. After first helping to cook and prepare the food (a chaotic – yet successful production line!) we set off in the van headed for the street with Alan, an 80+ year old volunteer behind the wheel.

We learnt so much from Alan as he told us stories about all the people he’s met and friendships he’s formed through volunteering. The street loop was five stops, and at each stop a crowd of people were eagerly awaiting. In the beginning I found the number of people overwhelming, but Alan helped to guide the crowd and ensure everyone got some food.

What surprised me on the streets was just how gracious people were. One particular night we had a lot of food generously donated, so we were able to offer people as much as they could carry. What I didn’t expect was that the majority of people just took one item, the same as they normally would, and said “save some for everybody else” and “I’ll just take enough to get me by”.

Another night, I volunteered to deliver the food to the boarding houses and distribute it. I enjoyed this more than the streets, as you stood with people as they ate, and really had the time to have a conversation with them. It’s amazing how easy it is to talk with people you thought you had nothing in common with.

We went from door to door, led by Michael – who has been volunteering for many years. At each door he knew the person, their story and what footy team they barracked for and would always finish the conversation with, “see you next week – looking forward to it”; which gave each person a smile, some comfort and a sense of belonging. Things that are often missing in their lives, things that we take for granted.

Going straight from a busy day at work into a boarding house and talking with people for a couple of hours, for many of whom this is their only conversation for the day, really puts everything into perspective. It makes you feel incredibly lucky for what you have, but also helps you realise that money, possessions and jobs aren’t everything, as all it takes to brighten someone’s day is a conversation. Handing over food is the perfect vehicle to do this.

I would strongly recommend everyone to volunteer at the Soup Van at least once in their lives – you don’t know what you’re missing out on until you experience it for yourself.

Chloe Harris
Every Thursday, for the past 40 years, there has been one familiar and friendly face greeting people in need on the streets of inner-city Melbourne; Vinnies Soup Van volunteer, Frank Mullins.

At 77 years young, Frank hasn’t skipped a beat. Volunteering, in his words, is “part of my life and a real privilege” and the spark in his eye when he arrives at the Soup Van kitchen in North Melbourne is proof.

“The first night out on the van was a bit of an eye opener, to see how people live. It’s been over 40 years now. It’s just flown,” said Frank.

Frank is the longest serving ‘Vannie’, as they’re affectionately known, and over the years he has seen the issue of food insecurity from many angles. When the Vinnies Soup Van first started in 1975, with a motivated group of young people at the helm, food preparation was tedious.

“It would take hours and hours to make the sandwiches every night,” he says.

These days there are now more efficient and cost effective avenues for sourcing good food. Generous donations from corporate partners means the Vannies can provide a greater variety and quantity of food each night, and also save considerable time preparing food. Although, some traditional legacies of love still continue – namely, the art of making the very best soup.

“The biggest change I have seen in my time on the van is the impact of Tasty Trucks. They have made such a big difference to the variety of food we serve – sandwiches, pies, pasties, chicken rolls,” says Frank.

The Tasty United (Tasty Trucks) donates around $1 million worth of food to the Soup Van operation every year and has been supporting the service for two decades, which has made an enormous difference to the quality and efficiency of the food they serve.

The Australian food service industry throws away an average of 23 percent of the food they buy for business every year, which generates more than 5.25 million metric tons of food waste annually. Tasty United’s partnership with Vinnies Soup Vans directly addresses the issues of leftover food waste and its associated costs, together with an initiative their customers are proud to support.

“This food is very much appreciated by the people on the street, especially in winter.”

There’s also a regular and varied flow of ‘seconds’ foods including bread, cakes, fruit and milk from other food service agencies. While nutrition remains a recurring point of discussion among the volunteers, it’s a well-known fact that people regularly share their food and prefer calorie dense food to keep them satiated for longer – an important consideration for many people who often only have one meal a day.

“We find that there are a lot of people on the street who know where other people in need are and they’ll take sandwiches to them.”

The Vannies’ helping hands arrive holding cups of hot soup and sandwiches too; but through shared meals and conversations, volunteers like Frank often change lives.

“Thinking back on my life, I started off pretty young appreciating what help can do for a family. We try to provide companionship – if you haven’t got support, it’s very hard to survive,” he says.

As the years tick on, he’s now hopeful that others will also make volunteering a staple part of their lives.

“I’d just like to see it continue, with the same goals that we have now – that the people on the street always come first. We need new people and new minds, people who think differently to us.”
“WE TRY TO PROVIDE COMPANIONSHIP – IF YOU HAVEN’T GOT SUPPORT IT’S VERY HARD TO SURVIVE.”
The Compeer program, which facilitates friendship between a volunteer and a person living with a mental illness (a companion), operates in the eastern metropolitan area of Melbourne and regionally in Bendigo.

The Compeer program supports 80 very active, committed volunteers who have developed ongoing friendships with their companion since first being matched to meet for an hour a week. Many of these dedicated volunteers have extended their commitment beyond the initial 12 months and have been with their friend for a number of years. The program and the companions benefit greatly from the continuity of the friendship.

The service has been challenged in the last year with a significant increase in the number of people wanting to be supported by the program and a corresponding decline in the number of volunteers.

Services that operate in the mental health sector have also been experiencing an impact on their operations as they anticipate the launch of the National Disability Insurance Scheme and the impact on their work, their organisation and the people they serve. The uncertainty of the future for these professionals has also impacted on Compeer because we try to work very closely with them as they support people matched with a Compeer volunteer.

Even so, the program has continued to make a meaningful and significant impact on the lives of people experiencing mental illness and is an initiative the Society is proud to support.

### MATCHED COMPEER VOLUNTEERS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Municipality</th>
<th>Women</th>
<th>Men</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bendigo</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boroondara</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Casey</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knox</td>
<td>7</td>
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</tr>
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<td>Manningham</td>
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<td>2</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monash</td>
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<td>0</td>
</tr>
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<td>Whitehorse</td>
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<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>55</strong></td>
<td><strong>25</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### A RELATIONSHIP BASED ON TRUST AND COMPANIONSHIP

Once volunteers are recruited, continuity of support is important in the relationship, especially in the early days when the volunteer and their companion are getting to know each other. Compeer staff work diligently to ensure that support continues. On many occasions the Compeer matched volunteer and staff provide the only consistency in the companion’s life.

### RAISING THE PROFILE

Compeer promotes the program and recruits volunteers, through internal Society networks as well as external promotion. There are never enough volunteers.

One of the achievements in the last year has been creating the position of Compeer Ambassador, which will help to raise the profile of the program. The ambassador, Warren Tu, attended both the 2015 and 2016 Vinnies CEO Sleepout, speaking enthusiastically with participants about Compeer, his role and his observations of the program’s benefits that he has witnessed for participants.

For three years Warren has been a supporter of the Compeer program through his fundraising group, 300 Blankets. This is a group of people who work together to raise funds towards the support of people experiencing homelessness and increase the inclusion of people who are disadvantaged. They have supported the Compeer program by helping with the annual Christmas party.

Elizabeth Cromb
Manager, Compeer

St Vincent de Paul Society Victoria Inc.
“MY COMPEER FRIEND SHOWS SO MUCH KINDNESS AND UNDERSTANDING. SHE’S A REAL TREASURE. I HOPE SHE REALISES HOW MUCH HER VISITS MEAN TO ME.”
Our commitment is for Vinnies Shops to generate sufficient income to fund the increased welfare demands placed on the St Vincent de Paul Society.

The retail environment is competitive with minimal growth reported. The St Vincent de Paul Society, however, continues to be supported by community members who are dedicated to giving their time and donated goods.

The 2015-2016 financial year saw the closure of Vinnies Edithvale with new shops opened in Chelsea Heights, Northcote and Niddrie.

STAYING AHEAD OF THE CURVE

Weak consumer sentiment and subdued disposable income growth over the past five years have prompted many consumers to look for cheaper clothing alternatives. This has contributed significantly to the popularity of fast fashion stores, due to their ability to offer low prices, while constantly updating product ranges with new styles and designs.

Even within this competitive climate, Vinnies Shops have achieved double digit growth with sales up 11 percent on last year. General improvements throughout the shops, warehouse, distribution and transport system enabled funds available for distribution to increase three percent over last year. Volunteers and staff are to be congratulated for their efforts.

RETHINKING SUPPLY CHAINS

The establishment of the Dandenong Distribution Centre for Vinnies Shops represents a positive step for us as a retailer and a necessary paradigm shift within our supply chain, to ensure our distribution strategy is supporting supply and demand in response to consumer behaviour.

The basic distribution principles include being able to service shops with the right mix of stock at the right time and at the right price, through structured inventory control via the distribution centre. This allows us to align supply seasonally to shops and compete with mainstream retailers.

VOLUNTEERS

Our volunteers continue to be the backbone of our Vinnies Shops, which provide a primary source of revenue to support good works within the community.

There are over 5,700 active Vinnies Shops volunteers who give their time so generously in our shops to raise much needed funds for our conference members to assist people in need. Our volunteers consist of a diverse range of people from all backgrounds and age groups.

We extend our thanks and gratitude to all of our retail volunteers as they play an integral part of managing our Vinnies Shops and make a positive impact on the local community.

OUR STAFF

In a year with many changes to improve our processes, our staff at all levels have continued to provide strong leadership and support. This has ensured that our volunteers are working in a safe and supportive environment and that all Society policy and procedural requirements are complied with. We thank them for all their fine efforts during the year.

DONATIONS

Vinnies Shops are totally dependent on the generosity of our thousands of valued donors.

The Kerbside Collection program continued in the 2015-2016 financial year with Vinnies donation bags delivered into suburban letterboxes for later collection. Targeting suburban households has provided an additional donation stream of clothing and household items at a higher yield than our donation bins. It also enables us to compete with commercial operators that undertake letterbox drop bags for second-hand clothing.

Donations of clothing, furniture and assorted household items are used for welfare, and to sell in shops to raise funds for welfare.
OUR VOLUNTEERS CONTINUE TO BE THE BACKBONE OF OUR VINNIES SHOPS

FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

Welfare aid

- **$2,119,297**
  The value of product (clothing, furniture and household items) given away by Vinnies Shops for welfare purposes during this financial year, up by 19 percent on the last financial year.

- **$806,207**
  Vinnies Material Aid Gift Card purchases for the 2015-2016 financial year

Income & Expenditure

- **$38,256,796**
  All Vinnies Shops income

- **$24,729,464**
  All Vinnies Shops expenditure

- **$13,527,332**
  Funds available for distribution
RESTORING HOPE . . .

“I WAS IN A VERY DARK PLACE. THERE’S SO MUCH THAT VINNIES DOES AND IT’S NOT JUST THE BIG THINGS.”
MARKETING & FUNDRAISING

Victorians have continued to generously support the St Vincent de Paul Society to provide assistance to the most vulnerable members of our community. Thank you for your support.

FUNDRAISING

The Fundraising team works to support our volunteers in delivering programs and services to help alleviate poverty and assist people in need. This year we delivered a number of fundraising appeals and community engagement programs to drive greater partnerships in our services and money to fund our programs.

Fundraising Appeals

This 2015 Christmas Appeal focused on ‘restoring hope’ by highlighting the work undertaken by dedicated volunteers and members of the Society. This appeal raised a total of $576,743.

The Winter Appeal was similarly successful with a central theme of ‘rethink homelessness’. This appeal highlighted the plight of many women who find themselves homeless and challenged community perceptions of who is homeless and what homelessness looks like. This appeal raised $1,033,189. Additionally, the September and March supporter newsletters, Society, have raised $235,150.

Bequests

In 2015-2016, the Society received $3,033,130 in lasting legacy contributions from bequests and estate distributions.

In November 2015, the St Vincent de Paul Society’s Bequest program, Frederic’s Fellowship, was launched at a function attended by 50 major donors and intending bequestors. The fellowship, named after our founder Frederic Ozanam, has been formed to thank and acknowledge people in the community who include a gift in their will to the St Vincent de Paul Society.

Community Fundraising

This financial year we expanded the concept of the Vinnies CEO Sleepout by taking this into the community, allowing schools and community groups to host their own sleepout events. This year 29 schools and seven community groups held sleepouts raising a total of $132,057.

Corporate Relations

Businesses play an important role in helping Vinnies provide grassroots services to people in need within our community. Recognising this, 2015-2016 saw the launch of our new Corporate Relations program. Special thanks to our partners Tasty United and AGL, and our Community Champions Bosch and Ritchies, for helping to bring this important program to fruition.

Fundraising: our year in numbers

- $697,082 raised by Vinnies CEO Sleepout
- $132,057 raised by community sleepouts
- $295,635 raised by regular giving in 2015-2016, a six percent growth on the previous year
- $1,845,082 raised by our appeals

CORPORATE SUPPORT: ESSENTIAL FOR OUR GROWTH

Over the past five years AGL has invested over $1.5 million to help the St Vincent de Paul Society deliver support to people in areas identified as ‘at risk of hardship’ in Victoria, New South Wales, South Australia and South East Queensland. This essential funding aims to relieve the burden of many people experiencing housing stress and poverty, showing them somebody does care and that there is hope for a better future.

AGL has also worked with Vinnies to develop Energy Savings Advice Packs containing information and advice for households about available support, retailer hardship programs and simple tips to save energy around the home. This has included training to St Vincent de Paul Society volunteers to provide advice to households around their energy use.

Lucy Menting
Acting General Manager, Marketing & Fundraising
Students sleep rough to raise awareness of homelessness

There is a limited level of awareness and public conversation about the many pathways that can leave people without stable accommodation. Vinnies School Sleepouts play an important role in casting new light on the experiences and challenges faced by those experiencing homelessness.

Students from Foundation to Year 6 at Essendon North Primary School hosted and participated in a Vinnies School Sleepout in 2016. The School’s Assistant Principal, Kate Barletta, said it was an eye opening experience for the school community.

“It was a fantastic way of creating opportunities for all members of our community to have a sense of belonging and connectedness to our school, and one where together we take action,” said Kate.

In 2015, the Essendon North Primary School Executive Leadership group took part in the Vinnies CEO Sleepout as a way to lead by example to their students. A year later, they decided to get the whole school involved in taking action against homelessness.

Students rallied together in the weeks leading up to the Sleepout and were able to fill nine clothing bins with material items that were later delivered to the local Vinnies Shop in Niddrie and raised more than $6,500, which will be used to support vital Vinnies services in their local community.

Kate applauded the efforts of her students.

“They successfully demonstrated what a difference can be made to the lives of people less fortunate than ourselves by working together as a community,” she said.

All funds raised from Vinnies School Sleepout events are invested into local communities to support Vinnies programs and services.
MARKETING & FUNDRAISING

MARKETING

The Marketing team works alongside the Fundraising team to provide best practice advice on how to position the Society internally and externally to meet organisational objectives. This includes providing expertise on matters pertaining to marketing, paid advertising placement, retail campaigns, public relations, digital media, design, events, branding, communication strategy and corporate communications. The team works closely with the National Marketing Committee to ensure the Society is continuing to enhance its strong and respected reputation within Australia’s not for profit sector.

Public Relations

The Society’s public relations program achieved 3,080 media hits across respected local, state and national channels in the 2015-2016 financial year:

- **1,337** Online news
- **294** Television news
- **104** FM radio
- **1,180** Newspaper
- **165** AM radio

This has included significant feature stories on the Society’s Fitzroy Soup Van’s 40th Anniversary; Energy Reports issued by the Policy & Research unit; features to support the Vinnies CEO Sleepout; Vinnies Shop campaigns; opinion pieces for corporate leaders; and a variety of other topical news issues.

Digital Media

Vinnies Victoria continues to grow its social media footprint year on year, and through a considered multi-channel digital strategy, has built an active and positive online community across Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and LinkedIn.

- **22,600** Vinnies Victoria Facebook has grown by 98 percent with 22,600 fans
- **119,692** National Facebook has grown by 49 percent with 119,692 fans
- **3,953** Vinnies Victoria Twitter has grown by 49 percent with 3,953 followers
- **#CEOSLEEPOUTAU** #CEOSleepoutAU trended on Twitter on the night
- **1,565** Vinnies Victoria Instagram has grown by 92 percent with 1,565 followers

THE GIFT OF GIVING

Each year the Society is humbled by the community’s generosity. Throughout the year gifts are made in many forms such as financial aid, volunteer time, hampers and toys to name a few.

Christmas especially allows organisations, schools and community groups to support people in need by donating toys and goods to make up food hampers.

For three years members of the HMAS Cerberus & Navy Steam Club has provided over 500 gifts annually, delivered via the 1923 Foden Steam Engine which is loaded at Victoria Barracks and journeys across the city to the Vinnies Warehouse in Altona.

In Essendon at St Therese’s School, students worked through their lunch breaks to create over 20 Christmas hampers and collected over 200 gifts.

This support has restored hope and brought happiness to the lives of many people, children and families that the Society assists.
This year has seen a number of campaigns launched, encouraging people to engage with our Vinnies Shops.

New promotions leading into seasonal changes have been developed with photography showcasing clothing and styles that can be bought at Vinnies. The Spring/Summer and Autumn/Winter campaigns have been highly successful.

Vinnies volunteers have also had fun building two window displays. The first showcased Spring Racing outfits and accessories and the second celebrated the wardrobe staple that is denim. Pictured above are our volunteers on Denim Day at Vinnies Port Melbourne.

In November last year the Vinnies Gift Card campaign was launched. Designed to increase awareness and drive sales, the campaign creative featured the tagline: A gift worthy of giving.

In May, our first Winter Warm Up campaign was launched, which encouraged people to donate high quality warm items at the start of the winter season. The campaign focused on the tagline: after all, a single winter woolly can make the world of difference.

The Winter Warm Up campaign was communicated through instore point of sale, digital and social advertising, and a three week metropolitan and regional radio campaign. The activity delivered plenty of PR opportunities, particularly in key regional markets.
Over 200 business and community leaders, and an army of dedicated Vinnies volunteers, arrived at the Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre for the seventh Vinnies CEO Sleepout in Melbourne on Thursday 23 June 2016.

Participants rallied together over many months to raise much needed funds and awareness for people experiencing homelessness. Together, they raised over $697,000 for the Society’s new HomeDirect Housing project, which will help to secure head leases and more stable accommodation for people in need. This program has been developed in partnership with VincentCare.

This event allows members of the corporate community to see life through the lens of over 105,000 Australians who experience homelessness and provides a platform for meaningful conversations around this issue. To all our participants and volunteers, we say thank you.
## CONSOLIDATED FINANCIALS

### CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (EXTRACT*)
FOR ST VINCENT DE PAUL SOCIETY VICTORIA INC. AND ITS CONTROLLED ENTITIES

#### STATEMENT OF PROFIT OR LOSS AND OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2016

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>CONSOLIDATED ENTITY 2016</th>
<th>CONSOLIDATED ENTITY 2015</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CONTINUING OPERATIONS</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Revenue</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fundraising activities</td>
<td>9,058,126</td>
<td>9,803,832</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government grants</td>
<td>18,806,843</td>
<td>17,337,517</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sale of goods</td>
<td>38,439,251</td>
<td>35,203,599</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other revenue</td>
<td>5,611,000</td>
<td>4,721,956</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net gain on sale of property, plant and equipment</td>
<td>1,775,262</td>
<td>230,772</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Revenue</strong></td>
<td>73,693,482</td>
<td>67,297,676</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Retail costs</strong></td>
<td>(25,101,786)</td>
<td>(23,442,262)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gross Surplus</strong></td>
<td>48,591,696</td>
<td>43,855,414</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fundraising/public relations</td>
<td>(1,756,098)</td>
<td>(1,514,978)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administration</td>
<td>(5,696,908)</td>
<td>(4,705,202)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People in need services</td>
<td>(12,489,253)</td>
<td>(10,373,388)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accommodation and support services</td>
<td>(20,402,833)</td>
<td>(18,062,662)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other support services</td>
<td>(4,620,150)</td>
<td>(4,429,235)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase in depreciation arising from the change in useful lives of buildings, building improvements and fittings</td>
<td>(940,246)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net loss arising on disposal of available for sale financial assets</td>
<td>(1,098)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net unrealised foreign exchange losses</td>
<td>(10,538)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impairment of property</td>
<td>(628,109)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Surplus for year from continuing operations</strong></td>
<td>2,046,463</td>
<td>4,779,949</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>DISCONTINUED OPERATIONS</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surplus/(deficit) from discontinued operations</td>
<td>21,931,421</td>
<td>(117,802)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SURPLUS FOR THE YEAR</strong></td>
<td>23,977,884</td>
<td>4,662,147</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Changes in fair value of financial assets designated as at fair value not taken through profit or loss</td>
<td>(241,495)</td>
<td>171,338</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Other comprehensive income for the year</strong></td>
<td>(241,495)</td>
<td>171,338</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL COMPREHENSIVE SURPLUS FOR THE YEAR</strong></td>
<td>23,736,389</td>
<td>4,833,485</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (EXTRACT*)

**FOR ST VINCENT DE PAUL SOCIETY VICTORIA INC. AND ITS CONTROLLED ENTITIES**

#### STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

**AS AT 30 JUNE 2016**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>CONSOLIDATED ENTITY 2016</th>
<th>CONSOLIDATED ENTITY 2015</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>CURRENT ASSETS</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cash and cash equivalents</td>
<td>54,758,579</td>
<td>50,994,421</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trade and other receivables</td>
<td>1,841,664</td>
<td>1,759,974</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inventories</td>
<td>242,550</td>
<td>182,515</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial assets</td>
<td>1,000,000</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other assets</td>
<td>1,494,203</td>
<td>1,833,183</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Current Assets</strong></td>
<td>59,336,996</td>
<td>54,770,093</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assets classified as held for sale</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>33,919,789</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Current Assets</strong></td>
<td>59,336,996</td>
<td>88,689,882</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>NON-CURRENT ASSETS</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial assets</td>
<td>52,701,962</td>
<td>13,182,583</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Property, plant and equipment</td>
<td>39,276,116</td>
<td>41,942,973</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intangible assets</td>
<td>414,087</td>
<td>1,394,148</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Non-Current Assets</strong></td>
<td>92,392,165</td>
<td>56,519,704</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Assets</strong></td>
<td>151,729,161</td>
<td>145,209,586</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CURRENT LIABILITIES</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trade and other payables</td>
<td>3,407,628</td>
<td>3,591,151</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provisions</td>
<td>3,787,720</td>
<td>4,011,963</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other liabilities</td>
<td>2,893,174</td>
<td>4,817,846</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liabilities associated with assets classified as held for sale</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>14,859,983</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Current Liabilities</strong></td>
<td>10,088,522</td>
<td>27,280,943</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provisions</td>
<td>648,256</td>
<td>672,649</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Non-Current Liabilities</strong></td>
<td>648,256</td>
<td>672,649</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Liabilities</strong></td>
<td>10,736,778</td>
<td>27,953,592</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Net Assets</strong></td>
<td>140,992,383</td>
<td>117,255,994</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ACCUMULATED FUNDS OF THE ASSOCIATION</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accumulated funds</td>
<td>12,683,584</td>
<td>12,683,584</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reserves</td>
<td>6,067,569</td>
<td>6,648,741</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retained earnings</td>
<td>122,241,230</td>
<td>97,923,669</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Accumulated Funds of the Association</strong></td>
<td>140,992,383</td>
<td>117,255,994</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### DIRECTORS’ DECLARATION

In the Directors’ opinion, the financial report as set out in the audited Financial Statements:

1. Presents a true and fair view of the financial position of the St Vincent de Paul Society Victoria Inc. as at 30 June 2016 and its performance for the year ended on that date in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards – Reduced Disclosure Requirements and the **Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012**.

2. At the date of this statement, there are reasonable grounds to believe that the St Vincent de Paul Society Victoria Inc. will be able to pay its debts as and when they become due and payable.

This statement is made in accordance with a resolution of the Directors, and is signed for and on behalf of the Directors by:

**Michael Liddy**  
State President

**Carol Messer**  
Deputy State President

**Auditor:** Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu  
**Bank:** Commonwealth Bank of Australia  
**Dated this 24th day of September 2016**
Thank you to all the individuals, churches, community groups, schools, corporations, trusts and volunteers who supported the St Vincent de Paul Society in Victoria in the 2015-2016 financial year.

The St Vincent de Paul Society has received a number of lasting legacy gifts over the past 12 months through the Bequest program. Particular acknowledgement is given for these generous and thoughtful contributions that provide for the future needs of the Society.

A special thanks too, to all Victorian and national media outlets for promoting and/or featuring the work of the Society throughout the 2015-2016 financial year. You make our advocacy efforts go further.

**Trusts & Foundations**
- ASCFA Education Foundation Company Limited
- Beck Family Charitable Foundation
- Bell Charitable Fund
- Brasher Family Foundation
- Carter Family Trust
- Melbourne Catholic Archbishop’s Charitable Fund
- CGU Foundation
- Deton Foundation
- F & J Ryan Foundation
- Gandel Philanthropy
- J & M Nolan Family Trust
- James & Cathy King
- Lord Mayor’s Charitable Foundation
- Malvest Pty Ltd
- Minter Ellison Charitable Gifts Committee
- Mulot Pty Ltd
- Naelfran Pty Ltd
- O’Donohue Family Foundation
- Orioff Family Charitable Trust
- Randall Foundation
- The DMSE Ryan Family Legacy
- The Gray Family Charitable Trust
- The Jonamare Foundation
- The Kellen Family Foundation
- The Pratt Foundation
- Une Parkinson Foundation Pty Ltd
- Valdichiesa Foundation

**Business & Government**
- AGL Energy
- Alvis Consulting Pty Ltd
- ANZ
- Aokin Performance Panels
- Bosch Group
- Brookfield Multiplex
- Carman’s Fine Foods
- Casamento Photography
- CGU Insurance
- Choice Capital
- CIBT Vistas
- Citywide Service Solutions
- Compu-Stor
- Coons Chambers Westgarth
- Cotton On Adults
- Doran Printing
- EDMI Pty Ltd
- FairShare
- Fowles Auctions + Sales
- Frontier Software Pty Ltd
- Gate Pacific Ltd
- Geotech
- HMAS Cerberus & Navy Steam Club
- Hume Doors & Timber (Victoria) Pty Ltd
- Incology
- Kennedy Builders
- Ladro Getrude
- Marand
- Mathey Investments Pty Ltd
- Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre
- Mount Carmel (Kew) Property Association
- O2Harvest
- Places Victoria
- Porter Davis
- Ritchies
- RMIT
- Second Bite
- SkyNEWS Business
- ShareGift Australia
- Stellar Asia Pacific Company/ Employees
- Tasty United
- Telstra Corporation Ltd
- The Australian
- Toshi
- Victorian Mortgage Group

**Schools & Community Groups**
- All Souls’ Opportunity Shop
- Blessed Sacrament Congregation
- Catholic College Bendigo
- CFRR Dougies Boys
- Emmanuel College
- Koostk Hal Mothers’ Association
- Lions Club of Dromana
- Marcellin College
- Marist Brothers
- MSC Sisters
- Newman College
- Padua College
- Point Cook College - Students
- Rotary Club of Belmont
- Rotary Club of Camberwell
- Rotary Club of North Melbourne
- Sisters of St Joseph
- St Clement of Rome Primary School
- St Gregory the Great Primary School
- St Thomas The Apostle Primary School
- Thomas Carr College
- XLI Club
- Whitefriars Catholic College

**Bequests**
- Estate of the late Adrian James Bailes
- Estate of the late Alfred Heiler
- Estate of the late Barry James Dawson Robinson
- Estate of the late Barry Michael King
- Estate of the late Christine May Clarke
- Estate of the late Colm Francis Butler
- Estate of the late Cyril John Patrick Carroll
- Estate of the late Daniel Francis McCarthy
- Estate of the late Edward Blum
- Estate of the late Edwin Joseph Robinson McGrath
- Estate of the late Eileen Griffin
- Estate of the late Eileen Teresa Richards
- Estate of the late Ellen Elizabeth O’Brien
- Estate of the late Esther Gascoigne
- Estate of the late Francis Ernest Stone
- Estate of the late Frank Sans
- Estate of the late Graeme Frederick Dore
- Estate of the late Graham George Harris
- Estate of the late Guido Polano
- Estate of the late Helen Nelan
- Estate of the late Helena Theresia Wilderberg
- Estate of the late Ida Joyce Bourke
- Estate of the late Jane Goodwyn
- Estate of the late Jessie Carnegie Burnett
- Estate of the late John Aloysius McGregor Rudd
- Estate of the late John Anthony Delaney
- Estate of the late John Edward Dineen
- Estate of the late John Lawrence De Yong
- Estate of the late John Xavier Charney
- Estate of the late Joseph De Freitas
- Estate of the late Lawrence Bernard Eaton
- Estate of the late Leo Gerard Moloney
- Estate of the late Leon Anthony Fennessy
- Estate of the late Margaret Ann Rodda
- Estate of the late Margaret Joan Wildicomb
- Estate of the late Marian Mary Moore
- Estate of the late Marie Therese Sweeney
- Estate of the late Mary Bernadette Carey
- Estate of the late Mary Constance Dilger
- Estate of the late Mary Ellen Norden
- Estate of the late Maureen Bolger
- Estate of the late Maureen Margaret Malone
- Estate of the late Noel Mary Evelyn Grabau
- Estate of the late Rita Kerlin
- Estate of the late Sheila Margaret Bernadette Maguire
- Estate of the late Stephen James Baliee
- Estate of the late Suzanne De Villers Bosisto
- Estate of the late Thomas Antony King
- Estate of the late William Albert Hefterman
- Cyril Mannix Memorial Charitable Trust
- Dibbs & Massie Foundation
- Gregory Joseph & Zigg Dickson Trust
- James Bernard Ryan Perpetual Trust
- The John Murphy Charitable Trust
- The Margaret Conway Trust
- The Father Leo Hartnett Perpetual Charitable Trust
- The James & Evelyn McManus Perpetual Charitable Trust
- The Leo and Mary Loughnan Charitable Trust
- The Michael Francis Hynes Trust
Vincent de Paul was born in the small southern French town of Pouy (later renamed St Vincent de Paul in his honour) on 24 April 1581 and ordained as a priest in 1600 at the age of 19.

As a young man he ministered to the wealthy and powerful. However, an appointment as chaplain to a poor parish, and to galley prisoners, inspired him to a vocation of working with those most marginalised and powerless.

Vincent urged his followers to bring God’s justice and love to people who were unable to live a full human life:

Deal with the most urgent needs. Organise charity so that it is more efficient…teach reading and writing, educate with the aim of giving each the means of self-support. Intervene with authorities to obtain reforms in structure… there is no charity without justice.

Vincent de Paul died in Paris on 27 September 1660 at the age of 79. He was canonised on 16 June 1737 and, in 1883, the Church designated him as the special patron of all charitable associations.

The Society was named after St Vincent de Paul and follows his teachings and compassion for people in need. St Vincent de Paul is the international patron of the Society.

Frederic Ozanam was born in French-occupied Milan on 23 April 1813. He was the fifth of 14 children.

In Paris at the age of just 20, Frederic established the St Vincent de Paul Society. At this time, the people of France were experiencing tremendous political and social upheaval including changes of government, the Industrial Revolution and unjust employment practices.

Ozanam gathered some colleagues and began to respond in practical ways to the poverty and hardship he saw in the lives of people around him. They visited people in their homes and offered friendship and support. This practice, known today as ‘home visitation’, remains a core activity for St Vincent de Paul Society members and volunteers.

The group formed by Ozanam and his friends later became known as the first ‘Conference’ of the St Vincent de Paul Society. They met together regularly as a group for prayer and mutual support, to learn and to share ideas about how they could best assist others.

Frederic Ozanam died on 8 September 1853 at the age of 40. He was beatified in Paris by Pope John Paul II on 22 August 1997.

Gerald Ward was born in London 1806 and arrived in Australia on 7 September 1850 after being recruited to work in the Melbourne mission by the pioneer priest Fr Patrick Geoghegan.

The first conference of the St Vincent de Paul Society in Australia met in Melbourne at St Francis’ Church on 5 March 1854. The first president was Fr Gerald Ward. With the discovery of gold in 1851 and the rush to the goldfields of central Victoria, the population doubled and homeless, deserted children roamed the streets.

Fr Ward and the new St Vincent de Paul conference responded to this acute problem by establishing the St Vincent de Paul orphanage in South Melbourne. The foundation stone was laid in 1855 and the first children were accepted in 1857.

In 1855, in a submission to the government of the day, Fr Ward stated that the new conference aimed at the relief of the destitute, in a manner as much as possible permanently beneficial and the visitation of poor families.

Gerald Ward died on 14 January 1858 aged 52. A newspaper noted that he was one in whom many a widow and orphan had found a good friend. His enduring legacy is founded in such friendship.
HOW YOU CAN HELP

The St Vincent de Paul Society relies on the generous support of individuals, community groups and businesses who are committed to building a more just and compassionate society. To support our mission:

■ MAKE A FINANCIAL DONATION

Credit card donations can be made by visiting our website or calling the donation hotline.
All donations of $2 or more are tax deductible.

www.vinnies.org.au
13 18 12

■ MAKE A REGULAR GIFT

Regular donations to assist the work of the Society can be made by credit card or direct debit from your bank account. Donating this way reduces our expenses and can be arranged by visiting our website or contacting us by phone. All donations of $2 or more are tax deductible.

www.vinnies.org.au
03 9895 5800

■ MAKE A BEQUEST

The Society is able to assist thousands of people because of the generosity of those who have remembered us in their will. For an information booklet or to speak to our Bequest Manager.

03 9895 5821
bequests@svdp-vic.org.au

■ VOLUNTEER YOUR TIME

If you are interested in becoming a member of a conference or volunteering your time to assist people in your community through any of the Society’s services.

1300 736 933
volunteer@svdp-vic.org.au

■ DONATE GOODS

Donations of quality clothing, furniture and household goods can be made to any Vinnies Shops.

1800 621 349
material.donations@svdp-vic.org.au

If you have any financial donation query please email us on:
donorrelations@svdp-vic.org.au