



# Newsletter

## July 2019

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### Events

#### All Year

1st & 3rd Saturdays The Vintertainers music group visits the Tiwi Nursing Home.

#### July

- 1 Territory Day
- 4 Movie Night Fundraiser
- 5 Alice Springs Show Day
- 7 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Sunday
- 7-14 NAIDOC week
- 12 Tennant Creek Show Day
- 19 Katherine Show Day
- 22 1945 - First Society meeting in the NT
- 26 Darwin Show Day

#### August

- 5 Picnic Day

Next issue: September 2019. Deadline for contributions: 15<sup>th</sup> August 2019  
Email: [admin@svdpnt.org.au](mailto:admin@svdpnt.org.au)

## The President's Pen



**Fay Gurr, NT President**

Recently I had the opportunity to visit the St Vincent de Paul Society operation in WA. It was great to see how they are managing their retail stores and operations in Perth. Their presence is concentrated in the metropolitan area with some work in smaller towns like Bunbury and Albany. In more remote places such as Broome and Geraldton there is a presence of religious orders and through these groups the Society provide Emergency Relief and send clothes and other goods for 'pop up shops'. The proceeds are kept within the community mostly so that some 'good works' can be done, and it is known in the communities that Vinnies is present.

In Perth the society run a drop in Youth centre called Passages. It is a day centre and has services for physical, psychological and social support. Also, there is a day centre called Tom Fischer (named for a long serving Vincentian) where people who live on the street can come daily. The limit is that clients can stay for no longer than 7 days and must wait 30 days before returning. There is an excellent support



system and clients can be cared for around the clock. The effort is put into having support for them when they leave. This is a funding partnership with Rotary clubs in Perth with the Society.

## Strategic Plan and Goals

At the recent Council meeting, we had the opportunity to focus on the strategic goals which we outlined in 2018. It is exciting to see that some of those goals have been achieved and some need refinement and a refocus.

Key initiatives that are underway include:

- Commencement of an Advocacy Committee with the acceptance by Dr Maria Randazzo to serve on this committee. This committee will work to boost the profile of the Society's voice on issues of justice where high level discussion is needed.
- Formation of a Finance Committee which will comprise the Treasurer, CEO, a Council member and delegate nominated from a Conference or community. This committee is critical to ensure that due diligence is brought to the high priority area of finance and provisions for future planning.
- Governance and Legal Committee which will have the purpose of ensuring that the Council is compliant with current legislation under which we are governed and that our governance practises are in line with best practice.

## Council Appointments

Victoria Ikutegbe has taken on the role of our Youth Representative to the Territory Council and she brings to this role great experience and a real passion to ensure the voice and the needs of our youth are represented on our Council.

I am happy to advise Jocelyn Cull has agreed to step into the role of Vice President. Jocelyn is known to us as a positive influence in the Council, experienced in leadership and brings a breadth of skills. With Jocelyn changing her role, member of St Mary's Conference Nia Veamatahau will take the role of President.

Thank you to Jocelyn and to Victoria for accepting these roles and to Nia who is taking on the St Mary's President role and leading Emergency Relief as part of that role. I have every faith in those who have accepted these roles to bring great energy and vision to them. ■

## From the Pen of St Louise de Marillac



The soul that truly loves God must seek nothing more.



## Executive's Update



**Fran Avon, CEO**

Well, it is hard to believe that I have now been in the role of CEO for St Vincent de Paul Society in the Northern Territory for five months. Time has flown but I am excited about what has been achieved by the team and our amazing volunteers in this time.

We were blessed by the attendance of over 60 guests including Her Honour, the Honourable Vicki O'Halloran AM, Administrator of the Northern Territory and The Most Reverend Bishop Charles Gauci DD at the official opening and blessing of our new administration centre in Casuarina.

We have welcomed our new Property team and are proud of the work they are doing in making our facilities more welcoming and appealing for our companions. There is much work to be done and I am looking forward to sharing with you some of their achievements in the next edition of this newsletter.

We have received a strong endorsement by the Northern Territory Department of Housing and Community Development with the generous support of \$215,000 in additional funding to enhance our work at both our day centre, Ozanam House and our Bakhita

accommodation facility at Coconut Grove. Plans are underway for improvement to the facilities at both sites.

Our housing project in Bernhard Street, Katherine is making some inroads into providing a safe and secure housing option for those in need in Katherine. We are working towards improving this facility and offering greater support to our tenants.

We have opened a new Vinnies store at 468 Stuart Highway Winnellie and are excited to see how this new store will contribute to building our presence and providing more funding for our vital services in the Northern Territory.

We have seen the launch of our localised fundraising appeal which is based on the theme, "Territorians are tough. We've got to be. But, we also look out for another". Please visit our website to find out more – [donate.vinnies.org.au/appeals-nt](https://donate.vinnies.org.au/appeals-nt).

Our presence on Facebook (Vinnies NT) has exceeded expectations with having reached our target of over 1,400 followers. We have also launched an Instagram (@vinnies\_nt) page. Please show your support by following us on these sites and inviting your friends and family to join us too.

On a personal note, I just wanted to thank everyone for their kind welcome. Already, I understand the deep connection that people have with the Territory. I am enjoying the beautiful weather, having had dinner last night on the Nightcliff foreshore. Not something I would normally be doing in the middle of winter! ■



### Opening of Casuarina Headquarters

New St Vincent de Paul office officially opened by The Honourable Vicki O'Halloran, Administrator of the Northern Territory.

The St Vincent de Paul Society NT office in Casuarina was officially opened by Her Honour The Honourable Vicki O'Halloran AM, Administrator of the Northern Territory on Saturday 1 June with a plaque reveal and cutting of the cake. The building was blessed by The Most Reverend Bishop Charles Gauci DD.



The upgraded premises accommodate our management team and administration functions and provides space for members and volunteers to use as required. It allows for further growth in staff numbers so the St Vincent de Paul Society can continue to provide a wider range of services and deliver more programs to those in need.

The St Vincent de Paul Society in Queensland had a significant role in procuring the building and planning of its refurbishment. The work was led by Peter Maher, former CEO QLD, and Edwina Wagland, former Executive Officer NT, with the support in planning from Deborah Nisbet, General Manager, Finance & Business Services and Joe Duskovic, General Manager Governance & Risk.

Northern Territory Administrator Vicki O'Halloran said the new building represents a wonderful milestone in the Society's journey in

the Northern Territory. Her Honour further stated, 'these new facilities will enable a greater number of opportunities to make a tangible difference to those in need of support'.

Fay Gurr, President for the St Vincent de Paul Society in NT said, "This new centre is the culmination of a number of years of planning and is testament to the commitment of St Vincent de Paul Society to the Northern Territory. It is a base from which we can grow and provides a hub where the community will always be welcomed".

Her Honour, Mr Craig O'Halloran, Ms Fay Gurr along with staff members instrumental in the building development were invited to join in the blessing of the building by Bishop Charles Gauci.

This new building has been long awaited after operating from Bakhita Centre for six years, a facility which had outgrown the growing needs of the Society a number of years ago. The administration office at the Bakhita Centre will now be converted to housing accommodation with funding support from the Northern Territory Department of Housing and Community Development.



The event was attended by more than 60 St Vincent de Pauls Society's supporters including representatives from Government, volunteers, members of the Society, representatives of NGOs and our staff. Without their generous support, the good work of the Society would not be possible. ■



## RIP Jack Evans

A Memorial Mass was celebrated at St Martin de Porres Church, Wanguri on 7 May 2019 to mark the entry to eternal life of Jack Augustine Evans (1926 – 2019). The readings, hymns and prayers had been selected personally by Jack for his funeral at Gowrie ACT. To Richard's eulogy for his dad, the following memories of Margaret and Jack's Darwin days were added.

Margaret and Jack first came to Darwin in December 1980 from Kyabram Vic where they both worked in the Catholic education system. They gave up their Christmas holidays to enable Peggy and Bill Sykes, the couple then managing Ozanam House at Stuart Park to take overdue annual leave.

Some months later when the Westralia Street manager's position became vacant, having like so many others fallen under the Territory's spell, Margaret, Jack and their youngest son, Richard, moved permanently to Darwin in May 1981.

On 22 February 1984, Margaret and Jack moved to the Bakhita Centre - which Jack had been instrumental in establishing - where Jack occupied the position of manager from its opening till his retirement on 31 March 1992.

In both situations, Margaret and Jack initially lived onsite. Noticeably each hostel became home - as much for them as for the thousands of people whose lives they touched.

They established a more permanent home at 32 Cummins Street, Rapid Creek where they became active members of St Paul's Parish - and Jack, of St Paul's Conference, Nightcliff. The conference was a strong and supportive one.

One funny story around this time is of members marking the coming departure of Fr Joe Kelly, their spiritual adviser. They attended Mass at St Paul's one Monday evening and planned to enjoy together the roast leg of lamb and vegetables which were cooking in a Webber BBQ in the undercover area outside the church. Emerging after Mass, they found that someone in greater need had souvenired the roast and vegetables and used the table cloth to carry them off. The Colonel saved the day.

Another of Jack's passions was the care for seafarers. He became involved in the Apostleship of the Sea and was instrumental in expanding the associated Stella Maris Seafarers Centre at the Darwin waterfront.

Margaret and Jack were active members of the Teams of Our Lady, a marriage enrichment program. For some, a quick glance around the church today will find people who sharing the same experiences.

When the Disciples of Jesus covenant community was established in Darwin, Margaret and Jack felt an immediate infinity and joined the community. This continued through their Canberra days. Fr Ken Barker mgl concelebrated Jack's recent requiem Mass along with Fr Peter Day, the author of the poignant poem in today's booklet.

In the aftermath of the Katherine floods of 1998, Margaret and Jack spent several weeks living in Katherine visiting, listening to and assisting people whose lives had been impacted as did Frederic Ozanam and his companions.

In late 1999, some 2000 East Timorese people were evacuated from Dili to Darwin to escape the violence which followed the UN referendum for independence. Many were accommodated in a specially erected Tent City at Marrara.



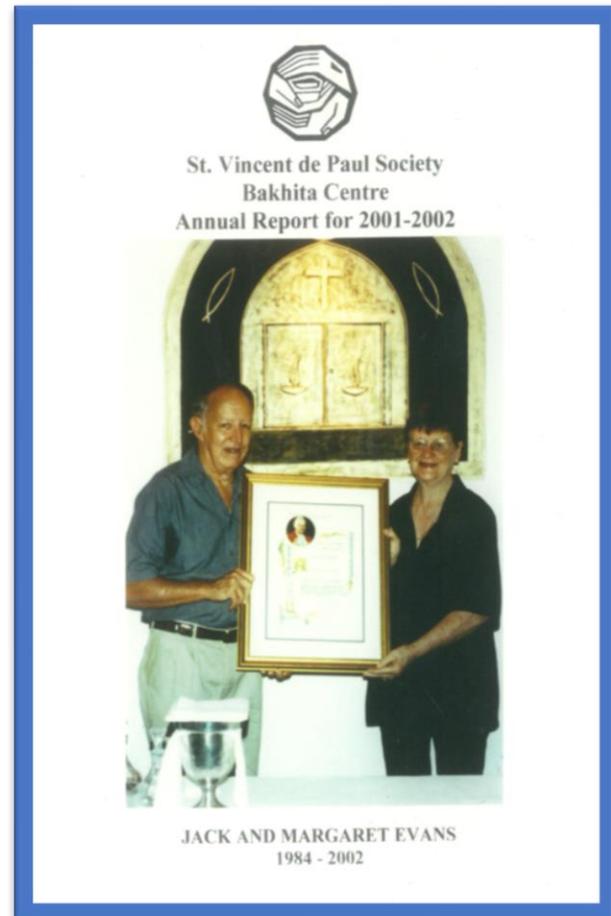
Again, Margaret and Jack were among the many Vincentians and many others who reached out to people traumatised by events in their homeland and the need to flee to another country.

In retirement, they continued to serve the Society energetically, Jack as a member of St Paul's Conference and vice-president of the NT Council, Margaret as a volunteer at the NT Secretariat and treasurer of the NT Council.

Placed at the rear of the church for browsing after the Mass were a number of Bakhita's annual reports including the very first one for y/e 30-6-1984 and also that for 2001/02, the cover featuring Margaret and Jack receiving the Papal blessing in the Bakhita chapel shortly before their departure from Darwin.

Also, there were the papers delivered at the Society's Darwin Congress of August 1982. Of particular note were addresses by pivotal figures in the NT Society: Willa James, John Byrne, Jack Evans and Maureen Dunham.

Attention was also drawn to the book of Jack's poems compiled by Richard and presented to his father on his 90th birthday.



*We preach mainly by good example.*

*~ St Vincent de Paul*



## A Poem for Jack

These drifters, they wash up against my door;  
Knock, knock ... I'm lost, want what I had before.  
Sad eyes, dry hearts, full of stories they are;  
Say anything for company; Gotta couple of  
dollars, friend? Need petrol for me car.

~

Bored as hell am I, just passing through;  
It's my way of searching: Tell me, am I loved too?  
Needle and bottle, that damn gaming machine;  
Poverty, chaos: God, where's me self-esteem?

~

Illness, addictions; no, they never get blamed;  
Can't admit to that, feel too ashamed.  
I'll tell ya anything, anything at all,  
But not the real reason this drifter's had a fall.

~

Sure, sometimes I'll deceive ya as I quickly pass  
by;  
But that's called survival and it beats explaining  
why.  
Easily ignored, I'm drifting away,  
Nearly out of sight; just another day.

~

Now welfare and handouts,  
they're not a bad thing;  
But they aren't enough to make this broken  
heart sing.  
Can you look again, please; think of a new way  
to care;  
Someone to sit alongside me: a bit of you...can  
you spare?

~

"Whatever you do to the least," Jack had engraved  
on his soul;  
His Master's cry for mercy revealed the truth  
behind the begging bowl.

~

I know mess and hunger and friends too few;  
Pinned to that Cross, they said I was worthless  
too.

"A king", they scoffed as they spat on my face;  
Naked and lonely; another drifter out of place.

~

Cherish one another; share in the mud and the  
blood and the dust;  
Be a well for the thirsty – hunger for what is  
just.

I came to bring Good News to the poor;  
Remember that, please, when next I come  
knocking at your door.

~

## By Peter Day

Fr Peter Day was born on October 23, 1963 in Brisbane. Being an army brat, he enjoyed the opportunity to experience some of his primary schooling in Malaysia, Singapore, and the Philippines; while Marist College, Canberra was his home from grades 6 to 12.

Following school, he attended the University of Canberra (then CCAE) completing a Bachelor of Sports Journalism and enjoyed a brief stint with a newspaper in England in 1988. He worked as a radio broadcaster with the ABC in Canberra from 1990-92.

Peter commenced his training for priesthood at St Paul's National Seminary, Sydney in August 1992. His ordination to the diaconate was celebrated in the car park at the Matthew Talbot Hostel for Homeless Men in January 2000; then 10 months later (October 20) he was ordained a priest at St Raphael's Church, Queanbeyan.

In October 2005, Fr Peter founded HOME in Queanbeyan: a community-based initiative that provides 24 hour supported accommodation for people with chronic mental illness who cannot live independently or are at risk of being homeless. HOME opened on 1 July 2010 and is also Peter's home.



## Upcoming Formation and Training

### What message do I give to others?

This workshop focuses on the difficult encounters members, volunteers and staff experience with our Companions. It will:

- describe those difficult encounters,
- consider what the dilemmas are that we face
- reflect on the scope of our work and its complexities
- Discuss having difficult conversations; and
- Raise awareness of the importance of self-care

Presenter: Marg Lambert. Marg is a registered psychologist, author and speaker, currently undertaking PhD research. Marg is a member and a past President of the Society.

**Date / Time: Tuesday 13 August 2019**

**6.00pm - 8.00pm**

**Venue St Vincent de Paul Society Offices,  
3 Bradshaw Terrace, Casuarina NT 0811**

20 places available

Register by calling or emailing  
Jackie Godden T 08 8948 8100  
E [admin@svdpnt.org.au](mailto:admin@svdpnt.org.au)  
by 8 August 2019

**Did we miss something** - An event, an achievement, an important piece of Society news, something from a Conference or special work? Don't let us do that again. You can get your news to us via: Email: [admin@svdpnt.org.au](mailto:admin@svdpnt.org.au)



## Make your legacy live on

Have you considered including the St Vincent de Paul Society in your will? A bequest to the Society makes lasting positive change. It is a powerful reflection of the values and principles you treasure. It enables you to create a legacy of love and care for those who most need assistance and it will continue your life's aims beyond your own lifetime.

If you would like to consider making your community a better place through a bequest to the Society, please contact us for a fact sheet or brochure detailing the Territory's specific requirements.

Alternatively visit our Wills and Bequests site at:

[https://www.vinnies.org.au/page/Donate/Wills\\_and\\_Bequests/NT/](https://www.vinnies.org.au/page/Donate/Wills_and_Bequests/NT/)



## Make a difference today

I would like to make a gift to support the work of the Society

\$50     \$75     \$150     \$250     \$500    Other \$\_\_\_\_\_

Donations over \$2 are tax deductible

Please debit my card:

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I would like a receipt emailed to me, providing your email address allows us to email your tax receipt to you, minimising postage costs and paper usage.

My cheque or money order is enclosed, cross 'Not Negotiable' and made payable to St Vincent de Paul Society Northern Territory

Mail to: St Vincent de Paul Society  
PO Box 40345  
Casuarina NT 0811

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