



## REFLECTION

### Prayer of healing and protection

Brad Stephensen  
9 January 2020

We start the year with a heavy heart, as much of our country is living through the bushfires that burn through so much of our land.

I invite you to join me to offer up a thought or prayer of healing and protection for those who are living through the devastation, especially for those Vincentians and their families who are affected.

For all those who are working in affected conferences and shops, please know that you have the thoughts, prayers and support of the whole organisation. We are all so grateful for your commitment to caring for those in need. Please take care of yourselves and each other at this time.

At times of suffering, faith can sometimes seem like a distant ideal. Please all know that when the fires eventually die down and the news cameras move onto another story we will be there as Vincentians, living out our Mission, to offer practical support where we can for affected individuals and communities in the difficult months and years to follow.

We pray for strength and give thanks for the love of those we know and also for the kindness shown by strangers. In Sue's article last week in the Herald Sun she spoke of 'doing a Vinnies'. This is a timely reflection that we can all come together on an ongoing basis, not just our own St Vincent de Paul Society, but volunteers from a range of other organisations and individual citizens to support those in need around us.

We have a short-term External Assistance Program (EAP) available to all staff, members and volunteers. Please contact 1800 818 728 or visit <https://accesseap.com.au/> if you feel you would benefit from additional counselling at this difficult time.

Please also be sure to reach out with any thoughts or prayers of support to [brad.stephensen@svdp-vic.org.au](mailto:brad.stephensen@svdp-vic.org.au) and we will make any special intentions at Mass.

With a continued prayer of hope and protection for all those who living through this tragedy.

Brad Stephensen, Mission and Spirituality Manager  
St Vincent de Paul Society Victoria