



# MEDIA RELEASE

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## Vinnies launches COVID-19 Winter Appeal

As the impact of COVID-19 deepens and winter approaches, the St Vincent de Paul Society is calling on Australians to dig deep and donate generously to the COVID-19 Winter Appeal.

National Council CEO, Toby oConnor said falling donations because of the COVID pandemic, coupled with a spike in demand for services, make tough times even tougher for many people.

'The economy has all but shut down and the COVID crisis is unfolding on the back of unprecedented drought, bushfires and floods,' Mr oConnor said.

'It's possible that as many as 3.4 million people will be out of work because of the pandemic.

'Our ability to raise money through Catholic schools and parishes has also been affected by the restrictions.

'Australians have been very generous over the summer months, donating money and goods for people affected by drought and by the catastrophic fires that ravaged many communities.

'Vincentians, our volunteers and our staff continue to do what they can in the face of COVID-19 social isolation restrictions.

'While many of our volunteers and staff are out of action, we continue to provide hope and practical assistance.

'Many of our regular good works such as our Vinnies soup vans continue to operate with scaled back volunteers practicing the necessary social distancing.

'While our good works continue, revenue from our shops has all but disappeared due to necessary closures. While some shops are due to reopen soon in line with government advice, revenue will likely take many months to get back to normal.

'Donations now are vital to ensure our good works can continue to make an impact on the lives of the increasing number of vulnerable people right across the country as the winter approaches.

'We are noticing many people bearing the impact of social distancing policies are for the first time in their lives finding it hard to pay household bills because their regular income has disappeared.

'Thank you so much for your support during these difficult times.

'Together, with your assistance we can continue to make a big difference to the lives of people in need in our local community especially those who are affected by the pandemic,' Mr oConnor said.

People who need help can call our helpline on 131812.

To donate visit the Vinnies website: [vinnies.org.au/covid19winterappeal](http://vinnies.org.au/covid19winterappeal)

*The St Vincent de Paul Society in Australia consists of 60,000 members and volunteers who operate on the ground through over 1,000 conferences located in individual parishes across the country.*

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**MEDIA CONTACT: Judith Tokley 0408 824 306 / 0400 845 492 or [media@svdp.org.au](mailto:media@svdp.org.au)**