



This is what God asks of you, only this,  
to act justly, to love tenderly,  
and to walk humbly with your God.

(Micah 6:8)

## Warm Christmas greetings to friends, members and supporters of Catholic Social Services Victoria

Christmas punctuates the year. It provides a frame of reference for much work output, and for many of our personal engagements. As one colleague put it, 'it isn't just the presents that seem to demand to be wrapped up at this time of year.'

Christians celebrate that our God entered into a new and unique relationship with humankind; that Jesus came to live among us as one of us, to bring the face of God before us in a radically different way.

The spirit of Christmas, then, is very much one of recognising the value of all people, because our God has identified with us in a special way; and has told us that we find him in each other.

May each of us this Christmas make more room for those through whom our God speaks to us. May the fruits of this Christmas season then flow throughout the year.



## With Christmas blessings from the Council and staff

### Our news

- [Suspended Sentences](#): Abolition fuelling a perfect storm in Victorian Corrections
- [Pathways to Partnership - engaging with a challenging future](#)
- [Christmas Reflection: Recognising God in those in need](#)
- [2013 Conference on 'Impact of Mission and Identity'](#)
- [Workshops on Catholic Social Teaching](#)

### Developments

- [Anti-Poverty Week Human Rights Future Conference](#)
- [An effective parole system enhances community safety](#)
- [Asylum seekers must be treated humanely](#)

### Key dates for 2014

**Wednesday 14 March,**  
Commissioning Mass and AGM  
4.30pm at All Saints Church,  
Fitzroy

**Friday 8 August**  
Annual Dinner  
7.00pm at Leonda, Hawthorn

### Members' News and Events



## **Suspended Sentences: Abolition fuelling a perfect storm in Victorian Corrections system**



New research released on the 11<sup>th</sup> December by Catholic Social Services Victoria warns that the Victorian government's move to abolish suspended sentences will have a debilitating effect on Victoria's corrections system. The report finds that community safety may well be compromised by the reforms, which will add an extra 5,500 people to Victoria's corrections system each year, effectively doubling the number of people who receive community orders at a time when the system is under pressure from so many directions. [Read more](#)

## **PATHWAYS TO PARTNERSHIP – engaging with a challenging future**

Around 70 leaders from Victorian Catholic social service organisations gathered on 25 November 2013 in response to the challenges our Catholic organisations face in a future of changed Government policy and tighter budgets. Our panel of distinguished and experienced speakers - Bill Scales AO, Patricia Faulkner AO, Susan Sullivan, etc. - covered a lot of ground. [Read more..](#)



## **A Christmas Reflection: Recognising God in those in need**

**Christmas: Making room for God, whom we find in others**  
Christmas might well be the most distinctive time of the Australian year. No other day seems to have the same prominence for such a large number of Australians. In our seasonal busyness, would there be room for Mary and Joseph if they were to knock at our door? Do we recognise our saviour in those through whom he speaks to us: children, the suffering, the abandoned, those who are excluded and the poor of this world? [Read more..](#)



## **Listening, Learning and Leading: the 9, 10 Oct Catholic Social Services Conference**

Thanks to everyone who contributed to the success of our conference on 9, 10 October. It brought together an excellent line up of leaders and participants to explore **the impact of Catholic identity and mission on what we do and how we do it**. In the words of one highly respected participant: *I enjoyed the conference ... interesting ... lots of good people ... energising commitment to the 'mission' ... honest about the challenges they suffer ... all in all, good stuff!* A book of conference proceedings is in preparation. Click through for videos and papers, which will be added to the [CSSV website](#) as they become available. [Read more..](#)



### **Catholic Social Teaching-Formation Workshop 29 Oct**

A workshop for staff across the Catholic Social Services sector was presented by Catholic Social Services Victoria as part of our Catholic Social Teaching series. It offered a stimulating mix of input, reflection and discussion for the ten participants at the workshop. [Read more...](#)



### **Anti Poverty Week - Australia's Human Rights Future**



A conference on 17 October, to mark Anti Poverty Week 2013, provided great input and good discussion on several aspects of human rights in Australia. [Click here](#) for text of Keynote address by Jacqueline Phillips, Director of Policy and Campaigns, ACOSS, on 'Australia's human rights future'. [Click here](#) for slides from 'Poverty Reduction Strategies in Australia: the disappointing decades?' by David Hayward, RMIT University

### **An effective Parole system enhances community safety**

*"A well-resourced and effective parole system will deliver better outcomes for community safety than keeping offenders imprisoned," said Denis Fitzgerald, Chair of the Victorian Interchurch Criminal Justice Taskforce\* today, 24 October 2013.* In responding to the Review of the Adult Parole Board by Mr Ian Callinan AC, the Taskforce made a number of recommendations, all designed to reduce re-offending rates and increase the safety of the Victorian community...[read more](#)

### **Asylum Seekers must be treated humanely**



Asylum seekers must be treated humanely – [click here](#) to add your name to a petition that was initiated by Jesuit Social Services and other Melbourne Catholic agencies. [Click here](#) to read the principles that are proposed to protect vulnerable asylum seekers, and particularly children.

**Providing homes for refugees:** When Pope Francis visited a refugee shelter in Rome on 11 September, he called for the Church to support refugees. Many parishes and other religious bodies in Australia, including Catholic social service providers, are doing this. But we must work together to respond more fully to the Pope's inspirational preaching of the Gospel. [Read more..](#)

## **Member's News & Events:**

### **'Out & About' - An app to identify accessible locations**

**Villa Maria** has launched ***Out & About***, an app that will help people with mobility and accessibility issues decide what parks, museums, restaurants and other points of interest would be suitable for them to visit. In an Australian first, *Out & About* allows people to find accessible locations near where they are using the mobile device's GPS. The app, which currently covers metropolitan Melbourne, also allows users to review locations they have visited and rate how accessible they are for people.





### **A Beautiful Christmas Gift Idea**



Every year our safe house, McAuley Care, provides welcoming accommodation and caring support to 350 women and children escaping family violence.

These elegant bracelets, made of sterling silver and 18K rose gold vermeil, come engraved with the wording "I CARE". The opening allows the bracelets to suit wrists of all sizes. [Read more](#) and to order [click here](#)

### **Social Justice in the City Series February & March 2014**



FORTHCOMING GUEST SPEAKERS 2014

26 February: Rev. Dr. Raymond Cleary, BEcon, Dip Ed Monash; BSW Melb; BTheol, MMin, DMinStuds, Melb College Divinity. Social Justice Matters.

26 March: Maggie Lynch OAM, AMES AMEP Counsellor. Will present on her involvement in support of refugees. For further information please call: Paula – (03) 9895 5800 [Click here](#) for a flyer

### **New Executive Director CentaCare Sandhurst**

Welcome to Peter Richardson, who has the honor of taking over from recently retired Paul Fogarty. As part of a distinguished career, Peter was until recently the Operations Manager of Homeless Services for Haven at their head office in Bendigo. Read more at <http://www.centacare-sandhurst.org.au/>



### **If we allow comfort and privilege to blind us...**



Fr Joe Caddy delivered the homily during an anti-poverty week service on 24 October 2013: For 11 years I worked as a chaplain in a maximum security prison at Melbourne's Metropolitan Remand Centre. In that setting I would at times meet inmates who were accused of serious crimes that had shocked the community. [Read more...](#)

## **Catholic Social Services Victoria**

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