

## Catholic Social Services Victoria November 2011 Update for members and friends

It's been some time since our last update, so this note covers quite a bit of ground. Thanks to so many of you for your support for various projects, events, etc. Please don't hesitate to [contact us](#) with comment, seeking information etc about any of these items.



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#### Positions vacant

- [Executive Assistant](#) at CSSV
- [School Liaison Officer](#) at St Vincent de Paul Society

#### For your calendar

- 2012 CSSV AGM and Commissioning Mass - 14 March
- 2012 CSSV Annual Dinner – Friday 24 August

### CSSV developments

#### ✚ CSSV Council, planning

- The [Council](#) of Catholic Social Services Victoria meets eight times a year, most recently on 21 October. [photo: Council chair, Peter Bearsley]. Among other things, several new members have been admitted to CSSV over recent meetings: a warm welcome to the Assisi Centre, Brigidine Asylum Seeker Project, Edmund Rice Asylum Seeker Project, the Order of Malta, and Rosies Oblate Youth Mission.
- **Archbishop Denis Hart** joined the 16 September meeting of Council, which provided for an update for the Archbishop and a general discussion about key issues faced by vulnerable and marginalised people within the society, and the role of Catholic social services organisations in working with those who are affected.
- The Council and its committees gather on 2 December for **planning for 2012**. Input from interested parties would be welcome – contact [Denis Fitzgerald](#) in the first instance.
- Thanks, congratulations and best wishes to Council member **Michael Perusco** (pictured), who is moving from his role as CEO [Sacred Heart Mission](#) to take up a senior position in Canberra with the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet.



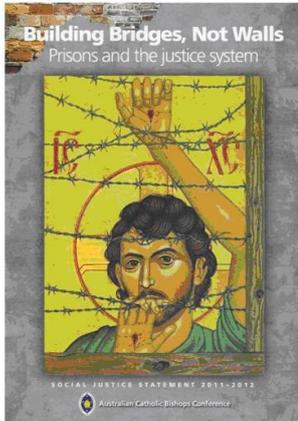
#### ✚ Policy & advocacy

- On behalf of and with member organisations, and with a range of inter-Church and other bodies, CSSV has been engaged in advocacy on a range of issues, including criminal justice policy, poverty issues, and housing.
- [Click here](#) for an initial CSSV reflection on housing: Australians are facing a **housing affordability** crisis. Homelessness is the stark and extreme end of the struggle experienced by many families and individuals to maintain a home. However, a chronic lack of affordable housing also means many households face housing stress and insecurity that may persist over many years. Work is also underway on developing case studies to throw light on movement from public housing to private rental.

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- The 22 September Breakfast Briefing by **Patricia Faulkner AO** on ***The social equity dimension of a carbon tax*** left everyone better informed, and more able to play our part in support of those who are most vulnerable. Gavin Dufty's response rounded out a very informative session. It's clear that there will be a higher relative impact on lower-income households, and that this is an issue where continued support is needed for advocates for those who are most exposed.
- The September [2011 Social Justice Statement](#) from the Australian Catholic



Bishops on the **criminal justice system**, entitled '*building bridges, not walls*', provided a useful context for a number of activities and engagements, including several articles in [Kairos](#), a Jesuit Social Services' [National Justice Symposium](#), a lunchtime dialogue at CSSV, reflecting on the connections between '[justice](#)' in [the Gospels](#) and our current criminal justice system; etc. Among other things, CSSV is currently working on a cost-benefit approach to analysing the need for preventative and early-intervention steps, as an alternative to building more prisons.

- [Anti poverty week](#), from 16 - 22 October, provided an opportunity to reflect on the reality and the causes of poverty, and on what more should be done to alleviate

it. There were lots of events organised, by CSSV, many member organisations, and others that we work with, including the [Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne](#), the Victorian Council of Churches, etc. A number of useful resources were made available.



- A project underway at CSSV is exploring the potential of **Social Investment Bonds** as a way of increasing resources available for social services in Victoria.
- Work to progress the **National Disability Insurance Scheme** continues. Building community and, thus, political support remains a priority – signing up at [www.everyaustraliancounts.com.au](http://www.everyaustraliancounts.com.au) to support the general campaign is an element in this. There are also strategic and resource issues to be addressed at the various levels of Government, and by community service organisations that serve this community. Planning for a gathering of CSSV members on these issues is underway.

### **Member support and engagement**

- **Gathering of Religious in social services:** Thanks to our presenter Michael Yore and to all who participated in this third annual gathering on Tuesday 20 September. Feedback was very positive. A paper will be on the website soon, as will a date for 2012 Enquiries to [Terry O'Shannassy](#), tel 9287 5570.
- **CSSV Annual Dinner:** Thanks to all who contributed to our successful Annual Dinner on 19 August, including our guest speaker, the Hon Mary Wooldridge MP. Congratulations to Fr Kevin Mogg AM on his life membership of CSSV. Click here for a [report and photos](#) and [here](#) for remarks at the dinner from Executive Director, Denis Fitzgerald.

With a special thank you to our 2011 Dinner sponsors:



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- o A gathering in Melbourne on 26 August of the **Board of Catholic Social Services Australia** provided an opportunity for CSSV members to meet Board members and to engage on a range of current issues.
- o Thanks to St Pius X parish, West Heidelberg, for their Mass on Wednesday 28 September 2011 to mark **Mental Health Week** - an opportunity to stand in solidarity with those suffering within our community, and to help raise awareness of mental health issues. [Click here](#) for a write up. CSSV was pleased to be associated with planning and advertising this event.

### **Catholic ethos and identity**



St Mary MacKillop was a trail blazer in the development of social services in Australia. She is now recognised as a Saint. Those who gathered in Melbourne on 13, 14 October for **A conference to explore the influence of Mary MacKillop on Catholic social services** engaged more deeply with her life and the work that she inspired and explored her influence today and beyond. [Click](#) for conference webpage, including papers and other links.

Catholic Social Services and our partners in this venture - MacKillop Family Services, Aboriginal Catholic Ministry, the Sisters of St Joseph and Australian Catholic University - would like to thank all our presenters and all who contributed to or participated in this very well-received event. Thanks too to our sponsor, Catholic Church Insurances, and the others who supported the conference in various ways.



- o Our **'Mission network'** has continued to meet bi-monthly, and is scheduled to meet again on 17 November.
- o Over recent months, CSSV staff have delivered a number of presentations on varying aspects of [Catholic Social Teaching](#), the principles underpinning our analysis of society and the call to justice. [Denis](#) or [Terry](#) would be happy to discuss this.

### **Sector events and developments**

#### **To note just a few:**

- o Friday 4 November, 1.00 – 2.30pm at Thomas Carr Centre, 278 Victoria Parade: [launch](#) of 'Walk with Us', an Indigenous response to the Northern Territory intervention.
- o 10 November 2011, Jesuit Social Services [Just Leadership Just Imagine](#) Breakfast Series
- o 24 March 2012, Bethlehem Community 'Homework' formal fundraiser. Email to [Bethlehem Community](#) or phone Alex on 0457 080 543.



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