

# mini MICAH

March 2008

Hello, and welcome to *mini MICAH*.

## What's been happening

- ① CSSV has a new Executive Director. Denis Fitzgerald commenced on Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> March and the Secretariat is very happy to welcome Denis and have him on board. We are looking forward to new and exciting times ahead. Denis and Marg Casey have already scheduled meetings with several agency CEOs to gauge what the sector needs from CSSV.
- ① In February, CSSV joined an Affordable Living Alliance. This Alliance was convened by VCOSS in response to the possibility that the Government is considering limiting or reducing eligibility to concessions for utilities and water. Many members of the Alliance are organisations and agencies who express different concerns. The Alliance has signed a letter that has been sent to all Labor MPs with a view to discussing the issues in more detail. Agencies and individuals are requested to write to their local MP in the hope of getting wider exposure for the issue. We will keep you up-to-date with how the campaign progresses.
- ① On 1<sup>st</sup> January, CSSV handed over management of healthcare, prison, youth justice, AIDS and mental health chaplaincies to Centacare Catholic Family Services. In February, Centacare welcomed all the chaplains with a liturgy and supper which was very well attended.

## What's coming up

- ① CSSV will conduct its Annual General Meeting on Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> March at Brennan Hall at St Vincent's Hospital which will be preceded by the Annual Missioning Mass to be celebrated by Bishop Prowse, Episcopal Vicar for Justice and Social Services, and followed by a light lunch. You are most welcome to attend, but would ask that you notify us **immediately** in order to cater for the day.
- ① mini MICAH will undergo a facelift in the coming weeks as we endeavour to streamline the way in which we deliver news to you. We will give you more news of CSSV activities and trust that you will contribute news from your world.

## Who am I?

Each issue, we profile someone in the CSSV community. In this issue, we hear from Denis Fitzgerald, new Executive Director at Catholic Social Services Victoria.

*Q: Tell us about where you work and your role.*

An integral part of the Gospel mission of the Church is to stand with the poor, the disadvantaged and marginalised; and to work for a just, equitable and compassionate society. As a peak body for Catholic social service agencies in Victoria, CSSV works with Catholic welfare agencies and with others in the Church and beyond to further this gospel mission in Victoria.

*Q: Tell us something interesting or funny that has happened at your work recently?*

All at CSSV have given me a warm welcome - Marg Casey and Chris Wade who I'm working with on a day-to-day basis; Council members and leaders of member agencies; bishops and other church leaders; and many who have been involved in Catholic social services work over the years. That's a great way to start off in a role which revolves around working with others.

*Q: Have you a piece of advice or words of encouragement that has helped you in life or work?*

I am fortunate to have benefited often from advice and encouragement from friends and colleagues. I also find encouragement in regularly re-visiting the words of inspiration and the call to service in the gospels, psalms, the prayer of St Francis and other familiar works.

*Q: What do you do to wind down or relax?*

I relax in discussion with family and friends; when meditating on the train; reading; running; absorbing music, films; etc.

*Q: Have you a particular role model?*

I have been inspired by a wide range of people whose lives and actions have been focused on compassion, service and making a contribution to the common good. These include family members, work colleagues, friends, and others I've come to know through study, and the media. There were many such people at Centacare Catholic Family Services, where I worked for the past three years. Among those known to a broader public, Fr Mark Raper SJ was an inspiring presence at a critical juncture; and among historical figures whose lives I find myself returning to are Robert Kennedy and St Thomas More.

*Q: Which footy team do you support and why?*

My father grew up in North Melbourne, so I inherited the Kangaroos

Send us your news – any information on what your agency is doing will be greatly appreciated.

*mini MICAH* thrives on news! Send your news, updates, and any items of interest to [miniMICAH@css.org.au](mailto:miniMICAH@css.org.au).

**Catholic Social Services Victoria**

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