

mini MICAH

August 2008

monthly update for members and friends of Catholic Social Services Victoria

Hello, and welcome to *mini MICAH*.

We have combined two months into one as sickness precluded the July issue being sent to you – apologies.

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Recent CSSV News & Developments

- 🔗 **Mental health:** CSSV has submitted a response to the Victorian Government consultation paper on mental health services. The submission has been compiled from conversations held with many members who are either directly or indirectly working with people affected by mental illness. The submission may be viewed at www.css.org.au. Key issues are building resilient families and communities; removing the stigma associated with mental illness, and adequate funding for much of the good work that our members are currently engaged in.
- 🔗 **Other Victorian Government directions:**
 - Most members would know that the Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities took full effect from 1 January 2008. CSSV is currently developing a briefing document on the workings of the Charter, which we will contact you about soon.
 - Debate commenced last Wednesday in the Legislative Council on a private members Bill to legalise physician assisted dying in Victoria. Catholic aged care providers, CSSV and Catholic Health Australia have been among those who have written to members of Parliament on this Bill – prescription by the medical profession of substances with the primary aim of assisting death is not consistent with the commitment to end-of-life care that underpins the work of Catholic aged care and health care services. We'll keep you informed of the fortunes of the Bill.
- 🔗 **Refugee support:** a meeting between CSSV members and related agencies was conducted at the end of June to share experiences and explore options for effective cooperation in working with refugee communities. Present was a representative of the Department of Immigration and Citizenship who outlined the statistical data available to assist agencies and parishes in their planning, based on age, culture, arrival details, immigration status etc... It was noted that there are

many people doing amazing work in the area of refugee assistance, and that CSSV would act as a conduit for ongoing discussion in order for people to work more co-operatively.

- 🔗 **Homelessness:** In light of the keen response by the Catholic social services sector to the recent Federal Green Paper on homelessness – see www.css.org.au for a copy of the CSSV submission – we are following up with interested members at 9.00am on 14 August to identify further steps that should now be taken to follow up that consultation.
- 🔗 **Catholic Social Services Dinner – Feast of the Assumption, 15 August 2008**
We are looking forward to seeing many of you at our Annual Dinner to be held Friday week, 15th August, at the San Remo Ballroom in North Carlton.

Around the Sector

- 🔗 **Sacred Heart Mission** has an excellent article in *The Age* 5th August 2008 on homelessness. See link <http://www.theage.com.au/opinion/the-melburnians-without-hope-or-a-home-20080804-3pw9.html?page=-1>
- 🔗 **The John Pierce Centre (JPC)** has been providing pastoral care and family support to the Deaf Community throughout Victoria since 1935 when Father John Pierce was appointed as the first chaplain to the Catholic Deaf Community in Victoria by Archbishop Mannix. Today JPC has 9 staff working to provide a community centre, pastoral care and faith development, parenting programs, a playgroup for deaf mums, seniors groups, rural outreach and counselling. After more than 5 years of fundraising and negotiation JPC is finally near completion of a building re-development project which will see the St. Francis Xavier Church in High Street Prahran become the new spiritual home of the deaf community in Victoria. This will accommodate the pastoral service, administration and community centre, whilst still continuing to function as a Church for the deaf community where a Mass in Auslan is held once a month.
- 🔗 **Days in the Diocese and World Youth Day** were successful events for pilgrims along with CSSV and some member agencies.
 - St Vincent de Paul Society held its annual Ozanam Lecture plus a concert as part of Days in the Diocese; other members were involved in local and parish events that focused on service and justice.
 - CSSV and 3 other Archdiocesan agencies conducted **Voices from the margins** with Cardinal Napier from South Africa.
 - The finale of course was World Youth Day in Sydney which was an amazing success. St Vincent de Paul Society; CSSA; and other social services networks and agencies were very active. Centacare Sydney organised a meeting between Pope Benedict and a group of marginalised young people – follow the link for the Pope's inspiring address on that occasion: http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/benedict_xvi/speeches/2008/july/documents/hf_ben-xvi_spe_20080718_darlinghurst_en.html
 - Follow up to capitalise on the World Youth Day experience will now be a priority. We expect to have more information on this next month.

Who am I?

Each issue, we profile someone in the CSSV community. In this issue, we hear from **Craig Fisher** from St Vincent de Paul – a man of few words.

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

I work for St Vincent de Paul Transitional Housing. My role is to manage approximately 60 properties in the Brunswick, Coburg and Broadmeadows areas.

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

The funny/interesting thing is that I actually got this job!

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

Stay true to yourself and have fun.

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

I enjoy great food and fantastic company.

Q: Have you a particular role model?

No, actually – unless you count Herman master of the universe?

Q: Which footy team do you support and why?

Collingwood, because they're the best.

Send us your news
Any information on what your agency is doing is greatly appreciated.

Contact us

mini MICAH thrives on news! Send your news, updates, and any items of interest to miniMICAH@css.org.au.

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