

mini MICAH – February 2009

monthly update for members and friends of Catholic Social Services Victoria

with New Year's greetings to all our readers: may the blessings of Christmas now inspire us as we re-engage fully in our struggle for a more just and compassionate society

2009 Commissioning Mass and Annual General Meeting

Please join staff, leaders, volunteers and friends of CSSV members as a community to celebrate our identity, and our goals for the coming year.

Thursday 12 March, 2009,

4.30 – 7.30pm, at St Vincent's Hospital, Victoria Pde., Fitzroy

- **Commissioning Mass** Chapel, Ground Floor, Healy Wing, 41 Victoria Pde
- **AGM** at Brenan Hall, Aikenhead Conference Centre, Victoria Pde
- **AGM guest speaker: Teresa Wilson**, Director, Office of Youth, Archdiocese of Melbourne, and National Youth Representative, St Vincent de Paul Society in Australia. **Topic: "Engaging young people in service and justice agencies"**
- Followed by light meal

RSVP: Chris Wade, tel 9287 5566, cwade@css.org.au

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Wed 25 Feb 2009. **Advocacy 101** - Overview of with workings of Government
Thurs 12 March, 4.30 – 7.00pm 2009 **CSSV Commissioning Mass, AGM and gathering**
Fri 28 August, 2009 **CSSV Annual Dinner**

- **Who am I?** Trish Nolan, Centacare Ballarat

Recent CSSV News & Developments

📎 December breakfast

Our last breakfast for 2008 was held on 17 December. Around 20 people from social service agencies enjoyed a cooked breakfast and an excellent presentation by Professor Peter Sheehan, VUT, on the impact of the current financial crisis on social service agencies. Peter presented an analytical framework that took into account changes in the international economy, technology-driven changes in financial markets, excessive reliance on the neo-liberal de-regulatory policies, and personal greed – we are grateful to him for the time and effort he put into the presentation and the active discussion.

A program of further breakfasts is being developed for 2009.

White Paper on Homelessness

The release in December of the Federal White Paper on Homelessness has given great heart to agencies working with the homeless. The government response through the COAG framework will commence with a new National Affordable Housing Agreement from January 2009. The agreement provides \$6.1 billion over 5 years from 2008/9 on measures including social housing, private rental assistance, support and accommodation for people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness, and assistance with home purchasing. The government aims to half overall homelessness by 2020 and offer accommodation to all rough sleepers who need it by 2020.

CSSV will continue to liaise with member agencies who deliver housing services to ensure that the sector is well positioned to provide the best care for our clients. This will require that the Victorian Government moves in alignment with the White Paper.

Advocacy

At the national level, CSSA have followed up on the well publicized release with other Church groups, of the Access Economics report on the financial crisis and the needs of vulnerable families. The leaders of the major Church welfare agencies met last week with the Deputy Prime Minister, Julia Gillard to maintain the momentum generated by the earlier reports. The follow up report presented by CSSA Director Frank Quinlan and the other leaders is available at www.catholicsocialservices.org.au

Equal Opportunity Act: Review of exemptions and exceptions

The Victorian Government has asked a Committee of the Victorian Parliament – the Scrutiny of Acts and Regulations Committee – to review the appropriateness of exemptions and exceptions under the Equal Opportunity Act. There is a wide range of exemptions and exceptions under the Act, including a number of provisions relating to charities and to bodies established for religious purposes. CSSV will be consulting with members in the development over the coming weeks of a submission to the review. Contact here is Denis Fitzgerald.

Melbourne Seminars on Catholic Identity in health, education and welfare delivery

CSSV is working with Bishop Chris Prowse in the organisation of a series of three seminars in March 2009 that bring together leaders from the Archdiocese of Melbourne and key personnel from our health, welfare and education agencies. As part of the broader dialogue that is already underway in these areas about the Catholic identity of agencies working in these fields, the seminars will provide a forum for dialogue and continued reflection on ethos and identity. Through publication of key inputs and summaries from the series, this material will also be available to a broader audience, in agencies and in the community generally.

Please feel free to contact Denis or Chris at Catholic Social Services Victoria if you would like any further information. Please note, though, that places are quite limited.

CSSV Council

Next Council meeting will be held Friday, 6 February 2009. See www.css.org.au for information on Council members.

Around the Sector

St Mary's House of Welcome

St Mary's have a job vacancy for a Volunteer Coordinator position, closing date Monday, 9th February 2009. The Volunteer Coordinator (VC) is a full-time position (38 hours per week). The Coordinator is required to recruit, welcome, train, support and coordinate the activities of volunteers. Additionally, the Volunteer Coordinator will act as the Client participation Officer within SMHOW.

A position description is available from Sr Roseanne Murphy, roseanne.murphy@smhow.org.au, tel 9417 6497. Applications close on Monday 9th February 2009.

'Wounded and gifted'

Jesuit Provincial Fr Steve Curtain SJ reflects on a visit to Corpus Christi Community at Greenvale:

We can learn ... from the men at Corpus Christi, who understand what it means to be wounded spiritually.

There is a woundedness at the heart of being human. It grows out of alienation from God and from each other. It is seen when we fail to respect each other's God-given dignity, and when we avoid spending time nurturing relationships with one another and with God. Theologians call it Original Sin.

The beautiful thing about the men at Corpus Christi is that they no longer try to pretend that they are anything other than fragile, weak and needy people in need of the love and support of a community of friends. In prayer, they reach out for the love, forgiveness and healing of our merciful God. With God's grace, at Corpus Christi they have also discovered that they are good and gifted in their own ways and that each one has his own contribution to make to the life of the community and to the healing of others who are hurting.

Those of us who are privileged to know people like the men at Corpus Christi receive a great gift from them. They help us to face the truth about ourselves. We are the same as them: fragile, weak and needy. If there is goodness and giftedness in us, as indeed there is, then it is there by God's grace.

See <http://www.express.org.au/article.aspx?aeid=9779>

Volunteers and workplace safety

Employers are responsible for the health and safety of volunteers working under their control, as well as for their employees. WorkSafe advise that , when working with volunteers it is essential that employers: ensure that volunteers have appropriate skills, training and supervision to perform the work safely. A useful recent WorkSafe publication, 'Volunteer Health and Safety – a workbook for community service organisations is available from the WorkSafe website: www.worksafe.vic.gov.au

Media coverage

There is usually a lot of coverage over the Christmas season of particular support services offered to the homeless and marginalised. Two articles from The Age stood out: two articles on a Sudanese family and a adoptive family, both of which are clients of Centacare Catholic Family Services – see www.css.org.au/news.html

For your diary

-  **Advocacy 101, Wednesday, 25th February 2009, 9:30-11:30am.** Venue: China Room, Cardinal Knox Centre. A workshop for those who are interested in an introduction to how Government works, and how you can influence it. RSVP to Chris Wade on 9287 5566 or cwade@css.org.au.

2009 Commissioning Mass, CSSV Annual General Meeting, and light dinner

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For staff, leaders, volunteers and friends of CSSV members – to join as a community to celebrate the coming year.

2009 CSSV Dinner

Friday, 28th August 2009, San Remo Ballroom. All welcome.

Who am I?

Each issue, we profile someone in the CSSV community. In this issue, we hear from **Trish Nolan from Centacare Ballarat**

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

I'm the Senior Manager of the Youth and Vocational Services programs for Centacare Catholic Diocese of Ballarat. These programs include the Personal Support program for people who face major non vocational barriers to employment; Job Network Services- employment services; JPET – a program for homeless and at risk youth; also a number of Victorian government funded youth support programs-including: Start Over- for young people coming into contact with the police; Youth Justice group Conferencing; the Youth Justice Service delivery Model- a new program for Youth Justice clients; and Youth Transitions Support Initiative- for young people disengaged from school, training or employment.

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

I have been on annual leave until today, 27 January, so my life has been very relaxed! A funny thing that happened on my return was that one of my staff members said, "Welcome back. Did you have a great holiday? You look very clean! Oh, that's not what I mean; I mean... you look refreshed!" I must have been pretty dirty before I left!

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

I think that the best piece of advice someone can give you is to believe in yourself and to be confident that when you do your best, you are doing a good job.

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

I like to catch up with family and friends and have a chat and a laugh. I also like to walk with music from my IPOD surrounding me and filling my head. I walk to the beat and have been known to skip along, much to the disgust of my teenage daughter!

Q: Have you a particular role model?

In my early career as a secondary school teacher, I had a couple of role models who were senior female school leaders, who were achieving well in a typically male environment. I have admired the way in which they were able to be strong leaders and yet maintain their individuality, integrity and personal leadership style.

Q: Which footy team do you support and why?

Collingwood,(although I'm not really into football) because most of my family supported that team. My daughter also supports Collingwood, much to my husband's disgust! He's a Cats supporter.

Contact us

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

Please also let us know of any events, celebrations etc in your agency or program – we are keen to keep in touch with developments, and to assist with publicity etc where that is appropriate.

Catholic Social Services Victoria

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To nominate new subscribers or to unsubscribe to mini MICAH, email cwade@css.org.au.