

mini MICAH – February 2010

Monthly update for members and friends of Catholic Social Services Victoria

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For your diary

-  24 February 2010 - First CSSV Breakfast Briefing for 2010
Professor Beth Crisp, Spirituality in Catholic social services
[Click here for flyer](#), RSVP by 19 February
 -  11 March 2010 – **CSSV Commissioning Mass and AGM**
[Click here for flyer](#), see below for more detail
 -  14 April 2010 - Breakfast Briefing with Bruce Bonyhady on
The development of a National Disability Long-term Care and Support Scheme
 -  20 August 2010 – **CSSV Annual Dinner**
 -  Sunday 28 February 2010 – **Film 'Bran Nu Dae'** to support Aboriginal Catholic Ministry
2.00pm at Rivoli Theatre in Camberwell
RSVP: ASAP – Ph: 9878 7939 or e-mail: jandpschmidt@bigpond.com
- Other CSSV Breakfast Briefings for 2010: 2 June, 21 July, 8 September, 27 October

Who am I?

-  Peter Bearsley, Chair of the Council of Catholic Social Services Victoria



Catholic Social Services News & Development

Counselling in a Catholic agency

[Click here](#) for text of a recent CSSV paper on counselling in a Catholic agency, delivered last month to the 2010 Catholic Bioethics Conference.

The paper considers counselling in Catholic agencies in the context of the role of the Church in social services, and the features of Catholic social services in Australia.

- Counselling offered in Catholic agencies is non-directive and client-centred. Features that can be expected include professionalism, respect for clients, and a spirit of loving service; humility, an openness to the spiritual dimension; and a value base that reflects Catholic moral teaching on the value of marriage, that life begins at conception, and the importance of the family.
- Catholic social teaching informs the organisational setting for this counselling: accessible fee levels, for example.
- Much of this service is now directed and delivered by people who are not practicing Catholics, including many who have made very significant contributions in advancing the Church's mission of loving service and work for justice.
- A dialogue is needed within agencies and more broadly to ensure that people and processes are in place to maintain a continued focus on mission within Catholic agencies, and particularly in recruitment and in staff formation. This will include detailed consideration as to whether particular positions need a person who is a Catholic, or a Christian, etc.
- These issues are important, because the services are important: they are needed by those who are served, and they are an integral part of the mission of the Church, whose members are compelled as Christians to 'heed the cry of the poor' within our society.

Any comments or discussion on the paper would be welcome, and can be directed to Denis on 9287 5569 or at dfitzgerald@css.org.au. Related to some of the points in the paper, CSSV is currently planning a workshop for members on best practice in 'recruitment for mission'.

CSSV 2010 Commissioning Mass and AGM

All staff, volunteers and friends of Catholic Social Services Victoria member agencies are invited to join our Annual Commissioning Mass and Annual General Meeting, on Thursday 11 March:

4.30pm	Commissioning Mass	All Saints Church, Brunswick St, Fitzroy
6.00pm	Annual General Meeting	All Saints Hall
6.45pm	Refreshments	St Mary's House of Welcome (165 Brunswick St, across from All Saints)

Melissa Brickell, Coordinator, Aboriginal Partnerships, at MacKillop Family Services will be the guest speaker for the Annual General Meeting. Melissa will speak on 'Catholic social services and Aboriginal Australians: what are the opportunities for greater engagement?'

Refreshments at St Mary's House of Welcome will provide an opportunity to visit their recently re-built premises.

[Click here for a flyer for the Mass and AGM.](#)

Episcopal Vicars: visits to programs

Both of the Episcopal Vicars in the Archdiocese of Melbourne who have responsibilities for Catholic social services work are keen to visit member agencies.

Fr Tony Kerin, Episcopal Vicar for Justice and Social Services, has visited several program areas, and Monsignor Anthony Ireland, Episcopal Vicar for Health and Aged Care, has commenced liaison with organisations active in those fields. Both Fr Tony and Monsignor Anthony are keen to both familiarise themselves with the work that is being done, and the issues that are faced by the people we serve. Please contact Emmy Silvius on 9287 5566 to arrange a visit to your program.



*Fr Tony Kerin,
Episcopal Vicar for
Justice and Social
Service*



CSSV Planning for 2010

At its initial 2010 meeting on 12 February, the Council of CSSV considered general directions for 2010 that would add to the overall strength and impact of the Catholic social services sector in Victoria and complement the work at the national level of CSSA. Discussion centred around three strategic priorities, and included the following initiatives:

Research, policy and advocacy.

- A best practice workshop on the impact of mental health issues on the delivery of other services
- Preparation for a conference (in 2011?) on rural communities
- Engagement with members on the theme of cooperation within the Catholic social services sector
- Follow up to 2009 CSSV Political Forum, in the lead up to the Victorian election
- Continued advocacy focus to include housing, disability, gambling, human rights, and prison issues.

Member support

- Focus on maximising our cooperation with indigenous communities
- Workshop on best practice in 'recruitment for mission'

Fostering a Catholic ethos

- Forum on experience and learnings on embedding the charism of a Religious Congregation
- Continued exploration of pastoral care options in aged care
- Support of a Ballarat-led initiative on engagement by staff with Catholic social teaching

Any feedback on 2009, or comment on priorities for 2010 would be most welcome.

Victoria Parliamentary inquiry into future directions of Public Housing

Alongside a number of concerned member agencies, CSSV is making a submission to the current Parliamentary Inquiry into the future of Public Housing in Victoria.

The expansion of social housing, and Government initiatives to address the needs of those who are homeless have been prominent at Federal and State level under current Governments, and there is much to be applauded.

At the same time, there is simply not enough public housing to meet the accommodation needs of those who are classified as most in need; there is a shortage of housing across the community generally, which leads to upward pressure on rental costs and downward pressure on rental availability; and much of the social housing under development is still priced beyond the reach of many of those who are homeless.

Our input to the Parliamentary enquiry supports the expansion of public housing stock, as well as:

- Support for innovative housing developments that meet the range of needs of some of the most marginalised in our society: The Queens Rd Rooming House project managed by Sacred Heart Mission is among those that address the social and support needs of residents, as well as providing stable shelter.
- CSSV supports the current segmented waiting list model, which gives priority to those most in need.
- We argue for the maintenance of public housing for the most needy, and support 'security of tenure' as a basic principle.
- We call for immediate steps to tackle the excessive use of remand facilities to lock up young people who do not have suitable housing, as well as the range of mentally unwell and intellectually disabled who are being incarcerated because there are no other suitable options.
- CSSV calls for additional 'respite places' and long-term accommodation for the ageing families of disabled adults.
- CSSV supports moves for a vastly improved remuneration scheme for housing workers within the community sector.
- Finally we commend the tireless work of the large number of our member agencies who minister in this field, and the patience of their clients who bear the direct cost of the under resourcing of the current system.

CSSA Conference 2010

Catholic Social Services Australia held their annual conference in Canberra from 8 – 10 February. Stimulating and challenging presentations from a wide range of speakers developed the theme of where reforms have led



us and where we still have some distance to travel. Fr. Frank Brennan S.J. spoke on the process of the consultation for the Human Rights Charter. Awards acknowledging excellence in program development and innovation were presented, Sacred Heart Mission being honoured for their Journey to Social Inclusion project. The program concluded with a Parliament House breakfast attended by around 30 MPs, followed by individual presentations from Julia Gillard, Jenny Macklin, Tony Abbott and others. CSSA are to be congratulated for a thoroughly professional yet warm and friendly gathering.

Key papers can be accessed at www.catholicsocialservices.org.au. [Click here](#) for an op ed piece by Michael Perusco on the causes of homelessness, that drew on some of the input at the Conference.

Working more closely together: Centacares in Victoria and Tasmania

A theme of the Canberra conference and of CSSV planning was to explore and pursue opportunities to maximise cooperation between agencies, in order to maximise our impact on those we seek to serve. Consistent with that, CSSV has been working with the various Centacare organisations from Victoria and Tasmania with the goal of formalising links in order to enable a united interface with contracting parties, including Government. Further information will be available as work progresses. Denis Fitzgerald, on 9287 5569 or dfitzgerald@css.org.au can address any current queries.

CSSA 'The Social Inclusion Agenda'

The Parliamentary breakfast during the CSSA conference provided the backdrop for the launch of 'The Social Inclusion Agenda' paper. A copy can be downloaded from www.catholicsocialservices.org.au. This extensive, thoroughly researched document traces the history and development of the notion of social inclusion and concludes with a statement from Catholic Social Services Australia outlining a strategy that CSSA sees as foundational in moving the process forward.

Elements of this strategy include:

- o An independent Entitlements Commission
- o Incentives rather than sanctions
- o Strengthening communities
- o Early childhood
- o A social inclusion innovation fund
- o Alternatives to program based funding



Emmy Silvius

Welcome back to Emmy, who has returned to the CSSV office following her knee replacement surgery. Please keep Emmy in your prayers as her work towards full recovery continues.

Around the Sector

Change in leadership at Centacare Gippsland: farewell to Arda Tymensen, and welcome to Jamie Edwards



Arda Tymensen has retired after a decade as Director at Centacare Gippsland. Arda led the agency through its formative years, and has established it as a strong presence in the Sale Diocese – see www.centacaregippsland.org.au for an overview of their work. In addition to her work with Centacare, Arda has been a valued representative on the CSSV Council, and has been actively involved with CSSA and in counselling forums. In 2009 she led the development by Centacare Gippsland of a long-term response to the personal and community impact of bushfire devastation in the region.

Jamie joins Centacare after seven years as Manager of the Family and Community Services Division of Good Shepherd Youth and Family Services. His new appointment marks a return for him to the region where he spent his childhood and earlier phases of his working life.

CSSV joins all those who have worked with Arda in thanking her for her contribution to the people of Gippsland, and to the wider Catholic services sector; and we look forward to keeping in contact with her as she reduces the



managerial focus in her life. We also look forward to working with Jamie, to supporting him and Centacare Gippsland where we can, and to benefiting from his contribution to the broader sector.

20 March 2010, Jesuit Social Services Annual Fundraising Dinner

JSS is honoured that The Hon. Julia Gillard MP, Deputy Prime Minister will be this year's guest speaker delivering the inaugural Frank Costigan QC Address.

When: **7pm, Saturday 20th March 2010**

Where: Victory Room, Etihad Stadium

Speaker: The Hon Julia Gillard MP

Entertainment: Dancing to The Frantics

See www.jss.org.au for further details and booking arrangements.



21 March 2010 – Volunteer Reflection Day

Many people are drawn to help those who are at the edges of our society. But how do we sustain such a commitment and how do we make sense of what drives that commitment? God is found in every human being we encounter. A day of reflection is offered for those who would like their volunteering to be enriched and sustained.

Campion Centre of Ignatian Spirituality and Jesuit Volunteers Australia invite all volunteers to come to a day of rest and reflection. Register at www.cis.jesuit.org.au/CampVolunteer.html or phone Campion CIS on 9854 8110.

11 April 2010 – Just Cycle Yarra Valley

An initiative of Jesuit Social Services, Just Cycle Yarra Valley will raise awareness and funds for their work with some of the most disadvantaged and at-risk young people, families and communities. Set in the picturesque Yarra Valley region at Rochford Wines, the day features cycling, live music, entertainment and fun activities for the whole family.

Just Cycle Yarra Valley has two course options – a 45km recreational ride or a 120km course including the challenge of Mount Donna Buang. If you're not a rider, you are invited to enjoy a relaxed day out amongst the vines at Rochford Wines.

Please visit www.justcycle.com.au for more information and to register.



Green Steps @ Work training course 15 & 16 March 2010

Want to increase your green skills and contribute to positive change within your workplace? Then Green Steps @ Work is for you. Green Steps is an introductory level training course providing:

- A deeper understanding of environmental sustainability issues
- Practical skills to initiate and drive sustainability programs in the workplace
- Access to national alumni and network of sustainability practitioners

Highly interactive and intensive, Green Steps @ Work brings together motivated people with a passion for creating positive environmental change in their workplace and beyond.

Not-for profit organisations receive a 50% discount - \$950 for 4.5 days of training

For more information visit [Green Steps @ Work - Course Details and Applications](#)

Seeking a wages policy to promote social inclusion and family wellbeing

CSSV is working with Brian Lawrence, Chair of the Australian Catholic Council for Employment Relations, in the preparation of his initial submission to the newly established wage setting body, Fair Work Australia. Brian's areas of focus include the issue of wages policy and family wellbeing, and the implications of a provision in the Fair Work Act, relating to a new objective of 'promoting social inclusion through increased workforce participation'. Brian is keen to utilise this new objective in arguing a case for a wage that does indeed meet the needs of all workforce participants, including families.



Pope Benedict's message for Lent: a reflection on justice

[Click here](#) for Pope Benedict XVI's message for Lent 2010. The message is a theological reflection on justice:

Material goods are certainly useful and required – indeed Jesus Himself was concerned to heal the sick, feed the crowds that followed Him and surely condemns the indifference that even today forces hundreds of millions into death through lack of food, water and medicine – yet...

Thanks to Christ's action, we may enter into the "greatest" justice, which is that of love (cf. Rm 13, 8-10), the justice that recognises itself in every case more a debtor than a creditor, because it has received more than could ever have been expected.

Strengthened by this very experience, the Christian is moved to contribute to creating just societies, where all receive what is necessary to live according to the dignity proper to the human person and where justice is enlivened by love.

Who am I?

Profiling Peter Bearsley, Chair of the Council of Catholic Social Services Victoria:

Q: Tell us about where you work and your role

I work from home and wherever meetings take me. The roles are mainly on Boards and committees, particularly investment committees. They include Rotary (I'm trying to initiate a project in East Timor to assist in reducing infant and maternal mortality), a medical research foundation, two religious congregations, a number of trusts and estates, and of course CSSV



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

My Dad used to say to us kids that if as Catholics we want to succeed in life, we need to work that much harder and be that much better than others. As a railwayman and local union leader, he himself had to overcome a lot of bigotry from Communists on one side and the Orange Lodge on the other, while all the stationmasters were Freemasons. Sectarianism is no longer such a problem, but the advice stood us in good stead.

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

I run – and lately, go [geocaching](#) (it's fun – try it!).

Q: Have you a particular role model?

My wife is one of the most inspirational people I have ever met. I am different from her in many ways, and she's way ahead of me.

Q: If there is one thing you could change in the world today what would that be?

The promotion of greed in advertising and in the business world. I think we can reasonably look to the earth to provide for our real needs, but not if a lot of people accumulate far more than is needed for a healthy, fulfilling and dignified life.

Contact us

mini MICAH thrives on news! Send your news, updates, and any items of interest to office@css.org.au. Please also let us know of any events, celebrations etc in your agency or program.

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