

mini MICAH - November 2008

monthly update for members and friends of Catholic Social Services Victoria

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Recent CSSV News & Developments

📎 Recent members forums

Breakfast Conversations: Around 20 people gathered on 29 October to hear an incisive presentation from Michael Perusco, CEO, Sacred Heart Mission, on the topic of **Social Inclusion**. The lively discussion that followed reflected the potential that Michael identified in the concept, the hope that flowed from its adoption by Governments, and the challenge of ensuring that it makes a difference to the vulnerable, including our clients. Unfortunately, there were some glitches with the food and location, which we will learn from for the future.

Fundraising forum: Around a dozen gathered on 23 October for a presentation and discussion on the recent successful capital fundraising campaign by St Mary's House of Welcome, and for a general discussion on fundraising strategies and options. Please feel free to contact us if you would like further details of discussions, etc.

📎 Religious Orders : Impact of their Charism on Catholic Social Service Agencies

Over the past month CSSV Council member Br Doug Walsh met with a range of agency leaders and members of Religious Orders working in agencies. The meetings explored how the particular charism of the order has impacted on the agency, and implications for supporting staff and for strengthening the Catholic ethos within agencies. A work program arising out of this is being worked on.

📎 CSSV Council

The CSSV Council met in Ballarat on Friday 31 October. A feature of the meeting was a round-table review of the impact of the international financial crisis on our members – in short, while there is much that is not yet known, it is clear that increased unemployment will impact adversely on our client population, and that Government budgets and, perhaps, donor budgets, will be much more constrained than they have been in recent years. However, a basic principle for advocacy and for our own resource allocation is that the burden of a downturn should not be carried by the most vulnerable members of our society.

Mr Bernie O'Regan, Manager, Family & Community Services, at MacKillop Family Services, has joined the CSSV Council. In addition to his time with MacKillop, Bernie brings to the role an extensive experience in the community sector in Queensland, including significant time with Centacare Brisbane. At its meeting Council thanked former Council member Ms Suzy McManus for the time and commitment she had contributed to CSSV, both as a member of Council and a member of staff.

🔗 **Terry O'Shannassy joins CSSV staff**

Terry very recently joined CSSV as Member Support and Projects Coordinator. Terry built up a strong background in teaching and working with marginalised youth while with the Christian Brothers, and was most recently Manager of the Personal Support Program at Centacare Catholic Family Services. In 2006 Terry received a medal of the Order of Australia for his work with marginalised youth. Terry's role will include re-building our range of support functions for members across Victoria.

🔗 **Recent CSSV advocacy work has included:**

Inter-Church Gambling Taskforce: This group has been active in analysing developments, and making representations to Government and politicians. Specific CSSV contributions include articulation of the arguments that the pain of problem gambling is disproportionately borne by people in poorer areas of Victoria, and that State Government dependence on gambling revenue remains a barrier to long term reform.

🔗 **Visits to programs by Bishop Christopher Prowse:**

As part of his role as Episcopal Vicar for Justice and Social Service, Bishop Prowse will be visiting a number of Catholic social service programs over the coming months. Looking to 2009, agencies or programs that would welcome a pastoral visit by Bishop Chris should contact CSSV.

🔗 **Work still in progress** includes analytical work on the workings of the Victorian Human Rights Charter on our sector, a submission on the 2009 Victorian Budget, and work on the impact on our clients and our work of the recent economic and financial shocks. Your input would be welcome – please contact Denis with general or specific items you would like taken into consideration.

Around the Sector

🔗 **Social Policy Connections**

On 11 November, 7.30pm, Hilary Martin OP will speak at the YTU Study Centre on the Intervention in the Northern Territory. see website <http://www.socialpolicyconnections.com.au/>

🔗 **Useful links** – income inequality in Australia, scholarships for MBA, community resources

The OECD reports that **income inequality in Australia** has fallen sharply since 2000 but that poverty has not fallen over that same interval - <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/44/47/41525263.pdf>

A full fee scholarship is available to the community sector for completion of an **Executive MBA** at the Australian Graduate School of management:
http://www.scholarships.unsw.edu.au/scholarship/sc_al_search_detail.display_scholarship_details?p_session=&p_scholarship_specific_id=555

The monthly **e-publication from Our Community** includes tips on fundraising, management, etc - <http://www.ourcommunity.com.au/>

🔗 **Media coverage**

An extended Channel 9 feature on Sr Mary O'Shannassy, Director of **Catholic Prison Ministry at Centacare Catholic Family Services**, shown on Mon 20/10/08, can be viewed at <http://www.css.org.au/news.html>

Kairos on 2 November 2008, ran an article by CSSV on the incidence of **homelessness in Victoria** - <http://www.kairos.com.au/local-news/homelessness-in-our-midst-2.html>

Two **Shekinah** agencies have been in the news recently. Radio station 774 gave quality time last week to **Mercy Care** when Richard Stubbs spoke with Janine Froomes a volunteer with Mercy Care. This week it was **St Mary's House of Welcome's** turn when Lindy Burns had a conversation with Sr Roseanne Murphy about food donated to SMHOW. It's very refreshing when two of our agencies receive such positive recognition from the media.

For your diary

📅 **Wednesday 10 December 2008 - breakfast briefing.**

Topic: Implications of the financial crisis

RSVP to Chris Wade on 9287 5566 or cwade@css.org.au

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

Thursday 12 March, 2009, 4.30 – 7.00pm

For staff, leaders, volunteers and friends of CSSV members

📅 **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 **Pierre Kazadi Mwamba** from the Office for Justice & Peace of the Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne.*

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

I'm Pierre Kazadi Mwamba, Student in International Community Development at Victoria University and I'm working part-time for the Office for Justice and Peace, I have been asked to assist the Executive Officer, Mark Clarke to develop new projects to increase awareness of the vital issues of social justice - especially poverty in our local and global community. The aim of these projects is to urge parishes and schools to get more involved in helping those who are victims of injustice in Australia and around world. I'm currently working on three particular projects:

- *Asylum seekers and refugees.*
- *Promoting Community Theatre as form of educational tool within the Catholic school system in the Archdiocese.*
- *Developing a hub of African Catholic communities to address the needs of these newly arrived ethnic groups.*

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

Recently my manager, Mark Clarke became engaged to my sister Shina, I believe it is going to be an interesting situation to be reporting to a boss who will also be my brother-in-law. I am very happy to have Mark as my sister's fiancée, and look forward to the challenge of working under his direction.

Do you have a piece of advice or an encouragement that has helped you in life or work?

It is very important to have a strong sense of justice and to remain true to your principles and values. Our family was forced into exile by a dictatorship that oppressed the vast majority of its citizens. Because my family refused to participate in the dictatorial regime of the Democratic Republic of Congo, we were arrested several times and persecuted, but we didn't give up. We continued to fight for justice. Today we are privileged to live in this lucky country, and so we continue to work hard for justice for the local community and for those who remain under the brutal dictatorship of Joseph Kabila.

What do you do to wind down or relax?

I run or go to the gym.

Have you a particular role model?

I would like to nominate my father Clovis, as my role model. My father was elected as a Deputy (Representative) to the Parliament of the Democratic Republic of Congo. Because he refused to participate in the corrupt practices of the Dictator, he was persecuted and eventually thrown in gaol. Even when his life was threatened, he refused to participate in the corruption of a regime that oppresses and impoverishes the majority of its citizens.

When we arrived in this country, my father insisted on our whole family giving back to the Australian community through volunteer work. It was through my work with the St Vincent de Paul society that I met my future brother in law.

My father has instilled a sense of family and justice of which I am extremely proud.

Which footy team do you support and why?

Personally, I don't have a team because I'm from a part of the world where soccer is common and I'm still having difficulty to understand the game. May be in future I will support Mark Clarke's team "Geelong" though given the result in the Grand final, I will have to wait and see.

(A more detailed version of Pierre's profile is available [http](http://www.css.org.au/minimicah/index.html) as an attachment to the on-line edition - <http://www.css.org.au/minimicah/index.html>.)

Contact us

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

Catholic Social Services Victoria

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