



17 May 2021

MEDIA RELEASE

Young People rise to volunteering challenges nationally

The National Council of the St Vincent de Paul Society in Australia celebrates its 60,000 members who are the backbone of the Society, present in communities across Australia.

This year National President, Claire Victory thanks all Vinnies volunteers for their vital role bringing dignity and hope to so many people who experience disadvantage in the face of drought, fire, floods and pandemic.

'In particular, we recognise the role of young volunteers, that often unsung cohort of 28,500 people under the age of 40, who make up more than a third of our membership base,' Ms Victory said.

'Young people were able to lead new ways of responding to the needs of their local communities, particularly as vulnerable older members were unable to volunteer on the ground at the height of the pandemic.

'A young Frederic Ozanam founded the Society on his 20th birthday and that spirit of youth is thriving in the Society today.

'The past 12 months have showcased the adaptability, innovation and forward-thinking spirit of our young volunteers and their connection to the founder's mission to make positive change.

'Young people from primary school age to their late 30s are in our shops, in our soup vans, talking to people experiencing isolation and disadvantage, and taking up senior leadership roles.

'Nationally seven of our advisory committees are led by young people and five of the National Council members are aged under 40. More than 60 young people at the national level shape how our organisation responds to public policy challenges of the day.

'Young people are not the future of volunteering, they are the here and now – without their energy, creativity and commitment, the Society in Australia would be a very different organisation.

'National Volunteer Week is an opportunity for all Australians to recognise the contributions made by nearly six million people across our country who volunteer their time, compassion, and expertise to help others.

'Vinnies offers volunteers a chance to give something back to the community, to use their skills and experience to make a difference. For others, it is a chance to develop new skills in a supportive environment.

To find out more or to sign up as a volunteer visit vinnies.org.au

The St Vincent de Paul Society in Australia consists of 60,000 members who operate on the ground through over 1,000 groups located in local communities across the country.

Media contact: 0475 068 209 / media@svdp.org.au

[Subscribe to SVDP National Council Media Releases](#)

