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## MEDIA RELEASE

### **Vinnies urges attendance at Palm Sunday rallies for refugee justice**

Australians concerned about the unfair treatment of asylum seekers and refugees are being asked to join St Vincent de Paul Society and other like-minded community groups at Palm Sunday rallies on 10 April 2022.

‘With the world in considerable turmoil there has never been a greater need for a more compassionate approach to refugee policy,’ said SVDP National Council President Claire Victory.

‘The Society has a long history of assisting vulnerable people such as refugees and asylum seekers, and Palm Sunday is a perfect time to highlight the community’s concerns. It was on this day that Jesus entered Jerusalem to complete his mission “to bring good news to the poor and to set captives free”, through his suffering, death and resurrection.’

Ms Victory said the Society has put a series of recommendations to political parties and candidates in advance of the 2022 Federal Election. These include scrapping the unjust ‘fast-track’ processing of people seeking asylum under the ‘Legacy Caseload Act’, ensuring people seeking asylum have access to adequate levels of support and providing access to family reunion for all refugees.

‘The Society joins the Refugee Council of Australia in welcoming the announcement in the 2022-23 Federal Budget of 16,500 additional places set aside for refugees from Afghanistan,’ Ms Victory said.

‘However, we have ongoing concerns with Australia’s treatment of refugees, for example nearly 20,000 refugees in Australia are still on temporary visas after a decade, and thousands still seeking asylum are enduring the fast-track refugee assessment

process, condemned as unfair by the Australian Human Rights Commission. Hundreds of people are in Australian immigration detention, many brought here for medical treatment.'

SVDP's full policy paper 'People Seeking Asylum' can be viewed on the [SVDP website](#).

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**The times and locations of the Palm Sunday rallies can be found on the [Australian Refugee Action Network website](#).**

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