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MEDIA RELEASE

The Catholic Diocese of Bathurst purchases previous nursing home premises for community use

The Catholic Diocese of Bathurst has recently purchased the previous Opal Aged Care facility on Boyd Street, Kelso to provide facilities to those most vulnerable in the community.

After witnessing the success of other such projects, the Diocese of Bathurst aims to practically implement services and carry out the mission of the local church by making the premises available for community outreach.

Bishop of Bathurst, the Most Reverend Michael McKenna said, "There is an obvious need in the community for emergency accommodation and services to ensure the most vulnerable members of our community can have a meal provided, temporary accommodation when needed, and access to social services."

"The wonderful success of the Uniting Safe Shelter project, providing men in the Bathurst area with a bed and a meal through the winter months, demonstrated the need for emergency accommodation in the area," Bishop McKenna said.

The Diocese will work with Housing Plus, who will manage the facility and will identify the needs of the community.

Housing Plus is a progressive social enterprise, being a specialist service provider directly supporting individuals in the region who are experiencing homelessness and domestic and family violence.

"Housing Plus will engage with community groups to identify the needs of those most in need. It is the hope of the Diocese that the facility will evolve into a place that will provide a safe and secure environment for people who may find themselves in need of help for whatever reason," said Bishop McKenna.

Justin Cantelo, Housing Plus Acting CEO said, "Often the most challenging factor in offering specialised social services is finding a building to deliver them from. The Diocese is offering a premises that is a blank canvas to be developed into a facility that will provide services for whatever is determined as the most urgent need".

Early in the New Year, Housing Plus will connect with local community organisations and work towards developing options of how best the facility could be used in the Bathurst/Kelso area. Organisations interested in being involved in the planning stages should contact Housing Plus via phone: 1800 603 300 or email: info@housingplus.com.au

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Media Contact: For further information, contact Kimbalee Clews, Catholic Diocese of Bathurst on 0407 888 407 or email comms@bathurst.catholic.org.au.