

<<Wednesday 21 January 2025>>

## **Statement: Plea for unity on National Day of Mourning to honour Bondi victims**

*By Mark Gaetani, National President, St Vincent de Paul Society National Council of Australia*

On behalf of the 45,000 Members and volunteers of the St Vincent de Paul Society in Australia, we will join our fellow Australians in pausing on Thursday 22 January for the National Day of Mourning to honour the victims of the Bondi terrorist attack.

The Society stands in sorrow and solidarity with the families and loved ones of those who were killed, all who were injured or traumatised, our Jewish sisters and brothers, and everyone affected by the terror that unfolded at Bondi on 14 December 2025.

We embrace the theme chosen by the Bondi Chabad community, 'Light will win, a gathering of unity and remembrance', as a powerful expression of hope in the face of darkness.

Lighting candles, the '15 Pillars of Light' installations across the country, and the minute's silence at 7.01pm (AEDT) are significant ways for our nation to show respect, pray and remember the 15 lives so cruelly taken at Bondi.

The Society reaffirms that every Jewish person is a valued and welcome member of the Australian community and rejects the hatred and division that motivated this violent act.

Aligned with the Society's mission, we encourage all Australians to respond through concrete acts of love and service – in the Jewish tradition, *mitzvahs* – such as checking on neighbours, supporting local businesses, volunteering time, or donating to assist those in need.

In this time of deep grief, the Society invites people of every faith and background to come together in prayer, reflection and everyday kindness, so that compassion, justice and peace might overcome fear and division in our communities.

Light will always win.

*The St Vincent de Paul Society in Australia has more than 45,000 members and volunteers, who work hard to assist people in need and combat social injustice across Australia. Internationally, the Society operates in 153 countries and has over 800,000 members.*

**MEDIA CONTACT DETAILS: MOB: 0475 068 209 | E: [media@svdp.org.au](mailto:media@svdp.org.au)**

ABN 50 748 098 845 | ARBN 612 807 995