

Caritas Australia strengthens diocesan network with five new appointments.

Caritas Australia has welcomed five new Diocesan Directors in 2026, strengthening its nationwide network of local Catholic leaders who help bring the Church's mission of compassion, justice and solidarity to life in communities across Australia.

Appointed in partnership with local bishops and dioceses, Diocesan Directors play a vital role connecting Australian Catholics with Caritas Australia's international development, humanitarian and advocacy work. They help foster relationships between local Catholic communities and vulnerable communities around the world, encouraging practical expressions of solidarity through faith in action.

The new appointments are:

- **Sr Victoria “Vicky” Kithungu**, Diocese of Broome, is a religious sister from the Assumption Sisters of Eldoret, with experience in social work, child protection, aged care and supporting young people in rehabilitation.
- **Bernadette Killin**, Diocese of Cairns, is an educator, artist and cultural leader from the Atherton Tablelands, with experience using the arts to foster engagement and advocate for social and ecological justice.
- **Deacon Don Gomez**, Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn, is a recently ordained permanent deacon with extensive experience supporting the Church's work with migrants and refugees, clergy formation and Catholic social teaching.
- **Donnie Velasco**, Archdiocese of Sydney, brings more than a decade of experience in diocesan mission and adult faith formation, including helping lead the Diocese of Parramatta Synod and creating initiatives connecting faith with justice and community life.
- **Rob Wilkins**, Diocese of Wollongong, brings senior leadership experience across Catholic education, government, the not-for-profit sector and organisational learning, together with a commitment to Catholic Social Teaching, advocacy and community engagement.

Caritas Australia CEO Kirsten Sayers said the appointments reflected the enduring commitment of dioceses across Australia to standing alongside communities experiencing poverty, injustice and humanitarian crises around the world.

"At the heart of Caritas Australia is the belief that we are one human family, called to walk together in faith, hope and solidarity. Our Diocesan Directors help make that vision real in local communities. They create opportunities for people to learn, pray, advocate and act in support of communities facing some of the world's greatest challenges.

"Through their leadership, we are able to collectively live out the Gospel call to love our neighbour and care for our common home. We are delighted to welcome these new Directors as they begin this important ministry."

The appointments come at a time of continued growth and renewal within the diocesan network. Caritas Australia is currently recruiting for Diocesan Director positions in Perth and Wagga Wagga, while the Diocese of Lismore and Bunbury are progressing their own local appointment process.

Last week Diocesan Directors from across Australia gathered in Sydney for their annual national formation and planning gathering under the theme “One Body, One Mission”, which drew from 1 Corinthians 12:12–27. The program brought together prayer, reflection and practical sessions on safeguarding, Project Compassion 2027, caring for our common home through Catholic Earthcare, and deepening connections with Caritas programs.

To contact your local Diocesan Director please visit: <https://www.caritas.org.au/contact>

For interest in the Wagga Wagga or Perth vacancies please email people.culture@caritas.org.au

ENDS

Media contact: Tara Harvey 0484 002 021 tara.harvey@caritas.org.au or caritasmedia@caritas.org.au