



## **INVITATION TO ATTEND NATIONAL CATHOLIC SOCIAL SERVICES CONFERENCE**

1 February 2024

Catholic Social Services Australia and Catholic Social Services Victoria warmly invite media members to attend the upcoming national Catholic Social Services Conference, a key event scheduled for February 21-23 at the Catholic Leadership Centre in Melbourne. Under the theme 'Commons, Commonality, Common Good,' this event will bring together social services experts across Australia, inspiring essential thought-provoking conversations and positive concrete action for the common good.

The Conference boasts an exceptional [line-up of speakers](#) that will interest media members. The esteemed Bishop Vincent Long Van Nguyen OFM Conv will deliver a [keynote address](#) on the first day on 'What makes us human? What is essential for human flourishing?' [Dr Julie Edwards](#), CEO of Jesuit Social Services, will speak on the role of social services and their work on the commons. [Prof Mark Considine](#), a leading public policy specialist from Melbourne University and author of *The Careless State – Reforming Australia's Social Services*, will address the topic 'Service systems for the common good: where are we headed?'

We look forward to the 2024 Mary MacKillop Oration at the conference dinner being delivered by [Ms Claire Victory](#), former National President of St Vincent de Paul Society, on the topic, 'Going back to our roots: what grounds us today in our shared work? We welcome the following distinguished speakers as part of a panel discussion on 'Unlocking our shared DNA: Reflections from major church providers': [Ms Kasy Chambers](#), executive director of Anglicare Australia; [Dr Robyn Sampson](#), chief executive officer of BaptistCare; and [Ms Claerwen Little](#), national director of UnitingCare Australia. Ms. Monique Earsman, Executive Director of Catholic Social Services Australia, will moderate this panel session. In two panel discussions on day two we'll hear from the Hon. [James Merlino](#), former Deputy Premier of Victoria, Associate Prof. [Ben Phillips](#), Principal Research Fellow, Centre for Social Research and Methods, Australian National University, [Ms Marcelle Mogg](#), chief executive officer of Mental Health Victoria, [Mr Matthew Cassin](#), chief executive officer of Catholic Development Fund and [Ms Anita Veivers](#), executive director, Centacare FNQ.

Media attendees can expect robust discussions on critical issues facing our society and exploring innovative solutions to contribute to the common good. A range of [interactive workshops](#) designed to wrestle with the challenges of our time and ignite discussion on how we can collectively respond will also take place on the second day. Workshop presenters include representatives from Centacare FNQ, Centacare North Queensland, CatholicCare Central Queensland, CatholicCare Social Services Hunter-Manning; Marist 180; MacKillop Family Services; Caritas Australia; ACRATH; Jesuit Social Services; Catholic Development Fund; St Vincent's Health Australia; Highway and Byways; Institute of the Sisters of Mercy of Australia and Papua New Guinea, and Australian Catholic Anti-Slavery Network.

Media attendance and involvement are crucial in spreading awareness and fostering a spirit of an engaged and vibrant Catholic community. We invite you to join these thought-provoking presentations and make the most of this opportunity to network with leaders in the field who are committed to making a positive change in our community.

Media who attend the Conference will have full access to a dedicated media room for working on stories and conducting one-on-one interviews. Fiona Basile will coordinate the one-on-one interviews on behalf of the Conference delegates. Fiona will also attend the Conference to take photographs, which will be deposited into a shared Dropbox folder, which can be accessed and used by media. To be included in the Media Photos Dropbox list and to register your interest and attendance, please get in touch with [Fiona Basile](#) directly. For further updates, please see the [conference website](#).

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Media Contact (CSSV) | Fiona Basile | 0407 897 991

Media Contact (CSSA) | Anne Aziz-Parker | 0403 628 669