



# Volunteer Handbook

## Xavier Social Justice Network

April 2021



**XAVIER SOCIAL  
JUSTICE NETWORK**

*Justice through advocacy and volunteering*

# Acknowledgement of Country

*We would like to begin by acknowledging the traditional custodians of all the lands on which we meet.*

*We also acknowledge:*

- *our gratitude that we share these lands today,*
- *our sorrow for the costs of that sharing, and*
- *our hope that we can move in unity to an Australia that is fair and just for all its indigenous peoples.*



*The XSJN supports The Torch. The Torch provides art, cultural and arts industry support to Indigenous offenders and ex-offenders in Victoria. The program supports the development of self-esteem, confidence and resilience, through cultural strengthening and artistic expression. By embracing program participants as artists rather than offenders, The Torch provides an avenue to change.*

<https://thetorch.org.au/what-we-do/>

# A volunteer's experience

*Sacred Heart Mission is part of our family consciousness.*

It signifies a world down the road, easily glanced past, but ever so real and practical and rich.

We do homely things at Sacred Heart Mission: peeling vegetables (including the odd vegetable or fruit that you may not recognise!), serving meals, pouring cups of tea, cleaning up.

In a curious way, doing these homely things there puts into perspective the same tasks done at home – you see them more clearly as gift and service (in its best, non-market, sense!).

I like that the tasks are shared – you peel onions and shed tears in company. That company is diverse and admirable in its generational and cultural range. You learn to be amazed by the commitment of some younger volunteers who frequently fit these duties into their lives, and by the liveliness of some communities (including some parishes and schools) that maintain regular rosters of volunteers there.

Then there are the staff members – stalwarts, who on a daily basis wrangle workforce changes beyond the imagining of any ordinary workplace. Be assured, it's an efficient workplace, where amazing provision of food is achieved.

**Margaret Coffey**

**Volunteer at Sacred Heart Mission Dining Room**







These images are of XSJN volunteers engaged in community services pre-COVID-19 pandemic.



# XSJN 2020 – A Year in Review

## *Summary*

A reflection on 2020, the year of the global COVID-19 pandemic.

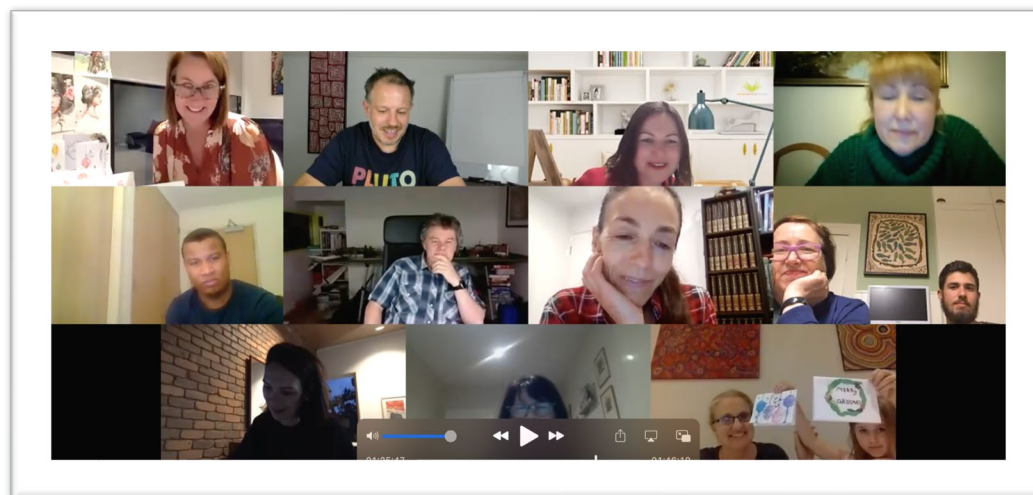
The XSJN adapted and continued its mission to make a difference.

- We held our XSJN Committee meetings online.
- We hosted our XSJN Dinner in support of JRS as a live event held online.
- We ran our advocacy DTBD forum as a series of interviews and presented them on the Xavier College Facebook page.
- We supported our partner agencies in donations of goods and funds, volunteering in COVID-Safe ways and in raising awareness of the challenges the people they served were facing. For example, rough sleepers or people experiencing homelessness not being able to isolate themselves at home.
- We continued to be a voice of social justice in the Xavier School Community and shared news, stories and raised awareness in our regular XSJN Newsletter.

We hope this year will be a much more socially and physically present one where we can re-engage with our members, volunteers and supporters to continue to do the work of advocacy and service to those who live on the margins and lack a voice.

Here is a video of the highlights of our XSJN in the year 2020.

[Video on XSJN Year In Review](#)



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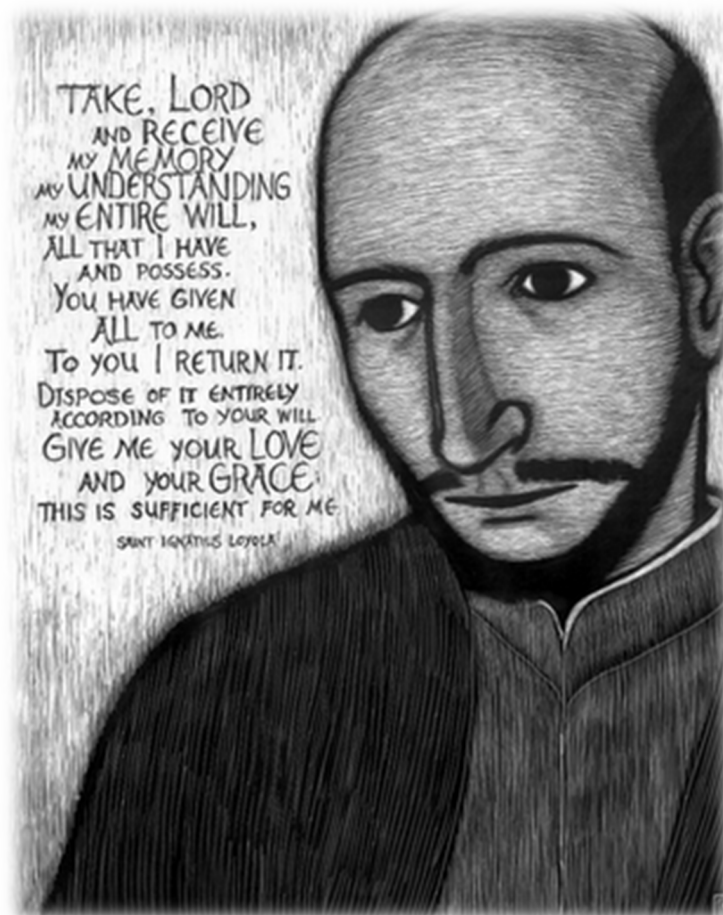


**XAVIER SOCIAL  
JUSTICE NETWORK**  
*Justice through advocacy and volunteering*

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## You may find the following definitions helpful

Term	Definition
<b>XSJN The Network</b>	The Xavier Social Justice Network.
<b>Partner agency</b>	A social or community service agency with whom XSJN places volunteers.
<b>Coordinator</b>	The XSJN Coordinator employed by Xavier College.
<b>Ignatian</b>	A word used to describe the ideas, spirituality and values expressed by Ignatius of Loyola – the founder of the Society of Jesus (the Jesuits).
<b>The Magis</b>	<p>A core guiding principle for our work.</p> <p>We seek to achieve the greatest good by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Undertaking the better choice, the more effective option, and</li> <li>• Meeting the greatest need.</li> </ul>
<b>Volunteering Australia</b>	The national peak body working to advance volunteering in the Australian community.







**XAVIER SOCIAL  
JUSTICE NETWORK**

*Justice through advocacy and volunteering*

# About our Network

Our history, mission, guiding principles & values

# About our Network

## Welcome!

We have lots of other things we want to tell you in this Handbook, but we want to start by simply saying "welcome".

And "thank you" for becoming part of our Network to serve those in need in our community.

- We look forward to your participation, whatever your role may be.
- We will work with you to ensure that your experience with us is supported and fulfilling.
- And we wish you all the enjoyment and satisfaction you can get from being a volunteer.

Lord Jesus,  
teach me to be generous –  
teach me to serve you as you deserve,  
to give and not to count the cost,  
to fight and not to heed the wounds,  
to toil and not to seek for rest,  
to labour and not to seek reward,  
except that of knowing that I do your will.  
Amen.

St Ignatius Loyola  
(Prayer for Generosity)





## History

The Xavier Social Justice Network came about in 2004 because of the desire of a group of like-minded Xavier College parents and staff to do something about the injustice they saw in the world and to model to their children action in response to injustice. They believed that combining the skills and resources within a community such as Xavier College, could actually make a difference.

They had a vision of:

- Engaging with service to vulnerable people in society, and
- Raising awareness of social justice issues through a range of advocacy events.

A Coordinator was appointed, and the various Parent Associations across the College came together and funded this position.

After some years, the then-Principal, Mr Chris McCabe, saw the Network as an important work of the College and so took on the responsibility for funding the Coordinator's position.

The Network has evolved over the years and is now a program of Xavier College, recognised as being a key expression of the College community and ethos.

We now have:

- Volunteers in a range of social service organisations working directly in supporting those in need (refer pages 41-57),
- Advocacy events across the year to raise awareness and challenge thinking about current issues of social justice (refer pages 17-25), and
- A staff member and a Committee to support these activities (refer pages 26-32).

## Mission

The Xavier Social Justice Network works within the spiritual tradition of the Jesuits. This tradition calls us to live a faith within which, social justice is the heart. Our inspiration is Jesus Christ. As Christians we seek the common good for all, recognising the dignity of each human person, and especially focussing on those who are excluded from opportunities due to injustices in society.

We seek to engage the wider Xavier College community:

- Old Xaverians,
- Current parents and their families,
- Past parents, and
- Staff.

Our focus is on becoming compassionate and reflective men and women who are committed to serving those in need through:

- Direct service, and
- Raising awareness about social justice issues.

## Vision

Our Network shares the College's vision as a part of the Xavier community. This is the foundation of all the work of the College and defines the relationships between the various groups that make up the College community:

*Xavier College aspires to set hearts on fire through an educational commitment to a faith that does justice.*

## The XSJN Committee

Our Committee is made up of:

- Our volunteers,
- People working within social justice agencies,
- Parents and alumni of Xavier College,
- The XSJN Coordinator (ex-officio), and
- Xavier College's Head of Ignatian Formation (ex-officio).

As part of the Committee's role, it ensures that:

- The vision, mission, principles and values of our Network are understood and enacted in all our activities and relationships.
- A strong fit between these values and the organisations where we place our volunteers.

It also meets regularly with our Coordinator to:

- Approve agency engagement to ensure those decisions are consistent with our vision, mission and principles.
- Discuss progress of Network activities, and
- Provide practical support and advice in their work – including the planning and delivery of events.

## Parent & Alumni representatives

We have strong relations with Xavier College's parent, OX and alumni associations, across the three campuses.

Each association has a representative who promotes our advocacy events and volunteer opportunities within their own networks.



**Meeting of the Parent Association Reps. and Parent Agency Reps.**

## Partner Agency representatives

A member of our Network acts as our representative in each of our agencies and their programs.

This Agency representative:

- Supports the work of the XSJN volunteers and coordinates our volunteers' rosters (where applicable).
- Liaises with our Coordinator to provide two-way communication about our volunteers' experiences.

# FORMING OURSELVES, TRANSFORMING OUR WORLD



"Do not be afraid...  
I bring you news of great joy...  
A joy to be shared by the  
whole people"  
Luke 2:10

## Guiding principles

Our values guide us in:

- Our work – both within our Network and the wider Xavier College community, and
- Choosing those organisations with whom to collaborate.

## Men and women for and with others

We accept our responsibility to work for social conditions which ensure that every person in society is able to:

- Realise their potential, and
- Have their social, spiritual and material needs met.

We seek to be person-centred – recognising that serving those in need is at the heart of our mission.

## Courage

We seek to be flexible and responsive in our work – willing to respond to the call of St. Ignatius to show love that is expressed more in deeds than in words.

We seek to influence hearts and minds to strive for a more just world through advocacy on social justice issues.

## Discernment

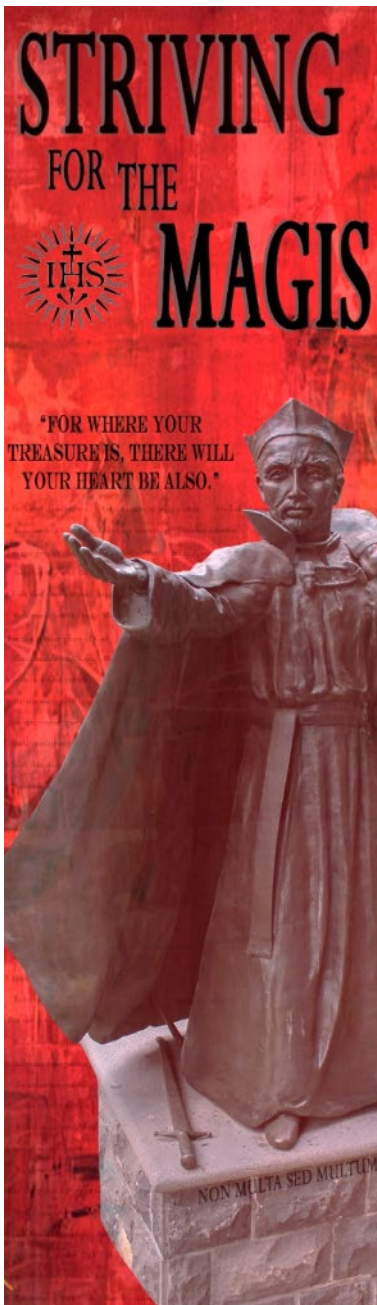
We seek to understand our own strengths and weaknesses.

We reflect on our experience and context to guide our action and inform future decisions.

We act where we can have the greatest impact in a way which is guided by our mission.







### **Collaboration**

We seek to work collaboratively with the wider school community and with those social service agencies who work directly with those in need – in particular with Jesuit Ministries.

### **Human dignity**

We respect the dignity and worth of every person regardless of their circumstances.  
We believe that every community, race and culture is equal in dignity and rights.

### **Solidarity**

We believe that our full potential is only achieved through being in relationship with others.  
We recognise our inherent need to live respectfully with one another.  
We choose to live in solidarity with the poor and marginalised.

### **Compassion**

We accept every person as they are and work compassionately to build their capacity to participate fully in society.

### **Striving for the Magis**

We seek to work where we can achieve the greatest good by:

- Undertaking the better choice, the more effective option, and
- Meeting the greatest need.

## Our strategic priorities

In striving for the Magis, we seek to work where we can achieve the greatest good by meeting the greatest need.

Our priorities accord with the Australian Jesuit Province:

- Women and young people.
- Australia's First People.
- Refugees.

We particularly aim to support Jesuit organisations.

We also support a broader range of social and community service agencies – see our project profiles (on pages 43 - 44).

Jesuit organisation	Their focus	Our primary support
<b>Jesuit Refugee Service Australia</b> <a href="http://www.jrs.org.au">www.jrs.org.au</a>	Seeks to meet the urgent needs of refugees and asylum seekers – with a focus on such areas as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Practical assistance</li><li>• Pastoral care</li><li>• Research &amp; advocacy.</li></ul>	We raise funds and awareness for their work through our Annual Dinner in June.  Refer pages 19-20
<b>Jesuit Mission Australia</b> <a href="http://www.jesuitmission.org.au">www.jesuitmission.org.au</a>	Development and relief organisation, working domestically and overseas to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Inspire social justice, support community needs and empower through education.</li><li>• Promote environmental sustainability and social development.</li></ul>	We help to raise funds for their work through the College's annual Maytime Fair.  Refer page 25
<b>Jesuit Social Services</b> <a href="http://www.jss.org.au">www.jss.org.au</a>	Works to build a just society – with practical programs and advocacy in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Justice &amp; crime prevention</li><li>• Mental health &amp; wellbeing</li><li>• Settlement &amp; community building</li><li>• Education, training &amp; employment</li></ul>	We provide volunteers to support their programs.  Refer page 45





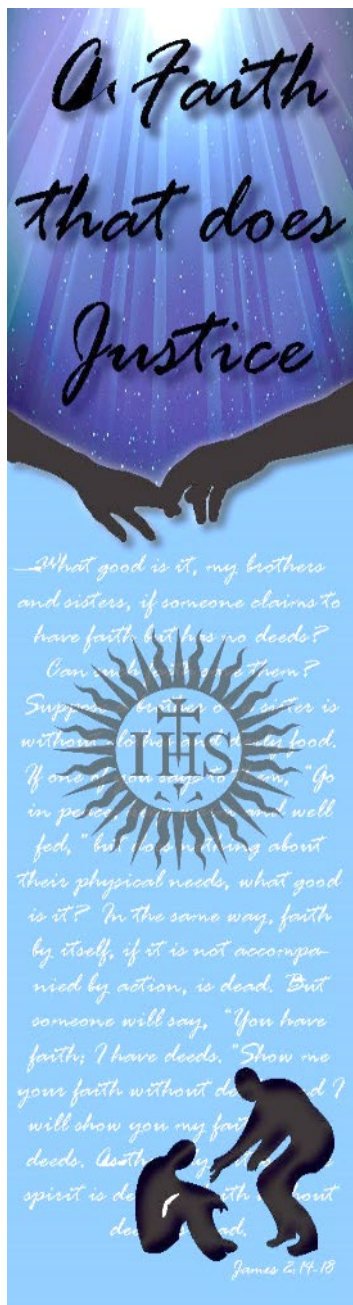


**XAVIER SOCIAL  
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# **Our advocacy activities**

Events & the agencies that we support



## Advocacy activities

We recognise that it is not enough to assist those in need – we are not truly engaged in social justice unless we seek to change the structures that keep people in poverty and social isolation.

We therefore seek to influence hearts and minds to strive for a more just world through advocacy and raising awareness on social justice issues.

### Activities

Advocacy events each year are:

- Palm Sunday 'Justice for Refugees' March,
- XSJN Dinner in support of the Jesuit Refugee Service Australia,
- "Dare To Be Different" Forum
- Jesuit Missions' Maytime Fair support.



We welcome opportunities to be engaged in other advocacy that accords with our vision, mission, principles and values (refer pages 10, 11, 13, 14).

### Newsletter and Podcasts

You can:

- Subscribe to our newsletter – which will tell you about our advocacy events and volunteering opportunities.
- Listen to podcast recordings of our advocacy events.

You'll find these resources on our website at [Our Xavier Social Justice Network | Xavier College](#)

## XSJN Dinner in support of the Jesuit Refugee Service Australia

We support Jesuit Refugee Service Australia through our Annual Dinner in June – to raise funds and awareness for its work.

JRS seeks to meet the urgent needs of refugees and asylum seekers, focusing on areas of greatest need – such as practical assistance, pastoral care, research and advocacy.









## "Dare To Be Different" Forum

The main advocacy event each year is held in August/September to address a particular social justice theme..

The aim is to inform, challenge and inspire our community to engage with, and better understand, the current social justice issues of our time.

The "Dare To Be Different" Forum is a great family event and appropriate for students in Year 5 and above.

This Forum:

- Provides a panel of speakers, with an opportunity for audience questions.
- Is normally hosted in the Eldon Hogan Performing Arts Centre at the Senior Campus in Kew. However, last year, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we held the forum online.
- Offers a "Call to Action" for audience participation in making a difference on this chosen issue.

Past Forums have covered the follow social justice issues/themes:

- Locked Down and Locked in.
- The other has a face.
- Dust on my shoes (Accompanying others).
- Walking with vulnerable children and young people.
- Youth mental health services and support.
- Justice for indigenous Australians.
- The challenge of responding to the needs of asylum seekers.
- Breaking down the barriers for those with a disability.
- Leadership as an authentic service.
- Discernment to Action.
- Reaching Out: Magis at the Margins.
- Stepping through the Door.









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## Dare to be Different Forum **Discernment to Action**



### SPEAKERS

**Robert de Castella AO MBE (OX 1975)**  
Robert de Castella (Deeks), former World Marathon Champion, launched the Indigenous Marathon Foundation (IMF) in 2010. The charity uses running to celebrate Indigenous health, wellbeing and pride to create inspirational Indigenous leaders. Each year IMF selects 12 Indigenous men and women (18 to 30 years old), mostly non-runners, and in six months take them on a transformational journey to run the New York City Marathon. Robert set the world record for the marathon in 1986, has won World Championships, dual Commonwealth Games gold medals and is still the fastest Australian over the distance.



**Fr Brian McCoy SJ (OX 1965)**  
Fr Brian McCoy SJ grew up in Melbourne but has spent much of his adult and priestly life in Aboriginal communities in northern Australia. Fr Brian entered the Society of Jesus from Xavier College in 1966. He was appointed as Provincial for the Australian Jesuit Province in 2014. Fr Brian initiated the 'Bookend's Project' in 2017 which brings together the Jesuits' concerns for Indigenous Australians and asylum seekers. He received a Doctorate from the University of Melbourne in 2014 that focused on the health of Aboriginal men.



### Shaun Bourke (OX 2014)

Shaun Bourke is in his final year of a Bachelor of Education at Monash University. Since leaving Xavier in 2014, Shaun has volunteered with the St Vincent de Paul Soup Van, becoming President of the Fitzroy operation in 2017. He has also been involved in advocating for Indigenous youth through his extensive volunteering in Bourke, NSW, a remote Indigenous community with high levels of youth crime. Since his first visit in Year 11, Shaun has returned to Bourke eight times.



**Thursday 5 September  
7:30pm - 9:30pm Forum**

6:00pm - 7:30pm Food Vans and  
Aboriginal Art Exhibition/Fundraiser

Eldon Hogan Performing Arts Centre  
Xavier College, 135 Barkers Road, Kew

Tickets \$15 Concession \$5  
Students are very welcome

[trybooking.com/BDJOW](http://trybooking.com/BDJOW)

For further enquiries:  
[Bronwen.Kellett@xavier.vic.edu.au](mailto:Bronwen.Kellett@xavier.vic.edu.au)

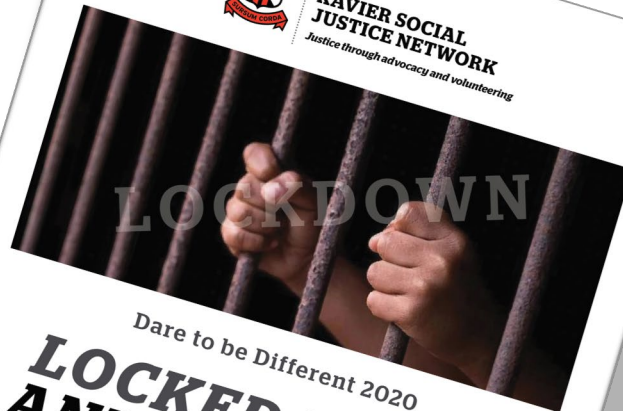


### MODERATOR Margaret Coffey

Margaret Coffey's long career as a broadcaster and journalist was spent chiefly with ABC Radio National, where she produced and presented the well-known series *Encounter*. She is now based at Monash University, where she is completing a PhD in the School of Philosophical, Historical and International Studies. She is also a volunteer with the Xavier Social Justice Network.



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Dare to be Different 2020

## **LOCKED DOWN AND LOCKED IN**

How can the COVID-19 pandemic help us  
reflect more deeply on the experience  
of imprisonment?

DTBD 2020 will be presented as a series of four short  
interviews with engaging speakers who have expertise  
and personal knowledge of the prison experience.

Date: MONDAY 7 DECEMBER  
Time: 8:00PM  
Where: XAVIER COLLEGE FACEBOOK

Please subscribe to the XSJN Newsletter email  
[XSJN@xavier.vic.edu.au](mailto:XSJN@xavier.vic.edu.au) to receive the links to the interviews  
and watch them livestreamed on Facebook.



## Palm Sunday Justice March – 28 March 2021

We are one of many Jesuit ministries and groups that march each year as a show of support for justice for refugees and asylum seekers.

This activity reflects the Australian Catholic Bishops' Conference (ACBC) Social Justice Statement:

*"For Those Who've Come Across The Seas – Justice for refugees and asylum seekers"*

The Bishops' Statement is inspired by:

- The words of our National Anthem, reflecting our national aspiration to be a place of welcome and inclusion,
- The actions and words of Pope Francis, and
- The Scriptures and Catholic teaching.





## Maytime Fair in support of Jesuit Mission Australia

Jesuit Mission Australia contributes to building communities of freedom, dignity and understanding in developing countries in Africa and Asia including India, Cambodia, China, East Timor, Myanmar, Pakistan, Thailand and the Philippines.

We support their work through the Maytime Fair – hosted by Xavier College Senior Campus in Kew. Normally held on the first Saturday in May each year, the Maytime Fair will be held later in the year due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Our stall is staffed by our volunteers, who welcome your help in:

- Preparation in the week before the Fair, and
- Our stall on the day of the Fair.





**XAVIER SOCIAL  
JUSTICE NETWORK**

*Justice through advocacy and volunteering*

# Our support for our volunteers

People, processes & resources to support you

# Our support for you

We have a part-time Coordinator who reports to the Head of Ignatian Formation within the Centre of Faith and Service Department of Xavier College.

The office is open Monday – Thursday, 8:30 am – 4:30 pm.

## **XSJN Coordinator: Danusia Kaska**

- Oversees the work of the Xavier Social Justice Network,
- Ensures that XSJN is working within the mission, vision and guiding principles of the XSJN's Charter,
- Manages the XSJN's advocacy events,
- Liaises with agencies' volunteer coordinators,
- Interviews and advises potential volunteers regarding placement opportunities,
- Provides ongoing support to volunteers,
- Educates, informs and advocates on social justice issues through a number of Xavier College and Jesuit Network communication channels.



Monday - Thursday

(03) 9815 4891

0427 413 503

[XSJN@xavier.vic.edu.au](mailto:XSJN@xavier.vic.edu.au)

[Danusia.Kaska@Xavier.vic.edu.au](mailto:Danusia.Kaska@Xavier.vic.edu.au)

**Watch** our introductory video

**Read** our newsletter

**Attend** our advocacy events

**Listen** to podcasts of our events

**Discover** volunteering opportunities

**Reflect** on your journey

## **Our website**

You'll find more information about our Network and activities at [www.xavier.vic.edu.au/xavier/xsjn](http://www.xavier.vic.edu.au/xavier/xsjn)





## XAVIER SOCIAL JUSTICE NETWORK

*Justice through advocacy and volunteering*



**Xavier College**  
**Senior Campus**  
135 Barkers Road  
KEW VIC 3101

To meet with the XSJN Coordinator:

- Present at Reception and sign in, a notification of your arrival will be made.
- Come up along Charles Street (from Barkers Road)
- Turn left at Gate 2
- There are car parks as soon as you drive through the gates
- Currently the XSJN office is located in the Property Office (shown here).



## The XSJN Committee

Our Committee is made up of:

- Our volunteers,
- People working with social justice agencies,
- Parents and alumni of Xavier College,
- The XSJN Coordinator (ex-officio), and
- Xavier College's Head of Ignatian Formation (ex-officio).

As part of the Committee's role, it ensures that:

- The vision, mission, principles and values of our Network are understood and enacted in all our activities and relationships.
- A strong fit between these values and the organisations where we place our volunteers.

It also meets regularly with our Coordinators to:

- Approve agency engagement to ensure those decisions are consistent with our vision, mission and principles.
- Discuss progress of Network activities, and
- Provide practical support and advice in their work – including the planning and delivery of events.

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## Partner Agency representatives

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This person:

- Supports the work of the XSJN volunteers and coordinates our volunteers' rosters (where applicable).
- Liaises with our Coordinators to provide two-way communication about our volunteers' experiences.



## Induction process

Our newsletter, website and XSJN Coordinator will inform you of our volunteer opportunities (refer to pages 43 & 44).

### If you'd like to become a volunteer...

Our XSJN Coordinator will:

1. Contact you to understand your interests and availability – to provide you with a range of volunteering possibilities.
2. Send you information about Program(s) of interest.
3. Call you to explain:
  - Our XSJ Network's policy and procedures, and
  - The agency with whom you'll be engaged with as a volunteer.



### If you'd like to proceed...

Our XSJN Coordinator will then:

1. Work with you to arrange any required compliance checks (e.g. Working With Children Checks, Police Checks).
2. With your permission, forward your details to the agency – or in some cases, provide you with contact details for its volunteer coordinator.
3. Arrange a phone conversation or meeting with the agency to understand the role and any important information.

If a place is available, you'll then be placed in that agency as a new volunteer and undergo their orientation and induction processes.

## Ongoing support

### XSJN Coordinator review

The XSJN Coordinator will be in regular contact with our volunteers on an agency-by-agency basis.

This contact is to seek your feedback and ensure that:

- We respond to any concerns arising from your placement as a volunteer (that can't be resolved directly between the volunteer and the agency staff).
- Our volunteers have an ongoing relationship with our Network, as a resource to enrich and sustain your volunteer commitment.



### Reflect on your volunteering experiences

In keeping with the Ignatian tradition of reflection, we provide an XSJN Journal to every volunteer.

On the next page, you will find a reflection.

- This resource is based on the Ignatian Examen.
- We encourage you to use it after each volunteering activity – capturing and reflecting on your experiences.

### Learn from other volunteers

Each term, we meet and learn from our volunteers and other Network members (both 'old and new').

These gatherings may be a volunteer information session, an 'Experiential Trial' of volunteering with one of our agencies, or a Professional Development session.

During these sessions, volunteers reflect on:

- What draws them to volunteering.
- Different aspects of their volunteering practice – such as being prepared before meeting with those to whom they minister, and then reflecting/debriefing after these encounters.
- Their highlights and challenges.
- What they have learned about themselves – and importantly, what they have learned about people who live on the margins of our society.

# Reflect on your experiences as a volunteer

We suggest that you use your XSJN Journal to record your reflections as you go.

*After a volunteering experience, take the time to stop and reflect on your service.*

- Recall the details.
- Become aware of God's presence whilst volunteering.
- What do you take from your service today/tonight?

*Review your service with gratitude.*

- What are you most grateful for?
- What did you receive from your service?
- Look at the work you did and those you interacted with – what did you give?

When we realise we cannot do everything,  
we are liberated to do something.

Oscar Romero

*Pay attention to your emotions.*

- Where did you feel uplifted and connected to the people you served with and the people you were serving?
- What were the moments where you felt uncomfortable or feeling held back from being able to make a contribution?
- What held you back at that time?
- How did you fall short?
- How can you better reach out next time?
- Do you need advice from others on how to better serve next time?
- Are you confident you did well?
- What is God saying through these feelings?

*Choose one feature of your time today and pray from it.*

- Was it positive or negative for you?
- Where do you find praise, gratitude or repentance?

*Look toward tomorrow.*

- How can I better respect the dignity of those I help?
- How can I improve the relationship I have with clients or other volunteers?





**XAVIER SOCIAL  
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*Justice through advocacy and volunteering*

# About you

Your rights & responsibilities as a volunteer

# About you

## Our promise to you

We will conduct an evaluation of every agency with whom we seek to place volunteers – to determine their:

- Compliance with Volunteering Australia standards, and
- Fit with our values, principles, policies and practices.

We will provide you with appropriate information to:

- Familiarise you with the vision and mission of our Network (e.g. through this Handbook), and
- Help you make a decision about where you wish to volunteer.

We will be available to discuss your concerns or complaints, should they arise.



## Your privacy

We maintain a database of our volunteers and other interested parties to allow us to perform our activities.

We use the personal information that you provide us only for this purpose – and respect and safeguard your personal information and your right to privacy.

We never share your personal information with other organisations unless:

- You give us your express consent, or
- Sharing is authorised or required by law.

We take all necessary steps to implement the Information Privacy Principles in line with the Xavier College Privacy Policy and set out in:

- Commonwealth Privacy Act 1988, and
- Health Records Act 2001 (Vic.) and the Health Privacy Principles in that Act.

## Your rights in relation to the agency with which you volunteer

As one of our volunteers, you have the following rights.

### Appreciation

You should know:

- You are recognised as a valued team member.
- You can say 'no' if you feel uncomfortable.
- You are supported and supervised in your role.
- There are grievance procedures within our partner agencies.

### Clarity

You should receive:

- Information about our partner agencies and their activities.
- A clearly written statement of tasks expected – and to whom you are accountable.
- Appropriate orientation on commencement and adequate training throughout.
- Briefing about any policies of our partner agency that may affect you.

### Care

You should have:

- A healthy and safe working environment.
- Protection through appropriate insurance.
- Your confidential and personal information dealt with in accordance with the Privacy Act (discussed on page 34).
- An advocate to speak on your behalf regarding any concern or complaint you may have which arises from your involvement.



## Your responsibilities

As a volunteer, you are representing our Network **and** partner agencies – through your appearance, behaviour and action.

We, therefore, require the following of you as one of our volunteers.

### Commitment

We require you to commit to our partner agency – including its philosophy, its mission and its aims. You should, therefore:

- Adhere to the policies and procedures of our Network and the partner agency.
- Give sufficient notice before leaving an agency.
- Respect and support the staff and management of our partner agencies – and those that they support.

### Professionalism

You should display an appropriate level of professionalism. You should, therefore:

- Understand and respect:
  - the importance of confidentiality, and
  - the rights of the service users, staff and other volunteers.
- Be non-judgmental, reliable and punctual carrying out your duties.

- Communicate relevant important information to staff through constructive input.
- Ask for support if needed.
- Address any areas of conflict with the appropriate person.
- Familiarise yourself with agencies' procedures for out-of-pocket expenses – including their requirements for prior (written) consent and receipts.



### Reflection

We encourage the Ignatian practice of reflection to:

- Deepen our understanding of our experience, and
- Make an ongoing evaluation of our commitment.

Our volunteers are encouraged to attend at least one XSJN event per year – such as attending:

- An information session, experiential volunteering 'trial' or professional development session.
- One of our advocacy events (refer to pages 17-25).





**XAVIER SOCIAL  
JUSTICE NETWORK**

*Justice through advocacy and volunteering*

# How we work with our partner agencies

Their rights & responsibilities when you volunteer

# How we work with our partner agencies

## Their rights

The Agencies we work with are entitled to expect that:

- Our Network refers potential volunteers after adequately briefing them about:
  - the work and values of the agency, and
  - an outline of the specific role in which the volunteers will be engaged.
- There is regular and clear communication between our Coordinator and the agency's volunteer coordinator about the needs and expectations between the two parties.

## Their responsibilities

We require our partner agencies to look after you, ensuring that you are supported in your volunteering.

In general, this means they **must** comply with the Volunteering Australia standards for regulation of protection and support for volunteers (including your health and safety).



Some of these requirements are described here.

## Professionalism

Agencies must ensure that:

- The role allocated to you has been properly assessed as suitable for a volunteer.
- They have provided the resources to support our volunteer.
- They have prepared their own staff to support our volunteers – through in-service training and explicit responsibilities in their job descriptions.

## Clarity

Agencies must:

- Appoint someone with specified authority to have responsibility for our volunteers – who will also be our primary contact person in regard to all volunteering matters.
- Be clear about specifying the number and type of volunteers required – including the skills, competencies and attitudinal qualities.
- Ensure our Coordinators are informed of any relevant changes.

## Care

Agencies must provide our volunteers with:

- A safe work environment.
- Adequate insurance for our volunteers' activities – including public liability and personal accident.
- An effective orientation program for our volunteers – including briefing about:
  - their key responsibilities and tasks (including expected days/hours of work)
  - relevant policies and procedures (including occupational health & safety and grievances).
- Quality support structures – including:
  - appropriate training and supervision to perform their assigned tasks, and
  - ongoing opportunities for continuous learning and skill development.

They must safeguard our volunteers' personal information, by:

- Abiding by the Privacy Principles set out in the Commonwealth Privacy Act 1988, the Health Records Act 2001 (Vic.) and the Health Privacy Principles in that Act.
- Taking all necessary steps to implement these Privacy Principles in all dealings with the Network and our volunteers.











**XAVIER SOCIAL  
JUSTICE NETWORK**

*Justice through advocacy and volunteering*

# Opportunities for your involvement

Overview of volunteer opportunities/agencies

# Opportunities for your involvement

The Network is seeking:

- A broader range of opportunities for direct support of those in need, through
- Development of further links with other social and community service organisations whose mission, vision and values are in accordance with our XSJN Charter.

The following pages provide an overview of our current activities – with opportunities to volunteer.

Lord, open our eyes that they may see  
the deepest need in all people.

Move our hands that they may feed  
the hungry and thirsty.

To all those who have less than we do,  
Touch our hearts that we show compassion  
and bring warmth to the despairing.

Teach us the generosity that welcomes strangers.  
Make us share in the quest to set the prisoner free.

In sharing our gifts, our wealth, our compassion,  
Lord – teach us to seek to help those  
seeking happiness and a full life.

Amen.

Adapted from  
The Vincentian Family  
[www.tinyurl.com/open-prayer](http://www.tinyurl.com/open-prayer)

## Some of our partner agencies for volunteers

Program name	Focus	Locations	When / Who	Refer to
<b>Jesuit Social Services Australia</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Jesuit Community College</li> </ul> <a href="http://www.jss.org.au">www.jss.org.au</a>	Refugees Tutoring Mentoring/Hospitality Homelessness, mental Health	Various	Daytime  Individuals & Groups	Page 45
<b>Sacred Heart Mission</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dining Room</li> <li>Women's House</li> </ul> <a href="http://www.sacredheartmission.org">www.sacredheartmission.org</a>	Homelessness Mental health support Mentoring/Hospitality Meals & practical assistance	St Kilda	Daytime  Individuals & Groups	Page 46
<b>St Mary's House of Welcome</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dining Room</li> </ul> <a href="http://www.smhow.org.au">www.smhow.org.au</a>	Homelessness Mental health support Mentoring/Hospitality Practical help (meals)	Fitzroy	Daytime  Individuals & Groups	Page 47
<b>St Vincent de Paul Society</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Margaret Oats (Collingwood) Soup Van Operation &amp; Friday Night Street BBQ</li> <li>Footscray Soup Van Operation</li> <li>Fitzroy Soup Van Operation</li> </ul> <a href="http://www.tinyurl.com/oats-van">www.tinyurl.com/oats-van</a>	Homelessness Mental health support Mentoring/Hospitality Meals & practical assistance (blankets & toiletries etc.)	Footscray  North Melbourne Collingwood	After hours  Individuals & Groups	Page 48
<b>Brigidine Asylum Seekers Project</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Friendship through teaching English</li> </ul> <a href="http://www.basp.org.au">www.basp.org.au</a>	Refugees Tutoring Mentoring/Hospitality	Homes of refugees & asylum seekers	Daytime & After hours, Individuals & Groups	Page 49

Program name	Focus	Locations	When / Who	Refer to
<b>Free to Feed</b> <a href="http://www.freetofeed.org.au">www.freetofeed.org.au</a>	Refugees Practical assistance	Thornbury & homes across Melbourne	Daytime & After hours  Individuals	Page 52
<b>Brotherhood of St Laurence</b> • Education First Youth Foyer <a href="http://www.tinyurl.com/bsl-foyers">www.tinyurl.com/bsl-foyers</a>	Homelessness Young people Mentoring/Support	Broadmeadows	Daytime & After hours  Individuals & Groups	Page 53
<b>River Nile School &amp; River Nile Learning Centre</b> <a href="http://www.rnlc.org.au">www.rnlc.org.au</a>	Refugees tutoring Mentoring/Wellbeing	North Melbourne	Daytime  Individuals & Groups	Page 54- 55
<b>Wellsprings for Women</b>	Program Support for vulnerable migrant women	Dandenong	Daytime	Page 57
<b>Refugee Legal</b>	Migration Agents & Paralegal Support	Collingwood	Daytime &  Night time	Page 51
<b>AMEP</b>	English tutoring to CALD adults	Preston & other locations	Daytime &  Night time	Page 50
<b>The Haven</b> <a href="http://www.havenfoundation.org.au">www.havenfoundation.org.au</a>	Mental health support Mentoring/Hospitality	South Yarra	Daytime  Individuals	Page 56

Please contact the XSJN Coordinator for more information about getting involved in any of these opportunities.

You'll find the contact details on pages 27.



## Jesuit Social Services

Jesuit Social Services (JSS) works to build a just society where all people can live to their full potential by:

- Partnering with community to support those most in need, and
- Working to change policies, practices, ideas and values that perpetuate inequality, prejudice and exclusion.

JSS offers many diverse programs and the XSJN responds to these as needed. As part of its Settlement Program, JSS runs English language programs for asylum seekers in various locations across Melbourne and homework clubs.



## Sacred Heart Mission

Sacred Heart Mission in St Kilda offers a range of services to assist people when they are in crisis and need immediate support and assistance – to address such basic needs as access to food, health care, laundry and bathroom facilities and material goods.

### Meals program

Hearty, nutritious meals are provided to people who are homeless, socially disadvantaged and isolated.

This provides a vital opportunity for people to reconnect and develop a sense of community and belonging – a team of support workers are always in the dining hall ready to:

- Listen and talk.
- Connect people with other Mission services.

### The Women's House

This provides a safe and supportive drop-in centre for women who are homeless or at risk of this – due to family violence, poverty, or physical/mental illness.

The House offers:

- Mentoring and support
- Meals
- Showers and washing facilities
- Medical and dental support.

Volunteers offer a friendly presence in the House when clients drop in for some safety and peace.



## St Mary's House of Welcome

St Mary's House of Welcome is located in the heart of Fitzroy and provides assistance to disadvantaged people experiencing homelessness, poverty and mental health issues.

The Centre:

- Is inspired by the spirit of the Daughters of Charity, and
- Seeks to further social justice by standing with disadvantaged people offering support, solutions and hope.

### Dining Room

St Mary's provides breakfast and lunch in a café environment where guests are served meals at the table. Volunteers assist with food preparation, serving and cleaning for each sitting.

### Day Centre

This drop-in service provides information, advice and referral assistance including emergency relief, showers and free meals for people in need.

### Mental Health Service

Indoor and outdoor recreational activities and excursions are offered in the hope of reducing social isolation and to encourage a sense of community.





## St Vincent de Paul Society's Soup Van Program

The primary aim of the Soup Van Program is to offer food, social connection and referral pathways out of homelessness and poverty to people experiencing homelessness or disadvantage, or are at risk of, homelessness.

Volunteers provide soup, sandwiches, fruit and other food and drinks at public locations, as well as boarding and rooming houses, crisis accommodation, social housing and other residential locations.

You can watch a video about this service at <http://tinyurl.com/soup-van>

Each volunteering shift begins and ends at a kitchen location, click on the link below to see where the Soup Van Operations are located:

[https://www.vinnies.org.au/page/Find\\_Help/VIC/Food/FAQs\\_-\\_Volunteer\\_Recruitment/Where\\_do\\_the\\_Vinnies\\_Soup\\_Van\\_s\\_operate/](https://www.vinnies.org.au/page/Find_Help/VIC/Food/FAQs_-_Volunteer_Recruitment/Where_do_the_Vinnies_Soup_Van_s_operate/)

For more information about our Soup Van Program please click on the following link:

[https://www.vinnies.org.au/page/Find\\_Help/VIC/Food/FAQs\\_-\\_Volunteer\\_Recruitment/](https://www.vinnies.org.au/page/Find_Help/VIC/Food/FAQs_-_Volunteer_Recruitment/)

There are generally 2 shifts on the Soup Van Program:

### **The Food Preparation shift - 2 – 5pm**

- Preparing sandwiches and soup.
- Packing cakes, fruit and sweets.
- Loading food into the Soup Vans.

### **Food Distribution shift – 7 – 10pm**

Food, drinks and material aid are distributed at various street stops, or accommodation places.

### **Margaret Oats - Collingwood Soup Van - Friday Night Street BBQ**

3 hours per fortnight on Friday nights in Collingwood.

Volunteers engage with Food Preparation in the kitchen and then serve the BBQ dinner to people attending the service and provide a social connection, whilst supporting a positive community environment for the people being served.





## Brigidine Asylum Seekers Project

The Brigidine Asylum Seekers Project provides asylum seeker families with friendship and support.

Through their Conversation and Companionship Program, volunteers work in pairs so that they are able to provide each other with support and back-up.

The volunteers meet regularly with their family or individual at a time suitable to both – generally in the home of the asylum seeker family or at a mutually suitable venue.

- Some volunteers bring their own family, siblings or friends.
- Some volunteers undertake visits to shopping centres, op shops, libraries and other places of interest – to increase vocabulary and learn how to use essential services.

Volunteers don't require any specific experience.

The program coordinator:

- Meets with the new volunteer to explain the responsibilities, and then personally introduces them to the individual or family.
- Regularly contacts volunteers to provide any advice or resources they may need.





## AMEP

Adult Migrant English Program in Melbourne.

- Helping new arrivals to Australia settle into their new communities.
- Volunteers become part of the 'Volunteer Tutor Scheme' to help refugees and migrants learn English and about life in Australia.
- Located in Preston, however, tutoring can be done online or at locations convenient to both the tutor and tutee.

## Changes to the AMEP

- In December 2020, The Immigration (Education) Amendment (Expanding Access to English Tuition) Bill was passed in parliament to enact reforms to the AMEP which would broaden the scope of eligibility, by removing time limits and uncapping hours for eligible learners.
- The bill is expected to come into effect by the end of March 2021.
- **How will things change?**  
It is expected that demand for Melbourne AMEP volunteers will increase.



## Refugee Legal

Refugee Legal is Australia's largest provider of free specialist legal assistance to vulnerable people seeking asylum, refugees and disadvantaged migrants in the community and in immigration detention in Victoria and across Australia.

- They have been operating for over 30 years.
- They advise, assist, educate and advocate.
- The legal services they provide are:
  - Telephone advice link
  - Evening advice service
  - Day time casework, including full legal representation
  - Temporary Protection Visa clinics
  - Strategic 'test case' litigation
  - Client and community information sessions
- Volunteers with and without law degrees are welcome to volunteer with Refugee Legal as there are various roles for volunteer opportunity.





## Free to Feed

Free to Feed engages refugees and new migrants in a range of innovative food-based enterprises.

They offer pop-up cooking experiences and classes around Melbourne – either in people's home or as part of a class. (They were named Melbourne's #1 Cooking School by *Timeout*.)

People are empowered to gain meaningful employment in Australia through:

- Hands-on paid work experience in the food industry,
- Skills development and mentoring, and
- Connections and career guidance.

At each cooking class, guests:

- Learn how to cook authentic, traditional dishes from their chef's home country, and
- Hear their incredible stories as they relate their journeys and rich cultures.

Our volunteers:

- Assist with all aspects of the cooking class – including preparation, cooking and cleaning afterwards, and
- Facilitate and encourage conversation between the chef and their cooking class guests. [FTF website link](#)

Currently, Free to Feed is in the review of their volunteer engagement program and therefore, volunteer opportunities are limited.



## Brotherhood of St Laurence

### Education First Youth Foyers

The Education First Youth Foyers Program aims to break the cycle of homelessness by providing young people with safe, secure and affordable accommodation while they study towards a career/vocation.

Volunteers engage in a mentoring relationship with young people who are estranged from their families.

The aims are to:

- Foster strong, healthy relationships – through positive connections with social, cultural and economic networks.
- Encourage the young person ('mentee') to replicate these good relationships elsewhere.

The mentor works with the mentee to:

- Explore their personal and/or professional aspirations for the future, and
- Develop new skills, knowledge and confidence to make positive decisions about this.



The mentors commit to a minimum of 6 months to:

- Meet at least monthly with their mentee,
- Contact them by phone at least once a fortnight, and
- Attend organised group activities with them.

The mentors are required to have:

- Maturity, good communication skills, self-awareness and resilience,
- The ability to work in a team, and
- The time to commit to an ongoing relationship.

A Mentor Coordinator and Youth Development Worker are always available to guide and advise about any issues.





## River Nile School & River Nile Learning Centre

The River Nile organisation empowers disadvantaged refugee and asylum seeker newly arrived women, often experiencing social and community isolation.

Education for the mother (and through them, the wider family) is used to:

- Break the cycle of dependence on social welfare, and
- Remove the barriers for participation in the broader Australian community.

The River Nile School provides full-time VCAL curriculum programs to re-engage school-aged women who:

- Have had disrupted schooling, or
- Are struggling to cope with their current education.

The River Nile Learning Centre offers programs to women who are unable to enrol as school students – due to such reasons as their age or visa status.

Each student is:

- Provided with an individual learning plan for their needs – which is then supported by a range of volunteers who tutor the students.
- Cared for by a social worker, and supported by mentors.
- Assisted with transport and basic food costs – and their children looked after in an adjacent childcare facility.

River Nile won the 2012 Victorian Multicultural Award for Excellence in Education. Their success has seen them grow to meet education needs of other disadvantaged community members.









## The Haven

The Haven Program is a residential rehabilitation support program within the grounds of the old Saint Joseph's Convent in South Yarra. The Haven units provide long term housing for people living with mental illness and in doing so; create a sense of permanency and a home for life.

It seeks to:

- Provide psychosocial support through Prahran Mission and The Haven Foundation, and
- Work in conjunction with the regional mental health teams.

Participants hold a residential tenancy lease with Housing Choices, with:

- Communal facilities – including a lounge, kitchen, computer area and other leisure activities, and
- Access to 24-hour support.

The XSJN volunteers at The Haven provide friendship and support to the residents. For example, one of the XSJ Network volunteers takes three residents for a regular game of tennis.



## Wellsprings for Women

Wellsprings for Women centre is a welcoming place caring for and empowering isolate and vulnerable women.

Wellsprings for Women assists isolated and vulnerable women through education, support and capacity building.

Volunteers can engage with Wellsprings for Women in different capacities depending on the skills of the volunteer and the requirements the centre has.



## Volunteering in a post-COVID-19 pandemic world

Volunteering within our partner agencies has definitely been changed since the COVID-19 pandemic affected us all in 2020.

Many of the images in the handbook were taken pre-COVID-19 pandemic when socially-distancing was not a term we were familiar with and close social interactions were allowed at that time.

The COVID-19 pandemic has forced the social and community service agencies to review their practices and services in light of social-distancing requirements and maintaining COVID-Safe practices. Therefore, this has meant that many of the social programs normally provided by our agencies have stopped for the current time. The meals in the dining halls of Sacred Heart Mission and St. Mary's House of Welcome and the meals at the Soup Van street stops and Friday night BBQ, have all been replaced by hampers and meal boxes. Volunteering is still greatly required in the areas of food preparation, packing and delivering/handing out, all in COVID-Safe manners.

Tutoring to refugees, asylum seekers and CALD migrants has also changed, from being a face-to-face meet ups at the library or café etc., to now mainly being online tutoring sessions.

It is the hope that many of these social programs will resume in the future as it is what most of the people we serve, and volunteers look forward to the most and enjoy.

The COVID-19 pandemic has had some silver linings in that agencies having reviewed their services, in some cases, were able to improve their practises and service delivery. Some comments from the management of boarding houses in Fitzroy and CBD of Melbourne where the Soup Vans operate have been, 'that the meals have been more nutritional since the COVID-19 pandemic and the health of their residents has improved'. More meals have been able to be provided with greater efficiency and a greater diversity of food with greater number of suppliers has increased the scope of the Soup Vans meal's program.



## Looking ahead

Whilst the pandemic has made the future even more uncertain, the one sure thing that we know is that people are needing the services of the social and community agencies more than ever in the present time. There are new and emerging needs in the community affecting people experiencing homelessness and disadvantage, refugees and asylum seekers, our First Nations People, people affected by mental health conditions, domestic violence victims and people isolated and lonely.

The XSJN will keep open to supporting programs and services which care for the vulnerable people in our society. We will keep you up to date on the most urgent volunteering opportunities which exist as we emerge out of this pandemic and look ahead with fervour and new appreciation for the work of the agencies.