

*You are*  
**MAKING A DIFFERENCE**

**HOW YOUR SUPPORT IS MAKING A DIFFERENCE IN YOUR COMMUNITY**

**AUTUMN 2024**

**Thank you for providing  
Anna with hope and a  
helping hand**

**Paul and Paula's passion for volunteering  
Progress towards 500 new homes  
Empowering Queensland's most vulnerable**

 **Vinnies**  
good works



# Thank you

*for making a vital difference.*

As a treasured member of the St Vincent de Paul Society QLD (Vinnies QLD), I'm delighted to send you this Autumn edition of *You Are Making a Difference*.

With rolling natural disasters heaping yet more hardship on struggling families, your compassionate support remains as important than ever.

You are helping to provide Queenslanders in the most desperate of circumstances with dignity, hope and the very basics of survival.

In this edition of *You Are Making a Difference*, you can read about some of the people you are helping through your support for Vinnies QLD. You'll also meet inspiring Vinnies QLD volunteer and staff members who share your wonderful commitment to providing a hand up to those who need it.

I hope you are inspired by all the good work you are helping to make possible.

With my deepest thanks,

*P. McMahon*

Trish McMahon  
State President  
St Vincent de Paul Society, QLD



# *A big year for* **compassion** **and support**

With your help, Vinnies QLD did a lot of good work in the last 12 months.

Over the last year news headlines have been full of doom and gloom about the cost-of-living crisis and how it is hurting Queensland's most vulnerable families.

What those headlines didn't mention was that last year was also a big one for kindness and

generosity. Thanks to you and other wonderful Vinnies QLD supporters, nearly 250,000 Queenslanders received a helping hand from our Society last financial year.

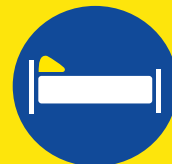
It was an inspiring response to one of the greatest challenges our state has ever faced.

## Thank you for providing:



**\$387m**

in total services and support to people in need



**103,853**

nights of accommodation during the housing crisis



**48,183**

home visits to comfort struggling families



More than  
**73,000**

hours of support in communities



**\$14.3m**

in direct emergency support

Source: [https://qld.vinnies.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/St-Vincent-de-Paul-2023-Annual-Report-FY23\\_WEB.pdf](https://qld.vinnies.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/St-Vincent-de-Paul-2023-Annual-Report-FY23_WEB.pdf)

Committed volunteer members Paul and Paula share your passion for volunteering.



# *A helping hand* in a time of great need

Thanks to you volunteer members Paul and Paula are providing a hand up to a growing number of struggling Queenslanders.

**P**aul and Paula have always been passionate about volunteering and helping those less fortunate in their community.

Retirement has given the husband-and-wife team the opportunity to spend more time listening to people's concerns and connecting them with the support they need. The escalating cost-of-living and housing affordability crisis is keeping them as busy as ever, with more and more families facing poverty and homelessness and struggling to afford the basics of survival.

**“We should be helping people and doing what we can to show Christ’s love in our community.”**  
Paul





# Thank you for being there *in desperate times*

You are providing families like Anna's\* with the very basics of survival.

**W**hen Anna first reached out to Vinnies QLD, she was in desperate need. After fleeing domestic violence, she was left to raise two neurodiverse children on her own. Anna was living hand-to-mouth from one day to the next and sleeping on a couch because she couldn't afford a big enough house for herself and her two children.

When she made that first call to Vinnies QLD, all Anna wanted was help to buy a winter school uniform for her son. After chatting

to team member Grace and visiting her local St Vincent de Paul Society QLD Support Centre she got more support than she'd ever dreamed of.

"Grace was amazing," Anna says. "She helped me get some warm clothes for my son and a couple of bags of food, which we really needed. But that was just the start."

Since then, whenever Anna has found herself struggling to cope, Grace has been there to provide the helping hand she needs. Sometimes that has been in the form of

**"For me, Vinnies was the difference between eating and not eating. They provided me dignity and made me feel valued as a human being." Anna**



**Your support helped Anna put food on the table, keep the lights on and pay the rent.**

emergency bill relief so Anna can keep the lights on and make sure her phone has credit. At other times what Anna needed most is a friendly ear and a shoulder to cry on.

With Christmas fast approaching, Grace was there again to help make sure it was a happy one for Anna and her children.

“Christmas can weigh so heavily on parents like me,” she says. “Grace made sure my children and I could share a special Christmas meal

together and celebrate the spirit of the season.”

**With your wonderful support, Anna’s family now have a secure roof over their heads. The children are no longer going to bed hungry, and they’re thriving at school. Thank you for being there for people like Anna in their time of greatest need.**



**Thanks to your kindness, Anna and her children have hope for a better future.**

\*Names and images have been changed for safety and privacy reasons. Thank you for understanding.

# IGA steps up again *for Queenslanders in need*

**The Aussie supermarket chain continues to be there for vulnerable families.**

Vinnies was proud to once again partner with IGA across the country last Christmas to raise vital funds to help families struggling with growing cost-of-living pressures. For more than a decade now, the supermarket chain has been supporting thousands of Australians by selling \$2 Vinnies baubles and products labelled

with a Community Chest ticket. In that time, they have raised more than \$4.5 million to support Vinnies’ work in disadvantaged communities across the country.

**Thank you to the team at IGA and everyone who shops there for making a powerful difference.**

# Laying the groundwork for 500 homes

This year, Vinnies QLD's plan to build more affordable housing passed a key milestone.

**O**ur 500 homes in 5 years initiative moved to the next phase in 2023, with Vinnies QLD membership approving projects that will deliver new housing on the Gold Coast (60 units), in Bundaberg (60 units) and Toowoomba (27 units). We are currently in the developmental approval process and design phase of these projects with relevant local councils.

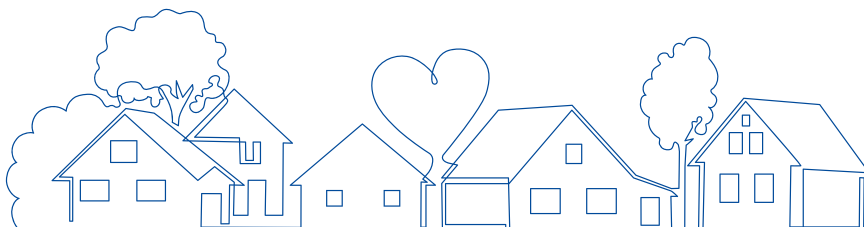
To bolster our response to the homelessness crisis, Vinnies QLD entered an agreement with the Queensland Government this year to convert an 18-unit facility in Cairns into crisis accommodation. This will provide urgently needed shelter for locals experiencing or at risk of homelessness.

Thank you for being part of our plan to give more vulnerable Queenslanders a place to call home.



Your generosity is helping vulnerable families cope with the escalating cost-of-living crisis.

“When the State Government works with homelessness support organisations like Vinnies QLD, it’s a powerful way to help people escape homelessness, not just in the short term, but for good.” Kevin Mercer, Vinnies Queensland CEO



# Thank you for helping **rebuild lives**

You are helping Queenslanders rebuild after fires, floods and cyclones.



## February 2022 Floods

You and other compassionate supporters raised **\$3.5 million** to help devastated families rebuild their homes and lives. Of that, **\$2.9 million** has already been spent repairing homes and supporting English-as-a-second-language residents to navigate the government support and rebuilding process. Of the remaining **\$600,000**, **\$400,000** has been committed to support those in need.



## October 2023 Western Downs Bushfires

With the caring Vinnies QLD community, you raised **\$380,000** to support long-term recovery in bushfire affected areas. **\$80,000** has already been spent assisting those in need.

All figures accurate as of 22/01/24. As a recovery agent, we focus on long-term recovery and typically spend 30% of funds raised within the first three months after the disaster occurs. Through our continuous work on the ground, the balance is spent over the following 2 years after the disaster event.



## December 2023 Cyclone and Floods

**\$432,000** was raised from wonderful Vinnies QLD supporters like you in response to last year's devastating ex-tropical Cyclone Jasper. The response effort is still in its early days, with **\$20,000** distributed to assist families who have lost everything. New claims continue to come in.

**Thank you for being there for Queenslanders whose lives have been turned upside down by natural disasters.**

Your support is helping people **take ownership** of their lives

**Edwina** shares your passion and commitment for helping the most vulnerable Queenslanders to create a better future.



who deliver holistic Alcohol and Other Drugs (AOD) and Domestic and Family Violence (DFV) services. Her team also delivers Home Assist Secure (HAS) program and Commonwealth Home Support Program (CHSP), which help people over 60 and those living with a disability to feel safer at home.

Edwina and her team deliver strengths-based, trauma-informed care to some of the most vulnerable people in our community – the same people you help through your generous support for Vinnies QLD.

As State Manager of Health and Wellbeing at Vinnies QLD, Edwina leads a dedicated team of specialists

**“All our services are about supporting vulnerable people to be empowered and take ownership of their lives.”** Edwina

In our 2023 Christmas Appeal, we asked you to send Anna and her family a message of hope and support.

# Your response was extraordinary.

Here are some of the wonderful messages you sent in.

Please add your message of hope and support for Anna and her family here.

Don't give up

Start by doing what is necessary then what is possible and suddenly you are doing the impossible

DEAR ANNA AND FAMILY,  
KEEP TRYING,  
DON'T GIVE UP  
KNOW YOU ARE LOVED  
AND CARED ABOUT.



KATHY

Please add your message of hope and support for Anna and her family here.

To Anna + her Family,  
may my little help brighten life for you this Christmas and may God watch over you all during the future years  
All my best wishes

Please add your message of hope and support for Anna and her family here.

you are amazing!  
Always remember that, Anna.

Happy Christmas Time to you and your family.  
May the sun shine on you in 2024.

Please add your message of hope and support for Anna and her family here.

Hello Anna, Olivia & Jaden,

I wish you warmth & joy this Christmas. May all of you be blessed with lots of moments of peace & hope & love, not just during this season, but forevermore.

♥ J

Please add your message of hope and support for Anna and her family here.

Dear Anna & family,  
We are hoping you and your children have all you need for Xmas, and the New Year. God bless you with courage and the love of Christ be with you always  
Frank & Rhonda

Please add your message of hope and support for Anna and her family here.

Dear Anna & family,

I hope you have a very enjoyable Christmas & all your troubles disappear for a while as you watch the light in childrens faces when they hear of Christs' birth, which is of course the reason we have Christmas. I wish you happiness & prosperity always.

Please add your message of hope and support for Anna and her family here.

Pat

Anna & kids have had a Christmas & New Year 2024 well be a happy New Year & hope you get some tucker & clothes. I pray & hope myself that I get tucker & some clothes for to keep going. Anna & myself have need for help but with trust to God will come us for us.  
I thank - you for us all.