



Brotherhood of St Laurence
Working for an Australia free of poverty

**ANNUAL
REPORT**
2015



Blowing bubbles is all part of the fun
at the Brotherhood's Baby Book Club.

WORKING FOR AN AUSTRALIA FREE OF POVERTY

OUR VISION

An Australia free of poverty

We work with others to create an Australia free of poverty for this and future generations: a fair, compassionate and just society where all can fully participate in social, civic and economic life, create and share prosperity and treat each other with dignity and respect.

OUR MISSION

Our mission is to research, develop and implement innovative and high quality services, practices and policies to drive change that benefits all Australians.

OUR VALUES

The Brotherhood, inspired by our Christian origins, seeks the common good through compassion, with a generosity of spirit and reliance on evidence.

The Brotherhood recognises Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the First Peoples and the traditional custodians of this land.

OUR AIMS

1 To prevent and reduce poverty and exclusion from the mainstream of society

This will involve working with people at greatest risk at four life transition stages considered critical to wellbeing: the early years, the transition through school to work, the shifts in and out of work during mid-life, and retirement and ageing.

2 To be a national voice on poverty, disadvantage and inequality

This will involve promoting integrated social and economic policies and programs that improve the human capacities, material resources and opportunities of people and communities.

3 To develop and deliver high quality and innovative policy, programs and practice

This will involve developing understanding and knowledge through research, community engagement and learnings from practice to create innovative policies and programs to implement and share with others.

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BIANCA'S STORY

Bianca and her four-year-old son Tyler joined their local HIPPPY in Moree in northern New South Wales in early 2015. Before long she saw how much the early-learning program was helping her son.

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NICK'S STORY

Mainstream school wasn't for Nick, as he found schoolwork hard to understand. In Year 11 he dropped out. For a year he searched for work until he joined the Youth Transitions Program. Now he's on track for a career in catering.

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PAM'S STORY

With the help of the Work and Learning Centre in Ballarat, Pam made a fresh start on the pathway to employment.

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RAY'S STORY

Ray was 62 years old when he joined the Brotherhood's Younger Onset Dementia Group in 2014. He and the other members appreciate the emotional benefits of sharing their experiences and concerns.

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DAWOOD'S STORY

Our Refugee Action Program (RAP) taught Palestinian immigrant Dawood leadership skills to make his community stronger.

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KASIA'S STORY

Raising two young kids on your own can be difficult, says Kasia, who came to Australia from Poland 20 years ago. The Brotherhood's Saver Plus program, however, has made life easier.

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Playgroups are popular at the Jindi Family and Community Centre in Mernda.

REPORT FROM THE CHAIR AND THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Rob Knowles'.

The Hon. Rob Knowles AO

Chair, Board of Directors
Brotherhood of St Laurence



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tony Nicholson'.

Tony Nicholson

Executive Director
Brotherhood of St Laurence

We are pleased to introduce the 44th Annual Report of the Brotherhood of St Laurence. This is the 85th year since our community organisation was established by Father Gerard Tucker, a man who combined his sincere Christian faith with an ambitious vision to stamp out poverty and disadvantage in the communities in which he worked.

The social and economic challenge Father Tucker outlined for his emerging Brotherhood in the 1930s in the inner city of Melbourne continues to resonate with us. In a turbulent world, modern Australia remains a prosperous and peaceful nation presenting great opportunities for people to build a good life for themselves. But with new opportunities generated by our modern economy also come new risks, especially for disadvantaged people. In our fast changing economy, increasingly based on knowledge and service industries in which technology is pervasive, and where even referring to a 'digital economy' as a separate entity seems 'yesteryear', education and skills along with personal networks are ever more important for finding and retaining work. The task of nation building in the 21st century must be anchored by the understanding that there is a deep connection between investing in building the capabilities and living circumstances of disadvantaged people – their education, skills, health and housing – and the returns these bring for our whole society, from greater productivity to greater social cohesion. As Father Tucker instinctively knew, it is a fallacy to divorce social policy from economic policy: poverty is not only bad for those facing it personally, it is also bad for the economy and bad for us all.

These realities have concentrated our minds in the past year, as we have reviewed and evaluated our strategy and charted our course for the next five years. Our new Strategic Plan 2015–2020 responds to the challenge offered to us at our Sambell Oration in March – our annual forum for ideas – where our speaker, British social thinker Maurice Glasman, urged us: 'In order to be of contemporary relevance you need to strengthen your tradition, renew your ethos, and modernise your vocation through the ancient truths of your calling.'

Our new strategy continues the themes that have characterised our work in recent years; recognition of the risks encountered at critical transition points across the life course, the challenges presented by the changing nature of employment, the associated pressures placed upon families and their caring responsibilities and the need to equip the disadvantaged in our community with the capabilities to be able to meaningfully participate in economic, social and civic life. While much of the current thrust of our work will continue, however, four new emphases have been introduced.

Firstly, we are determined to engage more in the life of the diverse local communities in which we work so that we better reflect local aspirations, contribute to strengthening community networks and facilitate ordinary people in those communities to support one another. This recognises that whilst there will always be a need for professional services, they alone are not enough to foster stronger communities. In some circumstances they can 'crowd out' community efforts. Our organisation was established and nurtured by community, by people who had a vision to fight social injustice, who recognised a need and who gathered together to address it. And we know from our experience, if our work disassociates people from the places in which they live, and only concentrates on individuals or households, it will be much less successful.

Secondly, we have identified that the risk of poverty and exclusion in contemporary Australia has a strong geographic dimension. There has been a distinct shift of its locus, moving from the more visible inner and middle areas of our major cities to the city fringes and in country regions, where it is less visible. Burgeoning growth corridors of our big cities, where more 'affordable' housing draws families, often lack the necessary infrastructure, transport and employment opportunities that allow people to fulfil their potential. The challenges are arguably greater in rural areas where a lesser density of population and greater distances to be travelled often exacerbate poverty by contributing to an effective denial of services that are responsive and of a decent quality. Our new strategy has us intentionally looking for opportunities to collaborate with others to contribute to building greater service infrastructure in these locations.

Thirdly, we have elevated our Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) to be a key objective within our new strategy. The disadvantage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and the stark inequalities that persist continue to concern us greatly; they stain the very progress of our nation. Now entering its second year, our RAP commits our organisation to take genuine steps in our sphere of influence to advance this issue and to ensure we support the rights and aspirations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

REPORT FROM THE CHAIR AND THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR


Fourthly, our new plan recognises the importance of ensuring that our organisation remains strong. Our business model which is dependent on maintaining a diverse funding base has stood us in good stead in recent years and can be expected to continue to do so in the immediate future. However, we have identified the need to be particularly attentive to the way our business model evolves over the next two to three years to ensure that we are laying the foundations to ensure our organisation is strong in a decade's time and able to pursue its mission with vigour.

With our long experience helping disadvantaged people and an appetite for innovation in service delivery, we know when a service model or approach works. The Home Interaction Program for Parents and Youngsters (HIPPY), our early learning service that assists parents to become their child's first teacher, with further support from the Australian Government, expanded this year to 100 communities across the nation with almost half of them Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander.

HIPPY, along with our Work and Learning Centres – employment services situated near public housing in Victoria – and Saver Plus, the national saving and financial literacy program developed with ANZ, are successful examples of the Brotherhood taking on the role of lead coordinating agency, with significant government support.

Crucial to their success in local communities across the country are our service-delivery partnerships with local organisations, often quite small, that are both embedded in those communities and trusted by them. This enables agility, harnesses local efforts and delivers results – and we believe the approach has efficacy for many other areas including the better coordination of services at the local level and in new programs to tackle the scourge of youth unemployment hurting so many communities. This model is also an expression of our strategic focus of continuing to work closely with colleague community organisations so that together we can invigorate a dynamic sector that all too often can be put at risk of being subsumed by top-down government administrative processes and the crude application of competition policy. That said, we continue to partner well with all levels of government across our programs. We find the doors to the public officials we work with are always open to us, and we acknowledge their important contribution to our work.

As a founding partner of Goodstart we are also delighted that five years on from its formation the national network of early learning and childcare centres is thriving, providing high-quality services to many thousands of struggling families and influencing national policy on child development. Goodstart is a great demonstration of what can be achieved through collaboration, whether the parties are large or small.



welcome home

Education First Youth Foyers integrate learning and student accommodation on TAFE campuses.

Our Brain Bank program matches skilled volunteer mentors with new arrivals seeking assistance to develop community projects, find employment and other activities.



Among pressing concerns for policy makers must be youth unemployment, and this continues to be a special focus for us. The unemployment rate for 15 to 24-year-olds nationally is stubbornly stuck near 14 per cent. The figures for regional areas are noticeably higher. Our ongoing campaign for youth employment – My Chance, Our Future – has drawn support from across Australia. Our Youth Transitions Service, with philanthropic backing, has been testing a creative approach to bringing employers much more closely into the task of building up disadvantaged young peoples' job finding and employability capacities in unemployment hotspots in outer Melbourne. We were pleased that the Australian Government, in its May 2015 budget, recognised the seriousness of the issue with funding to establish a national Transition to Work service, inspired in part by our pilot program.

What has made our Youth Transitions Service pilot a success – we have had a strike rate of around 70 per cent of the participants moving into employment and/or further accredited job-focused training – has been the ability to connect with local businesses and service and sporting clubs and, importantly, to harness the altruism of volunteers, including mentors for young people. From our founding, such volunteers have given great reach and vitality to our organisation. We have 1200 of them on our books now, working in every part of our organisation: ranging from our social enterprises, our services to older people and the young and the unemployed, to our Research and Policy Centre and library: without their dedication and skills we could not flourish. We thank all our volunteers for their selfless commitment and acknowledge their contribution.

We have identified that the risk of poverty and exclusion in contemporary Australia has a strong geographic dimension.

Our work is also a joint effort between many sector partners. They put the community into welfare, and the shared learnings and collaborations forged within our sector are invaluable to our work.

We are also particularly blessed by the generous support we continue to receive from our individual donors and the many philanthropic foundations and trusts. Put simply, their financial contributions to the Brotherhood help many people in the community to build better lives for themselves and their families.

The engine of the Brotherhood, our paid staff, continues to propel the organisation with their passion, dedication and professional skills, led by the Executive team that has once again managed its demanding tasks well and with a generosity of spirit. Our fellow Directors continue to fulfil their duties with diligence and an appropriate attention to 'balancing the money and the mission'.

HIGHLIGHTS

Major project studies vulnerable older workers

Encouraging older people to remain in or return to work is a key policy objective as the population ages. However it raises questions about jobs available to older workers, barriers to them finding work and how employment programs can better assist them, since almost a quarter of a million mature-age workers are on the Newstart Allowance. In a major Australian Research Council-funded project the Brotherhood is examining these and other questions by researching the experiences of older workers who are working less than they would like, or not at all. Findings from this project, *Understanding and preventing workforce vulnerabilities in midlife and beyond*, will be used to inform policy to support this group of vulnerable baby boomers. Our research partners are the University of Canberra, the University of Melbourne, Curtin University and Jobs Australia.



Support for families on urban fringe

The new Jindi Family and Community Centre in Mernda – in Australia’s fastest growing postcode, 30km north-east of Melbourne’s CBD – assists families with the support they need to build a good life. This centre, a partnership with Goodstart Early Learning and generously supported by the City of Whittlesea, also puts into practice the Brotherhood’s new five-year strategic plan, which brings a particular focus to outer suburban and rural areas where a lack of services and jobs holds back individuals, families and communities. Our research and practice shows that the growth corridors of the major cities are particularly vulnerable to social and economic exclusion.

Early childhood learning program expands

The **Home Interaction Program for Parents and Youngsters (HIPPY)**, which helps parents in their role as their child’s first teacher to prepare their young ones for school, is expanding to 25 new locations across the country. This brings the total number of communities that benefit from the program to 100. HIPPY is also a practical expression of the Brotherhood’s Reconciliation Action Plan, because in many of the communities where it operates the focus is on assisting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families.





Opportunities knock for asylum seekers

The **Given the Chance for Asylum Seekers** employment program goes from strength to strength in demonstrating the skills, resilience, productivity and social diversity that asylum seekers bring to Australian workplaces. Running for two years in Melbourne, it has found almost 250 jobs for asylum seekers with 40 employers, including major corporations, in industries ranging from hospitality to banking. Many of these businesses return to Given the Chance with new vacancies, and promote it to their contacts and the wider community. As a sign of the program's growing success, we are planning to expand it to regional Victoria. Its sister program for refugees, **Given the Chance @ ANZ**, having established its worth in Victoria with ANZ, has been expanded to Queensland and Tasmania.



RESET puts students back on track

Completing your education is one of the foundations of success in adulthood, but not everyone progresses at a traditional school. In Victoria alone around 10,000 children of compulsory school age do not attend school. The **Re-engaging Early Secondary Education and Training (RESET)** program fills a gap for 'middle years' students who stopped going to school because they struggled with formal learning, but had not been given an alternative educational path. It began in early 2015 at Monterey Secondary College in Melbourne's south-east in a customised classroom, with the aim of integrating a group of these young people, who are aged 10 to 14, into mainstream classes. The students also join in general school activities such as sports, and are helped to develop interpersonal, problem solving and other skills they need at school.

Practical program helps unemployed youth

Around Australia the Brotherhood contributed to putting the issue of growing youth unemployment firmly on the national agenda through the **My Chance, Our Future** campaign. Our **Youth Transitions Program** demonstrates the on-the-ground approach that we believe would work well in a national program to assist jobless young people to build their qualifications, skills and experience to find work in the modern economy. Through practical steps it helps disadvantaged young people in Melbourne's outer northern and western suburbs, where youth unemployment is stubbornly high, to move into work, education or training. A key element is the close connection with local businesses to link youth to work opportunities.



Focus on quality of life for people with dementia

Many people diagnosed with dementia experience a crippling sense of hopelessness. The Brotherhood supports and cares for people with dementia and their carers by focusing on people's capabilities, aspirations and quality of life. Our **Caring for Carers** program helps reduce the anxiety and depression among carers that can arise from looking after their loved one around the clock by building their caring skills and their understanding of dementia. In our **Younger Onset Dementia Group**, for people under 65 years, members initiate and implement group activities and report that the group gives them a sense of ownership, a chance to be heard and a place of hope.



THE EARLY YEARS

Helping children to learn in the first years of life and assisting their parents to gain confidence in supporting them are key parts of the Brotherhood's work to break the cycle of disadvantage. In the early years the brain develops faster than at any other time in life – heavily influenced by environment, in which parents play a crucial role – and the foundations for core skills are laid down. Research over the last 50 years has provided consistent evidence about the importance of environmental conditions for children's social, emotional, and cognitive development. Through our programs we recognise and support the critical role parents play in giving their children the best start in life.

Programs

The **Home Interaction Program for Parents and Youngsters (HIPPY)** – our home-based early-childhood learning and parenting program for four and five-year-olds that empowers parents and carers to be their child's first teacher – is now available in 75 communities across Australia, 25 with a specific focus on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families. With Australian Government support, more than 3,350 families from disadvantaged urban, regional and rural communities took part in HIPPY this year. Importantly, over 70 per cent of families complete the full two-year program, which is a remarkable success.

A further 25 communities are about to gain the benefit of a HIPPY program, bringing the total to 100, with 11 in far northern Australia, from Cape York to Port Hedland.

In addition, we are collaborating with Inala Aboriginal Health Service in Brisbane to pilot HIPPY for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children aged three. Supported by home tutors, parents and carers will begin their HIPPY journey earlier with play-based

activities, music and literacy materials. This project is funded by generous philanthropic grants including those given by the Grosvenor Foundation, Macquarie Private Bank, The Macquarie Group Foundation, The Mary Elinor Harris Fund, the C and T Park Endowment Fund, The Myer Foundation and Ms Joanna Baevski.

Our **Supported Playgroups** are taking a new shape, having incorporated fresh elements including home visits and a playgroup for fathers to better support families from refugee and migrant backgrounds. Our playgroups help children develop through play and give parents a space to connect with one another and share advice.

This year we expanded our **Parenting Programs**, which develop knowledge, skills and confidence for parents with children aged 2–12 years. Each term we delivered the Tuning into Kids™ course, which helps parents to understand and manage their children's emotions.

The Australian Government is supporting us to establish our new **Social and Emotional Literacy Program** for families, and incorporate our Parenting Programs and the **Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies (PATHS)** training program for staff at the



Bianca is delighted with son Tyler's progress since they joined HIPPY.

Brotherhood and other community organisations. PATHS is used to develop children's emotional awareness and social competence to help them deal with life's challenges.

Our **Breakfast Club** gives primary school children a good start to the day with social interaction and a nutritious breakfast. It is funded by four corporate partners and supported by volunteers drawn from their staff, three secondary schools and the broader community.

The **Jindi Family and Community Centre** in Melbourne's outer north, a partnership between the City of Whittlesea, Goodstart Early Learning and the Brotherhood, opened in February 2015 to support families in this fast-growing region to build a good life. The City of Whittlesea provided the new state-of-the-art \$7 million facility, which houses services including maternal and child health, a kindergarten, playgroups and allied health services such as occupational therapy. New communities in the growth corridors of our cities, with fewer jobs, educational opportunities and transport connections, are vulnerable to social and economic exclusion. We are committed to helping these communities succeed, by contributing to integrated services such as this.

Policy

We made a series of submissions to the Productivity Commission's Inquiry into Early Learning and Care and engaged with key stakeholders about the development of the Australian Government's Families Package in a bid to improve outcomes for families experiencing disadvantage in areas such as child care.

BIANCA

Bianca and her four-year-old son Tyler joined their local HIPPY in Moree in northern New South Wales in early 2015. Before long she saw how much the early-learning program was helping her son.

The program includes weekly educational activity packs, or books, which parents complete with their children. 'Within a week of [using] the HIPPY book with shapes he finally knew his shapes', she says. 'He has lots of other books, but HIPPY really worked.'

HIPPY, the Home Interaction Program for Parents and Youngsters, helps children get ready for school, while giving parents the skills and confidence to help their children learn. Families start HIPPY the year before their child starts school and continue during the first year of school.

Supported and encouraged by a home tutor, parents read to and undertake educational activities with their child, using the activity packs and HIPPY story books.

Bianca, who has four sons aged from newborn to 12 years old, also has a paid job as a community support worker with a local agency for families, which is where she became aware of HIPPY. Two mothers in the playgroup she runs are in the program and after talking to them about its benefits she inquired about joining up. 'We were lucky enough to get a spot', she says.

Bianca is particularly delighted about her son's progress because Tyler is developmentally delayed due to a condition called craniosynostosis. Incorrect growth of his skull caused pressure on his brain, before it was diagnosed and treated by surgery.

She says Tyler likes having his own special tub with his HIPPY story books, stationery including pencils and a ruler, colourful plastic shapes and other educational materials, all provided by the program.

'He understands that "This is mine and this is my work". He's very protective of it and has ownership of it', she says.

With the cost of trips to Sydney, 650 kilometres away, for Tyler's medical appointments, she is also pleased that there is no charge for HIPPY, which in Moree is operated by Miyay Birray Youth Service, a community organisation.

Looking forward to when Tyler starts school, she's had feedback from other parents that HIPPY builds children's confidence in the classroom.

She says: 'Kids go into the classroom and say "We already know this from HIPPY".'



THROUGH SCHOOL TO WORK

The path from school to further study or work has always been a point of economic and social change for young people. But in our modern economy that privileges qualifications, skills and experience, the path is much more risky than in previous generations. While it can provide many wonderful opportunities for those with the resources to seize them, many young people experiencing disadvantage find the task of getting a foothold in the world of work difficult and disheartening. They find themselves among the 13 per cent of Australian youth who are unemployed.

Our programs foster the aspirations of these young people and equip them with the knowledge, self-confidence and skills to best enable them to achieve an education and long-lasting employment in this changed world, thus demonstrating that by developing their capabilities and creating solutions – community connections, education and pathways to jobs – the vast majority of these disadvantaged young Australians can achieve a happy, fulfilling and productive adult life.

Programs

Our **Community Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning (CVCAL)**, an alternative education in a community setting for young people who have become disengaged from school, offers the equivalent of Years 11 and 12. The hands-on and flexible curriculum for this accredited qualification includes literacy and numeracy units, industry-specific training, work experience, vocational guidance and personal development to help students on the pathway to employment or further training. Students also benefited from the introduction of social and emotional learning to help them to deal positively with their feelings and relationships.

The **Re-engaging Early Secondary Education and Training (RESET)** program is reintegrating children aged 10–14 who have

not been attending school, into mainstream education. It's crucial to make sure youngsters are fully involved in school because prolonged non-attendance is often associated with anti-social behaviour and involvement with the juvenile justice system. Delivered in partnership with Monterey Secondary College in Frankston in Melbourne's south-east, it began in 2015 with its own classroom and specialist staff, including a psychologist. Students undertake academic work and hands-on activities such as music and also join the college's activities such as sports.

Our **Homework Clubs**, in inner Melbourne and in partnership with Woodleigh School and the New Hope Foundation in Frankston, provide a quiet environment where secondary students study with assistance from volunteer and staff tutors.

The **Youth Transitions Program** operates in unemployment hotspots in western and northern Melbourne. It builds the strengths of young people aged 15–24 who are disconnected from study, training and work. The program integrates training with work experience, career advice, workplace visits and links to community organisations and other services.

Our **Education First Youth Foyers** have at their core education that leads to employment and positive civic participation. Located at Holmesglen TAFE in Glen Waverley in Melbourne's east and at



The Youth Transitions Program helped Nick to get an apprenticeship.

the Kangan Institute in Broadmeadows in the north, they integrate learning and student accommodation in mainstream TAFE settings for young people aged 16–24 who are homeless or at risk of becoming so. We have developed the Youth Foyers in partnership with Hanover Welfare Services, now called Launch Housing, and the Victorian Government.

In 2015 the Brotherhood was approached by several community service organisations to trial, for young people moving from out-of-home care in the child protection system, the **Certificate I in Developing Independence**. Originally designed for the Youth Foyers, the course will help them plan and work towards education and career objectives.

Policy

Our substantial policy work focuses on the many young people who leave school early and are not in training or work.

We engaged with government on the development of the national Industry Skills Fund Youth Pilot Programs, and developed comprehensive proposals for a national Youth Transitions Service and a School Connect Service to reach out to young people lost from the school system.

In our pursuit of school funding that better meets the needs of students experiencing disadvantage, we participated in the National Alliance for Inclusive Learning and a cross-sector partnership, the Need to Succeed Alliance. With the latter we sponsored an Education Funding Symposium in Victoria. We also continue to seek fair funding arrangements for vulnerable young people to study in flexible learning programs outside traditional school environments, such as our Community VCAL program.

NICK

Mainstream school wasn't for Nick. The teachers were good, he said, but he found schoolwork hard to understand. Halfway through Year 11 he dropped out.

'I thought I'd just keep going, and going, but then I thought, "Nuh, I'm falling behind really bad".'

For the next year, Nick, now 18, lived with his mum and brother in Melbourne's western suburbs while searching for work.

And with youth unemployment in Victoria hovering around 13 per cent for 15–24 year olds, the job search is not always so easy.

'And then this opportunity came up and I took it', he says.

The opportunity was the Brotherhood's Youth Transitions Program, which assists disadvantaged young people into work, education or training.

In early 2015, Nick and his brother walked into a local community centre, where they met Brotherhood youth coach Ruth.

'She seemed supportive, very supportive, willing to take us on', says Nick, who told Ruth during that meeting that he had an interest in cooking and kitchen work.

The 13-week Youth Transitions Program followed, where Nick received career guidance and completed a leadership course. The program also brought him into contact with potential employers through 'work tasters', where participants get real-life exposure to various workplaces.

Underpinning our youth programs is 'The Deal'. That is, the young person agrees to commit to the program. In return, staff work with them on advancing their career goals and assist them into employment, education or training.

On top of this, Youth Transitions also emphasised the little things that make a big difference when applying for jobs. 'I learnt how to write a CV, and the program has also helped a lot with my English comprehension', he says.

The activity he enjoyed the most was the four-week work placement. Nick's was at Rosa's Canteen, the restaurant of renowned Melbourne chef Rosa Mitchell.

Rosa and her staff were so impressed with Nick that, after his placement, he was offered a year-long apprenticeship. For Nick, 'This is a dream come true'.

'If mainstream school isn't for you,' he says, 'there are always other alternatives'.



IN AND OUT OF WORK

Skills, recent work experience, community networks and links to employers can make a difference for people who struggle to find work. Our training and employment programs offer a 'line of sight' to a real job for those who have never worked in Australia, for people who have lost their connection to the labour market, and for young people seeking to land their first job. We work closely with employers and train, place and support people to get into work, progress in their jobs and participate in the economic and social life of their communities.

Programs

Our **Work and Learning Centres**' place-based approach assists disadvantaged job seekers to connect with their local communities, link with employers and get into work. We partner with five Victorian community organisations which provide local networks and connections. The Church of All Nations, Northern Futures, GEST (Gippsland Employment Skills Training), Ballarat Neighbourhood House and Salvation Army Pathways run the Centres in Carlton in inner Melbourne, Geelong, Moe, Ballarat and Shepparton. They have assisted more than 2000 people and placed over 1200 into work. In 2015 this flagship program was given ongoing funding by the Victorian Government.

Given the Chance – Workforce Solutions works with employers to find out their workforce needs and prepares and supports our job seekers to meet them. Refugees, asylum seekers, older people, public housing tenants and young people have been placed in an array of jobs with the City of Melbourne, Parks Victoria, Spotless Group, City of Yarra, Australian Unity, Radisson, Marriott, Benetas, Woolworths and others.

Given the Chance for Asylum Seekers helps asylum seekers to build their skills, find work and make their own contribution to their communities.

Given the Chance @ ANZ, our longest-running employment program, provides a pathway to work for refugees. In 2015, it expanded to Queensland and Tasmania through partner agreements with local community organisations. Eighty-six per cent of participants completed the program and of these 91 per cent gained ongoing work. We also established the **Make your Mark** program with ANZ for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Our **Training Services** provide learners with accredited training in English, aged care, community services and cleaning operations, and, for participants in the Brotherhood's Youth Transitions Program, the Certificate in General Education. To ensure our training is of the highest quality, we have established an Academic Advisory Board with representatives providing industry expertise.

The **Community Safety and Information Service (CSIS)** operates concierge and security services on public housing estates. It hires some of the tenants, many of whom were long-term unemployed,



After six months of advice and coaching from Jan (right) at the Work and Learning Centre in Ballarat, Pam landed a job.

as paid trainees for up to a year to provide a friendly reception service on the estates, and helps them gain qualifications in security operations. The program is supported by the Victorian Government and partners with Unified Security Group and Dome Security so that our trainees progress to jobs in the industry.

Our **Skills Gap** program helps people with qualifications who have not been able to find jobs because of inadequate training, poor English or lack of work experience. Skills Gap helps participants meet industry requirements, including training them in Australian workplace culture.

Policy

As part of our continued analysis of the effectiveness of the national employment services system, we made a submission to inform the development of the new national employment services model. Policy submissions were developed for the state and federal reviews of the vocational education and training system. We also developed policy recommendations for the McClure review of the national welfare system about measures to enable those experiencing barriers to employment to move into sustained work.

PAM

With the help of the Work and Learning Centre in Ballarat, newcomer Pam made a fresh start on the pathway to employment.

After she moved to the historic Victorian city from Melbourne, things didn't go according to plan when her marriage broke down. However, Pam liked Ballarat's sense of community and decided to make her home there with her daughter, 12, and son, 9.

Pam looked for work for 12 months, before finding out about the Ballarat Work and Learning Centre, a collaboration between a local community organisation, Next Steps, and the Brotherhood, supported by the Victorian Government.

The five Work and Learning Centres across Victoria help job seekers develop and implement a plan for their pathway to employment. Different for each person, the plan can include identifying career goals, and taking up computer classes, training and work experience. Importantly, for each person it includes the building of aspirations and links to local employers.

Pam said the centre in Ballarat took a more focused approach to assisting job seekers find work and provided a more personalised service compared with her experience of mainstream employment agencies. 'It's more one on one', she says.

The centre refreshed her knowledge of how to look for work, including learning about the local economy and areas of jobs growth and sprucing up her resume and cover letter. However what she valued most was 'that they gave me motivation'.

'I enjoyed going in there', she says.

Pam's work and learning advisor, Jan, brought local employers in to mentor her and other job seekers, advising on the skills they look for in workers, such as teamwork and problem solving, and coaching them in how to do job interviews. 'In everyday life you don't get that opportunity', says Pam.

After six months of advice and coaching, Pam landed a job. Long interested in working in the corrections system or in the court system, she is now employed as an administration support officer in the medical centre of a prison near Ballarat.

Looking back on the support from the Work and Learning Centre she says: 'I enjoyed every minute of it ... It gave me a purpose. I treated looking for a job like a job'.



RETIREMENT AND AGEING

Our founder, Father Gerard Tucker, wrote in 1956 that all older people should be encouraged 'to make full use of their physical, mental and spiritual powers and so enable them to be useful and happy to the end'.

His vision continues to guide our services, research and advocacy for disadvantaged and vulnerable older Australians, whose life circumstances have often prevented them gaining the assets that underpin security, comfort and choice in life, such as home ownership and superannuation savings.

More recently, influenced by the theories of Amaryta Sen and Martha Nussbaum, we developed and are now implementing our Enhancing Capabilities approach. It builds on people's own strengths to live the life that each values, by paying attention to their abilities, their opportunities and the support they need.

Programs

We are planning to improve and expand our residential care for older people who have experienced homelessness. We plan to rebuild **Sambell Lodge** in inner Melbourne to the highest standards, using a forward-looking design that will enable residents to be active and independent in a friendly and modern environment. Sambell Lodge continues to organise twice a year its Celebration of Life social events enjoyed by hundreds of residents from aged-care facilities in inner Melbourne.

At our **Sumner House** residential facility the *Teaching, Research in Aged Care Services (TRACS)* project, funded by the Australian Government, has identified and implemented the skills and training

that staff require to meet the needs and wishes of residents, and improve their quality of life. Importantly, our residents are now more involved in planning the services of their choice. Sambell Lodge and any future Brotherhood facility will also benefit from the project's research findings.

Individual choice remains paramount in all our services. In home care we were leaders in the thinking and practice on the consumer-directed care reforms adopted by the Australian Government. Thus in our **Home Care Package Program** we have implemented with confidence these reforms, where each recipient of a government home-care package decides how their funding will be spent.

For people living at home, our **Social Inclusion Program** services enrich lives, tackle loneliness and improve health and wellbeing. For example **Good Food Matters** staff help residents to shop for and cook nutritious meals at home, and **Peninsula Transport Assist's** volunteer drivers assist people without private transport in outer south-east Melbourne to enjoy social activities.

Our Day and Respite programs – run by **Banksia** and **Nexus Disability Services** in Melbourne's south-east and the **Coolibah Centres** in inner and northern Melbourne – assist older people, people with disabilities and their carers to increase their participation in society and improve their wellbeing. Program activities, which operate in our centres and out in the community,



The Brotherhood's Younger Onset Dementia Program offers Ray a safe, supportive and inclusive environment.

range from helping people to run market stalls for good causes, to English lessons for Chinese members, to supporting people with a disability who have moved into their own homes. The **Younger Onset Dementia Group** encourages members to deploy their knowledge and skills on the activities and projects of their own choosing. Our **Short Break Stay Program** gives carers a break by accommodating and caring for their loved ones.

In the digital age the ability to use technology is part and parcel of modern life. Residents of our aged-care facilities and the people we help to live at home have taken up the use of tablets with enthusiasm. With the help of our **iPad Essentials** and other programs they discover how the devices enhance their relationships, activities and lives.

Policy

Informed by the Enhancing Capabilities approach, we made our own submissions, and contributed to those of peak bodies, to Australian Government consultations on the major reforms taking place in aged and disability care. On community care these covered how key elements of consumer-directed care should be embedded in the government's Aged Care Principles, input on the Community Home Support Program and our analysis of government-funded dementia programs and services. On residential care we made submissions on access for disadvantaged people to concessional residential places and on the adequacy of residential care for young people with severe disabilities.

RAY

Ray joined the Brotherhood's Younger Onset Dementia Group in February, 2014.

'When you first are diagnosed, it's not much fun', he says.

'The problem is that you don't know much about it. You get told this diagnosis and your first thought is that you're going to lose your mind. But the group stabilised my emotions.'

The term 'younger onset dementia' is used to describe any form of dementia that occurs in a person aged under 65. In Australia, around 25,000 people live with this condition.

Many are in the workforce when they notice the early signs of dementia, which may lead to forced retirement. They are also more likely to experience feelings of loss, neglect, marginalisation and social isolation than older age groups.

Most of the available services are designed for much older adults. However, the Brotherhood's group has been planned to cater for the interests of a younger cohort, from 55 to 65 years; they are in the early to middle stages of dementia.

The group meets once a week from 9 am to 3 pm at the Brotherhood's Banksia Day and Respite Centre, where the members choose and plan their activities, supported by two facilitators. It is part of the Brotherhood's wider dementia care programs.

Friendships, cohesion and trust among the members have helped to create a social environment that is safe, supportive, inclusive and enabling for all of them.

They appreciate the emotional benefits of sharing experiences and concerns, giving and receiving advice and learning about dementia.

Ray and the other members are making a DVD about younger onset dementia to give to the newly diagnosed.

'It will take the loneliness out of the diagnosis', he says.

'I have found being able to talk one on one to some of the others in the group has been quite powerful. You've got to have the right attitude. You've got to be positive. When you are positive, everything works better for you.'



REFUGEES AND INCLUSION

Refugees, migrants and asylum seekers bring to their new community strengths, skills and the drive to succeed. The Brotherhood focuses on encouraging positive settlement by working to include new arrivals in the economic and social life of Australia.

Our Ecumenical Migration Centre (EMC), recognising that most new arrivals now settle in the outer growth corridors of our cities, is moving many of its services to the outer north and west of Melbourne. After almost 60 years in inner Melbourne it will move to a new base in the northern suburb of Epping in early 2016 whilst maintaining a presence in the inner suburbs.

Programs

Parenting is never straightforward and mothers and fathers from other countries face extra challenges in raising their children in an unfamiliar society. Our **Integrated Family Services** program supports parents to improve their children's safety and development by focusing on healthy relationships, all informed by EMC's wealth of expertise in helping families from diverse cultural backgrounds settle in Australia. While the Integrated Family Services program is designed for all Victorian families that need assistance, EMC's specialist expertise with recently arrived communities has resulted in it advising other providers on culturally responsive practice.

In Melbourne's west the **African Australian Community Centre** continues to support people who have been in Australia for longer than five years and still need settlement assistance.

The **Refugee Child Outreach** program in inner, western and northern Melbourne helps newly arrived families ensure their children get the best start possible in their new community.

The EMC supports young people to identify and achieve their goals. The **ReSource** program offers young refugees and migrants in Melbourne's north mentoring and training about Australian workplaces and the education system so that they can make informed decisions. The **Employment Pathways for Young Asylum Seekers** program supports those in Melbourne's north and west to become familiar with Australian workplace culture, prepare job applications and look for volunteering and other civic activities.

The **Stepping Stones** micro-enterprise program has helped refugee, migrant and asylum seeker women to turn their business ideas into reality. It is going from strength to strength, and now runs in the outer west and north of Melbourne.

The **Bridging Women's Worlds** program, in partnership with the Spectrum Migrant Resource Centre, brings together newly arrived and Australian-born women to share culture and reduce social isolation through skills workshops, lunches and an annual Let the Cultures Unite dinner.

We have also expanded our **Brain Bank** program into the outer areas of Whittlesea and Hume. It matches skilled volunteer mentors with new arrivals seeking assistance to develop community projects, find employment and other activities.

The **Refugee Action Program (RAP)**, in partnership with Spectrum Migrant Resource Centre, continues to build the capacity of refugee community groups to identify and plan responses to local issues. A key initiative was the Whittlesea Leadership Training Program, in which 20 emerging leaders learned about governance and leadership.



Through the Refugee Action Program Dawood has learnt new skills to help make his community stronger.

The **Community Proposal Pilot** assisted the reunion of 25 refugee families by helping them to settle relatives in Australia from Eritrea, Iraq, Syria, Afghanistan, Congo, Somalia and other countries.

The EMC developed cross cultural responsiveness training for both Brotherhood staff and external organisations. The Brotherhood has also been appointed to a panel of cultural-competency training providers for Victorian Government staff and service providers.

Policy

Our focus on practical matters to do with better access to education, training and employment for asylum seekers, refugees, migrants and their communities was a strong theme in a wide range of policy submissions and in discussions with stakeholders and all levels of government.

In a submission to the Senate inquiry into proposed changes to the Migration Act (the Resolving the Asylum Legacy Caseload Bill) we called for people seeking asylum to be treated fairly, regardless of how they arrived in Australia. We opposed prohibitions on permanent residency in the new Temporary Protection Visa and proposed measures to build social cohesion and employment opportunities among new arrivals.

We are an active member of the Australian Churches for Refugees Taskforce, which made a submission supporting a private member's bill to establish an independent guardian to protect the wellbeing of unaccompanied asylum-seeker children.

The Brotherhood's submission to Victoria's Royal Commission into Family Violence highlighted the importance of preventative and early intervention measures for culturally diverse communities.

DAWOOD

Our Refugee Action Program (RAP) taught Palestinian immigrant Dawood leadership skills to make his community stronger.

Dawood, who with his family migrated to Australia 10 years ago, joined a local Palestinian community group after moving to Mill Park, a suburb in Melbourne's outer north. He was selected in 2014 as one of 20 emerging leaders to join the RAP's Whittlesea Leadership Training Program.

Early in 2015, Dawood, who now runs a small business, was elected President of the Whittlesea Community Leadership Network.

'We discovered how much we didn't know about leadership', he says.

Dawood is currently working on programs and activities to keep local youth engaged and interested.

'Social activities teach not only the Australian way of life, but also keep our young people connected to their families and cultures', he says.

It can be challenging for refugee and migrant communities to find the services they need in an unfamiliar system. The Refugee Action Program is one of the Brotherhood's key initiatives to support and empower these communities.

Our Ecumenical Migration Centre works with Spectrum Migrant Resource Centre to deliver the program across the local government areas of Hume and Whittlesea in Melbourne's northern suburbs.

It aims to steer refugee communities towards being self-sufficient by helping them identify their needs, and then train their community leaders to establish vital relationships with service providers and supportive partner organisations.

Facilitators covered topics including community development, conflict management, advocacy, dealing with the media, project management, event management and grant writing.

'We learned new skills to help make our communities stronger', Dawood says.

'I want to open new venues to run activities to ensure all Whittlesea residents feel connected. It's so important for people to feel engaged and included.'



FINANCIAL INCLUSION

The Brotherhood of St Laurence focuses on financial inclusion as a pathway to full participation in society for Australians on low incomes. With 'money management' knowledge and skills and with access to affordable and fair financial services these Australians can save and build their household assets.

Our approach has been recognised by the Australian Government through its new five-year commitment to the flagship Saver Plus program we undertake with the ANZ bank.

Programs

Saver Plus, our matched savings program that operates around Australia, is being refunded through to 2020 by the Australian Government. The \$29.4 million announcement in the 2015 Budget followed the release of RMIT University research that again demonstrates the long-term impact of Saver Plus on the financial wellbeing of participants. More than three-quarters of those who complete the 10-month program continued to save as much, if not more, up to three years later. Over the 11 years since we developed Saver Plus with ANZ, its key elements – 10 monthly deposits of \$50, 10 hours of financial literacy training and an ANZ grant that matches savings up to \$500 – have proven remarkably successful. Working with ANZ and our main program partners, The Smith Family, The Benevolent Society and Berry Street, we anticipate the renewed funding will allow 14,000 more Australians on low incomes to gain greater confidence about saving, a skill that their children also pick up.

The Brotherhood continues to provide **MoneyMinded**, ANZ's long-running financial literacy course. We are working with ANZ as the program is taken on-line, which offers significant long-term potential benefits, including easy access to course information for Saver Plus participants, who all undertake MoneyMinded.

Hot water systems account for 20 to 25 per cent of household energy bills a year, on average. Our **Home Energy Efficiency Upgrade Program**, supported by the Australian Government, is assisting low-income households in Victoria to upgrade to more efficient hot water systems, generating large savings for residents and cutting greenhouse emissions. Our associated research project will assist in developing future energy efficiency policies and programs.

Affordable and reliable private transport provision is an issue of increasing interest to us because in many areas cars are essential to secure and maintain work and participate in community life. However the upfront cost of buying a dependable car is a barrier for people on low incomes. The generous support of the Three Pillars building development company has allowed us to investigate innovative responses to the transport challenges confronting many low-income residents of the outer suburbs of our large cities and regional Australia and to explore potential solutions.



The Saver Plus program helped Kasia save for swimming and gymnastic classes for her two boys.

Policy

We made a policy submission which addressed access to insurance and credit to the Australian Government's Financial Systems Inquiry, and also contributed to insurance group IAG's development of new affordable insurance products. We presented to the Australian Competition and Consumer Commissions on the risks associated with rising student debt, and in Victoria we made a submission to the Victorian Essential Services Commission Inquiry into the Financial Hardship Arrangements of Energy Retailers.



KASIA

Raising two young kids on your own can be difficult, says Kasia, who came to Australia from Poland 20 years ago. The Brotherhood's Saver Plus program, however, has made life easier.

The program, which offers practical advice on how to save regularly, is run by partner organisations in 60 locations across the country. When participants reach their savings goal, ANZ matches it up to \$500.

Kasia heard about the program from community groups in her home town of Bidwill, about 50 kilometres west of central Sydney.

After attending the program's financial management workshops at the Mount Druitt community centre, not far from Bidwill, she noticed her savings began to steadily grow.

'I could just talk about it and talk about it, and how eye-opening and how fantastic the whole program was', she says.

'And also the advantage of having the ANZ bank account and having your money matched', she adds.

Kasia put \$560 away. ANZ matched \$500 of that.

This injection of money meant Kasia could pay for her two sons to attend swimming and gymnastics classes.

Saver Plus, run by The Smith Family in Kasia's area, allows participants to put their matched savings towards educational expenses, including school uniforms, computers, excursions and sports lessons and equipment.

Kasia decided that her sons would benefit from the sporting classes. Her second son, she notes, has some trouble with his coordination.

'So I thought I would support him; the more sports he does, the better he will be able to coordinate his movements.'

For Kasia, therefore, the Saver Plus program was about more than money.

'It wasn't just about the finances,' she says, 'it actually allowed me to think about other very important things that are affecting my family'.

In the past, Kasia would worry that each pay would only last a few days, because of all the bills and daily expenses. 'I don't look at it like that now', she says.

CHAPLAINCY

The role of Chaplaincy continues to hold an integral place in the life of the Brotherhood. Through listening, pastoral care, advocacy, team building, prayer, dialogue, celebration and gathering for worship, our staff, volunteers and the people that we care for are able to connect to the Chaplaincy program and find support.

Providing ministry across all levels of the organisation offers an opportunity to explore a wide variety of practices and views around spiritual and faith dimensions for both individuals and the organisation.

Spirituality at the Brotherhood

Over the past 12 months we developed a number of discussion papers concerned with the very broad definitions of spiritual care in our places of work. Through these discussions, we plan to advance a suite of activities which enable people at the Brotherhood to gain a fuller understanding of spirituality, both individually and as an organisation. Our intention is to create a program which will be offered to all staff, volunteers and recipients of Brotherhood care.

Spirituality can mean different things to different people. For some it will be embedded in the practice of their religious faith, whilst for others it may be experienced through such things as being in the natural environment, expressions of generous humanity or a sense of mindfulness. We know that discovering and developing our own good spiritual health will allow us and others to gain strength and hope.

We often look after our physical, mental and emotional health but forget our spiritual health. Spirituality is always embedded in the unique experience of each person and so developing best practice while listening to each other and respecting each one's background and beliefs helps to develop positive outcomes, such as feeling valued and being able to express concerns. Spirituality acknowledges the idea that to flourish we all need to have engagement, interest, meaning and purpose in our lives.

Parish partnerships

We continued to foster and build relationships through mutual respect and interest with Anglican parishes and schools. At the forefront of parish life is the call to care for our neighbour, and to be compassionate and active in bringing about change. In August 2014 we welcomed a new position jointly funded by the Brotherhood, Anglicare Victoria and the Anglican Diocese of Melbourne. The role of Archdeacon for Parish Partnerships seeks to bring together the work of agencies and parishes as partners to provide support and encouragement and develop ways to bring about change in local communities.

Young people

Our **Schools Engagement Program**, now in its sixth year, goes from strength to strength, engaging with 30 schools from Melbourne and regional Victoria. We are committed to the hands-on social justice learning we provide through our Urban Camp project, with over 500 students from years 9 to 11 participating this year. We have also commenced structured day-long school visits to primary and Year 7 and 8 classes – over 2015 we will connect with close to 300 students to encourage their lifelong learning about issues of social justice and disadvantage. Key outcomes for the Schools Engagement Program are recognition of the importance of caring for others, vocational development, understanding of the value of working together for the common good, volunteering and long-term giving.



Students participating in the Urban Camp project learn about social justice and disadvantage.

We are committed to the hands-on social justice learning we provide through our Urban Camp project.



A member of the Coolibah Centre relaxes while doing a jigsaw puzzle.

RESEARCH AND POLICY CENTRE

Equity, inclusion, capabilities: these ideas are central to the work of the Research and Policy Centre at the Brotherhood of St Laurence. They underpin our efforts to develop new social policies and services for individuals, families and communities experiencing poverty and social exclusion. They also inform our endeavours to promote the socioeconomic conditions for belonging, participation and dignity.

Our focus on equity is significant. It reflects our commitment to promoting the common good. We know that to create the conditions for a more equitable community it is important to recognise and develop the skills and capabilities of individuals and communities to thrive. We are not alone in thinking this way. Renowned economist Amartya Sen and philosopher Martha Nussbaum have championed this understanding and approach among policy makers, researchers and community groups across the globe.

The year 2015 has been one of change for the Research and Policy Centre. Following a review of the Centre in 2014, we decided to concentrate our efforts to understand and address poverty and social exclusion in Australia around five key themes:

- inclusive education
- inclusive work and economic security
- inclusive communities, housing and places
- inclusive ageing
- energy, equity and climate change.

We bring a life-course perspective to our work in each of these themes.



The Brotherhood's researchers work on areas as diverse as education, employment, housing, ageing and climate change.

Inclusive education

Education is critical to people's life chances yet many disadvantaged groups in our community continue to miss out on quality education and training. Our inclusive education research examines the policies and programs that enable people across the life course – children, young people, adults and older people – to engage in education and training that develops their skills and capabilities to participate in the community.

For example in 2015 we:

- contributed to a range of Brotherhood submissions, including to the Productivity Commission Enquiry into Early Childhood Education and Care
- reviewed national and international early years theory and practice to inform the Brotherhood's strategic priorities for early childhood research and services
- conducted research into the nature and impacts of family stress on child stress and development, funded through grants by the Social Equity Institute and the Melbourne Neuroscience Institute at the University of Melbourne
- continued a major Australian Research Council study on flexible learning options in partnership with James Cook University, Victoria University and the Edmund Rice Institute
- completed a National Centre for Vocational Education and Research-funded study in partnership with Victoria University and the University of Melbourne on private Registered Training Organisation training for early school leavers.

Inclusive work and economic security

With growing inequality in Australia, it is important to understand the economic and social risks associated with people's moves into and out of work. Our research and evaluation in this area focuses on the international and national policies and programs that help or hinder disadvantaged young people, adults and mature age people to find, secure and retain satisfactory jobs and achieve economic security.

For example, in 2015 we:

- contributed to a better understanding of youth unemployment through the Brotherhood's campaign on youth unemployment and to diverse publications on young people's participation in the labour market
- continued work on the major study *Understanding and preventing workforce vulnerabilities in midlife and beyond*, in collaboration with Curtin University, the National Centre for Social and Economic Modelling, the University of Canberra and the University of Melbourne. The four-year study is supported by Jobs Australia and the Australian Research Council

The Breakfast Club gives children a good start to the day with social interaction and a nutritious breakfast.



- documented the **Work and Learning Centre** model that the Brotherhood developed in Victoria, and investigated the centres' effectiveness from the perspectives of job seekers
- conducted research on the experiences of asylum seekers seeking employment and informed service development of the Brotherhood's **Given the Chance for Asylum Seekers** program
- articulated effective employer engagement strategies for service providers who actively broker the relationship between job seekers and the labour market
- reviewed and synthesised international and national approaches to inclusive employment.

Affordable communities, housing and places

Affordable housing lays the foundation for work, family life and community involvement. Some people in our society, particularly women fleeing domestic violence, young people, older people on low incomes and new migrants and refugees, really struggle to secure a safe and affordable place to live. In 2015 as part of the Brotherhood's new strategic plan, we sharpened our focus on housing and on the communities and places where disadvantage is concentrated.

While our work in this theme area is in its early stages, in 2015 we:

- co-hosted a roundtable on affordable housing at the University of Melbourne
- continued our five-year evaluation of the **Education First Youth Foyers** developed in collaboration with Hanover Welfare Services and the Victorian Government. As part of this work we published a report on program innovation and implementation, an evidence review of other Foyer models and a conceptual framework for the way Foyer students are assisted with housing options after they leave the Foyer.

Inclusive ageing

Our research and policy work reframes old age as a time when all older adults, including those who are disadvantaged, should be encouraged to live a life they value, in a society that resources its older citizens to achieve this. We use Nussbaum's adaptation of the Capability Approach as a conceptual framework in this area.

For example in 2015 we:

- identified the social and service networks of Brotherhood aged and disability services, noting their role in promoting the wellbeing of the older people in our care
- investigated the impact of regulation on quality aged care, in collaboration with the national Dementia Partnership Centre: *Dealing with Cognitive and Related Functional Decline in Older People*, a National Health and Medical Research Council project
- evaluated the Brotherhood's consumer-directed care model for care in older people's homes to ensure that is viable and most importantly that it enhances the wellbeing of those who use this service
- evaluated the Brotherhood's **Younger Onset Dementia Group** program
- completed our evaluation of the **iPad Essentials** training program, which was one of the first to assist older adults to use iPads and has become the springboard for many other activities to maintain health and wellbeing in later life.

Energy, equity and climate change

Rising energy prices and climate change disproportionately affect low-income households, in particular those in communities where poverty and disadvantage are concentrated. Mindful of this, we focus on three areas: energy affordability, energy efficiency and equitable responses to climate change.

In 2015 our work in this area included:

- analysis of the key drivers of energy affordability and energy hardship using data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics and the Melbourne Institute's Household Income and Labour Dynamics in Australia (HILDA) survey
- participation in a Victorian Department of Economic Development Roundtable on energy efficiency and productivity
- engagement and influencing regarding the revised Victorian Energy Efficiency Target (VEET) scheme
- continuing evaluation of the Brotherhood's **Home Energy Efficiency Upgrade Program (HEEUP)**.



Our Community VCAL program offers young people an alternative education in a community setting.

CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

The following principles, practices and structures establish the framework for the governance of the Brotherhood.

Lady Southey AC is Patron of the Brotherhood.

The President of the Brotherhood is the Anglican Archbishop of Melbourne.

Organisational information

The Brotherhood is incorporated under the *Brotherhood of St Laurence (Incorporation) Act 1971*, number 8188 of the Victorian Parliament, and is domiciled in Australia. The registered office of the Brotherhood is at 67 Brunswick Street, Fitzroy Victoria 3065.

The Brotherhood is an income tax exempt charity, has deductible gift recipient status and is registered with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission.

The structures, principles and practices that provide the framework for the governance of the Brotherhood are described on the following pages.

Charter Members

Ms Joanna Baevski
Ms Diana Batzias
Ms Cath Bradley
Mr David Buxbaum
Emeritus Professor Judith Chapman AM
Ms Celia Clarke
The Revd Barbara Colliver
The Revd Don Edgar (from December 2014)
Ms Christine Edwards
The Rt Revd David Farrer (leave of absence)
Mr William Ford
Mr Stephen Grant
Ms Sarina Greco
Mr David Green
The Rt Revd Philip Huggins
Mr James Jacoby
Mr Mike James
Mr Roger Johnson
The Revd Dr J. Hugh Kempster
The Hon. Rob Knowles AO
Ms Alison McClelland AO (to December 2014)
Mr John McInnes OAM
Dr Fiona Macdonald
Dr Ian Manning
Ms Freya Marsden
Mr Tony Nicholson
Dr Apollo Nsubuga-Kyobe

The Revd Jeff O'Hare (from December 2014)
Dr Nouria Salehi OAM
Ms Fiona Smith
The Revd Clemence Taplin
Mr Evan Thornley
Ms Catherina Toh
The Revd Dr Richard Treloar (from December 2014)
Ms Jenny Trethewey (to December 2014)
Mr David Triplow APM
The Revd Janet Turpie-Johnstone
Dr Jonathon Welch AM
Mr Trevor Williams
Mr John Wilson
Mr Michael Wilson
Mr Graeme Wise
Ms Caterina Wooden

Life Members

Mr Ernest Barr (deceased September 2015)
The Rt Revd Michael Challen AM
Mr Sandy Clark
Dr Stephen Duckett
Mr Michael Feeney
Mr Nicolas Frances MBE
Mr Eric Hart
The Rt Revd Dr Peter Hollingworth AC OBE
The Hon. Professor Brian Howe AO
Ms Elizabeth Loftus
Ms Alison McClelland AO (from December 2014)
Father James Minchin
Mr Ian Reid
The Rt Revd Andrew St John
Ms Jenny Trethewey (from December 2014)
Mrs Thelma Tuxen

CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

About Charter and Life Members

Up to 40 Charter Members, including the Executive Director, are permitted under the Brotherhood's Constitution. At least eight of them must be clerics in Holy Orders of the Anglican Church in Australia.

Charter Members receive and adopt the reports of the Board and of the auditors, receive and adopt the annual financial statements, elect Board Directors and fix the remuneration of the auditors, as well as transacting any other business at general meetings.

Life membership has been conferred on a number of members who have given significant service to the Brotherhood. Life Members act as 'friends of the Brotherhood', often providing advice and ongoing support to the organisation.

The Board

The Hon. Rob Knowles AO

(Non-executive Chair from December 2014)

Commissioner with the National Mental Health Commission. Previously Commissioner, National Health and Hospital Reform Commission. Former Victorian Minister for Health, Aged Care and Housing. Member, Brotherhood Finance Committee (to November 2014). Chair, Brotherhood Nominations Committee and Remuneration Committee (from December 2014). Appointed to the Board in December 2005, took up the position in March 2006, reappointed in December 2010. Appointed Chair in December 2014.

Bishop Philip Huggins MA, BEc

(Non-executive Chair to December 2014)

Assistant Bishop, Diocese of Melbourne. Member, Christian World Service Commission (ACT for Peace). Member, Board of St Laurence Community Services. Member, Board of the Centre for Dialogue, La Trobe University. Member, Australian Intercultural Society Advisory Board. Member, Community Reference Group, Rabbinical Council of Victoria. Member, Multi-faith Advisory Group – Office of Multiculturalism and Citizenship. Member, Brotherhood Nominations and Remuneration committees (to December 2014). Appointed to the Board in November 2004. Appointed Chair in December 2005, term finished December 2014.

Mr Mike James BCom (Deputy Chair)

Fellow, Institute of Chartered Accountants. Member, Certified Practising Accountants of Australia. Retired Partner, PricewaterhouseCoopers Australia. Chair, Social Traders Limited. Member, Brotherhood Audit & Risk Management Committee (from December 2014). Member (Chair to November 2014), Brotherhood Finance Committee (to December 2014). Member, Brotherhood Remuneration Committee. Appointed to the Board in March 2007 and reappointed in December 2013.

Mr Tony Nicholson BA, BSW (Executive Director)

Executive Director, Brotherhood of St Laurence since October 2004. Member, Brotherhood Finance, Audit and Risk Management, Nomination, Remuneration and Social Enterprises Committees. Appointed to the Board in October 2004.



The Community Safety and Information Service (CSIS) operates concierge and security services on public housing estates.

Our Homework Clubs provide a quiet environment where students can study with assistance from volunteers and staff tutors.



Emeritus Professor Judith Chapman AM, BA, BEd, EdDd, FACE, FACEA, FWAIEA

Member, Parish Council of St Peters Anglican Church, Melbourne. Member, Academic Reference Group of the Bishop Perry Institute for parish renewal in the Anglican Church. Previously Dean of Faculty of Education at Australian Catholic University (ACU). Previously Professor of Education and Associate Dean (Teaching & Learning) of the combined faculties of Economics, Commerce, Education and Law at The University of Western Australia. Previously Director of the Centre of School Decision Making and Management, Monash University. Member, Brotherhood Nominations Committee (from April 2015). Appointed to the Board in November 2012.

Mr Stephen Grant Grad Dip (Marketing), FCA

Chief Executive Officer, Asia Pacific Business Coalition on AIDS (APBCA). Previously Chief Executive Officer, Victorian Transport Accident Commission (TAC). Previously Chair, Alfred Health. Previously Chair, Victorian Trauma Foundation (VTF). Previously Managing Director, Laura Ashley PLC (UK). Chair, Brotherhood Social Enterprises Committee. Appointed to the Board in April 2009 and reappointed in December 2014.

Revd Dr J. Hugh Kempster BEng, MTheol, PhD, Grad Dip (Education)

Vicar, St Peter's Eastern Hill. Area Dean, Diocese of Melbourne. Co-director, Kempster Consultants. Previously Senior Chaplain, Geelong Grammar School. Previously Vicar, Parish of St Columba, Auckland, New Zealand. Appointed to the Board in November 2012.

Dr Fiona Macdonald BBSoc, GradDipCounselPsych, MArts(SocPol), PhD

Vice-Chancellor's Senior Research Fellow, Centre for Sustainable Organisations and Work, RMIT University. Previously Executive Director, Equity Research Centre. Previously Director, Victorian Welfare Rights Unit. Previously Director, Wesley Mission Victoria. Appointed to the Board in November 2012.

Ms Freya Marsden BAgResEco (Hons), MCom (Specialising in Economics), GAICD

A policy economist with a strong interest in participation and social inclusion. Consultant, covering governance, strategy, policy and economic issues. Member, Australian Institute of Company Directors. Authority Member, Victorian Government's Metropolitan Planning Authority. Non-Executive Director and Deputy Chair, Victorian Abalone Central Zone Victorian Government's Interim Board. Non-Executive Director, Ruyton Girls School. Non-Executive Director, Waverley Industries (an Adult Disability Enterprise). Previously Director Policy, Business Council of Australia. Previously DLO Taxation Adviser, Federal Treasurer's Office. Previously Federal Treasury Economist. Previously Policy Adviser in State Government

central and line agency roles and a consultant. Member, Brotherhood Finance Committee. Appointed to the Board in May 2014.

Ms Catherina Toh BA(Hons), LLB(Hons), GAICD Practising Member LIV

A lawyer with her own practice specialising in legal and regulatory compliance in the financial services sector. Member, Audit Committee of the State Electricity Commission of Victoria. Chair, Social Venture Partners Melbourne and the Social Venture Partners Australia Fund. Member (Chair from December 2014), Brotherhood Finance Committee (from September 2014). Member, Brotherhood Audit and Risk Management Committee (to September 2014). Appointed to the Board in December 2013.

Revd Dr Richard Treloar BTheol (MCD), TheolM (MCD), PhD (Monash) (from December 2014)

Vicar, Christ Church South Yarra. President and Chair of the Board, Christ Church Grammar School. Honorary Research Associate, The University of Divinity. Christ Church South Yarra Lecturer in Old Testament and Ministry Studies, Trinity College Theological School (The University of Melbourne). Appointed to the Board in December 2014.

Role of the Board

The Board is responsible for setting the strategic direction and establishing the policies of the Brotherhood. It is responsible for monitoring the performance of the activities of the Brotherhood and overseeing its financial state on behalf of the Charter and Life Members. It is also responsible for ensuring that risks are adequately managed. The Board meets monthly.

Composition of the Board

The Brotherhood's Constitution limits the number of Board Members to 14, including the Executive Director and at least two people who are clerics in Holy Orders of the Anglican Church of Australia. Further, the Chair is required to be a communicant member of the Anglican Church of Australia. Currently there are 10 Directors including the Executive Director.

CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

Remuneration

The Brotherhood Directors volunteer their time and skills to the organisation and as such no remuneration was paid or is payable to the Directors in their capacity as Board Members.

Board sub-committees

Audit and Risk Management Committee

The Audit and Risk Management Committee's role is to ensure that all significant financial and non-financial risks are identified and properly addressed by management on a timely basis. The Committee is made up of Board Members and external members who bring independence and external expertise to the committee. Members during or since the end of the financial year are Dana Hlavacek (Committee Chair), Catherina Toh (to September 2014), David Errington (to September 2014), Roger Johnson (to March 2015), Guy Mendelson, Mike James (from December 2014), Malcolm Haynes (from June 2015) and Tony Nicholson. The Committee meets quarterly.

Finance Committee

The Finance Committee assists the Board in overseeing the proper financial management of the organisation. The Committee members during or since the end of the financial year are Mike James (Committee Chair to November 2014, Member to December 2014), Catherina Toh (from September 2014, Committee Chair from December 2014), Gayle Wilson (to March 2015), Hon. Rob Knowles (to November 2014), Catherine McKean (leave of absence from November 2014), Freya Marsden, Tony Hallam (from November 2014) and Tony Nicholson. The Committee meets monthly. The Finance Committee meets as a Finance and Investment Committee at least twice yearly, with Mark Dutton as an additional member.

Nominations Committee

The Nominations Committee reviews and recommends nominations for Board and Sub Committees' membership. The members during or since the end of the financial year are Bishop Philip Huggins (Committee Chair to December 2014), Hon. Rob Knowles (Committee Chair from December 2014), Sandy Clark, Emeritus Professor Judith Chapman (from April 2015), Jenny Trethewey (from June 2015) and Tony Nicholson. The Committee meets at least annually.

Remuneration Committee

The Remuneration Committee is responsible for the remuneration policy for senior management of the organisation, and reviewing and approving remuneration packages of senior management. The members during or since the end of the financial year are Bishop Philip Huggins (Committee Chair to December 2014), Hon. Rob Knowles (Committee Chair from December 2014), Mike James and Tony Nicholson. The Committee meets at least annually.

Social Enterprise Committee

The Social Enterprises Committee is responsible for providing strategic advice in relation to social enterprises. The members during or since the end of the financial year are Stephen Grant (Committee Chair), David Errington, Joe Gehrig, Michael Tucker, John Mann (to March 2015) and Tony Nicholson. The Committee meets at least three times a year.

Other committees

In 2014 a special committee was established to oversight further work in our Retirement and Ageing division. This and other committees or workgroups are established by the Board from time to time to oversee a particular task or project. These committees operate only for the period of time required to complete the task or project, and are not ongoing Board sub-committees.

Company secretary

Ms Jennifer Grayling LLB

Jenny Grayling has held a range of senior management roles in publicly listed companies in Australia and Asia. Previously Non-executive Director of Hanover Welfare Services for five years. Previously Non-executive Director of East Ivanhoe Community Bank for three years. Previously Non-executive Director of Foodbank Victoria for seven years. Appointed Company Secretary in October 2005.

Executive team

The Executive Director is responsible for the day-to-day management of the activities of the Brotherhood as delegated by the Board. The following management team is responsible for the implementation of organisational strategies, development of policies and management of issues and of the performance of the organisation:

Mr Tony Nicholson, Executive Director

Ms Victoria Carmody, General Manager Children, Youth and Families (to September 2015)

Ms Katrina Currie, General Manager Work and Learning

Ms Michelle Eunson, General Manager Communications and Development (to December 2014)

Ms Farah Farouque, Principal Advisor, Public Affairs and Policy

Ms Jenny Grayling, Group General Manager Organisational Services; Company Secretary

Mr Rob Hudson, Group General Manager Programs and Policy

Mr Jonathan Lee, Chief Financial Officer

The Given the Chance program helps asylum seekers to build work skills.



Professor Shelley Mallett, General Manager Research and Policy

Ms Christine Morka, General Manager Retirement and Ageing and Financial Inclusion

Ms Niamh O'Malley, General Manager Social Enterprises (from August 2015)

Ms Marian Pettit, National Manager HIPPY Australia

Ms Debra Saffrey-Collins, General Manager Chaplaincy and Diocesan Partnerships

Dr Tricia Szirom, Acting General Manager Children, Youth and Families (from August 2015)

Mr Rodney Weston, General Manager Business Planning and Social Enterprises (to August 2015); General Manager Business Development (from August 2015)

Other governance processes

Planning and control

The Brotherhood produces a five-year strategic plan, annual plans and detailed budgets, which are approved and regularly monitored by the Board and its sub-committees.

Risk assessment

The Board, its sub-committees and the Executive Team are responsible for identifying, measuring and assessing business, legal, financial, environmental and other risks in the activities of the Brotherhood. In particular, the Audit and Risk Management Committee and the Board consider all significant risks, their implications and strategies, and the Finance Committee oversees the financial affairs of the organisation.

Independent professional advice

The Board, General Managers and senior staff have access to appropriate external professional advice. Legal, risk, investment, and tax and accounting advice is coordinated by the Chief Financial Officer and the Company Secretary through Freehills, M+K Lawyers Pty Ltd, K+L Gates, Madgwicks, Rigby Cooke and HWL Ebsworth Lawyers; Deloitte and Grant Thornton; Deutsche Bank and JBWere; and KPMG, respectively. Some legal advice is provided by Freehills, Rigby Cooke and M+K Lawyers Pty Ltd on a pro bono basis.

Audit and accounts

The Brotherhood's Constitution requires that proper books of accounts are kept, true and complete accounts are maintained and audited annually by a registered company auditor, and the financial statements and the auditors' report are laid before the Annual General Meeting. In order that monthly management and annual accounts represent best practice and are of the highest standard, the Brotherhood complies with all applicable accounting standards and guidelines. The Brotherhood's external auditors are KPMG. In addition, the Brotherhood engaged Deloitte and Grant Thornton for internal audit services, during the period.

Performance indicators

Management and the Board monitor the organisation's performance, from implementation of the mission statement and strategic plan through to the performance of the organisation against operating plans and financial budgets. Performance indicators are reported to the Board on a monthly basis using a Balanced Scorecard approach. This enables Directors to monitor the Brotherhood's performance in four main areas: strategic priorities, governance, organisational capacity and health, and the impact of our work.

A resident of Sambell Lodge
enjoying a music session.



FINANCIAL REPORT SUMMARY

Results for the year

The surplus for the year is \$3.4 million compared to \$1.8 million in 2013–14. This improvement is mainly due to an increase in bequest income and finance income, partly offset by an increase in the deficit from operating activities. The operating deficit is \$5.1 million in 2014–15, which is \$0.7 million higher than in 2013–14. This increase is largely due to an increase in investment in Children, Youth and Families, Work and Learning and Research and Policy.

Total donations, excluding bequests, were \$5.3 million in 2014–15 (2013–14: \$5.2 million), including specified funds for designated programs and unspecified discretionary funds.

Sources and uses of operating funds for the current and previous financial years are shown in graphs on the next page. The increase in the investment in Children, Youth and Families is illustrated by

the 5% increase in the percentage of total operating expenditure. Whilst there was an increase in the investment in Work and Learning and Research and Policy, this was not reflected in an increase in their respective percentages of operating funds used due to the overall increase in the organisation's total operating expenditure. Although the percentage of operating funds used by Retirement, Ageing and Financial Inclusion has decreased by 4%, the amount of funds used has remained relatively stable.

Review of financial condition

The total equity of the organisation increased by \$3 million from 1 July 2014, to \$103 million as at 30 June 2015. This increase is mainly as a result of the surplus generated for the year.

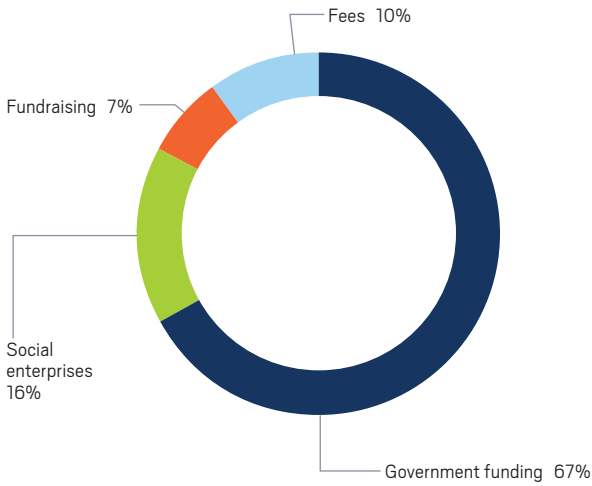


Given the Chance @ ANZ provides a pathway to work for refugees.

FINANCIAL REPORT SUMMARY

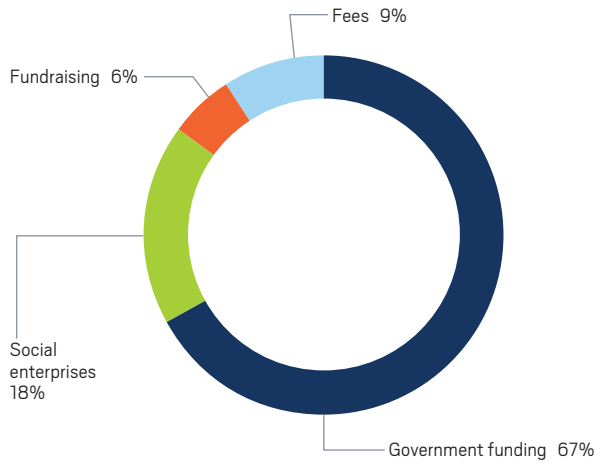
WHERE OUR OPERATING FUNDS CAME FROM

2015



WHERE OUR OPERATING FUNDS CAME FROM

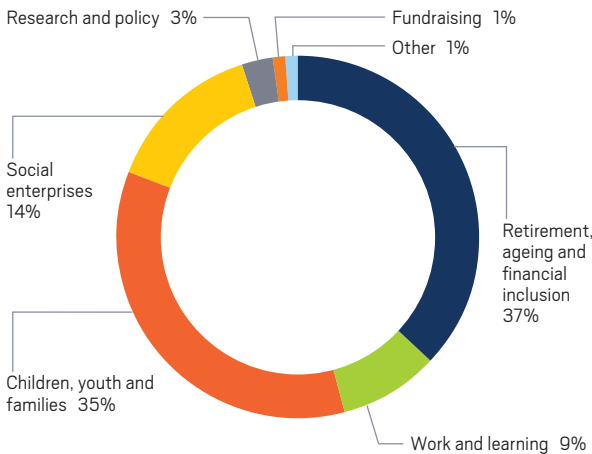
2014



The above charts classify operating funds received on the basis of the specific type of external funding source, rather than by the Brotherhood's internal service activity, the latter being the basis of revenue classification adopted in the Statement of Profit or Loss and Other Comprehensive Income.

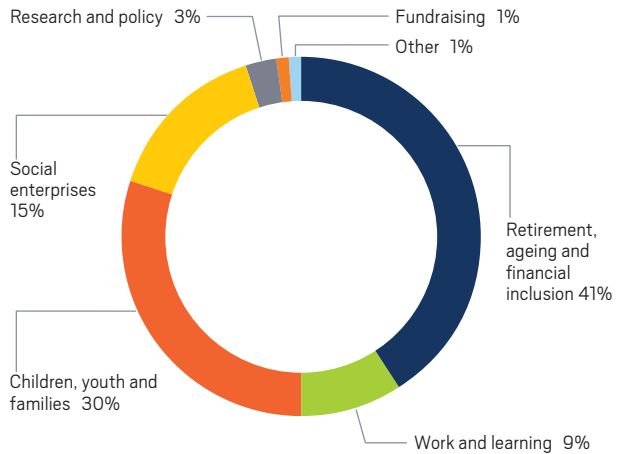
WHERE OUR OPERATING FUNDS WERE SPENT

2015



WHERE OUR OPERATING FUNDS WERE SPENT

2014



Statement of financial position

As at 30 June 2015

| | 2015 \$'000 | 2014 \$'000 |
|--------------------------------------|----------------|----------------|
| ASSETS | | |
| Current assets | | |
| Cash and cash equivalents | 17,723 | 10,717 |
| Trade and other receivables | 3,484 | 6,798 |
| Inventories | 656 | 736 |
| Investments | 55,711 | 46,296 |
| Assets held for sale | – | 291 |
| Total current assets | 77,574 | 64,838 |
| Non-current assets | | |
| Property, plant & equipment | 53,777 | 54,267 |
| Intangible assets | 1,720 | 1,720 |
| Trade and other receivables | 3,354 | 6,731 |
| Total non-current assets | 58,851 | 62,718 |
| TOTAL ASSETS | 136,425 | 127,556 |
| LIABILITIES | | |
| Current liabilities | | |
| Trade and other payables | 4,684 | 2,724 |
| Auspice and resident funds | 2,759 | 2,693 |
| Employee benefits | 5,496 | 5,418 |
| Deferred income | 20,092 | 16,321 |
| Total current liabilities | 33,031 | 27,156 |
| Non-current liabilities | | |
| Employee benefits | 350 | 325 |
| Total non-current liabilities | 350 | 325 |
| TOTAL LIABILITIES | 33,381 | 27,481 |
| NET ASSETS | 103,044 | 100,075 |
| EQUITY | | |
| Accumulated surplus | 71,071 | 67,702 |
| Reserves | 31,973 | 32,373 |
| TOTAL EQUITY | 103,044 | 100,075 |

FINANCIAL REPORT SUMMARY

Statement of profit and loss and other comprehensive income

For the year ended 30 June 2015

| | 2015 \$'000 | 2014 \$'000 |
|-----------------------------------------------------------|----------------|----------------|
| REVENUE | | |
| Service activities | | |
| Work & Learning | 4,952 | 4,794 |
| Retirement, Ageing & Financial Inclusion | 28,678 | 28,642 |
| Children, Youth and Families | 23,623 | 18,552 |
| Research and Policy | 513 | 497 |
| Other activities | | |
| Fundraising* | 2,428 | 2,341 |
| Social Enterprises: | | |
| - Sales of goods | 6,854 | 6,008 |
| - Services | 4,006 | 4,831 |
| Other revenue and income | 399 | 437 |
| Revenue and other income from operating activities | 71,453 | 66,102 |
| EXPENSES | | |
| Service activities | | |
| Work & Learning | 6,639 | 6,104 |
| Retirement, Ageing & Financial Inclusion | 28,341 | 28,618 |
| Children, Youth and Families | 26,528 | 20,777 |
| Research and Policy | 2,498 | 2,126 |
| Other activities | | |
| Fundraising | 1,151 | 1,053 |
| Cost of goods of Social Enterprises sales | 1,236 | 1,267 |
| Social Enterprises expenses | 9,698 | 9,569 |
| Other expenses | 456 | 996 |
| Expenses for operating activities | 76,547 | 70,510 |
| DEFICIT FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES | (5,094) | (4,408) |
| Finance income | 4,589 | 4,237 |
| Finance expenses | (239) | (225) |
| Net finance income | 4,350 | 4,012 |
| Bequests income | 4,195 | 2,326 |
| Bequests costs | (82) | (153) |
| Net bequests | 4,113 | 2,173 |
| SURPLUS FOR THE YEAR | 3,369 | 1,777 |
| Other comprehensive income | | |
| Items that may be reclassified to profit or loss: | | |
| Net change in fair value of available-for-sale assets | (400) | 2,720 |
| Other comprehensive income for the year | (400) | 2,720 |
| TOTAL COMPREHENSIVE INCOME FOR THE YEAR | 2,969 | 4,497 |

* Total fundraising income is \$5.27 million (2014 - \$5.15 million). The above income figure of \$2.43 million (2014 - \$2.34 million) represents unspecified fundraising income and excludes specified fundraising income of \$2.84 million (2014 - \$2.81 million) which is disclosed within Services Activities income.

Directors' declaration

In the opinion of the Directors of the Brotherhood of St Laurence:

- (a) the Brotherhood is not publicly accountable;
- (b) the financial statements and notes are in accordance with the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012*; including:
 - (i) giving a true and fair view of the Brotherhood's financial position as at 30 June 2015 and of its performance, for the financial year ended on that date;
 - (ii) complying with Australian Accounting Standards – Reduced Disclosure Regime and the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Regulation 2013; and
 - (iii) comply with the *Brotherhood of St Laurence (Incorporation) Act 1971 (Vic)* and the Brotherhood of St Laurence's Constitution; and
- (c) there are reasonable grounds to believe that the Brotherhood of St Laurence will be able to pay its debts as and when they become due and payable.

Signed in accordance with a resolution of the Directors:



The Hon. Rob Knowles AO
Chair, Board of Directors



Tony Nicholson
Executive Director

Dated at Melbourne on this 29th day of September 2015

The Annual Financial Report has been audited by KPMG. They have expressed an unqualified audit opinion. For a better understanding of the scope of their audit, please refer to their audit report in the Annual Financial Report.

For a complete set of financial statements visit www.bsl.org.au or contact the Finance Department by phone (03) 9483 1183.



Nexus Disability Services assists people with disabilities to increase their participation in society and improve their wellbeing.



The Brotherhood runs playgroups for young children which helps their development and gives parents a place to meet.

OUR COMMUNITY

The Brotherhood of St Laurence was created more than 80 years ago by people in the community who shared a concern to tackle disadvantage, voluntarily came together, set their own directions and encouraged others to make their own contributions to alleviating and preventing poverty.

Community continues to be at the heart of our work. Indeed as part of our strategic plan for the rest of the decade we are broadening and deepening our involvement with our supporters and with communities – especially in communities at most risk of poverty in urban growth corridors – in order to build our capacity to be innovative and responsive to changing circumstances.

Volunteers

We could not be the type of organisation we aspire to be without all our volunteers. During the year more than 1200 people kindly donated their time, skills, knowledge and energy to the Brotherhood to make a difference to the lives of people experiencing disadvantage.

Our volunteers include young people seeking work experience, retirees offering a lifetime of knowledge, school students, migrants wanting to contribute to their new country, highly skilled professionals and employees of our corporate partners.

Their many activities include mentoring disadvantaged young people and refugees and asylum seekers, supporting children and families, assisting people looking for jobs, working in our community stores and warehouse, contributing to research and advocacy, and sharing their skills on our advisory committees. As part of our new strategic plan we will further build our expertise in facilitating voluntary service within the Brotherhood and in communities, so that together we can more effectively tackle the challenges of poverty through fostering stronger communities.

Supporters

Independent income provided by the generosity of Brotherhood donors, whether it's through one-off donations or regular giving, allows us to extend our services and create new ones to meet new needs. Bequests made by donors in their wills leave a lasting legacy, enabling long-term planning and helping to continue the Brotherhood's tradition of innovation. The generous support we receive from philanthropic trusts and foundations allows us to break new ground in developing projects that support individuals and families at every stage of life.

Corporate partners

Our corporate partners further our vital work in so many valuable ways, from funding specific projects and programs, to supporting us through events and providing volunteer assistance.

To deploy the skills and enthusiasm of the volunteers from our corporate partners, in 2015 we launched Business Connector, which gives them the opportunity to apply their knowledge and

expertise to different areas of the Brotherhood, working with our own people to develop new approaches to aspects of our work. As well, staff from our partner corporations financially support the Brotherhood through their employers' workplace-giving programs.

Our corporate partners also make a difference by offering work experience to young people in their transition from school to adult life, and employment to long-term job seekers.

Reconciliation Action Plan

The first year of implementing our inaugural Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) has seen good progress in building knowledge and awareness about what needs to be done to achieve true reconciliation in our sphere of influence.

As a key step, all members of the Executive team completed a program of cultural awareness training tailored to our organisation's needs. A similar education program has commenced for managers. A highlight for many staff was our Sorry Day commemorations, acknowledging Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples affected by the policy of forcible removal of children from their families. The event, in May 2015, included a smoking ceremony conducted by Wurundjeri Elder Colin Hunter followed by a moving talk by Kutcha Edwards, a member of the Stolen Generations.

As part of embedding reconciliation in our operations, the goals of our RAP have been elevated as a priority in the new strategic plan. As an organisation that seeks to tackle poverty and disadvantage, we realise we must play our part in working towards greater economic, social and cultural inclusion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Our RAP spans three years and includes developing an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment strategy and boosting Indigenous representation in our governance structures.



Good Food Matters staff help residents to cook nutritious meals at home.

OUR SOCIAL ENTERPRISES

Our social enterprises raise independent income that is critical for supporting innovation and research to help individuals and families experiencing disadvantage to build better lives. Our community stores aim to attract and delight customers with high-quality goods at bargain prices, remaining true to their identity as ‘opportunity’ shops.

Our enterprises benefit the community in many ways. Our stores, with their large numbers of volunteers, offer a place for community connection in each area they operate in. We provide work experience for students and work experience placements for young job seekers from the Brotherhood’s Youth Transitions programs.

Retail businesses

The performance of our **community stores** continued to improve, with the overall contribution increasing by around 200 per cent over the previous year.

In 2015, after two years of focusing on improving our existing businesses we have started to open new stores.

Our **Brotherhood Books** business – the first and only online charity bookstore in Australia – continued to expand, with sales increasing by more than 50 per cent over the previous year. The website www.brotherhoodbooks.com is fast becoming a place that pleases book lovers of all interests.

Volunteers

All the achievements in our social enterprises are made possible through the commitment, passion and loyalty of our volunteers. More than 800 in number, they capably serve both donors of goods and customers. Some of our volunteers enhance their workplace skills to assist them into employment.

The volunteers on our Social Enterprises Committee contribute their expertise and advice to the management team, helping to ensure that our plans for the business are appropriately ambitious and realistic.

Recycling

Our enterprises are significant recycling operations in their own right. During the year we focused our efforts on extracting the greatest possible use from the goods donated to us. This included raising more revenue from the recycling of clothing and books that are not of retail quality.

Our **Brotherhood Fridges** team continues to recycle donated second-hand refrigerators. We refurbish newer fridges for sale in our stores and dispose of older ones that cannot be refurbished, after first removing harmful CFC gases. We pick up fridges in Melbourne for free – see www.brotherhoodfridges.com.

Settlement services for refugees

Our Social Enterprises team works in partnership with AMES and other charitable organisations to provide support and assistance to refugees through the Humanitarian Settlement Services program funded by the Australian Government.

The Brotherhood’s new store in Hoppers Crossing.





A qualified tester checks donated electrical appliances for safety before sale.



Exercise classes at the Coolibah Centre.

THANK YOU

Much of the work of the Brotherhood of St Laurence is made possible through the contributions of many generous individuals and partner organisations. Without their assistance – whether in the form of financial commitments, gifts of material goods or contributions of time, skills and enthusiasm – we could not work to prevent and reduce disadvantage and exclusion from the mainstream of society. We express our deepest appreciation to all who share our vision and have contributed to our work for an Australia free of poverty.

Ambassadors

We thank our Brotherhood of St Laurence Ambassadors, the Rt Revd Dr Peter Hollingworth AC OBE, our Bequests Ambassador, and Ms Joanna Baeviski, Ambassador for our Women's Network for Change.

Donors

The Brotherhood is able to assist so many disadvantaged people thanks to outstanding support from those who share our values and our concerns.

The unstinting financial support of our donors is critical to our work. It helps us help others – disadvantaged individuals, families and communities – through extending our services and planning innovative new ones, and through research and policy development to meet the great social and economic challenges that persistent poverty presents to our otherwise prosperous nation.

We thank everyone for their commitment to our vision and our work to achieve it.

Volunteers

We recognise the vital contribution our 1200 volunteers make to our mission and vision and wholeheartedly thank them for their efforts and for the wealth of community goodwill and connections they bring.

They include the volunteers at our Brotherhood Books online bookstore, recycling thousands of books and contributing funds to our charitable operations, and our Brain Bank, where skilled volunteers mentor refugees and migrants who want to develop projects to support their communities and other activities. Volunteers also make a wonderful contribution to our community stores. Without volunteers, these and other services could not continue.

Volunteer-managed stores

We would also like to acknowledge the tremendous support and hard work by all the volunteers who give their time and energy so willingly to our Community Stores located in Eltham, Glen Huntly, Greensborough, Ivanhoe, Mount Waverley, Ormond, Seaford and Watsonia. All of these are managed and operated entirely by teams of dedicated volunteers.

For contact details for all our stores go to www.stores.bsl.org.au/our-locations/

Partner organisations

Organisations like ours work best when they collaborate with each other, and in turn draw support from, universities, schools, businesses, philanthropic bodies and government. Our work is simply not possible without the collaboration with our partners and we thank them all for their continued support as we work together to reduce social disadvantage.



Our training and employment programs offer a 'line of sight' to a real job.



Breakfast Club corporate volunteers from Herbert Smith Freehills.

PARTNERS AND SUPPORTERS

Corporate

AGL
AMP
ANZ Banking Group
Australia Post
Australian Industry Group
Australian Super
Australian Unity
Benetas
BHP Billiton
Bunnings
Carlton Football Club
CDC Victoria
Citrix
Commonwealth Bank of Australia
Complex Security Pty Ltd
Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu
Dome Security
Energy Efficiency Council
Food Bank Victoria
Fun City
GHD
Grocon
Herbert Smith Freehills
Hudsons Famous
Ktena Knitting Mills
Lander & Rogers Lawyers
Loving Earth
Maddocks
Majestic Cleaning
Masters Home Improvement (Carrum Downs)
National Australia Bank
Naturform
Pacific Brands
Pitcher Partners
Readings
Recycling is Fun
Ricoh Australia
Rigby Cooke
Scalzo Food Industries
Spotless
St Vincent's and Mercy Private Hospitals
Suncorp
Superior Healthcare
Three Pillars
Unified Security Group
WorkSafe Victoria
Yarra Valley Water

Government

Brimbank City Council
Business Victoria
City of Darebin
City of Melbourne
City of Monash
City of Port Phillip
City of Whittlesea
City of Yarra
Department of Education (Australian Government)
Department of Education and Training (State Government of Victoria)
Department of Employment (Australian Government)
Department of Health and Human Services (State Government of Victoria)
Department of Immigration and Border Protection (Australian Government)
Department of Industry (Australian Government)
Department of Justice (State Government of Victoria)
Department of Social Services (Australian Government)
Frankston City Council
Hobsons Bay City Council
Hume City Council
Maribyrnong City Council
Melton City Council
Moonee Valley City Council
Moreland City Council
Mornington Peninsula Shire Council
Office of Multicultural Affairs and Citizenship (State Government of Victoria)
Office of the Fire Services Levy Monitor (State Government of Victoria)
Parks Victoria
Victoria Police
Victorian Multicultural Commission (State Government of Victoria)

Education

Advance
Australian Catholic University
Beaconhills College
Braemar College
Brighton Grammar
Brimbank/Melton LLEN
Camberwell Grammar School
Carrum Downs Secondary College
Chisholm TAFE

Christ Church Grammar School
City LLEN
Collingwood English Language School
Curtin University
Djerriwarrh Community and Education Services
Elisabeth Murdoch College
Eltham College
Embrace Education
Fitzroy Primary School
Frankston Mornington Peninsula LLEN
Geelong Grammar School
GEST
Goodstart Early Learning
GOTAFE Shepparton
Highlands LLEN
Holmesglen TAFE College
Hume/Whittlesea LLEN
Inner Northern LLEN
Ivanhoe Girls' Grammar School
Ivanhoe Grammar School
Kangan Institute
Korowa Anglican Girls' School
La Trobe University
Loreto College, Ballarat
Lowther Hall
McClelland Secondary College
Melbourne Girls Grammar
Melbourne Grammar School
Melbourne Polytechnic (formerly NMIT)
Mentone Grammar
Monash Sustainability Institute
Monash University
Monterey Secondary College
Mornington Secondary College
Mount Martha Community Learning Centre
National Centre for Vocational Education Research
Nepean Industry Edge Training
Oakwood School
Outer East LLEN
Patterson River Secondary College
Plenty Valley Christian College
RMIT
Sacred Heart School (Fitzroy)
Skills Plus
Somerville Secondary College
Swinburne University
St Bede's College
The University of Melbourne
Trinity College Theological School, University of Divinity Melbourne
University of New South Wales
University of Southern Queensland

PARTNERS AND SUPPORTERS

VETAssess
 Victoria University
 Westernport Secondary College
 Woodleigh School
 Yarra Valley Grammar

Philanthropy

Alison Margaret Clark Charitable Trust –
 The Warren Clark Bequest – managed
 by Equity Trustees Limited
 AMP Foundation
 Anglican Development Fund
 Anna Wearne Trust (sub-fund of Australian
 Communities Foundation)
 Arno Herpe Foundation
 Australian Communities Foundation
 Ballandry Fund (sub-fund of Australian
 Communities Foundation)
 Barr Family Foundation
 Bell Charitable Fund
 Beverley Jackson Foundation
 C and T Park Endowment Fund
 Canterbury Fellowship Trust
 Catherine Gray Trust
 Citi Foundation
 Clara Broadhurst Memorial Charitable Fund
 – managed by Equity Trustees Limited
 Coca-Cola Australia Foundation
 Collier Charitable Fund
 Dibbs and Massie Foundation
 Dina Grollo Community Fund (sub-fund of
 Australian Communities Foundation)
 E C Curwen Walker Charitable Trust – Doris
 Edna and Kathleen Curwen Walker
 Memorial Fund – managed by Equity
 Trustees Limited
 Estate of Amy IC Ostberg – managed by
 Equity Trustees Limited
 Estate of Danuta Rogowski
 Estate of Honor Moubray Allfrey
 Estate of LJ Baldy
 Estate of Violet Pugh – managed by Equity
 Trustees Limited
 Fonda Family Charitable Foundation
 Frank Broadhurst Memorial Charitable Fund
 – managed by Equity Trustees Limited
 Fred J Cato Charitable Fund
 Future Leaders
 Gandel Philanthropy
 George Hicks Foundation
 Gregory Joseph and Zig Dickson
 H and K Johnston Family Foundation
 Hanlon Foundation

Hart Line Fund (sub-fund of Australian
 Communities Foundation)
 Helen Macpherson Smith Trust
 Hugh D T Williamson Foundation
 Igniting Change Foundation
 Jack Dawson Trust – managed by Equity
 Trustees Limited
 Joe White Bequest
 John Nicol Charitable Trust – managed by
 Equity Trustees Limited
 John T Reid Charitable Trust
 J. M. Harrison Charitable Trust – managed
 by Equity Trustees Limited
 Keila Hinde Charitable Trust – managed by
 Equity Trustees Limited
 Leslie Gill Trust – managed by Equity
 Trustees Limited
 Limb Family Foundation
 Lord Mayor's Charitable Foundation
 Macquarie Private Bank
 Mary Evelyn Bowley Charitable Trust –
 managed by Equity Trustees Limited
 Portland House Foundation
 Pratt Foundation
 Precision Foundation
 Readings Foundation
 Reichstein Foundation
 Scanlon Foundation
 Scobie and Claire Mackinnon Trust
 StreetSmart Australia
 The Dara Foundation
 The Drummond Foundation
 The Flora and Frank Leith Charitable Trust
 The George Lewin Foundation
 The Grace & Emilio Foundation
 The Grenet Foundation
 The Grosvenor Foundation
 The GW Vowell Foundation Ltd
 The Ian Potter Foundation
 The Invergowrie Foundation
 The Macquarie Group Foundation
 The Marian and E H Flack Charitable Trust
 The Mary Elinor Harris Fund
 The Muffin Foundation
 The Myer Foundation
 The Peter Isaacson Foundation
 The RE Ross Trust
 The Ruth Fagg Foundation – managed by
 Equity Trustees Limited
 The Sentinel Foundation
 The William Mansel Higgins and Dorothy
 Higgins Trust – managed by Equity
 Trustees Limited
 Ward-Ambler Foundation

Will and Dorothy Bailey Charitable Gift –
 managed by Equity Trustees Limited
 William Angliss Charitable Fund
 William Buckland Foundation
 Yulgilbar Foundation

Managed by Perpetual

Estate of the Late Charles K Edwards and
 Keith and Mary Edwards Trust
 Estate of the Late Thelma Silver
 Frederick and A Winifred Grassick Memorial
 Fund
 GD Watson Charitable Trust Fund
 Harold Payne Charitable Trust Fund
 Henry B Smith Charitable Trust
 Ian William Dodd Charitable Trust
 Ida Maud Webster McDonald Trust
 Kathleen E Gardiner Memorial Trust
 Madeline Crump and Madeline Williams
 Trust
 Peter James Provelson Trust Fund
 The Drury Trust
 The Mary Elinor Harris Fund
 TTCAF – Permanent Trustee Foundation
 Werge Batters Estate

State Trustees Australia Foundation

Alfred John Hutton
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Community

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|-------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Anglicare WA | Frankston North Community Group | Playgroup Victoria |
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| ANTaR | Gippsland Employment Skills Training | Robinvale District Health Services |
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| Barnardos Australia | Housing Choices Australia | Sisterworks Inc |
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| Benetas | Indigenous Leadership Network Victoria | South Eastern Region Migrant Resource Centre Inc |
| Bentleigh Bayside Community Health | International Association of Geriatrics and Gerontology | Spectrum Migrant Resource Centre |
| Berry Street | International Federation on Ageing | Tamworth Family Support Service Inc |
| Boon Wurrung Foundation | Jesuit Social Services | Taskforce Community Agency |
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| CatholicCare Social Services | Launch Housing (formerly Hanover Welfare Services) | The Village Glen |
| Cathy Freeman Foundation | Laverton Community Centre | UnitingCare Burnside |
| Centacare Bathurst | Learning Links | UnitingCare Gippsland |
| Centacare Townsville | Life Without Barriers | UnitingCare Kippax |
| Centre for Multicultural Youth | Maari Ma Health Aboriginal Corporation | UnitingCare Wesley Country South Australia |
| Charcoal Lane | Macarthur Diversity Services Initiative Ltd | Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Association |
| Child Australia | Mallee District Aboriginal Services | Victorian Council of Social Services |
| Children's Protection Society | Max Employment Frankston | Wallaroo Community Centre |
| Church of All Nations, Carlton | MAYSAR (Melbourne Aboriginal Youth, Sport and Recreation Co-operative Ltd) | Women's Information and Referral Exchange Inc |
| Clean Force Property Services | Melbourne City Mission | Woor Dungen |
| Cohealth | Merri Community Health Services Ltd | Work + Family Policy Roundtable |
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| Early Childhood Australia | Novita Children's Services | |
| Eastern Zone Gujaga Aboriginal Corporation | Nowra Family Support Service Inc | |
| economic Security4Women | NQ Community Services Inc | |
| Family Relationship Centre Melbourne City | Ozanam Enterprises | |
| Fellowship for Indigenous Leadership | Peninsula Health | |
| Fitzroy Adventure Playground (Cubbies) | Platform Advisors | |
| Fitzroy Learning Network | Playgroup Queensland | |
| Foundation for Young Australians | | |
| Frankston Mornington Peninsula Medicare Local | | |

HOW YOU CAN HELP

Financial donations

The Brotherhood is generously supported by many individuals, organisations and businesses.

Phone: (03) 9483 1301 or
1300 DONATE (1300 366 283)

Email: donate@bsl.org.au

Mail: Development
67 Brunswick Street
Fitzroy Victoria 3065

Website: www.bsl.org.au/donate/

Clothing and household donations

Proceeds from all sales of donated goods at Brotherhood **Community Stores** supports the work we do. We are happy to accept good-quality clothing and saleable household items, including books for our online second-hand bookstore, **Brotherhood Books**. To find the location of your nearest store, call **1300 DONATE** or **1300 366 283**, or visit our website at www.bsl.org.au/act/donate-goods/.

Furniture donations

We raise funds to support our work by selling furniture in our Community Stores. If you have good quality furniture and small electrical appliances in working order that you no longer need, you can arrange for them to be picked up anywhere in Melbourne by calling **1300 DONATE** or **1300 366 283**, or by emailing us at customerservice@bsl.org.au.

Volunteering

The Brotherhood believes that the best way to create a fairer, better society is to engage everyone in looking after each other. This means volunteers are central to what we do. If you would like to be part of our efforts to reduce disadvantage by offering your time and expertise to our services or events, please contact our Senior Manager, Volunteer Services on **(03) 9483 1390** or visit www.bsl.org.au/act/volunteer/.

Bequests

If you admire the values and work of the Brotherhood, please consider including a gift to the Brotherhood in your will. To discuss how to leave a lasting legacy contact our team on **(03) 9483 1332**.

Corporate support

The Brotherhood of St Laurence relies on the business community to support our work through financial and non-financial support. We have a dedicated team committed to managing each of our corporate relationships.

If you have an enquiry about partnering with the Brotherhood, please contact our Partnership team on **(03) 9483 1113**.

Learn more

To understand more about the Brotherhood's work and about important social issues:



View our website; www.bsl.org.au.



Join us on Facebook; www.facebook.com/BrotherhoodofStLaurence



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Connect with us on Linked In; www.linkedin.com/company/brotherhood-of-st-laurence



Read our blog; www.bsl.org.au/media/brotherhood-blog/

Photography: Craig Sillitoe Photography except for:

Page 9 'Opportunities knock for asylum seekers' - Colleen Millar, Western Melbourne Catchment Networks

Page 10 'Bianca' - John Burgess Photography

Page 20 'Kasia' - Janelle Keys Photography

Page 33 Andrew Hobbs Photography - Source: ANZ Bank

Page 37 Sharon O'Neill

Design: Ben Galpin Graphic Design

Cover: Our Youth Transitions Program helps young people with career guidance, work placements and links with employers. Nick, who participated in the program, undertook his work placement at Rosa's Canteen restaurant.

Painting is one of the many activities offered by our day and respite programs at Banksia.





Brotherhood
of St Laurence

Working for an Australia free of poverty

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www.bsl.org.au

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