



2021 – 2022
YEAR IN REVIEW

MAKING PROGRESS *together*

catholic
care

WESTERN SYDNEY AND THE BLUE MOUNTAINS

Catholic Care Western Sydney and the Blue Mountains is the Diocese of Parramatta's social welfare agency that exists to continue Christ's work in the community.

We provide professional care and support through the Church to the most vulnerable and disadvantaged members of the community, regardless of faith, religion, gender, ethnicity, age or socio-economic background.

Our aim is to be the face of Christ and make a positive difference in the lives of those who need our support, and to help them find joy and purpose in life.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF TRADITIONAL OWNERS

We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we work and live.

We pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging.

CONTENTS

Message from the Bishop	4
Message from the Episcopal Vicar of Social Welfare	5
Leaders' report	6
2021-2022 Highlights	7
Specialised services	
<i>Ageing Well</i>	8-9
<i>Bringing a baby into the world</i>	10-11
<i>Chaplaincy</i>	12-13
<i>Children</i>	14-15
<i>Connecting with my Community</i>	16-17
<i>Living well with Disability</i>	18-19
<i>Support for my Family</i>	20
Our people	21-25
Governance	
<i>Leadership team</i>	26-27
<i>Strategic achievements</i>	28-29
Partnerships and Supporters	30
Where we are located	31



OUR HISTORY

The organisation that was to become Catholic Care was established in the 1940s. It was the idea of four Sydney women who dreamed that the poor and anyone in distress could receive professional care from the Catholic Church.

They wrote to the then Archbishop of Sydney, Cardinal Gilroy, suggesting that a Catholic welfare organisation be established, and the Catholic Welfare Bureau was born. When the Diocese of Parramatta was created in 1986, the welfare arm became Centrecare Parramatta and in 2017 was renamed Catholic Care Western Sydney and the Blue Mountains.

Today, Catholic Care Western Sydney and the Blue Mountains reaches thousands of people in the community each year through the work of more than 200 committed staff and volunteers.



MESSAGE FROM BISHOP VINCENT

Dear sisters and brothers,

For more than 70 years, Catholic Care has been there for the vulnerable at the edges of our community who are often neglected and marginalised.

Catholic Care in Western Sydney and the Blue Mountains is there for anyone who needs a helping hand. From those who are lonely and need someone to talk to, to those who have nowhere to sleep, or enough food for their families. Those who need help caring for their newborn baby, or sadly those who are trying to protect their families from violence.

There are thousands of people who struggle to make it through the day, and I thank God that the Good Samaritans at Catholic Care reach out a gentle hand to help them take the next step. Our team are out in the community, being the face of Christ. They listen with an open heart and create a safe space for healing to begin.

This year, our frontline workers focused on 'making progress together' – how they partner and journey with their clients to help them make progress in their lives and achieve their goals, no matter how small they may seem. Buoyed by Pope Francis' focus on synodality and walking the path of Christ with all God's people, I am proud that our people show that no one needs to journey alone. Together we make progress.

**Most Reverend Vincent Long
Van Nguyen OFM CONV**

Bishop of Parramatta



MESSAGE FROM EPISCOPAL VICAR FOR SOCIAL WELFARE



'Compassion gets involved. When others keep their distance from those who are suffering, compassion prompts us to act on their behalf.'

As followers of Jesus, we have been called to learn from Him and to shape our words and actions to be like His. In the Gospels, we often saw Jesus on a constant journey. On this journey, He comes across people of all sorts of lives and with the most diverse problems. However, Jesus is not someone who just walks by without being touched by the reality that people experience.

The Gospels use a particular word to describe how Jesus responded to the situations those people were experiencing. Mainly, the Gospels say that Jesus 'was moved with compassion' (Lk. 7:13; Mt 9:36; 14:14; 20:34; Mk 6:34; 8:2-3). Although many of us are familiar with the word, it is hard for us to explain the real significance behind it. At some level, the meaning of compassion is to recognise the suffering of others and then take action to help.

The Latin root for the word compassion is *pati*, which means to suffer, and the prefix *com-* means with. Compassion, originating from *compati*, literally means to suffer with. The connection of suffering with another person brings compassion beyond sympathy into the realm of empathy. However, compassion is much more than empathy. Compassion gets involved. When others keep their distance from those who are suffering, compassion prompts us to act on their behalf.

For this reason, Catholic Care, is an agency that wants to 'make a real difference in the lives of people in Western Sydney and the Blue Mountains facing difficult circumstances. No matter where you come from, what you look like or how you see the world, we truly care about you — and, because we care, we are committed to making sure you, and no one else, is left behind'. We are invited to develop the culture of encounter and listening. These are the attitudes that makes Jesus embrace the people He meets along the journey.

Encounter, as Pope Francis has mentioned in many of his homilies, is an antidote to our 'throw away culture,' in which people who are seen as useless are cast aside. If we encounter Christ in those people who are usually

marginalized and get to know them, then we won't be able to throw them away. You don't ignore and neglect a friend. This encounter requires from us specific actions. First, encounter requires physical movement across traditional boundaries, a willingness to change and adapt according to the situations. Second, it also requires attentive listening and careful discernment to make sure we are willing to walk together, and we are listening without prejudices or with pre-arranged answers. Finally, encounter also implies the commitment to follow-through. This means that 'walking together' is not just the reaction to a 'feel good' moment, but the honest and conscious determination to help those along the way to find the confidence to continue their life's journey.

Let us continue to embrace every journey and bring hope to those who find it hard to experience.

Peace in Jesus

**Very Rev Luis Fernando
Montano Rodriguez**

Episcopal Vicar for Social Welfare

'Our focus is always on journeying with our clients, wherever they are at in their lives and supporting them to overcome difficulties and start setting goals and achieving them. One step at a time.'



Angela McKay
Advisory Council Chair



Peter Loughnane
Executive Director

LEADERS' REPORT

There is truly no greater reward in our work than to see our clients making progress. To see a young mother set up a home for her family after living on the streets; to see an elderly client regaining independence in their own home; to watch a woman rebuild her confidence having fled domestic violence; or seeing a young person with disability achieve their dream of getting a job.

Every day in the work we do here at Catholic Care we have the absolute privilege of walking with our clients, some of whom are struggling to get through the day and are completely overwhelmed by life. It takes compassion, love, faith and persistence and each of our staff have all of those qualities in spades. They do their work because they want to make a difference and they want to 'make progress together'.

Throughout this report you can read a number of stories about clients who are making progress in their lives with the support of our staff and the resources we are able to connect them with. Timoty's story on page 9 is a wonderful example of how a service we introduced this year is helping elderly people who are homeless to find a home again. We're so proud of this service and the impact it is having on the many elderly people who find themselves homeless for any number of reasons.

We're also very proud of the progress we've been making with our clients who have disability. Seeing them achieve their goals of independent living, learning to cook or gaining meaningful employment is immensely rewarding.

Our focus is always on journeying with our clients, wherever they are at in their lives and supporting them to overcome difficulties and start setting goals and achieving them. One step at a time.

But we can't do this if people don't know about our services or if our services aren't meeting the needs of the community. And this year we've spent a lot of time asking our clients and other members of our community what we can do better, what they need from us and how they perceive us. We've used this invaluable feedback to reshape services, introduce new services, rebrand our organisation and build a new website. All of this work has signalled a new chapter for the organisation - a time to reach further into the community, digging deeper to support more people by telling more people who we are and what we do, and making sure that we are filling the gaps.

We firmly believe that all of the work we have done over this past year has set the organisation up for many years to come as a progressive, inclusive and supportive organisation that is genuinely here to journey with the people we serve and make progress together.

Finally, we would like to offer our most sincere thanks to Paul McMahon for his leadership as Chair of the Advisory Council. Paul resigned from the position in early 2021 after having led the organisation through the development of a new strategic plan and supporting the Executive Director to take the organisation on a new path. Thank you for your steady guidance and leadership.

2021-2022

Highlights

- Catholic Care received a one off grant of **\$587,000 under the aged care Commonwealth Home Support Program**. The funding supports the development of an innovative model of aged care for those who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. The service was launched in early 2022.
- Ms Angela McKay was appointed as the new Chair of the Advisory Council, following the resignation of Mr Paul McMahon.
- New branding and a new website was launched after 12 months of consultation and development www.catholiccarewsbm.org.au
- Drafted our first organisational Reconciliation Action Plan which has been submitted to Reconciliation Australia for review.
- The Inagh Foundation donated **\$15,000 to support education and training of volunteers to support the chaplaincy service**.
- Family Day Care Educator **Afroza Yasmin won 'Regional Educator of the year'** through the Excellence in Family Day Care awards.
- Redevelopment of Mamre House and Farm began and the first workshops for seniors were trialed.
- We introduced a client care team to better support new clients joining the organisation and enquiring about Catholic Care services.
- We supported many families with Oz Harvest food parcels to assist during tough times, in particular throughout COVID-19 lockdowns.
- We delivered more than **400 Christmas hampers in December 2021 to families in need**. These families would normally receive support from other agencies who, this year, were not able to offer the same level of support. To ensure these families had something to give their children on Christmas Day we dug deep and supplied Christmas hampers to all of these additional families.
- A NAB Community Grant for **\$8,220 enabled us to partner with Farm It Forward (FiF), to create skills, training and job opportunities for young people** while tackling social isolation and improving community cohesiveness in suburban and peri-urban areas.
- We secured **two, \$1,000 'Get Online Week' grants from the Good Things Foundation** to use for digital inclusion work at Springwood Drop-in Centre and Mamre House and Farm to help seniors with technology.
- The staff values committee was formed to continue the values work for the organisation.

OUR SPECIALISED SERVICES

SPECIALISED SERVICES **AGEING WELL**

Whatever your age, you will never be invisible to the people at Catholic Care. Our range of supports aim to keep you living independently in your own home for as long as possible, while staying connected with your friends and community.

Our Commonwealth Home Support Program (Neighbour Aid) supports elderly people to stay living at home through meal preparation and help with shopping, to home maintenance, and respite and support for your carers.

While our Community Visitor's Scheme aims to reduce loneliness and enrich people's lives through fortnightly visits to residents at aged-care facilities.

THIS YEAR:

- Catholic Care received a one off grant of \$587,000 under the aged care Commonwealth Home Support Program. The funding supports the development of an innovative model of aged care for those who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. The service was launched in early 2022.
- Redevelopment of Mamre House began to house a Multicultural Respite Centre, among many services. The respite centre will offer a range of services to elderly clients, including centre-based respite and a social support group. A trial of the social support group was held with clients taking part in a floral workshop. The social support group will offer a range of activities.



TIM'S STORY

Without the support of Catholic Care's Aged Housing Service, 63-year-old Timoty says he'd be in 'no man's land'.

The former crane driver found himself without a 'place to call home' after family relocated interstate.

No longer able to work because of trouble walking, Tim didn't know where to turn.

That's when he was referred to Catholic Care's Aged Housing team.

Within weeks the team had secured a ground floor unit for Tim in Mount Druitt, along with furniture, appliances and kitchenware.

Tim praised Catholic Care's Aged Housing case managers for their support.

'If it wasn't for the team, I wouldn't have got this place,' Tim said. 'And they organised for me to get a bed, a chest of draws, a fridge, pots, pans and a new TV. They're very understanding and have been the best support for me.'

To top it off, a shared vegetable garden at the back of Tim's block of units, allows him to continue one of his favourite pastimes – gardening.

'I've always loved gardening – growing vegetables, fruits and things like that,' he said. 'The other people here like

'If it wasn't for the team, I wouldn't have got this place, and they organised for me to get a bed, a chest of draws, a fridge, pots, pans and a new TV. They're very understanding and have been the best support for me.'

to garden too - they're all friends now, and we share the vegetables.'

Along with helping Tim to set up a home, the team took Tim to his first eye check, and with his first set of glasses, Tim is feeling happy and hopeful for the future. And, he says, it's all thanks to Catholic Care.

'The glasses have been good, I can now watch tv, I like my sports, the rugby union, so now I can watch that. I will always love Catholic Care like a family. They've done a person like me a good favour.'



SPECIALISED SERVICES

BRINGING A BABY INTO THE WORLD

There are few things more important than caring for a new-born child.

Our programs have helped many young women who are feeling lost or have been excluded from their community and are at risk of homelessness, to find their feet, make new connections and get the support they need.

Our parenting support program supports new parents who are finding the challenges of a newborn baby overwhelming.

THIS YEAR:

- Houses to Homes supported 102 clients
- 23 identified as Aboriginal, while 38 were CALD from Myanmar, New Zealand, Sierra Leone, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Iraq and Zimbabwe
- Supported seven clients throughout their pregnancies and births
- We found transitional housing for 24 clients
- 3 mothers and 4 children were supported to receive Rent Choice Youth subsidy, while 3 mothers and 3 children received Rent Choice Start Safely subsidy
- 12 parents and 16 children were helped to receive Public Housing
- We worked with 2 parents and 3 children to receive NDIS
- We supported 15 clients on Temporary Visas
- COVID positive mothers and children were supported with remote casework and support and contactless delivery of essential items and food by staff.



ONE MUM'S STORY

While most 23 year olds are enjoying one of the most carefree times of their lives, Candice* has felt the weight of the world on her shoulders.

The single mother had been without a home for her young family and the experience of homelessness was taking its toll. While struggling with family grief and a breakdown in family relationships, Candice had to face court and spent time in the community corrections system. She had mounting debt and was unemployed.

But with the support of Catholic Care, Candice is turning her life around.

Staff helped Candice to find a rental property and source furniture, supported her to find ongoing employment and enrol her now six-year-old daughter in school.

She's working hard to pay outstanding debts and maintain a steady, happy home for her and her daughter.

*'We couldn't be more proud.
To see her getting back on her
feet for her and her daughter
is wonderful.'*

She's maintained her rental property now for more than 12 months and is working through her grief with Catholic Care counsellors.

'We couldn't be more proud. To see her getting back on her feet for her and her daughter is wonderful.'

* Name changed to protect client privacy



SPECIALISED SERVICES

CHAPLAINCY

Providing spiritual and emotional support, our chaplains work with patients and inmates, their families and staff in the seven hospitals and three correctional centres throughout the Diocese of Parramatta.

An inclusive ministry available to all faiths, our 15 chaplains work alongside others involved in the care of patients and inmates.

THIS YEAR:

- Chaplains provided 12,000 hours of pastoral care
- With many COVID-19 restrictions still in place, chaplains were in high demand to provide one-on-one support to patients and inmates, mostly via online videos calls
- As COVID-19 restrictions eased, chaplains began to reintroduce programs and chapel services
- A \$15,000 donation from the Inagh Foundation is supporting education and training of volunteers to support the chaplaincy service.

RICHARD'S STORY

Richard Korkor's journey into chaplaincy has been one of a 'gentle unfolding'.

On graduating from actuarial studies, he pursued a career in structured finance and investment management. But the Global Financial Crisis took its toll and Richard found himself in need of some soul searching, drawing on his Catholic upbringing for guidance and re-centering.

'During this process, a little voice said, "Richard can you help me feed my sheep?";' Richard said. 'The voice was very clear.'

In response to that little voice, Richard enrolled in a Bachelor of Theology through the Catholic Institute of Sydney with a view to being a Deacon. After finishing the degree through the gentle accompaniment of some wonderful mentors and spiritual directors, Richard found his way into chaplaincy.

'The transition has been gentle and slow, confusing at times and frustrating at others, with each step necessary in hindsight,' he said. 'I think I am where I am supposed to be at this time of my life, walking gently with people and living out Christ's work in the community by being Christ to others,' he said.



'This is the last place in the world I thought I would end up, but I love it. I hold a safe space for people to talk and be heard without judgement. You create a real space of trust.'

Richard is a Catholic Care chaplain at Parklea Correctional Centre (a maximum-security remand centre) three days a week and the Royal Prince Alfred Hospital one day a week. During his time at Parklea, he runs meditation and communion services, and spends time talking with inmates.

'This is the last place in the world I thought I would end up, but I love it,' he said.

'I hold a safe space for people to talk and be heard without judgement. You create a real space of trust.'

Working in a prison, Richard said the people he meets are often feeling very vulnerable.

'A lot of the people I see are in a traumatised state with everything around them uncertain,' he said. 'Some do not understand why they have done what they have, while others cannot believe they are there.'

'I've had guys walk in the door who no longer had the desire to live or carried enormous shame for what they have done. But they walk out so much lighter because they've been able to share, knowing they've been listened to.'

For some it may have been the first time in their lives they've been able to open up about things they have bottled for many years—it can be very powerful for people.'

'There is real beauty in this work meeting people where they are at, connecting on a deeper level, where Christ lives.'



SPECIALISED SERVICES

CHILDREN

Catholic Care offers a range of support services to ensure children are taken care of in any situation.

It starts with early years learning and childcare — our home-based early learning and parenting program for families with young children helps them and their parents develop skills. Our family day care helps kids get a good start with their education.

Our creche is a thriving early learning centre, providing care for children of Sudanese refugee women enrolled in English classes offered on the grounds of Catholic Care.

THIS YEAR:

- The presence of Family Day Care in Western Sydney has grown with new educators joining the service
- New mobile play sessions were introduced in addition to the successful virtual story time sessions
- Weekend care and 24-hour care was introduced through our family day care educators
- Family Day Care Educator Afroza Yasmin won 'Regional Educator of the Year' through the Excellence in Family Day Care Awards
- Educator Anju Dewangan from Sai Family Day Care was a finalist in the Small Business Champion Awards 2022
- HIPPY staff engaged in numerous online and face-to-face child-centred training and attended interstate training in both Queensland and the ACT
- HIPPY adapted a blended model of service delivery (online and face-to-face) to continue to work with the community needs.



AFROZA'S STORY

Baulkham Hills Family Day Care Educator Afroza Yasmin was this year named the Regional Winner of the 2022 Excellence in Family Day Care Awards.

This is the third time the mother-of-two has won the award—she was also regional winner in 2014 and 2015.

Nominated by her parents, Afroza said they are incredibly proud of her achievements.

'A big thanks to my parents for nominating me - they are very happy and proud,' she said. 'I'm feeling pretty proud of myself as well.'

A childcare educator for 20 years, Afroza completed a Diploma in Childcare after arriving in Australia from Bangladesh in 2000.

'I love to look after children - it is my passion. I look after the interests of the children and put them at the centre of the care.'

'I love to look after children - it is my passion,' she said. 'I look after the interests of the children and put them at the centre of the care.'

Afroza, who has a waiting list for her family day care service in Castle Hill, said creating a strong bond with the child and their family and looking after their wellbeing was an important part of her role.



SPECIALISED SERVICES

CONNECTING THE COMMUNITY

Catholic Care's drop-in centres provide a safe place for people to belong and connect with others. They are a place to go, a place to be, a place to get information, join a group, and be accepted.

In Emerton, Aboriginal Catholic Care is a community centre led by Aboriginal people for Aboriginal people with information, cultural support, literacy classes and a cultural art group.

In Blacktown, culturally and linguistically diverse families are accessing support to settle into life in Australia through the team at All Saints of Africa.

At Springwood Drop-in Centre, clients stop by for a chat, join a reading or wellbeing group, learn to use technology, or seek support for their mental health.

At our newest community centre - Mamre House and Farm - people can learn English, take computer classes, attend a seniors' day club or craft club, or have a cuppa and enjoy the farm.

THIS YEAR:

- Drafted our first organisational Reconciliation Action Plan which has been submitted to Reconciliation Australia for review
- Partnered with locals to create the Bell's Line Music Festival, a major community building event, with a focus on improving cohesion, healing and connection for Hawkesbury residents, post

bushfires, pandemic and three major floods in the past three years

- Supported more than 50 people each week accessing free food at Aboriginal Catholic Care
- Established the Blackheath Community Kitchen Garden at Sacred Heart Parish. Run by a group of volunteers, the garden provides free, nutritious meals to those most in need in the community
- Received funding to run a seniors friendship group in the upper Blue Mountains
- Employed an Aboriginal Community Outreach Worker, Jaycee, to grow our work in the Aboriginal communities we work. See page 23
- Delivered groups and workshops to disaster affected areas including Cool Kids child anxiety groups, Black Dog Institute's REACH recovery program for people with mental health impacts, and financial information sessions for people with changed financial circumstances
- Delivered homework clubs at All Saints of Africa Centre and Aboriginal Catholic Care
- Supported Aboriginal clients with \$500 towards funeral costs in partnership with the Sisters of Mercy Funeral Fund
- Delivered food and whitegood vouchers to clients through our partnership with Givelt, primarily for disaster-affected and homeless clients
- Held Refugee Welcome picnics in Glenbrook and Springwood with newly arrived refugees and locals.



KRISSY'S STORY

Little Krissy's first six years of life have been very different to that of her mum, Ella's.

Ella was born in Sudan and spent her first six years of life in the African country before immigrating to Australia in 2004.

'I started school here when I was in Year 3 and graduated high school in Australia,' she said. 'But I was born in Sudan. My parents wanted to bring me here for the chance of a better education and better opportunities.'

Now a mother of two herself, Ella is grateful for the opportunities Krissy and her young son will have growing up in Australia.

'Australia is home to us,' she said.

The family moved to western Sydney from Queensland in 2020 and spent most of the first 12 months in their new hometown in lockdown.

'Because of COVID we were stuck at home most of the time, so it's been great to be out of lockdown and out in our new community,' Ella said.

Krissy is now in Year 1 and loving the opportunity to learn and make friends. It was through these friends that the family heard about All Saints of Africa's homework club. Krissy is now a regular on a Wednesday afternoon.

'We're so grateful that she has the opportunity to go to All Saints and she loves it.'

'She gets picked up from school by the staff and gets one-on-one help with homework and the opportunity to play with other Sudanese children,' she said.

Ella said All Saints of Africa meant a lot to the family, not only for the help with Krissy's homework but for the social connection with other Sudanese families.

'We are new to Sydney and this is a great way to meet people and for my daughter to be with her people,' she said.

'We're so grateful that she has the opportunity to go to All Saints and she loves it.'

All Saints of Africa is Catholic Care's support centre for culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) families, particularly Sudanese and African migrants and refugees.



SPECIALISED SERVICES

LIVING WELL WITH DISABILITY

We all need a support network to live our lives to the fullest. Our disability support team can help you with living, learning and overcoming obstacles on your journey, whatever they may look like. We can help you set goals, and achieve them, and help you build a brighter future.

With Catholic Care, disability support is about finding ways for you to live your best life, whether that's through services we offer, or through support accessed outside the organisation.

As a registered National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) provider, we support clients at home and in the community, whether you want to learn how to cook, need support with personal care, or want to play sport.

Our garden service employs more than 25 people with disability, giving them their own wage, the opportunity to learn transferable skills and gain independence.

THIS YEAR:

- Welcomed 10 new clients
- Four new disability support workers joined the team
- We trialed group services for clients to experience activities in the community, while meeting new people.



CAYTLIN'S STORY

At just 21 years old, Caytlin Parker's life took an unexpected turn.

Not long after graduating from university with a Bachelor of Animation, Caytlin was diagnosed with Functional Neurological Disorder (FND).

The first sign that something was wrong, was when Caytlin started having seizures. They now struggle to do some of the things they'd previously taken for granted.

Walking long distances is now difficult for Caytlin and it takes them longer to process information. At times it is hard for them to talk.

'My life has changed a lot,' Caytlin, 24, said. 'FND has taken away some of my independence, but where there's a will, there's a way.'

To help Caytlin retain their independence, they are supported by Catholic Care three times a week both at home and in the community.

Catholic Care Support Worker Hayley Whyte helps Caytlin with cooking, cleaning and anything else they need at home. On Friday afternoons the pair head out to lunch, shopping and the markets.

'I like going to the markets to get my fruit and vegetables and to support the farmers,' Caytlin said.

'My life has changed a lot. FND has taken away some of my independence, but where there's a will, there's a way.'

'Other times we might go the library and I like to go to lunch with Hayley.

'Without Hayley's help I wouldn't be able to do as much.'

While Caytlin's optimism keeps their mind strong and positive, their one wish is that others would be more accepting.

'The hardest part is how other people treat me,' Caytlin said. 'It would be better if people were more accepting of me.'

For now, Caytlin is focused on a business venture, using their creative skills to start a greeting card business.

'I can still do things, I just have to find new ways to do them.'



SPECIALISED SERVICES

SUPPORT FOR MY FAMILY

When life gets tough for our families, the people we care about most can suffer. Our range of family support services can support you to better relate to your spouse and understand their behaviour, to deal with dependence or gambling problems, single parenting, or just connecting with your kids.

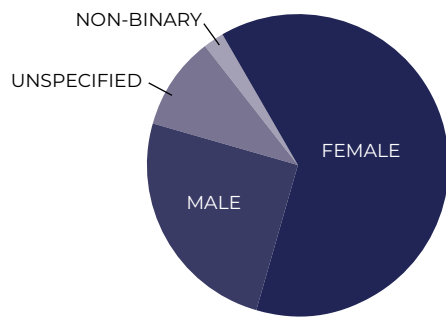
We support families who are going through the most difficult of times to cope through separation, and with grief and loss. We help parents deal with all the stresses that can impact your family, from anxiety and depression to money worries, gambling—we have the people, the resources and the support to help you make it through.

Our Counselling Services include Family Counselling (including Family Law Counselling), Grief Counselling, Gambling Counselling and Financial Counselling. We also deliver parenting educational workshops and attend community events to promote awareness.

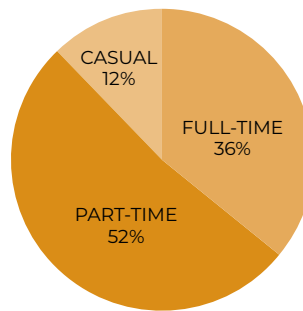
THIS YEAR:

- We provided close to 4,000 services to 745 clients
- All counselling services moved online during the lockdown in July 2021, with face-to-face services resuming across a number of sites in 2022
- Gambling and Financial Counselling were again funded by the Office of Responsible Gambling in July 2021 under a new branding 'GambleAware Blue Mountains & Western Sydney'. This is in partnership with Gambling Treatment Clinic (University of Sydney) and Uniting Parramatta.

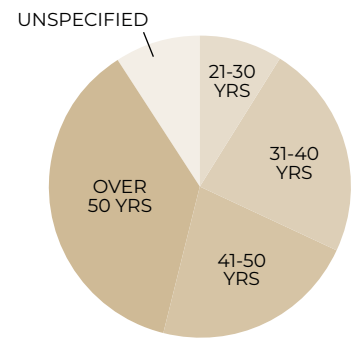
- Delivered educational and therapeutic group work, including:
 - Keeping Kids in Mind (KKIM) program is a 5-week program for separated parents who are experiencing on-going conflict. Family Counsellors have delivered KKIM groups online in every school term.
 - Circle of Security Parenting (COSP) program is an 8-week program for parents and carers of children aged 0-12 years who want to strengthen the bonds with their children and would like support to help their children to build secure relationships. We delivered one group of COSP online in May 2022.
 - Cool Kids Anxiety program is based on Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) to teach children (ages 7-17 years) and their parents how to better manage a child's anxiety. One group of Cool Kids has been delivered in person in June 2022.
- Stepping Beyond support group provides monthly support to men and women experiencing the challenges of separation or divorce.
- In addition to our monthly Bereavement Support Group, a 7-week Bereavement Program for men and women who grieve the death of their spouse or partner was delivered at St Bernadette's Parish Castle Hill in August 2022.
- 'Off Screen & Smart Play' project has delivered 20 workshops (online and in person) to educate school-aged children and their parents how to manage screen time and online safety.



Gender



Employment Status



Age Diversity

Longest current service: **29 years**

Number of Volunteers: **30**

OUR

PEOPLE

Catholic Care's Mission, Inspiration and Values are informed by Catholic Social Teaching. The principles of Catholic Social Teaching frame our work in attending to the needs of all people, with a focus on the vulnerable and disadvantaged, regardless of faith, religion, gender, ethnicity, age or socio-economic background. The principles are human dignity, the common good, solidarity, subsidiarity and participation.

VALUES

With honesty and openness, our staff have created our values to guide how we work and engage with those we service in our community.

We embrace every journey with gratitude and love. For our clients, the community and each other.

This value is fundamental to our work and the way we work together and is lived each day through the following individual values.



WE ARE AVAILABLE
with an open mind and heart



WE BUILD TRUST
with integrity and respect



WE ADVOCATE
with patience and passion



WE PERSEVERE
with resilience and belief

THIS YEAR:

VALUES SESSIONS

Employer Branding Australia, who led the consultation with all staff for the development of our organisational values, hosted a 'train the trainer' session with a newly formed values committee. Following this session, the committee trained around 60 staff who attended an all staff session. The committee developed a plan to ensure that all staff and teams can be trained in the values and how we embed a values session into the induction program for new staff.

STAFF COACHING

A number of staff were given the opportunity to participate in professional development coaching.

EXECUTIVE JOIN TEAM MEETINGS

Members of the executive team joined team meetings across the organisation to introduce themselves and keep staff up-to-date on organisation-wide matters. It was a great opportunity for Executive to hear directly from staff about concerns, focus and wins.

GUIDED MINDFULNESS FOR STAFF

Throughout the COVID-19 lockdown periods, 'Catholic Care Connect' was established to keep staff connected online while they worked from home. One of the available sessions was 'guided meditation', led by Catholic Care's Community Outreach Worker Sally Butler.



LISA MALCHER

COMMUNITY OUTREACH WORKER

After 25 years in the finance industry, Lisa Malcher found herself yearning for more. She was longing to return to the community work she found so rewarding at the start of her career.

'My early working life was spent in a community mental health centre in Kings Cross, then at the Royal Blind Society,' Lisa said. 'The people I met and the work I did really instilled in me a moral purpose, but I was just too young and not ready for those experiences.'

But after more than two decades working in life insurance and superannuation, Lisa was ready for a change back to doing what she truly loves – helping people in her community.

Lisa was appointed Community Outreach Worker for Catholic Care's Mamre House and Farm in early 2022 after volunteering for 18 months at the Springwood Drop-In Centre.

She is the first Outreach Worker for Mamre House since its redevelopment from Catholic Care's head office to a community space.

'Doing this work is so fulfilling – to make one person's day a little bit better is so rewarding,' she said. 'It puts me in a great headspace as well and just being here at Mamre means a lot to me.'

Having grown up in the area, Lisa would often take her late mum to Mamre House when the homestead operated as a tea room run by the Sisters of Mercy.

'Every day I'm here I think of mum and our visits to the tea room and that's so special to me,' Lisa said.

'Fast forward many years and now I am rewarded by the challenge of bringing Mamre House and Farm back to life.'

Lisa's days as a Community Outreach Worker are full, in fact, she says they are 'just as hectic' as working in finance but much more rewarding.

'I see that the work we do does make a difference,' Lisa said. 'It's not uncommon for us to have a family turn up who has no money and no food, so to be able to give them a food hamper feels so good and this is particularly true when they have children.'

Lisa has helped to establish new groups and classes for the community, including computer classes, craft club and a seniors' day club. Her plan for the New Year is to be out in the community more, supporting those who need it most, as well as recruiting volunteers to help welcome people to Mamre and take site bookings.

'Some people are in very difficult situations, but it's wonderful to be able to help them and let them know we are here to help. It might be that they just need someone to talk to and we are very good listeners.'



JAYCEE EDWARDS

ABORIGINAL COMMUNITY OUTREACH WORKER

A day at work as an Aboriginal Community Outreach Worker for Catholic Care almost feels like home for Jaycee Edwards.

'Going to work doesn't feel like work,' she said. 'It feels like I'm at home in Bourke yarning to my family.'

A proud Wangkamurra woman, Jaycee joined Catholic Care this year and already feels like part of the 'family'.

'I've had lots of help to settle in,' the 26-year-old said. 'The Aunties made me feel so comfortable, they are so welcoming and lovely.'

As an Aboriginal Community Outreach Worker, Jaycee spends her days with locals who drop into the Emerton Centre for a cuppa, a yarn or some help and advice. She is also making plans to grow groups, activities and projects to support the Aboriginal community, such as the recently started weekly literacy classes.

'We sit down and have a yarn and a cuppa,' she said. 'It's really nice, I especially love the stories from the Aunts and yarning with the Elders, listening to their stories about the old days and what tribes they're from. It's very similar to what we do back home in the village.'

The former youth worker and mother of three says she's found her perfect role at Catholic Care.

'Community work is what I like doing. Meeting new people and getting to know them, especially Indigenous people - it just makes my day,' she said. 'I can go home and ring my family and tell them who I met that day and quite often they know my family. One of the ladies who was from the Stolen Generation knows my grandmother - that is very special to me because I am really close with my grandmother - she's my rock.'

Through her work, Jaycee assists the local Aboriginal community to connect to resources and engage with programs and services.

'I love my work - I feel so lucky,' she said. 'And I can't wait to do more with the community.'



'I'm retired now, and I wanted to give back to my community and do something worthwhile. This is a nice fit for me.'

OUR VOLUNTEERS

KAY'S STORY

In 2013 when bushfires devastated parts of New South Wales including the Blue Mountains, Kay O'Connell was on the ground as part of the response team.

As a volunteer with the Red Cross at the time, Kay welcomed families to the evacuation and recovery centres, along with providing outreach support to people whose homes weren't damaged but who still lived in the disaster zone.

It was as a direct result of these very bushfires that Catholic Care's Springwood Drop-In Centre opened.

'Catholic Care set up a counselling office at the time to support people who had been affected by the fires and that was my introduction to Catholic Care,' Kay said.

Fast forward two years and Kay answered a call out from her church, St Thomas Aquinas in Springwood, to volunteer at the newly established Springwood Drop-in Centre.

For seven years now, Kay has been a welcoming face on reception at the drop-in centre on varying shifts.

Kay, a grandmother of 14, says she enjoys putting her 21 years of experience as a secretary for St Thomas Aquinas Primary School to use at the centre.

'I'm retired now, and I wanted to give back to my community and do something worthwhile. This is a nice fit for me,' she said.

While Kay enjoys getting to know visitors to the centre, she said the phone calls to clients during COVID-19 lockdowns, gave her the chance to become closer with some of the regulars.

'You do get to know people and I live locally, so it's nice for me to be involved,' she said.

Kay continues her volunteer work with the Red Cross emergency services and at her church.

'I have the time now and it's nice to do a little bit here and there to help others.'

GOVERNANCE

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Peter Loughnane

With a passion for leading not-for-profit organisations and connecting communities, Peter joined Catholic Care in January 2020 bringing with him more than 15 years' experience in aged care, community and disability services.

Throughout his career Peter has been a leading voice for change for minority groups having served on multiple community services boards including Multicultural Communities Council, the peak organisation serving the needs of multicultural residents on the Gold Coast, and in leadership positions for social service, aged care and disability organisations.

Through nurturing a strong alignment with the values and mission of Catholic Care, Peter leverages his expertise in organisational change and strategic leadership to support the organisation's sustainability and growth.

Peter's goal is to continue to connect individuals and families within their local community and the services they need to live a safe, and healthy life.

ADVISORY COUNCIL



Angela McKay, Chair

Angela is the Chief Executive officer of the Juvenile Arthritis Foundation of Australia and has more than 20 years' senior leadership experience with a diverse background spanning not-for-profit and for-profit organisations in the charity, professional services, consumer goods and aged care sectors.



Paul McMahon, Immediate past Chair

Paul is a passionate leader and advocate for aged care and social services clients. He is the former Chief Executive Officer of Southern Cross Care New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory, and has more than 30 years' experience in the social services sector.



Most Reverend Vincent Long Van Nguyen

Bishop Vincent was appointed as the fourth Bishop of Parramatta in May 2016. Nationally, he serves as the Chair, Bishops Commission for Social Justice, Mission and Service



Very Rev Luis Fernando Montano EV

Fr. Fernando is the Parish Priest at St Bernadette's in Castle Hill. In June 2020 he was appointed as the Episcopal Vicar for Social Welfare and became a member of the Catholic Care Advisory Council.



Vera Visevic

A partner at Mills Oakley law firm, Vera specialises in not-for-profit and social enterprise law.

She has more than 25 years' experience acting for numerous charities, religious and not-for-profit organisations.



Peter Bellman

Peter is the former Head of Finance for Catholic Care Western Sydney and the Blue Mountains.

He has more than 45 years' experience in finance working in private industry and across public and private health in New South Wales.



Helen Emmerson

Helen is the Chief Executive Officer of Southern Cross Care (New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory) and has more than 20 years' experience in aged care and disability services in both Australia and the United Kingdom.



Sue Walsh

Sue is a System and School Learning Consultant and has led a system of schools, 45,000 students and 5,000 teachers as the Deputy Executive Director of Schools and Director of Learning for the Catholic Education Diocese of Parramatta until 2019.



Peter O'Brien

The Director at Liminalspace Consulting, Peter is an executive coach and organisational consultant. He has more than 30 years' experience in the New South Wales social and community services sector with non-government organisations.



Geoff Officer

Geoff is the Chief of Operations and Finance (Diocesan Financial Administrator) for the Catholic Diocese of Parramatta. He has more than 25 years' experience as a company executive, commercial human resources consultant and practitioner.



STRATEGIC ACHIEVEMENTS

In late 2020, our strategic plan for 2020-2023 was launched. Developed in consultation with frontline staff, our plan outlines our desire to integrate into our local communities so that more people can reach us; prioritise gaps in services so we can support people holistically; and to be a partner with our clients, meeting them where they are in life to walk by their side, every step of the way.



GOAL 1:

WE ARE INTEGRATED INTO
OUR LOCAL COMMUNITIES

This year we:

- Began the process of redeveloping Mamre House and Farm to become a space for our community. Among many services now on offer from the homestead is a Multicultural Respite Centre. The respite centre offers a range of services to elderly clients, including centre-based respite and a social support group.
- Employed an Aboriginal Community Outreach Worker to grow our Aboriginal community work.
- Partnered with locals to create the Bell's Line Music Festival, a major community building event, with a focus on improving cohesion, healing and connection for Hawkesbury residents, post bushfires, pandemic and three major floods in the past three years.
- Commenced REACH recovery groups to support people with depression and bipolar disorder.
- Partnered with Community Refugee Sponsorship Australia to support parishes to sponsor refugees to bring them to Australia and help them to settle in their communities.
- We also commenced Refugee Welcome picnics with almost 100 refugees participating in three picnics this year being welcomed to Australia by locals and Aboriginal elders.



GOAL 2:

WE PRIORITISE GAPS IN
COMMUNITY SERVICE NEEDS

This year we:

- Received a one-off grant of \$587,000 under the aged care Commonwealth Home Support Program (CHSP). The funding supports the development of an innovative model of aged care for those who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. The service was launched in early 2022.
- Trialled group services for people with disability to enjoy social outings into the community.
- Expanded aged care services into new areas of the Diocese or Parramatta.
- Implemented new client engagement committees with aged care and disability clients.
- Created new partnerships with the Black Dog Institute, The Sunshine Project, Farm it Forward, Mary McKillop Today and Givelt.



GOAL 3:

WE JOURNEY BESIDE PEOPLE
TO ACHIEVE THEIR GOALS

This year we:

- Launched our new logo, look and feel and website after a 12-month consultation and development process.
- We continued to work with Employer Branding Australia to embed our values within our teams. Our values committee was formed to help guide our values work, including events to staff.
- Invited staff to take part in training on the Uluru Statement from the Heart.
- Drafted a Reconciliation Action Plan.
- Implemented a new technology roadmap and a new client management system across disability and aged care.
- Introduced a coaching opportunity for leaders across the organisation.
- Implemented a new finance system.
- Began the process of implementing a new payroll and human resource information system.

PARTNERSHIPS AND SUPPORTERS

KEY FUNDING AGENCIES AND PARTNERS



**Communities
& Justice**



DIOCESE of
PARRAMATTA



Bringing hope, peace and justice



Health
Nepean Blue Mountains
Local Health District



gambling **HELP**
gamblinghelp.nsw.gov.au
1800 858 858

**Australian Government
Department of Social Services**



PARRAMATTA
CATHOLIC FOUNDATION



**Australian Government
Department of Health**

MAJOR DONORS

**We sincerely thank all of our donors for their
generous support.**

- Australian Youth Foundation
- Catholic Church Insurance
- Catholic Education Diocese of Parramatta
- Diocese of Parramatta
- Eric Storm Trust
- Great Irish Famine Commemoration Committee Inc
- Inagh Foundation
- NRMA
- Parishes and Parishioners
- Parramatta Catholic Foundation
- Vera Visevic

Catholic Care Western Sydney and the Blue Mountains acknowledges the support from staff within Risk, Property, Communications and IT from the Diocese of Paramatta.

PEAK MEMBERSHIPS



OUR LOCATIONS




- Gambling & Financial Counselling
- Family Relationship Counselling
- Family Support Services
- Drop-In centres
- Aged Care Support and Blacktown Neighbour Aid
- Disability Support (NDIS)
- Gardening Services
- Family Day Care Services

Catholic Care Western Sydney and the Blue Mountains provides services to clients from a variety of locations across the region. In addition to our centres and offices, our staff see clients in the community and in their homes.

Making Progress Together

No one need journey alone.
We can make progress together.

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w catholiccarewsbm.org.au

 **We embrace every journey**
with gratitude and love.