

## **Holy Family Conference of the Society of St Vincent de Paul**

The Holy Family Conference (group) of the Society of St Vincent de Paul provides person-to-person support to individuals and families in need in the communities of Indooroopilly, St Lucia & Taringa. The Conference is grateful for the ongoing solid support (spiritual and financial) of the Holy Family and St Thomas Aquinas parishes.

For many years there were a small number of Vincentians (members) who carried out visits to households in need on an ad hoc basis. As the Conference grew, systems were put in place for rostered teams to visit on assigned days. The Holy Family Conference amalgamated with the St Thomas Aquinas Conference, at St Lucia, in 2015 and this has proved to be mutually beneficial to both the Conference and the people it supports.

The Society runs fund-raising appeals twice a year and donations in response to the appeals provide funding that allows the Conference to provide support. The Conference, as part of a global network, also provides financial assistance to 2 Conferences in the Philippines.

The aim of any interaction with Companions (clients) is to provide a “hand-up” not just a “hand-out”. Vincentians listen to their stories for an understanding of the challenges they face and to develop mutual respect. Many Companions suffer from isolation, addictions, domestic violence, mental health issues and/or lack of family support and this is not uncommon in the greater Brisbane area. The Conference connects with the community on a weekly basis and has provided disaster relief after natural disasters such as floods.

In response to the floods in 2011, the Conference collected and stored supplies for flood victims in Holy Family Church, itself. This was so successful that Bishop Brian Finnigan came to the Church to reconfirm its status as a sacred place.

Vincentians enjoy being a part of a universal and fraternal community of lay people, with an attitude of genuine service and sensitive caring, and welcome others who want to make a difference. The Holy Family Conference looks forward to continuing to serve the community in the years to come.