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## MEDIA RELEASE

### Anti-Poverty Week 2021

This year in Anti-Poverty Week, the National Council of the St Vincent de Paul Society strengthens its calls for urgent investment in social housing and more realistic income support in the face of escalating family and domestic violence.

National President, Claire Victory said ‘Long-term structural changes in housing and income support are essential.

‘The current base rate of income support of \$44 a day is so inadequate that women are forced to remain in violent relationships,’ Ms Victory said.

‘Compounding income and financial insecurity is the chronic and growing shortfall in crisis, transitional and long-term accommodation options.

‘Action is needed right now with an urgent investment in emergency accommodation to ensure the safety of a growing cohort of single women, including older women, and women and their children.

‘There has been a significant decline in longer term appropriate, safe, affordable housing in real terms over the past 20 years.

‘The share of all homes that constitute public or community housing has fallen from 7 per cent in 1991 to 4 per cent in 2016.

‘Waiting for years to access suitable housing is not an option for displaced women and children.

‘It is unacceptable when wealth has increased from 3.6 times GDP 30 years ago to 6.4 times GDP now.

‘The current shortfall of social housing dwellings is over 400,000.

‘Research indicates that this deficit will grow to 727,300 dwellings by 2036 and that an additional 36,000 social housing dwellings are required per year to meet projected demand.

‘An effective public policy response demands a bipartisan commitment across all jurisdictions, with leadership from the Federal Government.

‘The federal-state blame game is irresponsible while there is a growing number of people on low and middle incomes who cannot compete for housing in the booming private sales and rental market.

‘It’s time for the Federal Government to put some meat on the bones of its rhetoric,’ Ms Victory said.

The St Vincent de Paul Society is a proud major sponsor of Anti-Poverty Week.

*The St Vincent de Paul Society in Australia consists of 60,000 members and volunteers who operate on the ground through over 1,000 groups located in local communities across the country.*

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