



NATIONAL CONFERENCE, 'IMAGINING OUR PLACE WITHIN A BROADER MISSION'

8 February 2024

With only two weeks to go until the start of the national Catholic social services conference – [Commons Commonality Common Good](#) – representatives from the vast array of ministries within the Catholic church and all people of goodwill are encouraged to attend. Hosted by Catholic Social Services Australian and Catholic Social Services Victoria, this key event from 21-23 February 2024 in Melbourne will provide an opportunity to come together, exchange ideas, and collaborate on practical solutions to address the challenges of our times.

'This Conference aims to strengthen and advance our shared work in Catholic social services as part of the social mission of the Church,' says CSSV executive director, Joshua Lourensz. 'Connecting with colleagues across social services, health, parishes, and education, the Conference provides a moment to share expertise and take pause to think and imagine our place within a broader mission.'

'You might be a youth worker, an executive director, a volunteer, a pastoral associate, a graduate social worker, a retired Religious, a governance professional, or a seasoned veteran of social justice. Whoever you are and whatever role you play, this gathering will provide an opportunity to be inspired, challenged, and part of a values-driven sector committed to nothing less than positive social transformation.'

The Conference boasts an exceptional [line-up of speakers](#), including a keynote from [Dr Julie Edwards](#), chief executive officer of Jesuit Social Services, addressing the topic, 'The role of social services and their work on the commons.' Dr Edwards says, 'We're all held, nurtured, and sustained in a web of relationships—that spiritual, social, cultural, economic, physical world—and it's all gift.'

'That's an expression of the commons—the broad set of resources we live within, nurtured by and shared. They belong to us all, and they belong to none of us. It's this mutuality, the understanding that it's gift, that we're not to possess, but rather, we are to cherish, nurture, and protect them, to help them regenerate, and to strengthen them, to heal them. And that it is something that we all take responsibility for.'

Complimenting the keynote speakers is an array of panel sessions over the three days with speakers including Ms Marcelle Mogg, chief executive officer of Mental Health Victoria; Mr Matthew Cassin, chief executive officer of Catholic Development Fund; Ms Anita Veivers, executive director of Centacare FNQ, the Hon Graham West, chief executive officer of Amelie Housing, and Ms Stella Avrampoulos, chief executive officer of Good Shepherd Australia New Zealand. View the full program [here](#).

Attendees can expect robust discussions on critical issues facing our society and exploring innovative solutions to contribute to the common good. A range of [interactive workshops](#) designed to wrestle with the challenges of our time and ignite discussion on how we can collectively respond will also take place on the second day. [Registrations](#) close at midnight on Friday 9 February.

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