

ST VERONICA WELFARE COMMITTEE EMAIL NEWSLETTER NO 47 – SEPTEMBER 2025 admin@stveronica.org.au

TABLE OF CONTENTS:

The year so far Pages 1 - 3

Christmas Appeal Details Pages 4 - 6

Students available for sponsorship Page 7

Dear Supporters, I hope 2025 has been kind to you.

The presence of Christmas trees and decorations in the shops this week forced me to accept that we are heading into the last third of the year and it is time to contact you to share St Veronica's progress.

2025 has been a satisfying year for the Committee. Thanks to you, our donors, by the end of April we had raised sufficient funds to pay the full purchase price of a bus for physically and mentally disabled students to attend Jeevan Jyothy Special School in Puttur Taluk, Karnataka, India (the alternative being for them to remain isolated at their homes).



Disabled students can now access an education

In addition to their support for student sponsorships and regular appeals, many donors provide funds to allow the Committee to use 'as they believe best'. This generosity and trust is enormously appreciated and valued. It allows us to respond to unanticipated requests for assistance including a recent request from Bethel Orphanage.

Bethel Orphanage, a centre run by the Bethlehemite Sisters in Andhra Pradesh, India, caters for children of the very poor and provides a caring and educational environment for street children and children whose parents live and work overseas to earn their livelihood.

Earlier this year, Sister Shanthi, the Bethel Superior, requested assistance as the centre's security system had been severely damaged by the local forest monkeys. The cameras played a crucial role in ensuring the safety and security of the children, staff and property and, in addition, were required and monitored by the local government.

Thanks to donors the Committee was able to provide immediate assistance and the repair and protection of this essential infrastructure was carried out swiftly.



Protection of newly repaired security infrastructure to prevent future damage caused by forest monkeys. Bethel Orphanage

Whilst the education of poor students continues to be the Committee's major mission, it is the support for our regular appeals and unallocated donations which allows St Veronica's to respond to special needs. Dear donors, thank you for your kindness and, especially, for your trust that the Committee will ensure funds are always used wisely. The Committee could not function without your generous support.

Vital to its continuing function is St Veronica's reliance on volunteers who donate their spare time and energies to ensure the office and shop function. Whilst the Committee currently has sufficient office volunteers, **it is desperately in need of more volunteers to join the men and women who currently work in the shop.**

A new volunteer who could come in one day each week or fortnight would relieve the burden on current volunteers who sometimes need to work 3 or 4 days (or even 5 days!) a week when other volunteers holiday or are unwell.

**Supporters
You are needed!!**

**Come and join a friendly volunteer
group and be fulfilled plus
live happier and longer!!**

The St Veronica sponsorship program continues to grow as overseas dioceses and superiors request additional support and an increasing number of students enrol in college or vocational courses after finishing school.

It is sometimes confronting to realise that a school education can be a rare opportunity for some children and youths. After previously being involved in the Committee sponsorship program and transferred to another centre, Father Shaiju at Mount Carmel Church, Aryanad, India, wrote:

'A particularly distressing concern is the educational deprivation among children in the region. Many of them, though academically capable, are forced to discontinue their schooling to support their families. Talented and eager young minds are at risk of being left behind due to financial constraints, with long-term impacts on their growth, opportunities, and moral development.'

As a result of Father Shaiju's plea, the Committee agreed to commence sponsorship support for several children in the area. Over time and with support from new sponsors, it is planned to increase support for this centre.

This leads me to another request dear supporters! It is difficult for me to admit, but it cannot be denied. We are all getting older and the years appear to be passing more quickly. Whilst those of us who volunteer at the Committee enjoy our work and find it fulfilling, our age is a concern. We are inevitably getting older, and so are some of our loved sponsors. In addition to needing more volunteers for the shop, the Committee and the children who will benefit from access to an education require sponsors.

So please spread the word about St Veronica's and its impressive guarantee that every cent donated to its overseas aid program is forwarded to an intended beneficiary without any Committee administrations cost being deducted.

WE NEED MORE SPONSORS

This year the Committee is again selling Christmas Cards to raise funds to support its current projects. They are especially useful for people for whom it is difficult to buy as many of us have everything we need or want.

Individual cards which cost \$5, \$10 or \$15 can be used either on their own or to complement chocolates or a bottle of wine. Details are shown on the following pages.



St Veronica Christmas Card Appeal 2025

This year the Committee's **\$5.00 Christmas Card** provides support for the Salesian Sisters' work in Mumbai, India. The Sisters conduct a nursery school and tutoring classes for the children of slum dwellers who work during the day.

Approximately 50 children of marginalized migrants, wage labourers and domestic servants living in the slums adjacent to the Pune centre leave their children there whilst they are at work. The Sisters' goal is to provide a safe place for the children, focusing on early education, health and social development.

To assist the Sisters in their work, the Committee is raising funds to provide colouring books and pencils for the children.



Nursery children from the Pune slums

The Committee's **\$10 Christmas Card** is to assist with the cost of Christmas meals for the elderly citizens at Our Lady of Dolours Parish, Dindigul, India.

The Lady of Dolours Parish provides meals for aged and ill community members throughout the working week Monday to Saturday.

Without this care, elderly and infirm people would be left without company and support whilst family members are at work.

The parish has constructed a dining hall shed and toilet facilities for their elderly residents. The food (rice, curry, vegetables and fruit) is provided by the parish and cooked and organized by volunteers.



Elderly and infirm locals enjoy a midday meal at Our Lady of Dolours Parish

A St Veronica **\$15 Christmas Card** assists to purchase sporting equipment for students at St Francis Xavier Home, Ahmedabad, India

St Francis Xavier Home in Gujarat was established in 1901 to uplift and empower local girls from marginalized communities by providing a quality education. Currently almost 1000 girls attend the school including 190 girls from remote communities who board at the Home. At the present time the girls have limited opportunities to participate in sport and exercise, despite it being an essential activity for healthy and rounded personal development. In 2026, St Veronica's hopes to raise funds to improve the Home's sport grounds. But in the meantime, it is hoped to provide sporting equipment for the students to use.



Current poor quality sports grounds at St Francis Xavier become unusable during the wet season

Dear Supporters, if you are interested in purchasing one or more of the St Veronica Christmas cards above, please follow the steps on the following pages.

Step 1. I am interested in purchasing (please tick and indicate number of cards)

- \$5 - a gift card for colouring books and pencils for nursery students (Pune Slums)
- \$10 - a gift card for a Christmas lunch for elderly citizens (Our Lady of Dolours)
- \$15 - a gift card for sporting equipment for girls (St Francis Xavier Home)

Step 2. Fill out your details below:

Name:	
Street Address:	
	Total Amount:
Email Address:	

Step 3. Mail your order to St Veronica Welfare Committee, P.O. Box 5098 WEST END 4101 OR email your order to admin@stveronica.org.au OR telephone your order through to 07 3844 7423. Please note: volunteers usually only attend the office each Monday and Thursday, although the shop is open Monday to Saturday.

Payment methods available:

- a. Visa or Master card (please circle):

Card Number: _____

Cardholder's Name: _____

Signature: _____ Expiry Date: ____/____/____

INTERNET TRANSFER or DIRECT DEPOSIT (Please contact the office for further details)

**THANK YOU SO VERY MUCH
FOR SUPPORTING THE ST VERONICA
CHRISTMAS APPEAL**



STUDENTS AVAILABLE FOR SPONSORSHIP

Both students below are the first girls from the Gumuz people in Galiye Rogda, Ethiopia, who have graduated from Year 8. Both have been admitted to Year 9 classes and will commence their studies at the Wolkite Government School.

When requesting sponsorships for the girls, Father Augustine, the Committee's sponsorship coordinator in Ethiopia, stated that their education will constitute **'a revolutionary change in the socio-educational sphere of the Gumuz people'**.



Alemi Diriba Sabsibe:

Alemi is the first child in her family. She has seven siblings. Her parents, who are good people, sent her to school. She is an average student and passed her Grade 8 with a 59 % average. Alemi is currently learning to speak English and will move to a new town to study in Year 9.



Batteri Dibira Degaga

Batteri is a good student who obtained 74 % in her Year 8 results. She was the first in her class. She has four siblings and is an active student. Batteri's father was the leader of the Gumuz tribe but has passed away. Batteri is also studying English.

Dear Supporters, we hope that the remainder of the year is all that you would wish it to be. Take care of yourselves and, when the time comes, best wishes for a joyful Christmas.

Margaret Kerwin and the St Veronica Volunteers

