

ST VERONICA WELFARE COMMITTEE EMAIL NEWSLETTER NO 46 – OCTOBER 2024 admin@stveronica.org.au

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Dear Friends of St Veronica's, welcome to the Committee's 2024 newsletter.

I am aware, for several of our supporters, 2024 has been a distressing year due to the loss of a loved one or to personal or family illness or issues. In addition, the world situation is itself distressing, as nations struggle and, even in our own fortunate country, disadvantage, conflict and disharmony occur. Nevertheless, I hope that, for all St Veronica supporters and families, life is as joyful as it is possible for it to be. For those of us who volunteer, it is a privilege and a joy to contribute to the Committee's wonderful work which, though constant and demanding at times, is always personally enriching.

Once again, it has been a busy year, with the Committee supporting as many requests for assistance as possible, given the generosity of donors and the availability of profits from the wonderful 'best ever' Thrift Shop. The St Veronica student sponsorship program continues, with approximately 1500 disadvantaged students benefitting from sponsors' subscriptions and / or Committee funds. At any one time, approximately 10 percent of these sponsored students are undertaking a college or vocational course after completing school. Shop funds are used to supplement such student sponsorships to ensure each tertiary student receives a minimum of \$500 because college costs are significantly more expensive than funds needed for school supplies. It is always an achievement and cause for celebration when a student from a poor family enrolls in further education, especially as the Committee believes a post-school qualification enhances students' future opportunities.



**St Veronica sponsored student Samuel Abbabe
graduated in Computer Science from
Rift Valley University, Ethiopia**



Anisha R.K. is studying a B. Commerce at Immanuel College, Vazhichal, Trivandrum, India Donor Funds helped Anisha and many other students to purchase essential educational items.

In addition to student sponsorships, the Committee and its donors contributed funds to help cover the cost of expensive medical procedures and medications in **Sri Lanka**, and to purchase study tables for poor village girls in **India** as well as milk products, study materials, sewing machines and tailoring classes in **Ethiopia**. Other donations included help to cover costs associated with Indian cyclone damage and the rescue of vulnerable street children at Bethel Orphanage, Nellore, India, plus provided support for the protection and education of children and youth in the slums of **Mumbai**.



Sri Lanka medical camp



Study Tables for poor village girls, Jollang



Milk products for Ethiopia

At the Committee **Annual General Meeting** in April, the resignation of Mrs Lee Duffy as a shop coordinator and member of the Executive was accepted. Lee who had volunteered in the shop for approximately 20 years, had experienced persistent ill health. Whilst she was unable to attend the AGM, it is hoped that her years of service can be recognised when volunteers gather to celebrate Christmas and the conclusion of another successful year. Lee's place on the executive has been taken by Mrs Elizabeth Cole who was unanimously elected as the Committee Accountant. Otherwise, the Executive remains unchanged.

For the first time in many years, five outstanding past or present volunteers were honoured as Life Members of the Committee – they were Mrs Fay Roberts, a long-serving shop coordinator; Mr Bryan Menhinnitt, who, as an outstanding Treasurer, also computerised a complex, ancient pen and paper system dating back to the mid-1950s; Mr John and Mrs Olga Johnstone, for their many years of service, John in the office, and Olga in the shop. Working from home, John continues to organise and print the monthly reminders, a demanding, essential task. Mrs Sharyn Milsomm was also nominated for her loyal and supportive work and wise advice. Sharyn has a comprehensive knowledge of office business protocols and travels from Mudgeeraba to volunteer.



**Four of our impressive shop volunteers with Mike, Committee Secretary.
From Left to Right: Sue, Mike, Diane, Gai and Allyson**

Dear Supporters, on behalf of the many beneficiaries (both overseas and in the local neighbourhood), and the Committee Executive, a huge thank you for your loyal support, either donating your hard-earned funds and / or your precious time, sometimes for over several decades. I hope you all know how much your support is appreciated and that it does so much good in our troubled world.



St Veronica Christmas Card Appeal 2024

St Veronica Christmas Card Appeal 2024

As was done last year, St Veronica's is raising funds to assist the **Bethany Father's Mission in Ethiopia**, where Father Augustine (the Bethany Fathers' Mission Superior and Committee sponsorship coordinator in the country) works to assist poor students attend school and to support the Gumuz people in Galiye Rogda who have been the most under-privileged group in the country.

For many Australians, Christmas, especially Christmas lunch and dinner, means delicious roast meals, plum puddings, treats and the 'occasional' drink. The St Veronica Christmas Card appeal this year is also focusing on food for infants and children and, looking ahead, to provide for future food security for the Gumuz community.

Once again, the Christmas Appeal is raising funds to provide more chickens for eggs to ensure schools can continue to provide lunches for students as required by the local government. Father Augustine advises an appeal for chickens 'will be a blessing for the 250 poor children in Goro pre-kindergarten and kindergarten'.



Lunch for students at Goro school

Another major concern is future food security. To avoid the recurrence of the hunger and malnutrition experienced in the past year, the Bethany Fathers have introduced the Gumuz people to agriculture and are providing fertilizer, seeds, seedling and saplings to help ensure a future food supply.



Supply of fruit tree saplings for Gumuz children

A medical camp earlier this year revealed of the 246 Gumuz children attending the camp, 36 were severely malnourished with another 78 on the borderline. As infants are especially vulnerable, the Fathers continue to provide families with the ingredients for nutritious milk products.



Milk preparation Ethiopia

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

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

- ☐ \$10 - a gift card for purchase of chickens for student lunches
- ☐ \$10 - a gift card for purchase of fertilizer, seeds, saplings for food security
- ☐ \$15 - a gift card for purchase of nutritious milk products for infants

Step 2. Fill out your details on the following page:

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



Margaret Kerwin and the St Veronica Community



STUDENTS AVAILABLE FOR SPONSORSHIP

JESIKA BOWLIN M

Jesika Bowlin M is in Std 6 at St Francis Xavier Higher Secondary School, Arockiyauram.

She is part of the Kuzhithural Integral Development Social Service Programme (KIDSS), India.

Her date of birth is 13.05.2014.

Jesika's father is a coolie worker whose monthly income is Rs 1000 (approx. Au \$20)

Her mother is a housewife. She has a brother aged 8. The family live in a small, thatched hut and struggle to provide for their basic necessities.

Jesika's special talents are drawing and dance and her ambition is to be a nurse.



AKALYA V

Akalya V is in Std 4 at Lutharan Middle School, Valuthalampallam.

She is also part of the KIDSS Sponsorship Programme.

Akalya V's date of birth is 14.12.2014.

Her father is also a coolie but earning only Rs 600 (approx. \$12 per month). He has a problem with alcohol.

Akalya has a sister aged 11.

As Akalya's mother is divorced, Akalya is under the care of her grandparents who find it very difficult to meet all the expenses related to her studies.

She is a very clever student whose special talents are drawing and singing.

Akalya would like to become a doctor when she grows up.

