



COMPANIONS CARE & JUSTICE NETWORK

Dear Friends of compassion and goodwill,

Our current economic difficulties and redesigning of the economy, are forcing not only politicians and leaders in commerce and industry, but also ordinary citizens to decide what matters - money for some or opportunity for all.

I am convinced that the Brotherhood of St Laurence must promote ideas and principles of compassion and justice at this critical time.

'Companions' is an alternative to 'isolates'. Today we need to gather to affirm and celebrate, explore and communicate, and act according to our belief in a society that needs to care and have a place for everyone. To be a companion with others is to be healthy and strong.

I invite all people who believe in people, whether from the community generally or from the Churches in particular, to be Companions with the Brotherhood of St Laurence.

Bishop Michael Challen, Executive Director
Brotherhood of St Laurence

We welcome enquiries from all who are interested in the Companions Care and Justice Network.

Please contact us if you wish

- to have more information;
- to become a Companion and full member of the Network;
- to become involved in some aspect of the Network's activities';
- to have a speaker address your group;
- to discuss a particular area of work in which the Companions could become involved.

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COMPANIONS

About the logo

St Laurena, patron Saint and Companion of the Poor faithfully served and protected them. He stood against the Emperor's abuse and was burned to death on a grill in 3rd century Rome. This grill became St Laurence's symbol and it is suggested in the design.

It could also be a barred or prison window.

But it is broken open. Laurence lived to free the poor. Apparently he was unafraid and 'free' even at the end.

A dove - a symbol of life and peace and hope - is released.

'COMPANIONS' is written partly over the grill-which indicates our solidarity with those who are trapped - and then moves out into a space which indicates the goal of joyful liberation and opportunity.



A Network for people and groups in the community
'committed to a caring and just society'

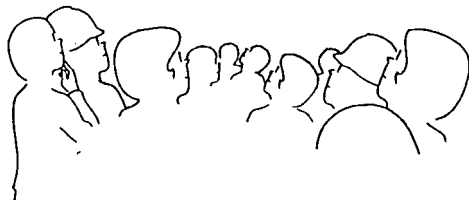
An initiative of the Brotherhood offering opportunity for wider community involvement.

The Brotherhood Serving
Victorians for 60 years,
1933 -1993
'Adding Justice to Care'

Companions' value stance & lifestyle commitment statement

I undertake for this year, according to my abilities and as is right for me

1. to work for a more caring and just society;
2. to identify with and be involved with people who are most disadvantaged;
3. to embrace both the care and justice aspects of social change;
4. to support and empower other Companions and individuals and groups in the community by giving of my time, resources and gifts;
5. to embrace a reflection - action process;
6. to work toward achieving a fair and sustainable Australian society within the global community;
7. to promote the Companions Care and Justice Movement. '



The Companions

- work for social change and make ours a more compassionate and equitable society;
- provide opportunities for personal and local involvement with disadvantaged people and engage issues at the broader levels of social and political life;
- offer mutual support by belonging to a group and wider network, and through being associated with the Brotherhood of St Laurence with its organisational backing, credibility, Community Development Worker and other Education, Research, Chaplaincy and Service staff;
- grow in awareness of the needs and justice issues facing Australians;
- reflect on those values and beliefs that motivate, inform and influence our actions;
- explore with people from humanist and religious traditions the various ways that celebrating, praying, listening, creating collectively, discussing openly and reflecting inwardly sustain us;
- seek to empower disadvantaged people and create a fairer and inclusive community; and
- model these same values and priorities in their common life as Companions.

How does the Network function?

The Companions Network will extend across Melbourne, Mornington Peninsula, Geelong and Ballarat.

The basic units of the Companions are geographically based and locally active and consist of 'Companion Communities' with perhaps 20 to 30 members and 'Work Groups'. Other Companions may form special interest rather than geographic groups which could, for example, focus on letter writing, developing ideas, artistic expression and prayer.

Companions are linked primarily by their common commitment (renewed annually) and also through special events and campaigns, co-operative activities, a newsletter, conference and quiet days and a co-ordinating group. Some Companions may choose to be involved in common activities only occasionally, while remaining in touch through the newsletter and offering their moral and spiritual support.

