



DIOCESE OF
LISMORE

Catholic Impact Report 2024



The Bishop's Message

The role of the Church in the Lismore Diocese is very easy to state but difficult to realise.

The Church is called to be a home in which Catholics are welcomed, cared for, and guided in their path to God. In relation to all other people in the diocese, the Church has a responsibility of care and Gospel charity.

In this Impact Report you will see the various works and entities through which the diocese tries to achieve these ends. We are constantly trying improve our outreach, and to recognise further possible good works.

Please pray for the diocese and, if possible, help us.

Bishop Greg Homeming OCD





From the Business Manager

This year the Diocese of Lismore continued to respond to the evolving needs of our communities.

Despite the ongoing economic uncertainty and the rising costs of living, we have remained dedicated to the Church's mission, by providing spiritual formation, pastoral care, quality education, health and aged care, and community outreach to thousands of people every day. We are grateful to the unwavering dedication of our staff and volunteers who live the Gospel through their service and make this possible.

This year, we contributed \$6.9 million to the broader Australian community through funds collected and distributed, in-kind services, and discounts and concessions applied to our services. We also established the Diocesan Benevolent Fund, providing a new pathway to directly support the most vulnerable. The fund is publicly accessible and accepts tax-deductible donations via our website.

Looking to the future, we remain focused on good stewardship, long-term sustainability, and providing hope and care for those in need.

Thank you for supporting the diocese.

Greg Isaac
Diocesan Business Manager

Our Impact

22

Parishes

46

Schools

1

Hospital

10

Outside school
hours care services

12

Aged & community
care services

43

Priests

2

Deacons

6

Brothers

66

Sisters

97,980

Catholics

1,130

Baptisms

794

Confirmations

18,667

Students

510

Funerals

49

Marriages

15,514

Cared for at St Vincent's Lismore

2,567

provided aged care and accommodation for

\$6.9 million

Contribution by the diocese's ministries to the broader Australian
community from fundraising, programs and in-kind services



22

Parishes

97,980

Catholics

Parishes

With 22 parishes serving 97,980 Catholics across Northern NSW, parishes are at the heart of our Catholic community, as places of worship, sacramental life, and support for those in need.

Each parish is a spiritual home where parishioners gather to celebrate the Eucharist, sacraments, and key moments in their faith journey. They are led by our clergy, and supported by lay leaders and pastoral teams. They work together to nurture faith, offer friendship, and provide essential services to their communities.

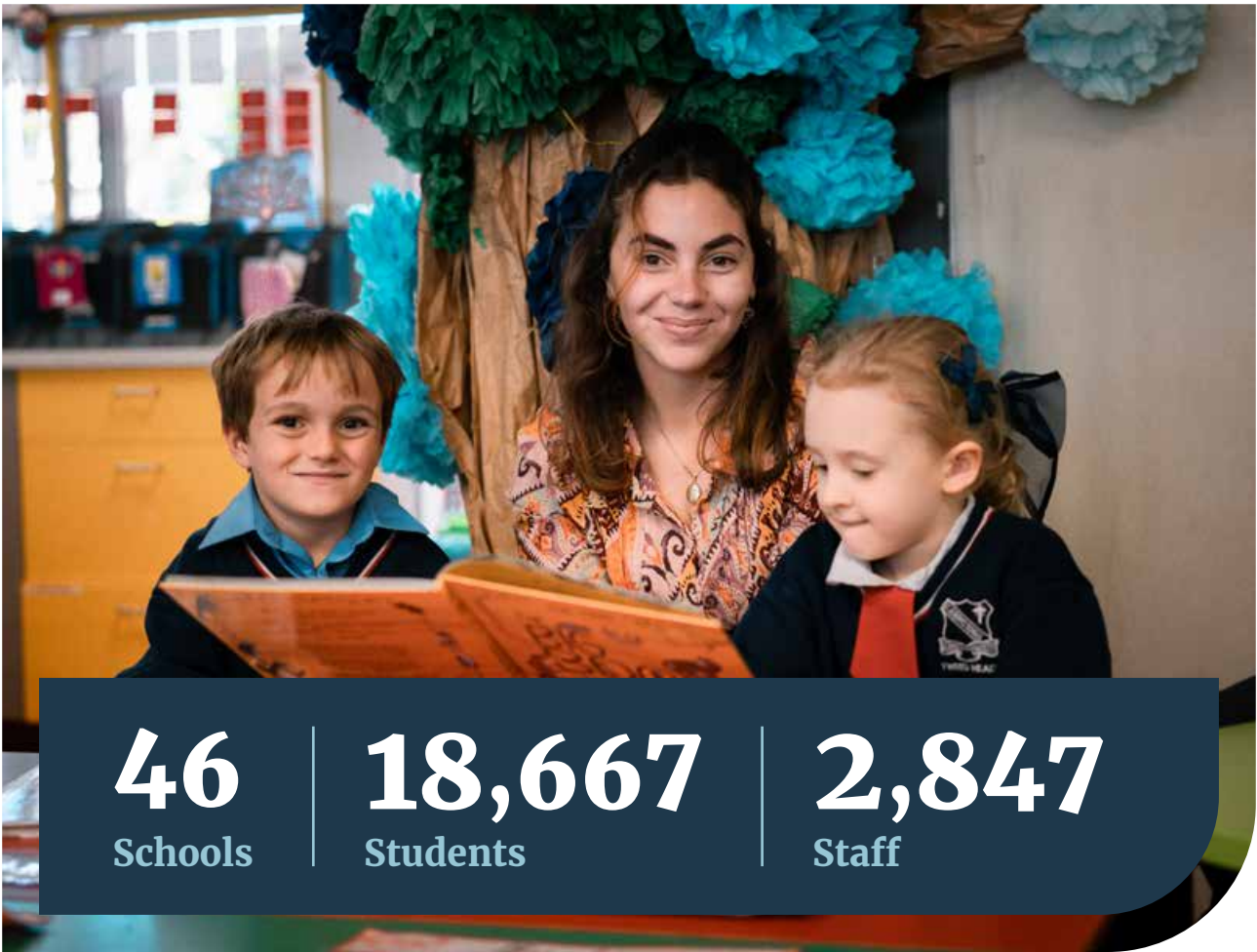
Parishes play an important role in providing pastoral care to their local communities, celebrating significant life events like the birth of a child, marriage, and the death of someone we love.

No matter where parishioners are located, whether in coastal towns, rural communities, parishes ensure that faith remains a living and active presence in the lives of Catholics across our diocese.

Our parishes are not only places of worship but also centres of outreach and service. Parishioners generously volunteer in a range of community programs, including:

- Providing meals and support to the homeless and vulnerable;
- Working with the St Vincent de Paul Society and other outreach groups;
- Youth ministry programs, helping to nurture faith and leadership in young people;
- Partnering with their local Catholic schools to provide food hampers and essential services;
- Pastoral care and companionship, ensuring that everyone feels welcome and supported.

Our parishes are welcoming communities where everyone is invited to experience God's love and grow in faith. Whether you are a long-time parishioner or new to the Catholic faith, there is a place for you in our parish communities.



46
Schools

18,667
Students

2,847
Staff

Schools

Our Catholic schools are vibrant hubs where families, parishes, and communities come together to support the holistic development of over 18,000 students across 46 schools, with the support of approximately 2,500 dedicated staff.

Co-responsibility in the service of the Mission guides collaboration among the bishop, clergy, school leaders, staff, and families in leading and governing through Gospel values. Staff and students are formed in the Mission of the Church, with a focus on evangelisation and understanding of God, self, and the world. Faith formation is central, with programs in religious education, student discipleship, and Catholic social teaching.

The Family Connect and Support service assists families facing challenges, linking them to appropriate support networks. Operating in partnership with organisations like Social Futures, the program addresses issues from parenting to housing stability.

Our schools celebrate cultural, linguistic and social diversity, fostering environments where every student feels valued and included. Programs support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, affirming identity and promoting reconciliation across school communities.

We offer a dynamic K-12 learning continuum, incorporating academic excellence, VET pathways, and life skills programs. Innovative approaches to pedagogy, including inquiry learning and digital integration, support future-focused education.

A whole-school approach to well-being underpins learning, with school counsellors, pastoral care, and trauma-informed practice in every school. Targeted support initiatives ensure students' social, emotional and spiritual development is nurtured alongside academic growth. Students are equipped to thrive, contribute, and experience the fullness of life.

Out of School Hours Care

Out of School Hours Care (OSHC) supports families by providing care for primary school children before and after school, on pupil-free days, and during school holidays. These services are designed for children who need a safe and supportive place to be when school isn't running, giving parents peace of mind during busy times.

The diocese's OSHC services operate as a partnership between parishes and schools, working closely with families to meet the needs of local communities. There are ten OSHC services located between Murwillumbah and West Kempsey:

- Mary Help of Christians, Sawtell
- Mt St Patrick's, Murwillumbah
- Our Lady Help of Christians, Lismore
- St Ambrose, Pottsville
- St Augustine's, Coffs Harbour
- St James, Yamba
- St Joseph's, Coraki
- St Joseph's, Kempsey
- St Joseph's, Maclean
- St Patrick's, Macksville

These services create safe, nurturing, and enriching environments where children can play, learn, and build relationships. Each service upholds the values of the Catholic Church, while offering inclusive care for families from all backgrounds.

The early education and care sector in Australia is experiencing notable growth. The Federal Government has reported that enrolments in OSHC programs have surged by 111% over the past 20 years, reflecting the increasing need for flexible and accessible care options for working families.

10 OSHC
Services

1,097
Students Cared For



Safeguarding

The diocese is committed to creating safe and caring communities for all – especially children, young people, and adults at risk who encounter the Church. We work together for the protection of those people and for the prevention of any form of abuse, neglect or exploitation within our Church communities and organisations.

Our practices are built on the National Catholic Safeguarding Standards and NSW Child Safe Standards as well as child safe regulations from the Office of the Children's Guardian to ensure compliance, accountability, and transparency in all that we do.

Our comprehensive policies and procedures are in place to respond immediately and compassionately to any person at harm or risk of harm.

In 2024, our safeguarding team worked closely with clergy, employees, volunteers and ministries to strengthen safeguarding across the diocese. This included the delivery of regular training and education to create safe and welcoming environments for families and our wider communities. This reflects our ongoing commitment to protecting the most vulnerable in our communities while nurturing their faith.

144 hours

of training delivered and attended by employees, volunteers and clergy





\$911,381

Proceeds given to the North Coast community from fundraising, programs and in-kind services

Supporting Our Communities

Funds from the 2022 Flood Appeal and the diocese have continued to help provide emergency relief, rental and mortgage assistance, food, and essential household items to vulnerable individuals and families. This support was often delivered in partnership with local parishes and not-for-profit organisations. Some of the organisations we supported in 2024 included:

- Social Futures
- The Good Pantry
- Resilient Lismore
- Kempsey Neighbourhood Centre
- Lismore Soup Kitchen

To give people the opportunity to continue supporting those at risk in our communities, the diocese established the Diocesan Benevolent Fund. All donations to the Fund over \$2 are tax deductible and used exclusively for charitable purposes, ensuring that the most vulnerable members of our community receive assistance.

**Donate to the
Benevolent Fund**
lismorediocese.org/donate



Aged Care Services

The diocese has a long and proud history of supporting older people through aged and community care. Traditionally, these services have been provided through residential aged care, nursing homes, hostels, and in-home community care. Independent living villages also form a key part of diocesan aged care, offering age-appropriate accommodation for older people.

With a significant presence along the east coast of NSW—from Ballina and Lismore in the north to Port Macquarie in the south—the diocese through the diocesan aged and community care providers plays a vital role in delivering aged care founded in Catholic principles within the communities they serve across the diocese.

The Diocesan Aged and Community Care Secretariat, formed as an initiative of the diocese in 2006, provides advice for parishes and supports collaboration between providers to meet regulatory requirements and strengthen organisations through the sharing of expertise.

Diocesan Aged and Community Care services include:

- St Joseph's Nursing Home, based at St Vincent's Private Hospital, Lismore (residential aged care).
- St Carthage's Community Care, Lismore (community care and independent living);
- Crowley Care, Ballina (residential aged care, home care and independent living);
- Sawtell Catholic Care of the Aged, Sawtell (residential aged care, home care and independent living);
- St Agnes' Care and Lifestyle, Port Macquarie (residential care, home care and independent living);
- Parish independent living services.

12 Aged and Community Care Services

2,567

Provided Care and Accommodation For





St Vincent's Lismore

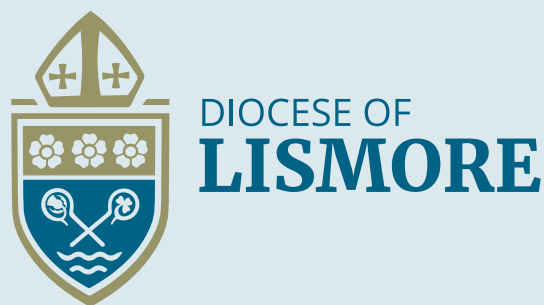
St Vincent's Lismore is an accredited acute surgical, medical, rehabilitation and palliative care hospital which provides a wide range of services.

The hospital is committed to providing patients with quality health care in a warm and compassionate environment. From initial consultation to diagnosis, treatment and recovery, patients receive the best in hospital care from St Vincent's highly qualified staff.

The hospital dates back to 1920, when the Sisters of Charity answered a request from Bishop John Carroll, to establish a Catholic hospital.

By December 1921, their vision became reality as the first patients were admitted to a two-story weatherboard residence on Dalley Street, Lismore. Over the decades, St Vincent's has grown into a first class, contemporary private healthcare facility.

At the heart of the hospital are exceptional staff, from dedicated housekeeping and catering teams to the leading medical and surgical specialists in northern NSW. St Vincent's Hospital is more than a healthcare resource – it's a community.



10 Orion Street, Lismore, NSW 2480
E. chancery@lismore.catholic.org.au
P. 02 6621 9444

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