



connect

SUMMER 2015

A NEWSLETTER FOR SUPPORTERS OF CATHOLIC CARE



Creating Better
Tomorrows

Message from Fr Joe Caddy



In April, a Committee for the Economic Development of Australia (CEDA) report highlighted that 1.5million Australians were living in poverty – with very little hope of escaping their situation. In June, the Australian Council of Social Services (ACOSS) Inequality report showed that the top 20% of Australians earned five times as much as – and owned 70 times more than – the poorest twentieth percent.

And if we need more proof that Australia is failing our most vulnerable citizens, we only need to look to *'Dropping off the edge'* – a report launched in June by Jesuit Social Services and Catholic Social Services Australia (of which CatholicCare is a member) that shows that disadvantage is concentrated in small numbers of communities.

What is confronting about this new report is that some of the areas that feature among the most disadvantaged are only too familiar to CatholicCare; with Corio, Doveton, Morwell, Moe and Dandenong all ranking in Victoria's top 40. While these areas face more than their fair share of struggles, there are many positives to be found in these places, with people of great courage, drive and resilience.

The poor, the disadvantaged the marginalised. These are labels that can sometimes get in the way of driving real change for our communities; reducing systemic issues to a vague problem and an impossible or insurmountable challenge.

But we at CatholicCare know too well the human face of entrenched disadvantage. We walk with the individuals, families and communities every day and we know that their

needs are complex. While we understand that solutions are neither quick nor easy, our work is inspired by the resilience and human dignity of the people we serve.

Reports like *'Dropping off the edge'* – which can be found on our website www.ccam.org.au – may be a reminder that we have a long way to go – but they also shine a light on some of our best work.

As we near the end of our 80th anniversary year, and I reflect on CatholicCare's achievements and the impact of our work, I feel great pride. Restoring the wellbeing of families to lead happy and fulfilling lives; and advocating for better social supports for those who don't have a voice is something for us all to be proud of.

With Christmas fast approaching, and the Catholic community preparing to begin **the Year of Mercy** on 8 December, it is fitting that we all pause and take time to celebrate and give thanks for all that is wonderful in our lives; for the roof we have over our heads; for the food we have on our table and the love we receive from our family and friends.

I would also like to extend our thanks – on behalf of our Board and staff – to you all for your continuing support and belief in our work. I also ask that you keep in your thoughts those less fortunate than ourselves, and pray their hopes and dreams for a great future and a better world will be realised.

With every blessing

Fr Joe Caddy

What's behind the door?

To mark the beginning of the **Year of Mercy** on 8 December 2015, Pope Francis will open a special holy door at St Peter's Basilica *"through which anyone who enters will experience the love of God who consoles, pardons, and instils hope."*



Here in Melbourne, a special holy door of mercy will be opened by Archbishop Denis Hart at St Patrick's Cathedral on 13 December 2015 and Melbourne's Catholic community are invited to join the pilgrimage.

Gather your family, friends and fellow parishioners, and make a real day of it!

Following the opening of the door of mercy, Archbishop Hart will lead a prayer service and commissioning. Each pilgrim is invited to carry a photo of someone who has been merciful to them, or someone they wish to pray for during this Jubilee, and place it on a 'wall of mercy' upon arrival at the Cathedral. Full details of the program will be made available closer to the date on the Archbishop's Office for Evangelisation website:

www.cam.org.au/evangelisation



A lasting legacy

If you have considered leaving a bequest to CatholicCare and would like to find out more about the breadth of work we do, join us on 10 March 2016 when we hold our Parker Moffit Bequest Society morning tea at the Cardinal Knox Centre.

Invitations will be sent shortly, so if you would like to be included on the guest list, please call Nevin Verghis on 9287 5517 or email nevin.verghis@ccam.org.au.

Thank you

Thank you to all who supported our June Appeal and Church Appeal.

You raised a total of \$560,344 to support our programs and services





SPOTLIGHT

Creating better tomorrows

"To put the world right in order, we must first put the nation in order; to put the nation in order, we must first put the family in order; to put the family in order, we must first cultivate our personal life; we must set our hearts right" – Confucius

Confucius wrote this back in 551 BC... and it is still ringing true in 2015!

To set hearts right requires a person to be surrounded by a wonderful and nurturing environment, full of love, harmony and peace. But the reality is that modern life is complex and there are many issues that impact on families. Unemployment, mental illness, violence, housing or financial pressure – these are just some of the things that cause stress and tension, and as parents, grandparents, nurturers or caregivers, we tend to put the needs of others first.

But the reality is that everyone, at some point, will experience areas in their life that aren't working as well as they would like. They will need an ear to talk to and a warm, welcoming and non-judgemental environment, where they can be heard and treated with respect. And this is our job. It's to listen to the people we work with, and to be present and guide them as they navigate life's difficulties and challenges

But how do we do this?

As the stigma that was once associated with counselling vanishes, more people are seeking professional assistance in managing their problems. Our experienced team – which includes psychologists, social workers, and specialists in mental health, family violence, relationships and drug and alcohol addiction – understand that the best client outcomes are achieved when a professional relationship exists founded on mutual trust, respect and understanding of each other.

A good counsellor nurtures this relationship from the outset by listening, asking the right questions, interpreting emotions, offering feedback and making recommendations – all key traits to providing quality counselling which meets client needs.

No matter the reason for seeking counselling, the goal is to help people regain strength and focus. This can take time, and any counsellor or psychologist will tell you – there is no 'one size fits all approach'. For some people, one or two sessions is all that is needed for their issue to be resolved. For more complex cases, multiple sessions may be spread over a longer period of time. What is consistent throughout our counselling program is the compassion and expertise of our counsellors – who tailor their approach based on their clients' needs.

But effective counselling can also exact a personal toll for those who spend their days hearing stories of trauma, abuse, grief and pain. There is always the potential for burn out and we promote work/life balance so our staff maintain their own health and wellbeing. They also receive regular clinical supervision as well as professional development and training

sessions to ensure they stay abreast of the latest industry techniques and best practice standards.

The aim of all our counselling services is to empower people to help themselves. To heal old wounds; to set people up with the tools to succeed; to look to the future with hope; and to have the opportunity to enjoy 'life to the full'.

Through a gentle mixture of empathy, understanding, compassion and listening we help children, families and individuals 'open' the window to a better tomorrow!

Lucie's story

'Having a child with an Ice issue is destroying. The parents suffer the most. You've got to have help. It destroys your child's life and the parent's life. It just goes on and on. It can destroy your marriage.

You don't realise that you're not as free as you should be after retirement when something like this happens. It's a lot of heartache. You need people who understand and who won't look at you in a bad way or talk about you. You need them to be non-judgmental. You can't always tell people about it.

I got very sick. I was a very angry person and disappointed in life. I never thought I would have to face all this heartache in my retirement. Counselling helped me to see a different view. I am now not so angry and this has changed my family relationships. If I hadn't come here I wouldn't be able to afford to get help. I would have gone downhill, not up. I would have been on medication.

This counselling has given me hope. It really helped me a lot to get by with life. It's helped me understand the children rather than getting angry and to cope in a different way. It has helped me to be stronger.'

Easy access to quality counselling is essential in achieving outcomes for those who need our care. We get some government funding for our range of counselling services, but rely on donations to meet the shortfall. We hope you can make a donation this Christmas and help us continue our work.

Natalie's story

'My son Cody was 11 months old when Charlotte was born. I'd just moved house, we had little money and my partner was out of the picture. Charlotte was an unplanned pregnancy and the instant love I had with Cody wasn't there. I resented her...and it just kept building. I wanted to be a good mother...but my patience had worn so thin. I was angry all the time and having shameful thoughts about harming them – my own children – these vulnerable innocent human beings. It was too much. I felt so low...like every bit of joy in my life has been sucked out.

Once I began family focused counselling through CatholicCare our family life changed. They linked me in with a support group for young mums where I could share my experiences. They helped me with parenting education to recognise my babies needs and how I can manage them – instead of resenting them for placing unfair demands on my attention – and they found me low cost activities we could do together to strengthen the family bond.

The best thing I did was to seek help. I didn't understand that I was suffering from post-natal depression...it's a terrible thing to go through on your own. You know deep down in your own heart that you're not a bad person, and you live in in fear of your own emotions and reactions. Having someone listen to you and reassure that you are not a monster and that other mums experience this as well...it lightened the load considerably.

Now I have two beautiful toddlers who are the light and joy in my life. I love seeing the delight on their faces when we're playing, or just cuddling and being silly on the couch. I'm becoming a good mother and role model and I just want to love, protect and nurture them.'



New partnership for the delivery of loss & grief ministry

We are excited to announce that we (CatholicCare Melbourne) and Good Grief (an agency of the Sisters of St Joseph) have entered into a strategic partnership to deliver Seasons for Growth - a unified and integrated ministry supporting individuals and communities who have experienced significant change or loss.

This program replaces our Seasons™ Loss and Grief program which has been delivered for the past twenty years, and ultimately, this partnership unites 40 years of combined experience in loss and grief ministry. It also brings together an experienced, expert team that can position the *Seasons for Growth* program firmly into communities in both Australia and New Zealand, and help build sustainability of the program into the future.

Change, loss and grief are a part of life and the *Seasons for Growth* program assists children, young people and adults to negotiate those difficult and challenging times in life. Schools, community settings and some parishes have trained Seasons Companions who run support groups to help you not only learn more about the grief process, but also normalise what you are going through by sharing your experiences with other people going through similar changes.

We are very excited to partner with Good Grief and look forward to growing this program in the future.

If you would like more information about this program, please contact Paula Sharp, Seasons for Growth Coordinator on 9287 5505 or email paula.sharp@ccam.org.au



good grief
Growing through Change



Seasons
for Growth®

Fast facts

2134
clients received
post-separation support



207
families received
in home support



received loss and
grief support



2215
people received
counselling

590
people received
drug and alcohol
counselling

291 professionals
trained as loss and
grief companions

Donor survey

We recently sent a survey to donors to determine which areas of our work you were aware of; how we could improve donor communications and what information you would like to receive in the future.



The results have been collated and overall donors are satisfied with our fundraising activities and the communications they receive.

Some areas for improvement were also identified such as receiving appeals and newsletters by email; greater communication in regards to how we spend our fundraising income and providing more information on what outcomes have been achieved.

In response to your feedback, you will see in this issue some statistics in terms of our service delivery, and the number of people we've been able to help in the 2014/15 financial year. We will also investigate the possibility of developing online appeals and e-newsletters to reduce our printing costs; and hope to have this implemented by July 2016.

Thank you to all who participated.

Crunching the numbers

89.2% of donors find our appeal letters and communications interesting and informative.

81.5% of donors find the donation process easily accessible and understood.

64% were satisfied and **22%** were very satisfied with communications in regards to how we use donations;

AND

57% were satisfied and **37%** were very satisfied with the recognition received as a CatholicCare donor.

What you think of our work

'The best thing that ever happened was the support given to us through CatholicCare to be able to adopt our daughter.'

'I am very glad to do the little I do. Despite the tiny amount that I give, CatholicCare is one of my favourite charities.'



Volunteers

We are extremely grateful for our family of loyal volunteers.

They help us to run community groups, and provide administrative, event and fundraising support. There has been considerable work undertaken in the past 12 months to grow our volunteer program and to ensure that we are providing a valuable volunteer experience.

We'd like to take this opportunity to thank all those who have given their time to help us – you are an integral part of the CatholicCare family and we are grateful for your support.

If you are interested in volunteering opportunities, please call Paula Selway on 9926 5699 or email volunteer@ccam.org.au



Figures: January to October 2015

Congratulations to Team CatholicCare!

On a cold and wintery Melbourne day, Team CatholicCare bravely met at Federation Square early Sunday 26 July to Run Melbourne for refugees.

We raised a total of \$14,452 which will be equally split between the East and West Refugee and Settlement programs. In the East, we will continue our Justice Education programs and a series of group workshops (sewing classes, homework groups and conversation groups). In the West, we are working with young refugees to plan for life beyond secondary schools, helping with resumes, advocating with employers and making career plans.



Team CatholicCare



St Peter's Primary students with their certificates

St Peter's Primary School Sunshine came on board for the first time to support us in our fundraising efforts. CatholicCare's Events Manager Angela Paterno-Smith and Leanne McKenner – our direct connection to St Peter's Primary School – recently paid the school a visit to thank them for their participation and award their certificates of appreciation.

Catholic Church Insurance has confirmed their support for next year and we encourage all parishes, donors and schools to get on board for 2016. It's a fun event and it makes a huge difference in the lives of refugees trying to settle in Melbourne. Pop the date in your diaries – 24 July 2016 – and email us at fundraising@ccam.org.au to register your interest.

We are looking forward to an even bigger target next year!

Heavenly Gala Ball

200 people filled the Plaza Ballroom on Thursday 10 September to celebrate CatholicCare's 80 years of service to the Victorian community.

It was an opportunity to celebrate our anniversary amongst supporters, raise much needed funds for our programs and services and showcase the programs we deliver and the impact our work has on those we serve.

We do as much as we can with the grants we receive, however, the resources available to us are consistently outweighed by the demand for our services. Fundraising events such as the Gala Ball assist us in helping to meet the growing need.

We would like to thank everybody who donated auction items, purchased tickets and joined us on the night. In particular we would like to thank the Kangan Visual Arts Students for theming the venue; our events sponsors Grollo Group and Mercury Principle Events, and the army of volunteers who looked after guests every need and ensured the night ran smoothly.

Some highlights from the night:

- AFL legend Kevin Sheedy – our keynote speaker who inspired all in the room by talking about his sporting achievements and the importance of family and community.
- The personal story of Clemente student Shathees, who is turning his life around with the help of Clemente Fitzroy and our drug and alcohol counselling services.
- The entertainment provided by a fabulous and authentic rock'n'roll band 'Who was that Cat' – every set they played filled the dance floor!
- **\$54,000 raised for our services – a tremendous effort!**



'I have come so that you may have life and have it to the full' – John 10:10

There has been considerable work undertaken in the past year to strengthen CatholicCare's brand in an increasingly competitive market place.

Part of our branding strategy was to develop marketing collateral that brings our gospel vision to life visually and appeals to people of all ages, faiths and backgrounds. We have achieved this through a new series of posters, postcards and event materials, and so far they've been very well received.

These materials are in the process of being distributed, so keep an eye out in your parishes and schools and let us know what you think!



The Spirit of Christmas

We have a beautiful selection of traditional Christmas cards available for purchase.

Cards are 2 x 5 kinds and only cost \$10 per packet. If you would like to buy cards please call us on 9287 5517 or purchase online at www.ccam.org.au



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Strengthening families and communities
www.ccam.org.au