

**Spotlight on
African Dads and Kids**
80th Birthday Celebrations
Run Melbourne 2015



Message from the CEO



It's hard to believe that we have been caring for the community since 1935!

When CatholicCare was established as the Catholic Social Services Bureau, the needs of families were very considerable. In the midst of a worldwide economic depression, unemployment was very high and many families were living in harsh

conditions of poverty. High numbers of children were being looked after in institutions because families simply could not afford to feed and house them.

Today the general economic situation may not be as grim as it was then, in fact, Australia has enjoyed more than twenty years of economic expansion. Clearly though, the benefits of that growth have not benefitted all and there are still significant pockets of disadvantage in our communities.

Last month, the Committee for Economic Development of Australia (CEDA) published research which revealed that between one and one and a half million Australians find themselves in entrenched poverty with little hope of getting out of that situation.

At the release of the report, CEDA Chief Executive, Professor Stephen Martin observed that labour markets on their own are incapable of turning this situation around because entrenched poverty is not just about getting a job; there are many other social issues including mental health, educational levels, social exclusion and discrimination.

It is into these spaces of disadvantage that CatholicCare steps in with its mission and work. Our work with families caught in alcohol and drug dependency; our efforts in helping to keep family relationships healthy for the benefit of children and happy mums and dads; and our efforts in helping refugees to settle successfully in their new homeland - just to name a few of our works - are all important parts of the solution to breaking the bonds of entrenched poverty.

With your help, we will continue to do this, but as the CEDA research demonstrates, and as we are aware from those who come through our doors at CatholicCare, support is needed now as much as ever.

Finally, you've no doubt noticed that winter is on its way, so please look after yourself and loved ones. Keep the umbrella close at hand; pull out the woollies, see your Dr for a flu-shot and keep warm (you'll find some cheap and easy tips in this edition).

Again, thank you for being part of the CatholicCare journey and helping us to alleviate the stresses and difficulties life can bring to those less fortunate.

Blessings

Fr Joe Caddy



A lasting legacy

On Wednesday 11 March we hosted a special afternoon tea for Parker Moffitt Bequest Society members.

The occasion commenced with a prayer and blessing for donors from Fr Joe Caddy, remembering and celebrating those who had left a final gift to CatholicCare in 2014. Our guests also heard from Ms Bernadette Garcia, Senior Manager Communications, Fundraising and Marketing who spoke about the enduring legacy of bequests which are invested to provide a secure and reliable income for future programs and services.

Guest speaker Joan Adamson shared her personal story of her association with CatholicCare, from her adoption of two baby boys over 40 years ago, through to her experiences of volunteering as a Friend of Mary of the Cross Centre. Joan's commitment to volunteering and her support to CatholicCare over many years was an inspiration to all.

Thank you to Joan, and to all our donors who attended the afternoon tea.

If you would like more information on becoming a Bequest Society member or would like to attend our next bequest event, please call Sharyn McBride on 0418 984 681 or email sharyn.mcbride@ccam.org.au



Tax Time

June 30 looms large and that shoebox full of receipts is about to get a workout. We can't give financial advice, but we encourage you to visit www.ato.gov.au to find out what deductions and rebates you are entitled to. If you would like to take advantage of a tax-deductible donation to CatholicCare, please visit our website www.ccam.org.au or call Nevin on 9287 5517



Exciting News

We are pleased to announce that our submission to the Department of Social Services to establish a new Family Mental Health Service in Melton was successful; and we will soon bring our own brand of caring to those with mental health issues in the Melton community!



SPOTLIGHT

Fathers Matter!

It's not easy being a parent today. For many, navigating the parenting journey – especially during the difficult teenage years – can be both challenging and overwhelming. But imagine what it is like for refugee families who have to combine these challenges while adapting to their new home, complete with new language, social norms and systems. Add the trauma of war, genocide, displacement and loss, and you might wonder how some refugee families can hope to successfully navigate parenthood AND settle well.

Since 2008, CatholicCare's African Dads and Kids Camps (ADK) have helped refugee families explore the similarities and differences between being a father in Africa and being a father in Australia while providing quality time for dads and kids to build understanding and strengthen bonds.

"I never thought of fatherhood as something that could affect a kid."

-Homer Simpson

Despite what Homer Simpson might think, it is generally acknowledged that fathers play an important role in raising healthy, happy children. However, in the context of forced migration, the traditional role of fathers can sometimes be thrown into uncertainty as a result of changing family dynamics.

In Africa, fathers usually assume the traditional role of breadwinner. But many refugee fathers in Australia experience difficulty finding employment, which can sometimes mean that mothers are out working, leaving fathers at home to take on a more active parenting role. Meanwhile, the children in the family are learning English quicker than their parents and integrating into their new community at an accelerated rate. This can lead to a shift in power dynamics and a diminishing of pride and confidence for fathers.

The camp

CatholicCare's ADK camps give fathers the opportunity to go away for the weekend with one of their children to explore and discuss topics such as respecting traditional cultures and a new way of life; parenting in Africa compared with parenting in Australia; bonding with their children; understanding each other's strengths; and working together as a team to meet new challenges.



In addition, post-migration can lead to a differing of values and beliefs – resulting in increased difficulty in communication - which in turn can lead to increased tension and family conflict.

But in order for refugee families to settle well, the role of the father is extremely important. It is often the fathers who carry the hopes of their children's futures. Maintaining strong relationships is crucial to enable them to support their children to settle well and to achieve their full potential.

It allows the dads to understand they can have a significant and positive impact in their children's lives and empowers them to become more attuned to the challenges their children face in being 'Australian', and how to address their own challenges in adapting to a new culture and new roles, while still balancing respect for their traditional culture.

The program combines group discussions with fun indoor/ outdoor challenges, allowing the dads and kids to work together to find solutions to problems they have never encountered before.

Most importantly, it allows the dads to spend quality time with their children. Sharing their story about their family of origin, in specifically designed activities, is powerful and moving for them and the child. The child has insight into why their father is who he is, what events in life happened and just as importantly the fathers see the incredible difference of cultures between them and their children.

Children have the best outcomes when they have great relationships with their dads. The ADK camps help participants to celebrate differences, resolve conflict and build stronger relationships.

Peter's story

In 1987, Peter became separated from his family during the Second Sudanese Civil War - when government troops and rebels systematically attacked villages in southern Sudan, killing many of the people who lived there. Peter made a three month journey on foot as an unaccompanied minor to Ethiopia; one of around 20,000 orphaned or displaced children who became known as the 'Lost Boys of Sudan'. He was just 9 years old.

Peter lived in a refugee camp for a further 14 years; and it was there that he met his wife. One of Peter's cousins - another Lost Boy who had since migrated to the United States - sent him money so he could move to Nairobi where Peter was able to get a job as a translator for the United Nations (Peter speaks five languages!).

At 28 years old, Peter and his family came to Australia. He thought it would be easy to adjust to the new culture, but he found it difficult to find work. He enrolled in an English language course and after three months he started working in a steel factory.

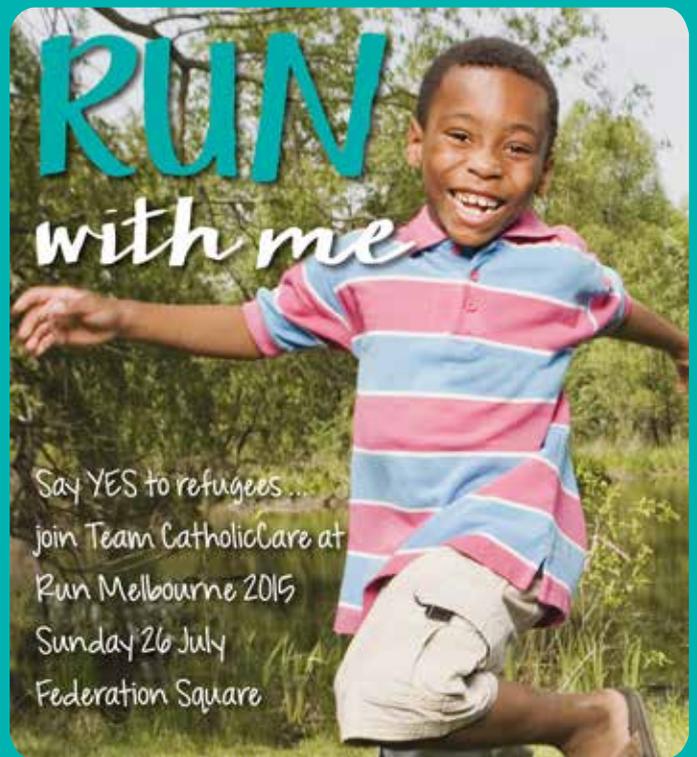
Peter has struggled with culture barriers, in particular the different gender roles. Already language barriers are beginning to surface in the household - and he laments that his children don't speak the mother tongue. He worries that the teen years will bring new challenges; anxious that new technology will serve to widen the divide between parents and their kids.

Peter sees value in the ADK program as a way of normalising some of his experiences; knowing that other dads have had similar issues. He also appreciates the sharing of their stories, giving acknowledgment of their African culture through the strength of their collective stories.

Fast facts

- Since 2008, over 100 dads have participated in the African Dads and Kids Camps
- Most camp participants have come to Australia from Sudan after escaping situations of terrible conflict and violence
- CatholicCare has hosted camps in Phillip Island, Queenscliff, Malmsbury, Anglesea and Myrning
- Camp activities have included: horse-riding, geocaching, surfing, tunnelling, paddle-boarding, campfires, flying foxes and movie nights
- CatholicCare's next African Dads and Kids Camp will be June 26 - 28, a Winter Adventure in Marysville. To find out more and obtain a registration form, please email Kate.McKernin@ccam.org.au or phone 0418 446 692.

CatholicCare's African Dads and Kids Camp is just one of the programs we run to help newly arrived refugees to settle well in Australia. For more information about our Refugee and Settlement Services, visit www.ccam.org.au



Run Melbourne 2015

Team CatholicCare invites all supporters to join us for Run Melbourne 2015. It's a great day out and all proceeds raised will go to our Refugee and Settlement programs to assist newly-arrived refugees to settle well in Australia.

If you would prefer not to run, you are welcome to join in a leisurely 5km walk - and if you can't be there on the day, you can always fundraise, sponsor our team or make a donation.

Find out more, register or donate at www.ccam.org.au/runmelbourne

CCI Personal Insurance is the official team sponsor and will donate \$40 for every person who joins Team CatholicCare.

CCI are a great supporter of CatholicCare and have been looking after the insurance needs of the Catholic community since 1911.

For more information on their wide range of products, including home & contents, car and landlord insurance, plus information on how they give back to the community, visit www.catholicinsurance.org.au.



Thank you to all who supported our recent Christmas and Easter Appeals

You helped us to raise a total of \$203,558 for our programs and services



“People in every nation enhance the social dimension of their lives by acting as committed and responsible citizens.”

- *Pope Francis*



Marvellous Moe

Less than 12 months ago there was a vacant block in suburban Moe and look at what's there now!

CatholicCare Gippsland joined in a partnership with Gippsland Employment Skills Training (GEST) to develop a vegetable garden with invitations to the African Community to participate. Participants were trained in the safe use of chemicals, tools and machinery; garden boxes were built and filled with soil; and planting began.

The original aim was to encourage participants to grow vegetables for their own use, however, after an approach from a local government agency, a good crop of beans were bagged and sold to workers. The Steering Committee was then approached by a local café who wanted to try some of the produce, with a view to ongoing weekly deliveries. The café manager and her team were very enthusiastic about the freshness of the vegetable tray and emphasised the potential for the garden to supply other local cafes.

It's a great endorsement of the program by the local community, and not only helps to develop links with the African Community (including Elders), but provides a meeting place for men who are unemployed and struggling to find a place in their new community.



Surviving Winter - cheap and easy ways to keep warm

Dry your shoes quickly with newspaper

Stuff wet shoes with newspaper. It will absorb the moisture quickly, though you might have to replace the newspaper a few times depending on how drenched your shoes are. Or wrap your shoes in newspaper and secure them with a few rubber-bands.

Bubble wrap your windows

A lot of heat escapes through windows so counteract this by insulating your windows with bubble wrap. It still lets light in and keeps your room warm for months.

Just mist water onto your window with a spray bottle, push the flat side of the wrap against the window and it will stay put.

Warm your pyjamas with a hot water bottle

Wrap your pyjamas around a hot water bottle and stick them under the covers before putting them on.

You can also hang your towel in front of the heater, so it's nice and toasty when you finish showering.

Avoid wearing cotton

Cotton holds moisture and loses its insulating properties. If you sweat under your jacket, get wet from rain, or if there's any moisture in the air, the cotton will quickly absorb it and keep it close to your skin, making you feel even colder.

PS: Don't leave home without the umbrella EVER.

Let the celebrations begin!



For 80 years, CatholicCare has supported vulnerable families; providing services that aim to strengthen relationships and keep families together. We continue to strive to meet the changing needs of our communities; and in particular those people whom others may turn away from: refugees, prisoners, and people impacted by drug and alcohol issues.

We are proud to be celebrating eight decades of continuous service to the community – and we aim to commemorate this marvellous milestone with a series of events throughout 2015.

Heavenly Gala Ball 10 September 2015 Plaza Ballroom, Melbourne



As part of our 80th birthday celebrations, CatholicCare would like to invite you to join us for a special evening of Heavenly 'Rock' with some spectacular entertainment and exquisite catering at the stunning Plaza Room.

The Heavenly Gala Ball is our major fundraising event for the year and its success relies on maximum tickets sales and the donation of

quality prizes that can be auctioned on the night.

Get involved by donating goods and services for our auction prizes, by making a donation or even becoming an official sponsor of the event. We've already sourced a signed 2007 Paul Stanley (KISS) Washburn Guitar to auction on the night. But we need more! **If you, or someone you know, can help us out with auction items or sponsorship, we would love to hear from you.**

Show your support by attending the Heavenly Gala Ball with your family, friends or fellow parishioners. Tickets cost \$195 each and will soon be available to purchase on our website www.ccam.org.au/events

Please call Angela Paterno-Smith on 9926 5722 or email angela.paternosmith@ccam.org.au if you can help in any way!



Octogenarians unite!

300 supporters gathered at St Patricks Cathedral on Sunday 8 March for our annual Mass of Appreciation and the first of our 80th birthday celebrations. We were thrilled to be joined by over 90 people who responded to our call for fellow octogenarians to help blow out our birthday candles after the mass.

We hold the Mass every year as a gesture of appreciation for the ongoing generosity we receive from loyal donors and supporters and we'd like to thank everybody who took the time to join us and celebrate our work.

For those who couldn't make it this year, we'd love to see you in 2016.



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Strengthening families and communities
www.ccam.org.au