



connect

SUMMER 2016

A NEWSLETTER FOR SUPPORTERS OF CATHOLICARE

A close-up photograph of a young boy with light brown hair and freckles, smiling broadly and showing his teeth. He is wearing a green turtleneck sweater.

**Helping young
people reach their potential**

Message from Fr Joe Caddy



It is true that children are our future. But when a child's future is predetermined by financial and social disadvantage - when a child is raised in an environment where unemployment, low education, gambling, addiction and family violence are present - then the journey to live 'life to the full' can seem impossible.

These children, and then their children, can become trapped in a cycle of disadvantage.

At CatholicCare, there are many ways we offer hope and support to young people. We have services to reduce the conflict that children experience during separation and divorce, and to support young people affected by a family member's substance abuse. We also work with families to protect the mental health of their children.

In schools, we work with children with social and emotional problems. We also teach young people about the importance of healthy relationships.

In this issue of *Connect*, we highlight some of our work with young people. Our feature story is on what life is like for young people in youth custodial centres, and how our Youth Justice Ministry walks with them to prevent further isolation as they prepare to re-enter society.

We also share some exciting news about funding for our homework programs, how we're helping refugee youth in North Geelong, and the experience of school students reaching out to the community and learning more about social justice.

On behalf of CatholicCare, we are, as always deeply appreciative of your support, which gives young people the chance to achieve their goals.

The impact of working with young people is broader than the individual; it inspires future generations and entire communities to also reach their potential.

With thanks and every blessing,

Fr Joe Caddy

Farewell from John

After nearly 15 years of fulfilling and enjoyable employment with CatholicCare, I am planning my transition to retirement at Christmas; ready to commence the next phase of my life.

I would like to thank donors and their families; Parish Priests, Secretaries and their communities; and, Principals and their school communities for their generous support of CatholicCare and my work over the years.

I know this will continue for years to come and I pray that God will continue to bless you, your families and communities.

With every best wish for the future, John McCarthy.



Thank you!

Thank you to everyone who supported our recent appeals to deliver necessary support to people in need. Your support of two of our major annual appeals - June Appeal and Church Appeal - has raised a total of \$484,533, and we still have a few more months to go!

As a donor or supporter of CatholicCare, we value your generosity and loyalty. Because of you, we can support people who are vulnerable and disadvantaged through programs and services that strengthen families and communities.

Visit our new website

CatholicCare is pleased to announce the launch of our brand new website!

Our goal is to provide our clients and supporters an easier way to find information on our programs and services; keep up to date with the latest news from our many locations; and learn more about how you can support CatholicCare in helping individuals and families achieve 'life to the full'.

Take a look at our 'new look' today - www.ccam.org.au

"We must open the doors of opportunity. But we must also equip our people to walk through those doors." - Lyndon B. Johnson, 36th President of the United States

CatholicCare's Youth Justice Chaplains provide emotional and spiritual support for young people in custody in Victoria's two youth justice precincts at Parkville and Malmsbury.

The Youth Justice Chaplaincy has an emphasis on rehabilitation, and the age of the offenders can mean a better chance to turn lives around.

There is a long history of CatholicCare being present with young men and women in youth custodial centres. Since the 1960's, an impressive roll call of Chaplains have made immense contributions to the lives of many young people.

In 1964, Fr Kevin Mogg, a young priest only a few years out of the seminary (also the former Episcopal Vicar of Social Welfare and a long term Board Member of CatholicCare) was appointed as the first full-time Catholic Chaplain.

Working alongside Anglican and Uniting Church Chaplains, this role saw him visiting young men and women at a number of facilities, some of which have since been closed down or reorganised under a new banner: Turana Youth Training Centre, Baltara, Winlaton, Langi Kal and Malmsbury.

Adept at harnessing people's skills for the benefit of those in need, Fr Mogg organised sporting tournaments between the young men and some of his West Heidelberg parishioners. He also arranged, with Sr Toni Martha, for Mandeville Hall girls to attend weekly dancing classes at Turana.

Youth Justice Ministry

Today, young men and women in youth custodial centres lead much more structured lives, making opportunities for valuable engagement even more critical. They attend school for most of the day, which can restrict the time available for Chaplains.

As part of a multifaith team, CatholicCare's Youth Justice Chaplains at Parkville and Malmsbury are focused on building an enduring non-judgemental relationship with young people. They are mentors, providers of wise counsel, a steady hand and a stable presence in lives where stability and positive role models are not always present.

Sr Rachel Fleurant works as a Chaplain at the Melbourne Youth Justice Precinct in Parkville. She works with young people in their day-to-day life, providing help with English and Maths during school classes, playing cards with them,

and joining other activities to encourage positive social participation. She sits with young people and engages them in conversations, which often feature young people's relationships on the outside, the shame of hurting and disappointing family, or missing a friend's birthday. It is through being present in these everyday encounters that young people come to ask deeper kinds of questions - about life, faith and God - and Sr Rachel provides opportunities for young people to explore and celebrate their faith, and attend Church services on Sundays.

The Fusion Program

Each Wednesday evening, Sr Rachel runs the Fusion Program with a group of volunteers. Through a variety of activities and discussions, the group creates a positive and welcoming atmosphere that allows the young men to experience a somewhat normal social environment - one they miss while in custody.

Fusion has been running weekly since mid-2015 and was developed by Sr Rachel to provide positive adult role models to mentor and support young people in custody.

One volunteer from the group said "...the Fusion Program is a place for fun, non-judgement, laughter, sharing and great banter. Many of the boys are able to be their true selves; showing kindness, resilience, strength, leadership skills and creativity".

Chaplains and volunteers who support the program look for the good in young people. They believe that by acknowledging and valuing the good in young people, they can grow to be defined by their positive attributes - rather than the crime that got them into custody.



New funding for homework programs

The Australian Communities Foundation (ACF), the Stan Willis Grant and the Reid Malley Foundation have awarded CatholicCare with funding to provide homework programs in Geelong and Wyndham Vale.

Refugee youth are a particularly vulnerable group. Most of them have endured years in refugee camps without the opportunity to receive formal education.

Many have experienced physical and emotional trauma – and may be struggling to integrate in their new country. CatholicCare’s Homework programs aim to provide emotional and academic support so that refugee youth are better able to succeed in education.

The Wyndham After School Learning Program has been operating since 2013. The program has been successful in reinforcing the importance of parents being active participants in their children’s education. It has continued to grow by word of mouth, as praise about its benefits spread across the Burmese community. While the children learn, their parents prepare food, which allows everyone to enjoy the break.

New funding from the Stan Willis Grant and ACF will cover costs for a year and enable an expansion of the program with Burmese children and their parents.

In Geelong, with support from the Reid Malley Foundation and ACF, we can establish a Homework Club at Northern Bay College, where CatholicCare operates a successful support program for refugee youth (see article below).

The new funding will allow us to expand on this work and continue to find better ways to respond to the specific needs of this student cohort.

CatholicCare thanks and acknowledges the generosity of the Stan Willis Trust, Reid Malley Foundation and Australian Communities Foundation for funding our homework programs.

Providing intensive learning experiences with enthusiastic and committed volunteers is an effective way of strengthening young people’s ability to settle successfully in Australia.

STANWILLISTRUST

**REID MALLEY
FOUNDATION**



Refugee Youth in North Geelong

The City of Greater Geelong is a regional centre for refugee settlement and 7.5% of its humanitarian arrivals are refugee youth. As early as 2011, CatholicCare’s Geelong office could see the emerging, associated needs of the young people arriving. Many were unaccompanied minors who had endured trauma, loss and immeasurable isolation.

The refugee experience of arriving in a new country of residence is not always an uplifting one, and CatholicCare wanted to demonstrate that Australia was a place of welcome and inclusion.

To respond, we developed a specialist refugee youth support program, out-posted at North Geelong Secondary College; the school with the largest proportion of students from refugee backgrounds in Victoria. Here, students receive trauma counselling, case management and a range of services to support them to overcome settlement challenges.

The program has been so successful it has been replicated at Northern Bay College, another school in Geelong.

School communities are well placed to support young people and both North Geelong Secondary College and Northern Bay College have embraced the opportunity to provide wholistic support. Specialist staff work with

young people to help them stand on their own feet and receive the necessary preparation to pursue a path to a fulfilling career.

Each young person has different needs and different aspirations, but there are common needs. These include receiving support to write resumes and prepare for interviews. Through therapeutic trauma counselling, we have helped a number of young people to obtain part time work and relevant training, and affordable housing has been found in other cases.

CatholicCare gratefully acknowledges the ongoing support it has received from Give Where You Live, the Geelong Community Foundation and the Collier Charitable Fund. We will continue to explore ways to sustain this valuable program and identify multiyear funding options to provide longer term certainty.



Collier Charitable Fund

Staff Profile - Maria Forde

Maria Forde (right) works with young people in custody at Malmsbury Youth Justice Centre. We recently spoke to her about her role as a Youth Justice Chaplain...

Can you outline your role as a Youth Justice Chaplain?

I see my role as a neutral presence and provider of pastoral and spiritual support. I'm also a 'go to person' for access to religious materials and personnel.

What motivates you at work?

I have worked as a secondary school teacher in Catholic Education, and as a parole officer and outreach support worker to offenders with intellectual disabilities. In my work with young people in custody, I strive to treat our young people with the dignity and respect we all deserve.

What do you enjoy most about your role?

I feel honoured when the young men at Malmsbury trust me enough to share their story with me. I enjoy sharing Sunday services with them and appreciate the reverence they show during these gatherings.

What do you find most challenging about your role?

There is definitely a need for greater awareness of the role of chaplaincy in the youth justice system. It can also be a lonely job, but getting to know the young men and the staff at Malmsbury has helped ease the solitary nature of the role.

What do you wish people knew more about in this area?

The young men in the youth justice system come from



different families, cultures and backgrounds. Regardless of their offending behaviours, they still deserve the respect we afford all people. They are not the sum of their offences.

What have you gained from working in Youth Justice?

The role is very rewarding at the 'coal face'; it's a privilege to be in young peoples' lives.

What does 'life to the full' mean to you?

To me, Life to the full means being true to yourself and others, doing what your heart calls you to do, and getting up again when you fall. Ever onwards and upwards!

And lastly, what do you do when you aren't working?

I'm also a musician, so when I am not working I am singing, or travelling, enjoying photography, country life, my family, friends and dog, Jack!

Marcellin visits Green Patch

The ground was muddy from overnight rain and the clouds looked ominous, but nothing was going to stop the Marcellin College social justice students from having their Green Patch Experience.

CatholicCare's Green Patch project trains refugee job seekers in gardening and horticulture. We thought it would provide the perfect opportunity for students to get involved and learn more about the refugee experience.



So in September, a group of students and staff from Augustine House travelled to Warrawong farm in Eynesbury located in Melbourne's outer west.

In the barn, the students learned about the history of the project, including how farm owners John and Mila Little offered a section of their property to enable refugee families to reconnect with the land and grow produce for their table and for sale.

Students then headed down the farm's slippery trail to the plots where they worked side by side with refugees, tilling the soil to prepare it for seeding.

Afterwards, students heard from Van, a refugee from Myanmar, who shared his experience of escaping the conflict in Burma and explained how the Green Patch project has helped him to settle in Australia.

We wish to thank the staff and students from Marcellin College - and other supporters of our Refugee Settlement Services. Your donations help programs like Green Patch to build refugees' sense of community, skills and self-esteem - the foundations for good settlement.

The endurance of 'The Family Counsellor'

In 1973 the Federal Government required all TV and Radio broadcasters to provide an hour of religious or community programming every week.

At the time, CatholicCare's Spiritual Director, Fr Gerard Dowling began hosting a radio counselling program called *The Family Counsellor* on radio 3UZ (now RSN).

Now in its 43rd year, *The Family Counsellor* is the longest running radio program of its kind in Australia. To learn more, we spoke to Fr Gerard Dowling.

How has the program changed?

"In the earlier years I received numerous phone calls from people considering suicide, but this help is now provided by telephone services like Help Line. Today's listeners call the program to receive companionship, or when they feel troubled or lonely. And being both an ordained priest and a trained counsellor, it is possible for me to attend to their need or struggle to find happiness in life, or to discover some meaning in it."

Is there a particular caller that sticks in your mind?

"One night a fellow called in saying that he had locked up the house and was preparing to take his own life. A friend was listening to the program and hearing the call and recognising the voice, raced to his home, broke in and called for assistance, thus saving his life."



Fr Gerard Dowling (right) and Philip Touzal

How many people have you helped?

"Over 43 years I would have helped thousands of people... I have broadcast from Adelaide and people living along the Murray have also listened. Recently I presided at a loyal listener's funeral in Tasmania because that was her wish."

Philip Touzal is the producer of *The Family Counsellor* and a long-time friend of Fr Gerard.

"Over the years I have enjoyed hearing the stories of people who have a story to tell, whether doing it tough or simply wanting someone to listen to their story," he said.

The benefits of Direct Debit

More and more people are moving to direct debit to support their favourite charities. At CatholicCare we have nearly 400 donors who have opted to make regular automated donations. If you have ever wondered whether Direct Debit could be right for you, here are five reasons why it works:

1. More money for the services that help people

By cutting out the costs associated with sending letters (stationery, printing, postage, staff time) more of your donation can go to helping people in need.

2. Good for the environment

You can breathe easy knowing that you are saving trees by choosing to receive less printed material.

3. Never miss a donation again

We know you are busy and that there are times when that

stack of charity letters just keeps on growing.

Direct Debit donations mean that you won't need to worry about how to keep up your support of CatholicCare.

4. Easy on the budget

With direct debit donations, you can spread the cost of your donation across the year.

5. It's simple

Setting up Direct Debit donations is quick and easy to do. Email fundraising@ccam.org.au or call 03 9287 5517 to ask for a form, or visit www.ccam.org.au and click the 'Donate' button.

As a Direct Debit donor, you will still receive your *Connect* newsletter, an annual tax-deductible receipt - and our heartfelt gratitude for sharing our mission to help vulnerable and disadvantaged families.



ABN 42 795 179 778

CatholicCare is the social service agency of the Archdiocese of Melbourne and the Diocese of Sale. While we are a Catholic agency, our programs are offered to the whole community, regardless of religious belief or background.

- Greater Melbourne
- Geelong
- Gippsland

Strengthening families and communities

www.ccam.org.au