

SUMMER 2011



JESUS CARES NEWSLETTER

A MINISTRY THAT REACHES OUT TO THE LOST, HOMELESS AND HURTING PEOPLE
OF OUR CITY WITH THE GOOD NEWS OF JESUS



As we approach the Christmas Season we would like to wish all our volunteers and friends of Jesus Cares a joyful Christmas as we celebrate the birth of Jesus

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Jesus Cares Refuge Inc

A Registered

Charity

All donations over \$2 are tax deductible

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MORNING BREAKFAST MINISTRY

Those who know me, know that I had been a homeless man on the streets of Sydney, where God found me in 2002 and pulled me out of the gutter, cleaned me and put me right back there again where I am able to minister to the homeless, the hurting and the marginalised.

How did the breakfast ministry begin ?

In March this year I had to drop a friend off at Central Station to catch a train. When my friend departed, I started to walk to the entrance where a man was sitting on a milk crate drinking cold water out of a plastic bottle, another man using his fingers to scoop out sardines from a tin and a man sitting there freezing, wrapped in a flimsy blanket.

I later came to know something of their lives and their names... Ray, Mark and George (not real name)

When I saw the situation they were in, I sensed God reminding me of when I was in their shoes. "When you were a homeless, Bill, what was the first thing you needed when you woke up in the morning". I remembered "a cup of coffee and a cigarette".

So that's how brekkie at Central started - because God showed there was a need.

George's Story

George is an interesting man; he had been a farmer and had been through a marriage breakdown. This resulted in a mental breakdown, which brought him to the streets. He was now on medication and had severe depression. With all this going on in his life George walked away from God.

Then, one Easter morning, our homeless and indigenous friends asked if they could hear an Easter message because many had not been to church for years. And so without any prior preparation God gave me just the right words to say and the love of God came over that small gathering of 32 people. For George the story of Jesus came alive to him, he began seeking God and started coming to our Sunday meetings.

George subsequently had a personal encounter with God. He was walking towards Town Hall, when he experienced God coming into his heart. He said it was like a bright light that came inside him.

As George told this story I could see he was just glowing with life.

He has subsequently left to take up a job on a farm- a new beginning. On that morning when he left, I could not help noticing the Bible that we had given him months before tucked inside his jacket close to his heart.

Here was a man we had met on the streets, who was homeless; his life was now back on track through an encounter with the living God. How great is our God!

Bill



LALOR PARK & BLACKTOWN

LALOR PARK OP SHOP

One of our objectives is to connect with our local community. This Christmas we are combining with three local churches as well as a community organisation to put on a fete, a free Christmas dinner and Carols in the local park. (to be held Sunday 11th December)



Many now come to the shop each day; have a free cup of coffee discuss all aspects of life including who Jesus is. Many of these conversations are at the very basic level as we are constantly amazed how many have little knowledge about the things of God-yet need God in their life.

A young man who has throat cancer needs our support as he goes through chemo therapy. His family is really struggling to support him financially, but his circumstances have brought his family together and they believe that God can heal their son. We would value your prayers.

I am constantly asked how is the Op Shop going and acknowledge that God is moving in people's lives but financially the shop is still struggling. We value your prayers as Lalor Park is place of great need, with much Public Housing and unemployment.

John



BLACKTOWN

Blacktown ministry is changing in many ways. Our team has increased from 3 in January to 12-14 now and growing. God sure does answer prayers and we are planning going out on other nights as there are now more of us. Much of this came through FesT West- a combined churches effort covering the last few months with many lives being touched, which has resulted in more people interested in coming on board.

Some of the lives we have been involved recently were;

Nicki is someone we have seen over the years and we would chat and pray with as her faith grew. But she could not get her life together until early this year when she totally submitted her life to Jesus. We lost contact with her until recently. We can see real changes, she is hungry to know what the Bible says and is wanting more fellowship and contact with us.

John, a Filipino Catholic, who thought he would go to heaven because he was a good man and kept away from evil. We shared with him the true gospel and he received Jesus into his heart. He said he was very happy to have met us and to be told the truth. He was visiting Sydney as a tourist-we trust he will share his new found revelation that Jesus wants a relationship with each of us.

Vanessa

HOUSING ASSISTANCE

Australia's population is over 22million, comprising more than 8.4 million households. Viewed as a basic human right housing is a dominant feature of the economic and social landscape in Australia.

The majority (68%) of households either own or are buying their home. (those aged over 65 the rate of home ownership increases to 84%). Over 25% rent (mostly privately), *but around 5% of the population reside in social housing (Govt provided).*

Some 1.25m households are in moderate housing stress (housing costs more than 30% of gross household income) with 420,000 households in severe housing stress (housing costs more than 50% of gross household income).

Social Housing provided by Government (often called public rental housing)

There are two streams, Public Housing and Community Housing-all substantially funded by Government. Also includes Indigenous Housing (most States manage Indigenous Housing separately)

Allocation of Government provided housing

Whilst there is a waiting list, those considered to be in greatest need is increasing. These groups are given priority and are pushed up the queue. Those in greatest need are homeless or have significant medical issues or have disabilities etc. Families will be given priority over individuals at same level of need. Households in public rental housing tend to remain in tenure for long periods, contributing to the ever growing waiting list.

Waiting Lists

	NSW	Rest of Australia	Total AUSTRALIA
On the waiting List	62,619	149,111	211,730
Priority (greatest need)	23,102	41,126	64,228

In NSW some 27% of those on the waiting list are regarded as priority.

Low income households make up 98% of those in public rental housing. Consistent with this less than half, 48% of adults living in public rental housing were in the labour force. Because those in greatest need get priority we find "those not in the labour force" includes those unable to work due to age, disability or permanent medical condition. Public rental housing provides an important safety net for these people and also housing affordability is a key issue with rents set so that these households pay less than 30% of their income in rent.

Source Report of Australian Institute of Health and Welfare on Housing Assistance in Australia June 2011

Jesus Cares comment

Those we meet who are homeless, find it very difficult to get their life back together, find work etc, until they find secure housing. Whilst governments over the past few years have provided substantial funding for Public Housing, it is never enough and waiting lists seem to push out further. It is very clear that it is tough out there-however we do hear good news stories from time to time. Some of our street friends have been housed, with others hopeful of housing in the not too distant future.

We value your prayers that many of our homeless friends will be housed and whilst housing is not the only issue they have, secure housing is a big first step in getting their life back together.



SUNDAY FELLOWSHIP MEETING

Bruce's Testimony

I started talking to Bruce at our Sunday meeting when he asked for a coffee. I had not met him before and he said he came to the meeting because he was hungry!

As we talked he told me he had a few problems and would like some prayer.

So I grabbed another volunteer and we started to talk to Bruce to find out what we should be praying about. Bruce poured out his story. Bruce had a number of medical issues, his immediate problem being a stomach hernia (hiatus hernia) needing an operation, but there is a waiting list.

Incidentally he told us that he has been stabbed 22 times (he showed us some of the stab wounds), by someone who was living with him at the time-this person had a mental illness. Bruce immediately said that he had totally forgiven this man. Here was man who knew about the need and the power of forgiveness!

So we both prayed for Bruce who said he felt much better after the prayer. We asked him whether he had a Bible and he said he did not but would like one-we gave him one. He was then asked if he would like to accept Jesus as his personal Lord and Saviour. He said he would-in fact he said I have been wanting to do this for a long time but did not have the courage until now!

We wrote in the Bible and he asked us to write the exact date and time when he was saved-Wow!

Bruce then went on his way.

Here was a man ready to enter the Kingdom of God and we both were blessed that God used us to be his instrument to bring this to be!

A Volunteer

Meeting and Ministry Times

Inner City Ministry

Breakfast for rough sleepers around Central Station on Thursday and Friday morning
(leave at 6am, start serving at 7am)

Prayer meeting every Thursday night at the Ministry Centre, commencing at 6pm.

Van Ministry every Friday and Saturday night-meet at the Ministry Centre 6.30-7pm for food preparation, fellowship, praise and worship (call Bill on 0401 972 552 if you are coming)

Sunday Afternoon Fellowship every Sunday Afternoon (4pm – 6pm), at the Salvation Army Street level Premises, corner Crown and Albion Streets, Surry Hills.



Christmas function2010

*Christmas function
Sunday 11th December-
4pm Street Level*



Blacktown/ Lalor Park Ministry

Meets at Blacktown Station on Friday nights-ring Vanessa Burgess on
0425 532 820

Threads of Hope Op Shop-Shop 3 Freeman Street Lalor Park ring John Crawford on
0415 803 000

Christmas Function Sunday 11th December (all day with dinner commencing at 4.30pm) at a park near op shop