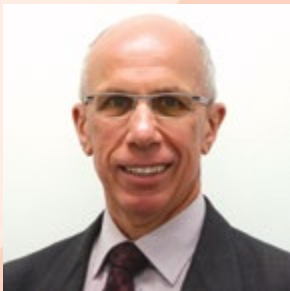




WINTER 2017



Chairman's Message Winter 2017

For most of us the beginning of winter is a time to get out our warm woollen clothes, test our home heating appliances and start thinking about preparing our favourite roast dinners. But sadly, the onset of winter means particular hardship for those who live in poverty and experience homelessness. In Australia on any given night, it is

estimated that around 105,000 people sleep rough on our streets – bitterly cold, socially isolated, many experience depression and all are at greater risk of illness associated with cold.

Thankfully, with your support, the Sisters of Charity Foundation is able to provide support to alleviate the effects of poverty and restore hope and build dignity. There are many different heartbreaking stories behind the people who find themselves homeless. Escaping domestic violence is one of the most common reasons affecting women and children. That's why the Sisters of Charity Foundation provides funding to grass roots organisations like Community Friends. Community Friends is a volunteer based organisation providing immediate relief to the homeless by giving out food, clothing, shoes and blankets. Community Friends then work to secure permanent accommodation and provide other supports to help people off the street permanently.

Community Friends help people like Sally* who recently attended their weekly food give away. Sally was living in her car with two small children

aged 5 and 7 after leaving an abusive relationship and had no means of supporting her young family. Community Friends was able to find Sally stable accommodation which will enable her to find employment and send her children to school.

With the support of the Sisters of Charity Foundation, Community Friends provide food parcels to around 150 people per week and give away close to 60,000 meals a year.

As a community, we owe a debt of gratitude to all of the organisations like Community Friends who will be on the front-line this winter providing immediate relief and assistance to those who have fallen on tough times and cannot support themselves or their children.

On behalf of the Sisters of Charity Foundation I would like to thank you for your generous support which enables us to provide assistance to those who need a helping hand the most.

Richard Haddock AM

**Name changed to protect privacy.*



Sisters of Charity Foundation Community Grants Program

Circus School Scholarship Program (SA)

Lolly Jar Circus Inc. has been operating for nearly three and a half years and provides circus training and performance opportunities to young people up to the age of 26 who have physical or intellectual disabilities and those who are at risk in the community. Funding provided by the Sisters of Charity Foundation will enable ten young people to experience the joy of developing physical skills. Each person works to their own level without any element of competition. Every person achieves and experiences the joy of applause and improved self-esteem. The class members, along with the trainers, parents and carers, are supportive and cooperative so that not only does each person improve in physical fitness, they develop social skills and achieve better mental health outcomes. Performances give participants opportunities to proudly display their achievements to their friends and families. Importantly, performances also educate the public to recognise the beauty of different bodies and different abilities. But most of all participants have fun and people who otherwise struggle to make friends and find their place in the outside world have a safe and happy place to socialise.



Clothing and Sleeping Program (VIC)

Destiny Transformations is a residential rehabilitation program that is tackling the issues of homelessness, poverty, drug use and mental illness head-on. Destiny Transformations is a client-centred, medium-term, drug free residential community offering twelve beds for men aged between 18yrs to 60yrs. A grant from the Sisters of Charity Foundation will enable Destiny Transformations to provide much needed clothing to residents who often have little more than the clothes on their back when they arrive at the centre. The funding we provide will also be used to help get residents work ready by providing them with the safety equipment needed to participate in Destiny Transformations work therapy program. This residential program has been servicing Melbourne's West and parts of regional Victoria for more than 18 months so part of the funding we have provided will also be used to update mattresses and linen. The program's goal is for residents to have an addiction free life, the skills to get back to employment and the ability to live positively in the community.



Let's Equip Program (NSW)

Bay City Care has developed the Let's Equip Program to provide practical back to school support for children from families experiencing financial hardship. The program aims to empower young people to achieve the education they deserve by providing them with the tools necessary to participate fully at school. Ensuring kids have the education they need, will also help to reduce the incidence of bullying, social isolation and disengagement that many experience because of their obvious poverty. Bay City Care will liaise with primary schools and supply them with fully equipped backpacks to be distributed to students whose families can't give them the same start to the school year enjoyed by their classmates. Funding provided by the Sisters of Charity Foundation will enable Bay City Care to expand their program of support to more primary schools where there are children in need. According to Bay City Care the need for practical support will grow because government funded school assistance payments will no longer be available to struggling families.



Sisters of Charity Foundation Tertiary Scholarship Program

The Sisters of Charity Foundation Scholarship Program continues to grow and we are currently offering 15 scholarships in eight universities across Victoria, New South Wales and Queensland.

We recently celebrated the graduation of another Sisters of Charity Scholarship recipient, Ms Renee Aholahi who graduated with a Bachelor of Laws (Honours) from the University of Notre Dame, Sydney. Renee has generously agreed to share her story and explain why the Scholarship was so important to her.

"My life was really difficult as a child. I grew up in a family where domestic violence, poverty and crime were normalised. My mum struggled to raise my four siblings and my father struggled with alcoholism, anger management and a mental illness. Throughout my primary school years, I witnessed many tragic events in life where unspeakable crimes were committed against loved ones.

After my mum finally got the courage to leave the relationship, we left all our belongings and remained in a refuge for about a year, until we were eventually rehoused. My mum suffered from severe depression and found it significantly difficult to prioritise my siblings and I. Rather she focused upon the next all night party, or on the needs of her drug addicted partner.

Life by this stage was very tough and I was eventually removed from my mother's care, at age 12 and placed into Doc's care. For the next year, I was moved from refuge to refuge, where I didn't attend school. I was very fortunate however to be placed within a lovely Christian home at Lutanda. In this home, I may not have had parents, but I had stability, love and encouragement. I was provided a whole new perspective on life, which allowed me to see there was so much more to life, than what I had grown up in.

What I've learnt from all of this, is that the past doesn't make you who you are, the choices you make in the future, will decide who you become.



Renee and her family on graduation day.

This scholarship has meant the world to my family and I. I have always had a childhood dream that I wanted to be a lawyer, and this scholarship has made that happen. I can still remember the day I was told that I had been chosen to be a recipient of the scholarship; I was overwhelmed with joy and happiness.

I was also trying to raise a family at the same time as university, which as many are aware can be a struggle physically, mentally and financially.

This scholarship removed a lot of the financial pressure and removed any anxiety about how I was going to be able to afford my next set of textbooks, or how I was going to cover my university fees, in addition to the costs of raising children. This scholarship has provided me with an opportunity to succeed.

I will be forever grateful to the Sisters of Charity Foundation and to all those involved or to those who have contributed to the University Scholarship program.

I have always been passionate about criminal law and I would love the opportunity to work with the Department of Public Prosecutions or with Legal Aid. I am particularly passionate about young offenders and I would love the opportunity to somehow positively impact their life. At the same time, I would like to be involved in criminal law reform, as I believe the current system does not adequately meet the needs of the offenders or society."

Bequest Program

The Sisters of Charity Foundation invites you to consider making a gift that will be dedicated to enabling those plagued by disadvantage to build a brighter future for themselves and those they love.

If you would like more information about the Sisters of Charity Foundation Bequest Program please contact Reba Meagher or Judy Christie on 02 9367 1211.

Sisters of Charity Foundation Continue to Provide a Safe Haven for Homeless Asylum Seekers

Providence House was established by the Sisters of Charity Foundation to provide safe, good quality accommodation for asylum seekers who are at risk of homelessness. This project is run in partnership with the Asylum Seekers Centre of NSW who provide all of the necessary support services to asylum seekers and their children who are some of the most vulnerable and traumatised people in our community.

Over the past six months Providence House has accommodated 56 homeless asylum seekers including 33 children. Providence House is currently offering priority placement to women and families who are unable to find safe and affordable accommodation. They require assistance because they do not have any support networks in Australia, are not allowed to work and are not eligible for financial and welfare support from government.

Lydia, her three daughters and two sons were at risk of persecution in their home country. As they had to leave suddenly, they arrived in Australia without essential medication, adequate financial support, legal advice and basic needs. When the family eventually found the Asylum Seekers Centre they had been sleeping in a stranger's garage. The youngest child Nuwan, was so traumatised that she refused to speak and had a chronic heart condition. They were ineligible for government services including financial support, schooling, Medicare and housing. Having quick access to Providence House ensured the Asylum Seekers Centre was able to provide safety and stability enabling the team to work on a plan to meet all of the family's needs.



Donation

The Sisters of Charity Foundation means the world of difference to people who, through no fault of their own, live with the harsh effects of poverty on a daily basis. All donations over \$2 are tax deductible. Please visit our WEB site at www.sistersofcharityfoundation.com.au to donate online or complete this form and send to **Sisters of Charity Foundation, PO Box 2432 Bondi Junction NSW 1355**

My Details

Title First Name Surname
Street Address Suburb State
Post Code Country
Phone number () E-mail

Payment Details

Please accept my Single Monthly Quarterly tax deductible donation of: \$

My cheque/money order is enclosed payable to Sisters of Charity Foundation or please debit the amount I've indicated from my:

VISA MasterCard Expiry Date / Cardholder Name
Signature Card No.

I authorise the Sisters of Charity Foundation to deduct this amount from my credit card on receipt of this form. If monthly or quarterly pledge has been ticked please deduct this amount from my credit card accordingly. This authority will remain valid until revoked in writing by me or the Sisters of Charity Foundation.

Workplace Giving

I would like to make a regular donation Pre-Tax from my salary of:

\$25 \$50 \$100 \$250 Other \$ every week/fortnight/month


I authorise the Payroll Department at my work place to deduct the above amount and deposit to:

Sisters of Charity Foundation Limited ATF Sisters of Charity Foundation BSB 032 040 Account 12 63 76

Please give this to your payroll officer.

Send me information about leaving a bequest to the Sisters of Charity Foundation.

All donations over \$2 are tax deductible. Thank you.

 Join us on Facebook