



your charity

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SEMINARIANS' UNIQUE
TRAINING PROGRAM

CATHOLIC CARE OFFERS MUMS-TO-BE HELP,
ADVICE AND EMOTIONAL SUPPORT

PRISONERS FIND DIGNITY &
HOPE THROUGH GOD'S LOVE

Redfern Meal Program Offers Nourishment, Companionship and Much More

Every Tuesday and Friday, more than 70 homeless people and others in need head for St Vincent's Catholic Church in Redfern where a team of dedicated volunteers from across the city serve up a hearty breakfast-brunch from 9am until noon.

Tuesdays the menu is usually scrambled eggs with all the trimmings along with baked beans, grilled tomatoes as well as a range of mouth-watering sandwiches, fresh orange juice, fruit, a variety of vegetables and hot steaming cups of tea or coffee. On Fridays, the meals served are more likely to have an Italian flavour such as hearty beef and vegetable lasagnes or spaghetti with meatballs. But the menu also includes favourites such as shepherd's pie and beef or lamb casserole.

"Much of what we serve on Fridays depends on what different schools have made and donated to our program," says Jenny Carter, who took over in March last year as coordinator of "Sharing of the Meal," the program founded by the late Father Ted Kennedy.

Supported by the Charitable Works Fund, thanks to Jenny and her team of volunteers, the Redfern project has become a remarkable example of community "can do" spirit, not just in the immediate area but across the city.

Once a term students from several Sydney primary and secondary schools cook up enough lasagne or casseroles to feed 70. Among the schools participating in the program are St Thomas' Primary at Wiloughby; Loreto Kirribilli, St Vincent's College, Potts Point; St Mary's

Primary, North Sydney; Sacred Heart, Mosman and Cammeray Public Primary School.

The donated meals prepared by the schools are delivered frozen and reheated on the day. Not that reheating is easy, says Liz Leighton, one

of the project's regular volunteers, pointing out that facilities at the old church don't run to an oven let alone a microwave.

"So in the morning we hot foot it around the area where local cafes and businesses let us use their ovens," she explains laughing as she describes volunteers dodging traffic as they rush across Redfern juggling different trays of food. One business, the Pitt Street Diner, not only heats up the food for the volunteers but its chef oversees the entire procedure and according to Liz "tells us what we might be doing wrong!"

With the Sharing of the Meal program it seems everyone pitches in to help.

With food donated by charities such as St Vincent de Paul Society and Oz Harvest, producers such as Steggles also contribute and for Christmas 2010 supplied all the hams and chickens.

"Last year's Christmas was a huge success," says Jenny who is now planning Christmas 2011 where more than 150 from the area can expect to royally dine on ham,

turkey, baked vegetables and gravy with pavlova as dessert.

"Indigenous people aren't crazy about plum pudding but like all Australians, pavlova is a favourite," she explains with a smile.

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■ GIO and OzHarvest volunteers cook up a Big Barbecue Breakfast for Redfern's homeless and families in need

Letter from Father Phil

I AM PLEASSED to send you the latest Charitable Works Fund newsletter, Your Charity.

This is the 6th issue produced since 2009 and it is our way to let you know more about the good works of the CWF. In this issue there are more interesting stories for you to see how the CWF is at work thanks to your financial support.

The Ephpheta Centre's new Deaf Dudes program is for children and youth 10 to 17. This exciting program covers a range of outdoor and indoor activities and supports our young people who are deaf or hearing impaired.

The Confraternity of Christian Doctrine is embarking on a new project to train our volunteer catechists in the use of new electronic whiteboard technology which will revolutionise the way we can teach the scriptures in our state schools. The article shows how the CWF Raffle raised enough money to fund the entire project.

Sharing of the Meal program run from St Vincent's parish in Redfern is operating two lunchtimes a week and is funded by the CWF. The story tells about the dedication of wonderful volunteer coordinators.

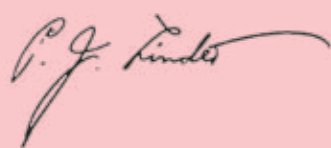
Visiting our prisons is a job not for the fainthearted. Margaret Wiseman, our Chaplain at Silverwater Prison for Women is helping women behind bars through this special ministry.

You'll also learn about how eighteen seminarians undertook work experience of a different kind in remote and outback dioceses. Find out how this has changed their lives.

CatholicCare operates more than one hundred programs including support for young women during unplanned pregnancies. This successful program is one of our most important initiatives funded by the CWF.

Our thanks go to our parish priests for promoting the CWF Pastoral Appeals and thank you for your valuable financial support. I hope you enjoy reading this issue.

May God bless you and your family,



Fr Philip Linder, Chairman
Charitable Works Fund

Smarter Catechists Trained In the Latest Equipment

During 2010 the Development and Fundraising Office through the CWF offered to assist the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine (CCD) in its initiative to establish a 'technology training room' to train as many catechists as possible in the use of interactive whiteboards (otherwise known as 'smartboards'). The present State Government plans to install thousands of new smartboards into classrooms across NSW. Wherever accessible, this new technology will be a powerful aid for the teaching of Catholic Special Religious Education.

Interactive whiteboards use touch detection for user input – e.g. scrolling, mouse-click, much the same way normal PC input devices, such as a mouse or keyboard, detect input. A projector is used to display a computer's video output on the interactive whiteboard, which then acts as a large touch screen. The interactive whiteboard comes with four pens, which use digital ink and replace traditional whiteboard markers. The interactive

whiteboard also accepts touch input from a finger, pen or other solid object.

The recent CWF Raffle was supported by the CCD and our volunteer catechists sold thousands of raffle tickets across the Sydney Archdiocese. The Raffle successfully raised the necessary \$15,000 required for the project. The CCD is currently in the process of renovating their premises on Level 6 of the Polding Centre, in particular the Director's former office. It is envisaged that all work will be completed by the end of this year.

The next step is to develop the course that will be used by the Faith Education Officers to train catechists interested in using smartboards. It is envisaged that training courses will commence in early 2012. The room has the capacity to seat ten catechists at a time.

Classroom trials have revealed that students find their lessons more interesting and often obtain better results. Teaching the scriptures using this technology will certainly improve the quality of lessons that catechists deliver. ■

CWF September Raffle Winners

The lucky winners for the CWF Raffle which was drawn on 7 September 2011 have been announced:

- | | | |
|------------------|--------------------------------------|--|
| 1st Prize | \$5,000 in shopping vouchers, | Mr Ron Landi (Lilyfield, NSW) |
| 2nd Prize | \$2,500 in shopping vouchers, | Mr Francis Cudmore (Padstow, NSW) |
| 3rd Prize | \$1,000 in shopping vouchers, | Mr Malcolm Irving (Killara, NSW) |

Winners of the special prizes for:

Most tickets sold: Denise Barbara (\$100 gift voucher), Mascot Parish and Bonnyrigg Parish (\$100 CCD book voucher each)
Seller of first prize ticket: Vita Repice, Campsie Parish (\$250 gift voucher).

The new CWF Christmas Holiday Raffle is now on sale! First prize is \$10,000 worth of travel OR shopping vouchers, second prize is \$2,500 worth of shopping vouchers, and third prize is \$1,000 worth of shopping vouchers.

You can buy your tickets online at www.cwf.org.au or phone 1800 753 959. Tickets are \$2 each, 3 for \$5, 6 for \$10 or 15 for \$25. Proceeds from the raffle benefit the Charitable Works Fund, Priests' Retirement Foundation and participating agencies. The raffle closes on 8 December and will be drawn on 15 December 2011. Winners will be announced in *The Catholic Weekly* and the CWF website. ■



CatholicCare Offers Mums-to-Be Help, Advice and Emotional Support

Women no matter what their age can find themselves overwhelmed, stressed and confused during pregnancy. For some women it may be their first child and they're apprehensive about how they will cope. For others it may be a fourth or fifth child. But with their partner no longer there to support them or with the family breadwinner having lost his job, or on long term unemployment, they worry about how they will manage.

Some women may be in middle age and their pregnancy completely unexpected or she may be a newly-arrived migrant not yet fluent in English and attempting to settle into a new country and culture without the support of family or a close network of friends.

Still others may be victims of domestic violence, and feel frightened and alone.

"Women come to us for a variety of reasons and not only range in age from 17 to 47 but come from all walks of life and backgrounds," says Anna Waddington, one of two experienced counsellors at the helm of CatholicCare's Pregnancy Counselling and Support Services.

The welfare arm of the Archdiocese of Sydney, CatholicCare provides specialist services for pregnant women, their partners and their families. Offered free, the program gives women emotional support, practical help, counselling and referrals to other agencies or health professionals they may need during their pregnancy.

Even after the baby is born and the mother has bonded with her infant, Anna and her fellow counsellor, Maria Cristaudo keep in touch, making sure things are running smoothly and to check for any sign of post natal depression. The two experienced counsellors also offer help under the program to women who are confused and grieving after a termination, and finding it extremely difficult to come to terms with their loss.

With the support of the Charitable Works Fund and operating from CatholicCare's Bankstown offices, Anna and Maria not only provide face-to-face counselling but are also on hand to provide telephone counselling. In addition they run a series of pregnancy support groups five times a year.

Another important aspect of their work is operating CatholicCare's anonymous national telephone counselling service

which enables women, no matter where they live or what their circumstances, an opportunity to confide in someone and receive practical advice and help.

"We assist all pregnant mothers who might need our help, particularly those who may be battling depression, feel isolated and alone, or are having relationship, financial or accommodation difficulties, or are migrants and new to this country," Maria explains. "We work closely with these women to give them emotional



and practical support to ensure the months spent waiting for the birth of their child is a positive experience."

According to Maria and Anna, sometimes a young mum-to-be may simply need advice and a bit of confidence building and reassurance. For others, such as those undergoing socio or economic distress, practical help may be needed in terms of referrals. For those who feel overwhelmed new hope may emerge by talking through their worries with other participants at the group counselling sessions, while the women who pick up the phone for help, may just need a sympathetic ear and a chance to voice their concerns.

In many ways the Pregnancy Counselling program offered by CatholicCare fills the role once provided by different generations of the family in the days when grandparents, aunts and uncles, cousins and in laws lived close and offered new mums loving advice and emotional support.

But with the transience of modern life, many no longer live in the same state in which they grew up, or even the same country as their families. Some have no idea of parenting either, for unlike previous

generations, they have not been raised surrounded by relatives and the rough and tumble of babies, toddlers, uncles and aunts.

Maria and Anna love what they do and say it is a privilege to support women at such an important and sensitive time.

To find out more about CatholicCare's Pregnancy Counselling & Support Services log on to www.catholiccare.org.au. ■

Redfern Meal Program...

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Thanks to Jenny, during school holidays there is seldom a shortage of volunteer servers with senior students from independent Catholic colleges such as St Aloysius at North Sydney; Monte Sant' Angelo Mercy College, North Sydney; or Loreto Kirribilli arriving each Tuesday or Friday to help out.

"It's great for kids to see another side of Sydney and to learn different ways they can lend a hand and make a difference," Jenny says.

With her own son at St Aloysius' College, she has also spread the word about the Sharing of the Meal project to other mothers, many of whom have joined up as volunteers, including Friday regular Liz Leighton.

"Jenny is a remarkable person and not only works full time in the real estate industry but has really got things moving down in Redfern," Liz says. "She has remarkable energy and drive, an amazing list of contacts and continually comes up with terrific ideas to help the homeless and people in need in Redfern."

Since Jenny took on the job of coordinator she has made sure the meals served are nutritious with plenty of protein, fresh fruit and vegetables. She involved schools in the program and is currently lobbying corporations so each month the Redfern project can put on a corporate-sponsored "big breakfast barbecue."

So far GIO have sponsored one big breakfast and Lane Cove's Baker's Delight another. "All I need is 10 more corporations so we can hold one sponsored breakfast barbecue per month," Jenny says.

But don't think this powerhouse of energy is stopping there. Also on the agenda is a mentor program. "I want to persuade businessmen to join our program as mentors, and to sit down and have a chat with the men and teenage boys. It would be great for Redfern's men to have someone to talk over things and advise them."

For Jenny, Sharing of the Meal is not just about feeding people in need, but about changing lives. ■

Seminarians' Unique Training Program in Rural and Outback Australia

The time 18 priests in training from the Seminary of the Good Shepherd, Homebush spent in outback and rural Australia not only deepened their faith, taught them about day to day life as a priest in remote sparsely populated dioceses, but importantly, taught them about themselves.

"Before you can know Christ you have to know yourself," says Rector of the Seminary, Fr Anthony Percy. "Gaining insight so you can understand and truly know yourself is a fundamental part of our program and the experiences encountered by each of the seminarians, during their month away was right on the money."

For second year seminarian, 30-year-old Sebastian Hew spending time at the remote Aboriginal community of Kalumburu in the far northwest of WA was both challenging and unforgettable.

With a Doctorate in Physics from Britain's prestigious Cambridge University, and a former Associate Lecturer at the University of NSW before answering God's call and joining the Seminary, Sebastian admits his time in the outback pushed him outside of his normal bookish comfort zone.

outback and had had no real dealings with Indigenous people," he says.

This quickly changed and Sebastian says one of the highlights of his time in the community was the few days spent camping with a group of Aboriginal adolescents where he was amazed by their expertise as fishermen. "Fishing using traditional spears, these teenagers were amazingly proficient and caught everything from mud crab to red snapper to barramundi, which they then cooked for us over an open fire."

The priest at Kalumburu is Kenyan-born Fr Nicholas Kipkemboi and although it was the first time he had met Sebastian's fellow seminarian, Patrick Kimulu who is also from Kenya, the two had an immediate bond.

"The days at Kalumburu were memorable," says Sebastian, who with Patrick was forced to travel to the remote Aboriginal community by river and light airplane as the wet season had begun and washed out all the roads.

"Working with remote Indigenous communities is very much a case of being a stranger in a strange land," he says and is eagerly looking forward to returning to

in training were split into groups with six heading for the Diocese of Broome, where in groups of two they spent time at different remote Indigenous communities. Two of the seminarians spent their month at the Diocese of Darwin in outback parishes there, with a further six travelling to South Australia's sprawling rural Diocese of Port Pirie. The final four spent their month in the vast Diocese of Wilcannia Forbes which encompasses Deniliquin, Broken Hill and Bourke, and many small towns in between.

The Immersion Program is an initiative of the Archbishop of Sydney, Cardinal George Pell who designed the program to give seminarians at the Good Shepherd a broader experience of the Church, enabling them to observe pastoral activities beyond the city of Sydney and across a wider much more diverse Australia.

Discussing the idea with the bishops of Broome, Darwin, Port Pirie and the current Administrator of the Wilcannia Forbes Diocese, Fr Percy says the prelates not only agreed to oversee the seminarians sent to their dioceses but were determined to make the program work.

For the bishops the scheme had an added bonus and helped create an upsurge of interest in priestly vocations within their own dioceses.

"The feedback we have received since the seminarians' return to Sydney has been remarkable," says Fr Percy who describes the

program as "a wonderful success."

"After ordination some seminarians may see their priestly mission in outback or rural Australia," he says. "Others may simply enjoy working there for short periods which could give rise to an exchange system between Sydney priests and those in outback and remote areas. That way we can give clergy in Broome, Darwin, Port Pirie, Wilcannia Forbes and similar dioceses a break and time in the city, while priests from Sydney fill in for them in their distant outlying parishes." ■

Kalumburu next year, and getting to know the people better as well as learning more about their culture, history and language.

Although this is the first year the program has been in operation, Fr Percy says the "Rural and Remote Immersion Program" is now part of the Seminary's curriculum and those who took part this year will return to the same parishes next year, deepening their understanding of themselves as well as the communities they help serve.

Ranging from second year through to sixth year seminarians, the 18 priests



■ The Most Rev Christopher Saunders, Bishop of Broome with six of the Sydney Seminarians.



■ Sebastian Hew at Mass in the remote Aboriginal community of Kalumburu.

"I can't remember another time when I've been pushed so far out of what I am used to," he says.

Priests in remote areas face many challenges and quite a few hardships, and usually have to carry out their priestly duties without the support of another priest. Despite this Sebastian discovered he had a hitherto unexpected willingness to take on the challenges of such a ministry.

"I was brought up in Perth and have spent my life in cities and until the weeks I spent in Kalumburu, I'd never been to the

Fun, Friends and a Sense of Belonging

Deaf Dudes is the brainchild of Ephpheta Centre youth workers, David Parker and Donovan Mulligan. Both men are profoundly deaf and understand how deaf teenagers frequently feel isolated and left out of the mainstream.

"So we came up with Deaf Dudes for deaf kids from 10 to 17 as a way to build their self confidence through a whole series of great activities which show them that any and everything is possible," says David – or "Deaf Dave" as he proudly refers to himself.

"I am proud to be deaf. We all are and Deaf Dudes is a way of providing deaf kids

and Mass in Auslan, the Australian sign language for the deaf, and also offers the city's deaf community support, friendship, practical advice and a range of activities. But until Dave and Donovan came up with Deaf Dudes, there has been little for adolescents who are either profoundly deaf or hearing impaired.

"Deaf teenagers can feel especially isolated and can have real difficulty communicating not only with their non-deaf peers but with their families," says Nicole Clark, Interpreter at the Ephpheta Centre and Chair of the Australian Cath-

"Usually young deaf people are not part of the general community and not included in local youth groups or teen social events. And there are few, if any services for young deaf people in Sydney," says Nicole. "But Dave and Donovan have changed all that and as they are deaf themselves, they provide wonderful positive role models for the kids."

Deaf Dudes also encourages the deaf teens to come together and have fun without having to rely on interpreters or family to make themselves understood. This in turn gives them a real sense of



■ At Deaf Dudes teens enjoy horseback riding, white water rafting and other great activities.

with dynamic deaf role models as well as helping inspire them to become leaders themselves," he says.

The name of the group was a play on Deaf Dave's nickname. "And we thought Dudes sounded sort of cool," he grins and adds that he and Donovan chose a brightly coloured yellow and purple worm as the group's mascot because, as Dave explains "worms don't have ears!"

Established more than 30 years ago, the Archdiocese of Sydney's Ephpheta Centre at Punchbowl provides pastoral care

olic Disability Council. "Many deaf children have hearing parents and siblings. "So they can feel increasingly cut off and left out of activities and social events other kids take for granted."

Joining in weekend activities as well as challenges such as white water rafting, horseback riding, camping or indoor rock climbing, the 15-plus Deaf Dudes' regulars have the time of their lives as they chatter back and forth using Auslan, signing non-stop as they crack jokes, burst out laughing and tease one another.

independence and empowers them to approach life and the years ahead with far greater confidence and self assurance.

These days Deaf Dudes even has its own website, designed and maintained by Dave and thanks to special funding from Dooley's Catholic Club at Lidcombe, the group has been able to solve its transport issues so more kids can become involved.

To find out more check out the Ephpheta website at www.ephpheta.org.au or go direct to Deaf Dudes at www.deafdudes.org.au ■

Pack Your Bags!

Imagine winning first prize in the new CWF Raffle, \$10,000 worth of Holiday Travel of your choice. You could fly off to an exotic destination, explore ancient civilizations or just lay on a beach. Cruises, tours, campervans, accommodation, rail, resorts...it's up to you how you use your prize.

If travel is not what you want, then you have the choice of \$10,000 worth of Christmas Shopping. Again, it's up to you what you choose: department stores; furniture and electrical retailers; toys; supermarkets and clothing. Christmas gifts for your family and friends, maybe a new TV and clothes, and don't forget the hams, turkeys and all the trimmings.

With the new CWF Raffle, first prize is your choice. Second and Third Prizes are \$2,500 and \$1,000 in shop-

ping vouchers each. If you win first prize, you may also choose to take the prize as \$8,000 worth of travel and \$2,000 cash spending money.

This raffle benefits the Charitable Works Fund, the Priests' Retirement Foundation and participating agencies. Tickets are \$2 each or 6 for \$10 and books of 15 only \$25.00. The raffle is drawn on 15 December and tickets can be purchased on-line at www.cwf.org; by phoning 1800 753 959 or can be ordered by mail. ■

Imagine a world without your favourite CHARITIES and all of the good work that they do...

IT DOESN'T BEAR THINKING ABOUT

Money from gifts in wills is a major contributor of income to our charity, both now and in the future. We need to make sure all our supporters know this too, so we can continue to do all the good work that we do. That's why the Charitable Works Fund has joined over 130 of Australia's most-loved charities who have come together to raise awareness of the importance of gifts in wills.

Gifts in wills are the cornerstone of many good causes. Without these gifts, many charities like the CWF would simply not survive. We want to help raise awareness of gifts in wills and encourage you to think about how you can make your last wishes really count.

We don't expect you to write or update your will right now. This is something that takes time. Instead we only ask that you give a thought to leaving a bequest to the Charitable Works Fund. When the time is right, after taking care of your loved ones, we hope that you'll remember us in your will.

Help the Work Live On

It's a common misconception that only wealthy people leave money to charity when they die. The reality is that most bequests are made by ordinary, hardworking people who want to make a positive difference to their community after they're gone.

The simple fact is that without the generosity of these normal, everyday Australians, many of the charities we know and support wouldn't even exist. Bequests form the financial basis of most major Australian charities and are absolutely essential for ensuring the good work they do continues into the future.

Fortunately Australians as a whole are a very generous bunch, with 70% of us supporting charities. And when asked, 29% of people say they'd be willing to leave a gift in their will once family and friends had been provided for. The trouble is only 7.5% of Australians actually end up doing that.

The good news is that including a charity in your will is just as easy as providing for your loved ones. And it can be as much or as little as you want. In fact if the percentage of Australians making a bequest were to increase to just 12%, an additional \$440 million would be created for charities in Australia every year to help them continue their amazing work.

You don't have to be rich or famous to make a difference. You just have to make a simple decision. Whoever you are, whatever your situation, you can help create a better world by including a charity in your will.

Preparing Your Will

Making a will is the only way you can be sure your wishes will be followed after you die. It also means less confusion and heartache for your loved ones in their time of grief. If you don't make a will, part or all of your estate may end up going to people you never intended to benefit.

Just as the term suggests, a will carries out your wishes. If you die without a valid will the law dictates how your estate is distributed. This means if you have no next of kin, your estate will pass to the Crown. And if you do have relatives, they may disagree about what should happen with your estate. Your will clearly explains your intentions and ensures they are carried out.

In Australia you can ask a solicitor to write your will or you can write it yourself. However do-it-yourself kits are not recommended as the best solution as they can leave out important details, like what will happen if the main beneficiary does not survive you.

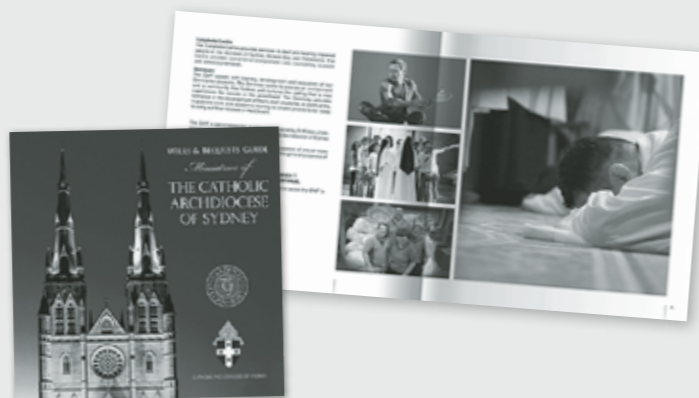
For a will that covers everything you need it to it's better to engage the services of a solicitor or the public trustee. Before you meet with them you should prepare for the sort of questions they'll ask you. For further information, the Sydney Archdiocese has prepared a free **Wills and Bequest Guide** that is available by phoning **1800 753 959** or send an email to bequests@sydneycatholic.org

How to Leave a Gift in Your Will

Including a gift in your will is easy. There are a number of important things to consider when preparing your will. Your will is your chance to say how you'd like your assets to be distributed after you're gone. Gifts can be anything you own including specific items, money, property or a percentage of your estate. *A gift in your will of any size can make a difference.*

Of course your loved ones come first, but if you'd like to also include a charity you'll need to know the full name of that charity and their registered charity number. You can find those details for CWF in our Wills and Bequest Guide.

You will also need to decide on who you would like to handle your affairs. The people who handle your affairs after you're gone are called executors. They can be professionals, friends, family members or any combination of these. Talk to your solicitor for advice on your particular circumstances.



Prisoners Find Dignity & Hope Through God's Love

As a small child Margaret Wiseman worried about the men and women who were locked up behind the high walls of a prison, isolated from their families and friends.

"I was too young to understand why they'd been locked up but I shared their fear at losing their freedom and being away from the people they loved," she says.

Her compassion, understanding and love for society's unfortunate and forgotten who are kept out of sight behind bars, has never left her. Now an adult, for the past 15 years Margaret has devoted her time and energy to bringing dignity, a sense of self-worth, hope and above all the power of God's love to the women inside Sydney's Silverwater Women's Correctional Centre.

The only lay Catholic woman working as a prison chaplain as part of the Archdiocese of Sydney's chaplaincy team, Margaret ministers to the women inside Silverwater and insists there is "no one so bad, so far away from God, so evil, that the Grace of God cannot penetrate."

"A man in prison usually has a woman, a wife or a mother to visit them and on release, a home to go back to. Many women don't have this. Many are abandoned with no one to visit them, no home to return to and no rights to their children," she says. "The majority of women in prison are mothers with several children who have been abandoned by their husbands or partners. Most have never had a stable family relationship, even as children, and once in prison have no freedom."

Margaret describes how women inside are locked up in a small cell from 3:30pm until 8am, and frequently many times during the day as well. In prison they are also forced to share their living space with others, have no privacy and are surrounded by a world of hardship, loneliness and despair.

"After getting so many knocks and bruises, suffering so many setbacks, and

feeling rejected and a failure as well as helpless and insignificant, it is easy to forget we are precious in God's eyes," she says.

For this reason, many of those in prison feel they have not only been deserted by society, but also by God, she says. "They believe the thick prison walls have left God outside and many of those I meet inside prison, believe they are not worthy of God's love."



■ Silverwater Women's Correctional Centre's General Manager Larry Bolger, Attorney General Greg Smith, Chaplain Margaret Wiseman and Commissioner Ron Woodham inside the new interfaith Chapel at the Correctional Centre which opened in June this year.

Margaret finds on her first encounters with women inside Silverwater that they are "at rock bottom and helpless." But when she asks what they most desire, what they most would like, the answer is almost always "to be loved."

Telling them God loves them and wants them to experience that love, Margaret gently encourages the women to ponder God's love through the words of the Scriptures. Touched by the greatness and power of this love, the women not only begin to recognise themselves as human beings, but start to realise what they have done.

Adamant that if she had to divide the world between outside and inside, for her Jesus would definitely be on the inside with the imprisoned. Margaret helps the women

to allow God to change them through His love and grace.

Finding God and His infinite love is a revelation for many of those she visits, but Margaret believes prison pastoral care must also involve the entire community.

Along with her frequent visits to Silverwater throughout the week, the Retreats in Daily Life she organises and study of the Scriptures for inmates, for the past 10 years Margaret has organised members of her parish in a unique scheme where volunteer parishioners befriend inmates helping them change their lives. Not only do the parish volunteers join inmates in a special ministry of Sunday Prayer at Silverwater's chapel, but after the non-denominational service everyone gathers together for a morning tea to talk and exchange ideas. Over the years many friendships have formed.

Another more recent initiative has been for parish volunteers to spend time with Silverwater's women in the days leading up to Christmas or Mother's Day helping them create their own special cards to send to family and loved ones.

"Last year five inmates asked for Baptism and I invited those volunteers who had known them over a number of years to walk the journey with them," Margaret says.

Now keen to enlarge the program to involve a broad number of communities and congregations such as St Vincent de Paul Society, Margaret hopes to form a system of mentoring where visitors visit inmates on a regular basis, help them make decisions and when they are released, be there to meet them at the prison gates and help with basic needs such as food and clothing.

In addition these mentors could also offer spiritual support as well as helping the newly-released women find somewhere to live as well as a job.

"Divine justice is not based on the law but on love. God's justice extends beyond the law. And so should ours," she says. ■

MAKE A DONATION – TERMS AND CONDITIONS: The Catholic Archdiocese of Sydney (CAS) is committed to protecting the privacy of individuals who provide personal information to it. In order to process this donation CAS may disclose your personal information to third parties (in Australia or overseas) where that party has been contracted to provide administrative or other services to CAS (and on the basis that that third party agrees to abide by CAS Privacy Policy). CAS takes all reasonable precautions to safeguard your personal information from loss, misuse, unauthorised access, modification or unlawful disclosure.

In no event will CAS be liable for any loss or damage including without limitation, indirect or consequential loss or damage (including loss of revenue, business, opportunity or reputation), or any loss or damage whatsoever arising from loss of data, information (including confidential information) or funds arising out of or in connection with the processing of this donation. For further details please see the Privacy Policy and Copyright & Conditions of Use on the Catholic Archdiocese of Sydney website at www.sydneycatholic.org/others/privacy.shtml

Statue of Our Lady

Rector of the Seminary of the Good Shepherd, Fr Tony Percy, has announced that the seminary will commission a bronze statue of *Our Lady Help of Christians* within its grounds.

The seminary chapel has a beautiful statue of the Virgin, but no outdoor statue or grotto.

"My original idea was to have a small statue placed in the grounds. But then I realised that we needed a more substantial, beautiful piece of artwork, worthy of the Mother of God. This way seminarians and visitors can come and spend some time in company with the Virgin, gaining strength and solace for life's ups and downs."

Fr Percy also reflected upon the importance of Our Lady Help of Christians for Australia.

"The new colony was dedicated to Mary under the title of Our Lady Help of Christians in 1844. The social and moral situation in the early colony was challenging, to say the least... The laity relied on the rosary as a source of strength."

"It is important, I believe, for the Australian Catholic Church to once again focus on our beginnings as we enter the 21st Century... the way forward is inevitably the same: love and fidelity to the Mass, faithfulness and reliance on Sacrament and the Word of God, unity in the Church and a tangible and affective devotion to Our Lady. Developing a wholesome and tender love for Mary in the seminary is a good starting point for the hoped for renewal.

If you would like to contribute to the commissioning of this statue, please contact Margarita Buazon on (02) 9390 5915 or email margarita.buazon@sydneycatholic.org

Contributors of \$1,000 or more will be acknowledged on a special plaque and all donors will be invited to its blessing. ■

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Help – can you assist the *Deaf Café*?



■ Donovan Mulligan

Deaf Café began last year as an initiative of the Ephpheta Centre at Punchbowl, arising from concerns expressed by pastoral workers and volunteers about the isolation that some deaf people experience, and the lack of opportunity for deaf people to be involved with local community events.

Some deaf people either because of life circumstance or because of incidents throughout their lives have not had the opportunity to develop a strong network

of friends or supports. These people often do not find it easy to join groups in the wider community and rely on services like the Ephpheta Centre for a range of support. The aim of *Deaf Café* is to create an opportunity for deaf people to gather together to chat and develop relationships. There is no other agenda – and Ephpheta think that they have tapped into a fundamental need of all people - the need for community and to belong!

The idea was put forward by Donovan Mulligan, one of the pastoral workers at the Centre. Donovan has an amazing gift for hospitality and warmth that people are naturally drawn to, so it has not taken long for Donovan's idea of a regular gathering for deaf people to grow into a reality. There are now around 15 people gathering on the second Friday of each month over a coffee and a piece of cake. Numbers are slowly growing with regulars and others who pop in when they can or are in need of company.

At the moment *Deaf Café* lacks a coffee machine and they are making do with a kettle and instant coffee over the lunch room table. To really make a difference to the program and help increase the number of attendees, they need a generous CWF supporter/s to donate the money required to not only buy a small coffee machine but maybe some proper coffee cups, a few cafe tables and some colourful umbrellas. Anyone interested in helping Ephpheta with this fantastic project should contact Margarita Buazon on (02) 9390 5915 email margarita.buazon@sydneycatholic.org ■



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Please tick this box to make a tax deductible donation of \$500 or more towards the Seminary of the Good Shepherd's Our Lady Help of Christians statue.

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