



LION TALES



March 2011

The Quarterly Newsletter of

St. Mark's Community Centre

(A partnership between St. Mark's, Fitzroy and Anglicare Victoria)

250 George Street, Fitzroy, Victoria. 3065.

Telephone: (03) 9419-3288; Fax: (03) 9417-5398;

NEW ABN: 97 397 067 466

LENT



Keeping a Holy Lent

Forty days before Easter is this special time.
Ash Wednesday's the first of Lent, to remind.
Candidates for baptism, disciplined and refined.

Traditional customs, to fast and repent, is divine.
From Moses, Elijah and especially Our Lord.
Later various changes, by many ignored.

For Lent us the time of abstinence and review,
Penitence, community service, altruism that's you.
Lent precedes Easter, brutal death of Our Lord.

Most important event of history's record.
The price that was paid for sinners accord.
An immortal life, is God's gift, his greatest reward.

By Colin Gist, our resident poet.

ROBIN ELLWOOD WRITES:

Welcome to our first Lion Tales for 2011. Firstly, apologies if this has gone to an incorrect address or we haven't emailed your copy to you when we should have, but my laptop computer was stolen in January on which was stored the database of our postal addresses. It was very frustrating to lose 18 months of work and easy to be wise after the event re backing up and locking things down etc. etc. Thankfully I now have a new computer and have been able to salvage some of the work I had previously saved, but sadly not all. Recently our new computer network was completed which means that everything will be backed up at Anglicare Central Office, so hopefully we won't have such a problem again.

With effect 04 January, St. Mark's has incorporated the Lazarus Centre and the three services of the Breakfast Programme at St. Peter's, Eastern Hill;

the Drop-in Centre at St. Paul's Cathedral; and the Drop-in Centre at St. Mark's are all now operating under the one umbrella. We have increased our opening hours from three afternoons per week to five full days per week, and St. Paul's has reduced to three mornings per week. The Breakfast Programme opens for 365 days per year. Together we are trying to offer the clients a more holistic and integrated service. Already we are reaping the rewards of sharing our resources with St. Mark's keeping the Breakfast going in cereals and both centres benefitting from the purchase of a bread slicing machine which means that we are able to give out more of the bread we are regularly donated.

With recent renovations at St. Mark's we hope to further expand the services on offer, especially medical assistance by inviting other service providers to make use of our three consulting rooms. One example will be working with North Yarra Community Health Service to provide our first Flu Vaccination Clinic and I am in the process of applying for a grant to fund a podiatry service for the clients.

In February a large number of our clients participated in a survey of homeless people led by Melbourne General Practice Network which aims to put the experiences of the homeless and medics together. The stories of our clients, jointly with those of several other agencies in Melbourne will be a major contribution to the final report on health and homelessness due later in the year. From this we all hope to be able to have a greater focus of the health requirements of homeless people in Melbourne.

A number of the clients have also taken part in the multi agency 'Melbourne Streets to Home', a new programme aimed at providing co-ordinated housing, support services and health intervention targeted at Melbourne's most vulnerable rough sleepers. The programme aims to identify those most at risk in Melbourne and help them to access safe, secure and affordable long term housing with ongoing support to sustain successful tenancies. To date the programme has had a 25% success rate so we have great hopes for all who have participated.

Homelessness is very real, and getting worse. On 28 February all the tenants of The Hub, originally a grim backpackers hostel in Nicholson Street, where a large number of our clients stay, were given notice. The Hub can accommodate 100 people in over 90 rooms, many of them doubles and dormitories and so each of the residents will now have to find somewhere else to stay if at all possible. Whilst services such as Homeground have been requested to assist those currently staying there to find new places to stay, in reality this will be very difficult which is why services such as our own have become so important in the lives of all who use them.

Our drop-in service is coming on by leaps and bounds since our opening hours have increased. People can now attend the Centre between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. There is a great sense of family within the place and even the addition of a toaster and some soft furnishings have made such a difference. Finally our new kitchenette and lounge area have been completed as a result of a

generous donation from the Paul Newman Foundation and we have been able to install a TV antenna so that the clients can watch the two TV's we have been given, however, if anyone has a spare flat screen TV we would be pleased to hear from them!

Our food distribution area has been relocated into the former back office so that staff are safer and we can better utilise the space within the building. Our sneeze counters and pie warmer, paid for by a grant from Woolworths have now been installed, emphasising better health and hygiene as well as greater security.

We are grateful to all involved in the recent renovations particularly Graham Reynolds, Ryan Sherbrooke and Wendy Wright from Anglicare Victoria, Craig Willingham from Affordable Trade Services and Jenny Nicholls and Imad Ellaz of CMC Property Services. The building had a long overdue spring clean as well as rewiring and computer cabling. Let's hope that the next financial year will allow us to repaint the interior and repair the wooden floors.

Thanks, as always, to VicRelief, Second Bite and Fare Share who make considerable efforts to prevent good foodstuffs from being wasted and going into landfill sites. Centres such as our own reap the benefits of the Feed Melbourne Campaign. Thanks also to Monty Stevens and his team at Brighton Grammar School for their recent quarterly delivery of foodstuffs. This time they broke all records and donated over \$6200 worth of goods.

As always, we are grateful to the many individuals, parish communities, schools, organisations and trusts who support us on a regular basis, both with foodstuffs and financial donations. Most importantly, thanks too, to those who assist us both at the Centre and the Opp Shop with their time – a very precious commodity these days.

Thanks to Lyn Wilson for editing "Lion Tales" and making this into such a professional looking publication.

CHRISTMAS PARCELS:

Thank you to all involved in making up Christmas parcels this year and to those who generously contributed to our Christmas appeal, however we received a considerable number of donations that were really inappropriate to give to the clients who are predominantly **SINGLE** and **HOMELESS**. Family sized Christmas cakes and puddings or tins of ham cannot be used. With our Anglicare partnership we were at least able to ensure that these went to families in need at other branches, but it meant that we had to go out shopping to buy more suitable smaller items. Even when clients are considered as being 'secondary homeless', i.e. living in rooming houses and temporary accommodation, they often have nowhere to store foodstuffs, so family sized items are unsuitable.

GIVING TREES:

We had 'Giving Trees' in the church, the Dance of Life Yoga Studio, Westpac Fitzroy and Westpac Abbotsford and it's a great way to involve people in the Christmas Appeal, particularly young families. Just hang labels on a Christmas tree, each listing an item

for the appeal and invite people to take a label and return it on their following visit with the particular item attached so that their donation can be more focused. Thanks to those who participated in the appeal this year.

NEW PRIEST FOR ST. MARK'S:

We welcome the news that **FATHER STUART SOLEY** is to be our new priest. His Induction Mass and welcome to St. Mark's will be held on **Tuesday 31 May at 8pm**. You are warmly invited to join us for this celebration of a new ministry. Enquiries to Fr. Jim Pilmer on **0488 967 688**.

Fr. Stuart is Melbourne born and bred and was ordained by Archbishop Keith Rayner in St. Paul's Cathedral in 1995. He has served as Curate at St. John's Camberwell, as Precentor of St. David's Cathedral in Hobart and since 1999 as the Parish Priest of Sunshine and Braybrook. He is passionate about liturgy, the social outreach of the church and modelling the church as the community God wants it to be – one where there are no outcasts and the dignity and worth of all is allowed to flourish.

He discerned a vocation to the priesthood whilst a student at Monash University in the early 1980s when he was studying for a Bachelor of Arts with Honours degree. He decided to test the vocation by entering the workforce and studying part time. Stuart did not offer for ordination till eight years later after working as a Librarian in public libraries in suburban Camberwell. His interest in church history led him to complete a Master of Arts at Melbourne University with a study of the first fifty years of the parish of All Saint's East St. Kilda which was widely regarded as the 'highest' church in Melbourne at that time.

Stuart is the eldest child of Dorothy and Ron who immigrated to Australia on the 'Ten Pound Pom' scheme in the late 1950s. Stuart grew up in Kew in the days when it was a more socially and economically diverse than today and in the 1980s lived in Richmond. His father, Ron, was a printer by trade and worked for a time at McLaren's printing firm in Fitzroy before it was taken over by the DRG group in the late 1970s. Dorothy is a milliner by trade and has made a number of Stuart's vestments.

In August 1999, Fr. Stuart was inducted as the Parish Priest of St. Mark's, Sunshine. Since then he has overseen the merger of the parish with its neighbouring parish, St. Peter's and St. Andrew's, Braybrook, facilitated the formation of partnerships with two Anglican agencies, Anglicare Victoria and Benetas, and steered the implementation of a comprehensive plan to rationalise the properties and build a new church and community hub.

In February 2011, the new Holy Apostles Church and Centre opened and both Anglicare and Benetas are moving in. The parish's op shop has opened and community groups are shortly to start using the building. The guiding principle in the building is the centrality of worship for the Christian with a beautiful sacred space surrounded by areas where the care of all God's people is undertaken in programs and activities that enhance each person's dignity.

Stuart's other involvements outside the parish are being a member of the Australian Academy of Liturgy and a member of Archbishop in Council. He has been a member of the Social Responsibilities Committee since 2000.

Stuart is looking forward very much to serving in the Parish of Fitzroy and meeting and getting to know its people and being involved in the Community Centre, very much building on the ministry of Fr. Philip and each of his predecessors. Laughter, social occasions and the enjoyment of beauty are just some of the things that animate his life. Stuart also has a keen interest in liturgy, ecumenical issues and 'earthing' the gospel in our lived experiences as individuals and community.

ST. MARK'S IN THE MEDIA:

The third of the recent Underbelly Files telemovies, *The Man Who Got Away*, was filmed partly at St. Mark's last August whilst the Centre was closed. The crew turned the Centre into parts of HM Prison Fairlea and the film included the true story of a prison fire in 1982 which claimed the lives of several prisoners. If you missed the viewing of the programme on Channel Nine, a DVD is now available which also includes some good shots of the Outhwaite Windows.

The recent Channel 7 series, **Conviction Kitchen**, includes one of our clients, Josh, when he was newly released from prison last year. In episode one he speaks about his desire to turn his life around and of this being a great opportunity for him. We'll watch the series as it unfolds to see how he gets on.

GOODBYE/HELLO:

We welcome **Louise Lang**, **Ian Wall-bridge**, **Mofi Islam**, **Campbell North** and **Yvette Armstrong** from the Lazarus Centre to our team. Louise has written an item about their ministry through the Breakfast Programme and at St. Paul's Cathedral

Kirk Vandergrift, our American student from Melbourne University returned home shortly before Christmas. **Seok Mei Lim** from Malaysia and **Lawrence Lam** from Singapore are both medical students from Melbourne University who have joined us as part of their Student Ambassador Leadership Programme. **Tuan Nguyen** completed his Work Experience (formerly Work for the Dole) through Kangman Institute, as did **Alfie Perri**. Alfie has decided to stay on as a regular volunteer as he enjoyed the experience so much. **Quyên Bach**, **Lap Dang** and **Tony de Fazio** have joined us in recent weeks and are already proving to be valuable members of the team. **Tram Le**, **Tan Huynh**, **Andy Nguyen**, **Jia Wang**, **Cheng Bao** and **Lu Ma** will also join us shortly as part of ACU's Professional Experience Programme.

We have also signed a Work Experience Host Agreement with Wise Employment to assist them with their Job Services Australia contract and already have one candidate lined up to work with us at the Centre. With my previous background in employment services I have always been keen to introduce such work placements. In addition we hope to work with Wise to introduce an ex-offender programme as well as providing necessary training in basic life skills for our clients to equip them to seek employment in the future.

FROM FR. GRAHAM REYNOLDS

Director of Parish Partnerships, Anglicare Victoria:

We have recently seen the completion of some significant work take place at the Community Centre. As you enter the centre you will notice that we have done some major rearranging of the space. This allows for a private staff office/meals area. The reception area now includes three cubicles for case work with clients, and food parcels are now collected from the room adjacent. The Hall now includes a kitchenette, and has benefited from a clean from ceiling to floor. There is pool, table tennis and other activities available. Now as you enter the community Centre there is a sense of “community” and “well being” amongst both the clients and the staff.

Also we are now beginning to see regular visits from some of the allied health services which service the area.

We are looking forward to Fr.Stuart Soley’s Induction, he is a long time friend of Anglicare and a great worker for both social justice and social inclusion.

Your continued interest, prayers and support for the Community Centre are greatly appreciated by all of us and you are welcome to visit at anytime.

THE LAZARUS CENTRE – LOUISE LANG:

The Lazarus Centre provides practical support to those of our community who are homeless and marginalised. The breakfast program operating from St. Peter’s continues to provide a great service to such people. More recently we have seen an increase in demand for breakfasts of about 20 percent - providing meals to between 35 and 70 people every day, with average numbers around 45 to 60. As we provide this service 365 days a year that is nearly 20,000 serves of breakfast in a year - that is a lot of toast, cereal and coffee!

Over the last year a cooked breakfast has been introduced on the first Wednesday of the month. This consists of eggs and bacon cooked on the barbeque by some staff recruited from Anglicare Victoria’s Central Office, a team headed up by Graham Reynolds our General Manager. This seems to be very much appreciated by all and our numbers often swell to 80 plus on those mornings.

The advice/referral program based at Saint Paul’s Cathedral off Flinders Lane has also been busy. Since we have started working collaboratively with St. Mark’s, our opening times have been changed but with an increase in staffing to improve security. This service is now available Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 9.30 to midday. We continue to have a weekly barbeque brunch there on Fridays.

The staff of the Lazarus Centre are thrilled to work both with, and at, St. Mark’s Community Centre, where together we can better serve and provide support to our homeless and marginalised friends. We look forward to further collaboration and broadening our services and programs.

ST. MARK'S SPORTS AND RECREATION PROGRAMME - TIM CLARK:

The end of the first part of the cricket season ended with the A Grade Grand Final against the Salvos at the Heidelberg Cricket Ground in late November. In a tight contest we went down but were not disgraced. Our skills and attitudes continued to improve. Five player from St. Mark's acquitted themselves very well.

In early February our Super Eights side (i.e. eight players per side) gathered at Warringal Park, Heidelberg In the preliminary rounds we played every Wednesday. Our side went well, losing just one game to Odyssey Blue. In the semi-finals we were drawn to play the Outer East Trailblazers from Lilydale, the favourites to win the tournament. In our best game to them, we defeated 106 runs to 104 runs.

In the A Grade Grand Final against Sacred Heart we went down in a close battle. Perhaps we had played our own personal grand finale a week before. At

the end of the game each player received a medallion and later at the barbeque trophies were presented. Wayne Harris from St. Mark's received the Best Player Award for our side.

Bowls continued throughout the summer. Clients played on Friday afternoons. Three of our players continue as members of the North Fitzroy Lawn Bowls Club and slay pennant on Saturdays. It is tremendous that they have an opportunity to meet the locals and the locals meet them. We had the ReLink Tournament at Lilydale in early February. After a sandwich lunch the clients played for two hours. Our A Grade side was victorious against Lilydale and trophies were presented.

On 01 April we start the pool season once again and this is eagerly awaited.

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A big 'thank you' to Tim for all he does in mentoring and supporting the clients plus the hard work of co-ordinating with ReLink and the other agencies.



FOR YOUR DIARY

- 22 April – Good Friday – Centre Closed.
- 25 April – Easter Monday – Centre Closed.
- 26 April – ANZAC Day – Centre Closed.
- 31 May – Fr. Stuart's Mass of Induction at 8 p.m.

**ST. MARK'S RECYCLED –
ROBIN CROTON WRITES ABOUT OUR OPPORTUNITY SHOP:**

Over the last year there have been dramatic changes to the Shop. The major changes that were a result of the renovations continue to be registered by customers who have been away for some months and see the shop for the first time since the changes.

We were open for significantly longer hours over Christmas and this was very well received by customers. Unfortunately many of our customers have said they would like us to operate from 9 am to 5 pm six days a week on a permanent basis. This would be great but we would need a real influx of volunteers to do this over the long term.

We have managed to maintain the focus and energy of the renovations so that we do not slip back into old habits. Sharyne has continued the arduous task of pricing all the clothes that go into the shop. In addition to this we now have coloured price tickets which show what month an item first went into the shop for sale. So as each month finishes we are able to see at a glance what is not selling. To help us with our presentation of clothes we bought a clothes steamer which allows us to remove creases from items that came to us squeezed into very small bags and therefore very crumpled.

We are still looking at the potential of selling electrical goods once they have been tested by an approved person. Similarly we still hope to sell smaller items of furniture – in fact we have sold a few items as they came to the shop and before they even went upstairs into our 'official' furniture area so there is an obvious need for affordable furniture.

One further change we introduced before Christmas but which is only now showing some benefits, is keeping some stock behind the shop but still on the same level. The stock we do this with is stock that there is only occasional demand for. For us this is items such as men's suits, table cloths and doonas. These are all too bulky to take up much floor space in a shop but we are making sure they are easily accessible to both staff and customers.

CHANGE FOR THE BETTER:

Do you have any foreign currency sitting at home after your holidays abroad, or old Australian currency that is now out of date?? Often these are such small amounts that the bank cannot accept them. We have set up a scheme whereby such notes and coins can be donated to the Parish Partnerships Programme of which St. Mark's is a major player. So why not use one of the enclosed Change for the Better envelopes and donate that old currency for the benefit of the homeless.



NATIONAL VOLUNTEER WEEK 2011:

INSPIRING THE VOLUNTEER IN YOU 9-15 MAY 2011

National Volunteer Week (NVW) is the largest celebration of volunteers and volunteerism in Australia, and provides an opportunity to highlight the role of volunteers in our communities and to say thank you to the more than 5 million Australians who volunteer.



Australian volunteers are essential to society, and many charities would struggle to survive without the support of their volunteers. Australian volunteers contribute more than 700 million hours of community service to so many areas of society, including community health care, heritage and arts, environment conservation, emergency services, education, social justice and sports. NVW provides a platform to pay tribute to these volunteers who donate their time and energy to help others.

LION TAILS BY EMAIL:

Don't forget that you can now receive your copy of Lion Tales by email which helps us at St. Mark's by saving money on the postage. Please let me know by sending an email to: robin.ellwood@anglicarevic.org.au

HAVE YOU VISITED OUR WEB AND FACEBOOK PAGES?

Our web page: www.stmarksfitzroy.com includes all of last year's editions of Lion Tales and our Annual Report which was published in November. There is also a link to our Facebook page so why not become a Fan of St. Mark's? We try to keep the photograph albums up-to-date so that you can see all that has been going on.

BEQUESTS:

Have you considered making St. Mark's a beneficiary in your will? When writing or updating your will, please consider furthering the work of the Centre in the longer term with a bequest.

ABOUT DONATIONS

ON-LINE BANKING

With the new St. Mark's/Anglicare partnership, we have a new bank account, so should you wish to make a donation via your bank rather than sending cash or a cheque, the procedure has changed:

1. Go to the Anglicare Victoria website: www.anglicarevic.org.au
2. Click on 'Get Involved'
3. Click on 'Donate online'
4. Complete the 'Major Appeals Donations' page
5. In the box marked: Where did you hear about Anglicare Victoria? Click on 'Other'
6. And on: 'If other, please specify' type in "St. Mark's Community Centre"

A receipt will be issued as is the current practice. Rest assured that all monies intended for St. Mark's will come to us here and will not be sent to a general pot for other programmes.

DONATION ENVELOPES:

If you have given a donation recently, or do not wish to contribute at this time, please ignore the form below. The enclosed envelope may be used:-

- For a donation
- To notify us of a change of address
- To request removal from our mailing list, or
- To forward names & addresses of others interested in our work.

Many thanks.

**TO: The Co-ordinator, St. Mark's Community Centre,
250 George Street, FITZROY, Victoria. 3065**

[Tel: (03) 9419-3288; Fax: (03) 9417-5398; Email: robin.ellwood@anglicarevic.org.au]

*"INASMUCH AS YE HAVE DONE IT UNTO ONE OF THE LEAST OF THESE MY BRETHREN,
YE HAVE DONE IT UNTO ME." [Matthew 25:40]*

Here is my gift of \$..... to support the work of St. Mark's Community Centre
(Gifts of \$2 and above are tax deductible)

Name:

Address:

..... Post Code:

If you do not wish to contribute at this time, please ignore this form.

St. Mark's Recycled

298 Smith Street,
Collingwood,
Victoria. 3066
Telephone: 9417-2965

The shop is now open from
Monday to Saturday,
10 a.m. – 3.30 p.m.

DO YOU HAVE ANY OF THE FOLLOWING ITEMS WHICH ARE ALWAYS IN DEMAND FOR THE SHOP??

GOOD QUALITY CLOTHES

PICTURE FRAMES

VASES

PLANTS

PERFUMES

BLANKETS

BOOKS

BAGS

CD's, DVD's AND VIDEOS

LUGGAGE

SHOES

JACKETS

BELTS

KITCHENWARE

HATS

READING GLASSES & SUNGLASSES

JEWELLERY

SHOPPING TROLLEYS

WALLETS

LAMPSHADES

SMALL ITEMS OF FURNITURE E.G.,

BOOKCASES, BEDSIDE TABLES, CHAIRS,

POSTERS, PRINTS, PAINTINGS . . .

OUR HOMELESS CLIENTS OFTEN ASK US FOR TIN OPENERS



ST. MARK'S COMMUNITY CENTRE, FITZROY

The following items are always welcome contributions for our food parcels:

Weet-Bix type Cereals
400g Tins of Baked Beans/Spaghetti
400g Tins of Vegetables, Tomatoes, Fruit etc.
400g Tins of Soup/500g Tins of 'Chunky' Soup
400g Tins of Stew/Curry/Bolognaise/Pies etc
Tins of Fish/Meat
Packets of Cuppa Soup/Packs of Pasta Meals
Bags of Pasta/Spaghetti & Jars of Pasta Sauce
Packs of Flavoured Noodles
Bags of Rice
Own brand Coffee/Tea/Milo/Sugar – for the Lounge
Long life milk – for the Lounge
Soaps/shampoo/toothbrushes/toothpaste/razors
(Hotel/in-flight type toiletries are always useful)
[NO BABY FOODS or FAMILY SIZED ITEMS - Thanks]

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Websites: <http://www.stmarksfitzroy.com>

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Our Facebook page (www.facebook.com/stmarksfitzroy) can be accessed directly from the parish website and includes photos from the Centre

OPPORTUNITY SHOP:

298 Smith Street, Collingwood, Victoria. 3066 Telephone: 9417-2965

NEW ABN: 97 397 067 466