



Peter said, "Catholic Outreach's mission is to help parishes and parish priests, set up and manage their own volunteer based pastoral care programs to provide support and short term emergency assistance for people in need living within that local area."

When someone is in need within the parish, they can contact one of the parish's Pastoral Care Coordinators who will arrange for a volunteer from the parish to provide assistance, for example, to visit the sick or elderly, to provide transport to Mass or to go shopping, to attend medical appointments, to provide emergency meals, to offer home help or to provide information and referrals to Government and other support agencies.

So how does a parish go about establishing a pastoral care program? What's involved and what assistance does Catholic Outreach provide?

Peter McMinn said, "At Catholic Outreach, we are here to help parish priests and parishes every step of the way, from establishing Pastoral Care Committees, providing training, formation and resources for Coordinators through to providing Orientation Seminars for volunteers."

Today there are over 25 parishes running quality pastoral care programs which are supported by more than 120 local Coordinators and literally hundreds of volunteers.

Our mission, our vision, is for every parish to establish a pastoral care program in their area. Betty and I are here to help in whatever way we can... and there are so many positive benefits for the parish and the volunteers, let alone for the people who are helped in so many ways.

Experience has shown that the Parish Pastoral Care Program can assist the priest in a variety of ways in the pastoral care of his people. Within the parish, Coordinators, volunteers and the people they help form a special bond which promotes friendships and a real sense of community. Volunteers report back to us that not only do they gain a tremendous sense of joy and satisfaction in helping clients, but they often make enduring friendships along the way" he said.

I asked Peter what is the best part of his many years of work with Catholic Outreach.

"It's so uplifting to see the truly positive outcomes of pastoral care programs. At the parish level, parish priests and parishioners are enthusiastically involved and committed to the service of people who need them."

People want to be a part of this, especially when they see first-hand the good which comes from the program. It just works... and it is a privilege to be a part of what is happening out there", said Peter.

In this special issue of LIFELINKS, we share with you some wonderful examples of people who have and are being helped through the Applecross Parish and Willetton Parish pastoral care programs... and meet some of the generous volunteers, who are making such a difference in people's lives.

For more information and agency contact details, please visit the Catholic Outreach website www.catholicoutreach.org.au or look for the links from our LifeLink website www.lifelink.com.au



We're *Blessed* to have John Paul Care in our Parish

"Well firstly, let me say how lucky we are to have Betty" said a smiling Father Thai Vu, Parish Priest at Willetton.

"This parish is so fortunate to have built such a strong sense of community over the years, and this is evident in our pastoral care program - John Paul Care. We have 6 wonderful Coordinators (including Betty) and more than 120 generous volunteers who are reaching out to offer help to those who need it."

This work is so important - we are helping people who are in difficulty, single mothers, those who are grieving the loss of a loved one, the aged and the isolated in our community. It is through our pastoral care work that we celebrate our faith and rejoice in God's love for us, by sharing our love with others.

We are truly blessed to have John Paul Care in our parish" said Father Vu.



Rev Fr Thai Vu, Parish Priest, together with Peter McMinn, Director, Catholic Outreach and Betty Thompson, Catholic Outreach Officer and John Paul Care Coordinator.



Transport Coordinator, Beatriz Clark; Betty Thompson; Meals Coordinator, Mary de Wever and Mental Health Coordinator, Robert Williams.

Before we leave the Willetton Parish, we sit and have a quick chat with some of John Paul Care's hard working Coordinators.

Beatriz said, "As a volunteer for 18 years now, everyone has become like old friends, good friends. One of the real positives has been the relationships I have fostered with parishioners, which I may not necessarily have gotten to do if we didn't share this passion for helping through John Paul Care".

Mary said, "There is a great deal of personal satisfaction too from being able to give my time to help people out there in our local community and to see the result of what reaching out can do".

Betty added, **"I THINK IT'S IMPORTANT TO SAY THAT WE ALSO HAVE A GREAT DEAL OF FUN!"**

We all get along so well and enjoy spending time together. Twice a year, I organise dinners for our Coordinators, their Spouses and Parish Priests, and once a year for volunteers. This is an opportunity to express appreciation for the service they provide, and importantly, allows us to strengthen and renew our friendships".

LIFELINKS

issue number 20



LifeLink™ - CATHOLIC CARING AGENCIES
61 Fitzgerald Street, Northbridge WA 6003

the official newsletter of LifeLink™

Telephone 08 9427 0311
Facsimile 08 9427 0379

Email admin@lifelink.com.au
Website www.lifelink.com.au

The material in this newsletter may be reused for school projects with our compliments



THE POWER OF 'FAITH THROUGH ACTION'

by Brett Mendez

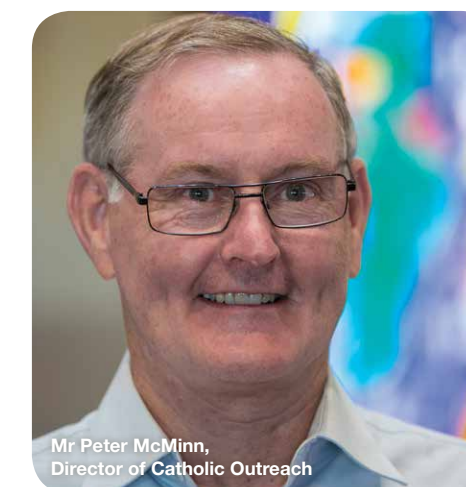
On behalf of Archbishop Timothy Costelloe SDB, we are delighted to announce that we have recently welcomed **CATHOLIC OUTREACH** as the newest member of our LifeLink family.

Of course Catholic Outreach is already a well-known and highly respected agency of the Church, having served the community and people in need within the community, since it was first established back in 1990.

As a newly designated LifeLink agency, our goal is to help spread the 'good news' about the wonderful work being done within parishes throughout this Archdiocese, and how so many 'good people' are reaching out to help those who reach out to them for help... and in doing so, expressing their Faith through Action!

I sat and chatted over a cup of coffee with Mr Peter McMinn, Director of Catholic Outreach since 1999, and his valued team member, Mrs Betty Thompson, Outreach Officer.

CONTINUED ON TO P2 ►



Mr Peter McMinn, Director of Catholic Outreach



CATHOLIC
OUTREACH

Independence & Friendship



Kathleen with Benedictcare Coordinator, Elizabeth Few.

Kathleen welcomes us into her lovely Applecross home, where she has lived for more than 16 years. She lives alone now since the death of her beloved husband some years ago. Also on hand to greet us was Elizabeth Few, one of the Coordinators from Benedictcare, the pastoral outreach program run by the Applecross Parish.

Kathleen, a retired nurse and medical consultant, kindly shares with us her story of how Benedictcare has made such a big impact in her life, and the very real friendship she has developed with Elizabeth.

"I've always been a very independent person, and I am very happy living here in my own home. The past years I've had several surgeries. Complications from my last surgery in December ended in me having to spend 2 months in hospital, requiring rehabilitation following a cardiac arrest. Elizabeth and other parishioners came to visit me in hospital, which was lovely."

It was suggested to me by someone at the hospital at that time that I would need to consider moving into an Aged Care facility, as I wouldn't be able to care for myself at home, which was upsetting to be honest. You see, my daughter, a teacher, was transferred to Broome, so I don't have any family here to help me."

That's where Elizabeth and all the ladies from Benedictcare have been such a blessing. I have had meals delivered when I first came home from hospital, and Elizabeth comes and takes me out for coffee each week. She brings me Communion and even helps take me shopping. I also get picked up to attend the Healing Mass and Coffee Morning held at the parish each month. It's wonderful to get out and about."

**ELIZABETH HAS BEEN SUCH A FRIEND
AND WILL OFTEN CALL JUST TO HAVE
A CHAT OR CHECK UP ON ME.**

With the support I receive from Benedictcare, and the home assistance provided through the Melville Council, I am able to continue to live independently in my own home, something which means a great deal to me" said Kathleen.

Elizabeth added, *"There are always new people coming into the parish - migrants, single mothers and the like who don't have an extended family around for support. It's so fulfilling being able to help people when they need it, and giving something back to my community, my parish."*

Kathleen and I have become firm friends over the years, and so I really enjoy our coffee and regular chats together" she said.

BENEDICTCARE Answering the Call



Rev Fr Phillip Fleay with Benedictcare's Pastoral Care Coordinators - Anne Kilroe, Margaret Handyside, Elizabeth Few and Cora Keeley.

We recently visited the Applecross Parish to meet some of the Coordinators of its pastoral care program - Benedictcare.

Margaret Handyside told us, *"I've served as a Coordinator of Benedictcare for more than 20 years and our parish has more than 100 parish volunteers who are willing and ready to contribute their time to help people in our local community. The sense of 'community' within our parish is very strong."*

There are such a lot of people who need relatively small amounts of help. It is so rewarding being part of a group of parishioners which provide transport for people to attend Mass or medical appointments, visit people who are lonely or housebound, deliver meals to those who need it."

**BENEDICTCARE IS ALL ABOUT SHOWING
COMPASSION AND EMPATHY FOR ANYONE
WHO NEEDS OUR HELP"** said Margaret.

Benedictcare Coordinators Cora Keeley, Anne Kilroe and Elizabeth Few agreed that they felt it was a blessing to be able to help people when they most needed it.

They said that one of the best parts of volunteering at Benedictcare was the friendships that were formed, not only between the volunteers but also with the people assisted through the parish.

Rev Father Phillip Fleay, Parish Priest at Applecross said, ***"It is through active service to those in need that we answer the call of Matthew, who reminds us that in reaching out with loving arms, we reach out in Jesus' name, and demonstrate our love for God."***

Benedictcare is an essential part of our mission here at the Applecross Parish. We have an aging community, multicultural members without family support, and many people who we discover are housebound, lonely or unwell."

I am so grateful that so many wonderful people from our parish so willingly give their time to help people in need" said Fr Fleay.

With Humble Thanks

For Willetton parishioner, Lilian Kee, what seemed just a simple fall in the kitchen, actually resulted in a trip to hospital, where it was discovered she'd fractured her left foot and ankle, and broken three toes on her right foot!

A stalwart member of the Willetton Parish since 1981, it wasn't long before her 'friends from the parish' noticed she wasn't attending daily Mass, and so John Paul Care swung into action. John Paul Care Coordinator and friend, Betty Thompson, visited Lilian and discovered that Lilian's fall required her to use a wheelchair.

Lilian said, "Typical of Betty, as soon as she saw I was incapacitated, all manner of help was offered and organised. Mary de Wever, JPC's Meals Coordinator arranged for meal deliveries, which were delicious!"

Beatriz Clark, Transport Coordinator, arranged transport to Mass for me, and Betty and so many volunteers from the parish visited or offered to help in some small way. Melville Care provided some home help and other assistance too."



Lilian Kee and John Paul Care Coordinator, Betty Thompson.

All my life, I've been the one to try and help others when I could, and I have been a volunteer at John Paul Care for many years. So it's been a very humbling experience to be on the receiving end of all this help and genuine care. I am so very thankful, and I feel truly blessed to be a part of such a vibrant Church" she said.

"At our parish, we have such supportive priests who fully support the pastoral care program, and of course, we have some truly lovely parishioners. John Paul Care is really just an extension of our Church into the surrounding area. We are an important part of the community" said Lilian.



Mrs Eileen Ryder with John Paul Care's Transport Volunteers, Glen & Marie Gomes.

It's the little things that make a *big* difference!

Eileen has been a member of the Willetton Parish for more than 30 years. Sadly, her beloved husband passed away five years ago, and as she doesn't drive, she found it rather isolating not being able to get out and about as she needed and wanted to do.

Mrs Ryder said, *"John Paul Care and the parish volunteers have been wonderful. They arrange transport for me to attend Mass every Sunday, and Glen and Marie drive me to do some shopping or when I need to see the doctor and things like that. There is one lovely lady, Sylvia, who comes to visit me every Saturday - rain, hail or shine - and we have a cup of tea and a good old chat."*

When my husband passed away, it was a difficult time naturally, and I found that the Bereavement Support provided through John Paul Care helped me through. With the help I get from my family and Meals On Wheels, I'm able to continue to live comfortably here in my own home, which I am very thankful for" she said.

Glen and Marie Gomes have been volunteers at JPC for many, many years.

Glen said, *"As a shift worker I'm available during the day to help drive people where they need to go, which is when they need it most."*

**I HAVE TO SAY THAT MY LIFE HAS BEEN
ENRICHED DOING SOMETHING FOR OTHERS**

...and it doesn't have to be big things either. Often, it's the small things we can do to show we care which really make a big difference, you know?"

Marie, who has been involved in the pastoral care program at Willetton Parish for 27 years, added: *"Volunteering is such a joy for me. It's so rewarding and uplifting doing something for someone who needs us, and we get to meet lovely people like Eileen who really become our valued friends" she said.*