

# Charitable Foundation Report 2023

2023 has been a year of both consolidation and new initiatives by the Foundation.

We have continued to support the activities of both the Lazarus Centre and the Social Enterprise in a variety of ways, funding numerous essential works to enable ongoing assistance to the many who are in need.

With our primary charter, the homeless support provided at St Peter's through the Lazarus Centre, **2023 has seen a very large increase in the number of clients we support.**

Many of these are now even more challenged with complex issues related to mental and physical health, as well as substance abuse. This reflects trends in other homeless support services across Melbourne; we are not alone.

These problems are exacerbated by the crisis in accommodation across the state and country.

It was therefore very fortuitous that **in April 2023 our social worker Jason began working at the Lazarus Centre.**

He has formed good relationships with a number of the more troubled clients, and is particularly experienced at assisting homeless people to obtain housing. As a result, we are providing a far more complete and supportive service than has ever been possible.

This appointment is a landmark initiative for the Foundation as in conjunction with our long-standing funding of Fr Philip Gill as Chaplain to the Homeless, it's a significant expansion of our provision of support services beyond food and emergency handouts.

There is a significant cost associated with this (in conjunction with continuing funding of Mthr Kathryn as successor Chaplain to the Homeless), and we are therefore hoping that our appeals and fund raising can continue to provide the necessary funds.

**For 2024, we must address the problem of increasing numbers and also of increasing the number of days we can serve a sit-down breakfast in the hall.**

Since the pandemic, while we continue to provide breakfast 7 days a week, this is provided as a sit down service on only two days a week. A major limitation.

This is a result of both the large increase in numbers of clients, the resultant need for more staff to service breakfast and our real budget limitations. The cost of food and other inputs has also significantly increased in the last year, and we are keen for the Foundation to be able to provide more assistance to meet those needs. We also have continuing costs in maintaining and improving our Parish buildings, equipment and other infrastructure to enable these services to be provided, and to assisting with the Parish's very successful Social Enterprise Program.

Starting with our Christmas Appeal in a few days, we will be asking donors to give even more generously to assist us to do this.

Realistically, we need to raise an additional \$100,000 each year to help provide these basic services to those most in need in our community.

In August, we held our **annual fund raising dinner** at Melbourne Club. It also served as our 175<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration of St Peter's Eastern Hill. It was an extremely successful evening, with many dignitaries in attendance, including the Governor of Victoria Margaret Gardner, the Lord Mayor Sally Capp, Archbishop Philip Freier, and numerous others.

**Our fund raising thus far in 2023** has continued to be successful.

As at 31 October, around \$160,000 has been raised (since January).

This is a little more than at the same time last year, a generous and encouraging result in this increasingly tight economic environment.

In 2024, we hope to be able to launch our bequest program.

Later this week, we will launch our **Christmas Appeal** – which we will enable us to extend our services and also to provide Christmas Packages and a BBQ lunch for Lazarus Centre clients.

In this Appeal, we will make special mention of our need for more staff at the Lazarus Centre and ask for additional support to enable us to employ the extra staff. Having additional paid staff will help expand the number of days we can offer a sit-down breakfast and other support to our homeless clients, in addition to the wonderful work done by our volunteers.

Lastly, you have all been invited to the **Foundation Soiree** on 7 December. This will be a relaxed evening in the Parish Hall, primarily intended to thank our donors, but including all parishioners and supporters who may want to join us and learn more about the work of the Foundation. Please join us for a delightful evening which will include performances by an operatic tenor and soprano.

(This is privately funded and no Foundation funds will be used).

**In summary, as in past years, the Foundation is funding, or significantly contributing to, all key social welfare initiatives and welfare support provided from the St Peter's site.**

**We are fulfilling our mission and intend to continue to do so.**