

Building better lives



Brotherhood of St Laurence

Working for an Australia free of poverty

Executive Director's message



Tony Nicholson

Families to benefit from expansion of in-home child care services

When I visit our Craigieburn Family Day Care Centre I am very conscious of the valuable role it plays in the lives of many disadvantaged families.

Through this centre we run highly innovative programs that offer both training, and child care in the homes of local care providers. Our carers, including many immigrants, are able to gain child care qualifications and pathways to employment. With our support, families are able to access culturally appropriate child care services.

The Brotherhood of St Laurence first

became engaged in the provision of Family Day Care in the 1970s, operating a pilot program in Fitzroy that was so successful it was picked up across the country.

Recently we announced our successful Family Day Care partnerships with the City of Melbourne and the City of Yarra. It is interesting that we are now returning to this location where we played such a

pioneering role with an expansion of services to families in need.

Since these in-home services are more flexible than 9-5 care, they enable people to engage more fully with their communities and allow them to study or work at irregular hours – positive steps that will help them to take charge of their lives and to provide for their children.

Carers receive help from donor

Donor Hilary Irwin is a long-standing supporter of the Brotherhood of St Laurence. She is confident that the Brotherhood is a well-run organisation that develops great programs and cares for its clients.

'We are fortunate to have a family holiday home at Red Hill, and I've long been aware of the challenges faced by many folk living in the region,' Hilary says.

'There is a growing population of elderly people living on the Peninsula, many of whom struggle with lack of transport, a range of health issues and isolation.

'When it was brought to my attention that the Brotherhood was building a new Dementia Respite Centre at Frankston, and developing programs to provide services to people right across the Peninsula, I thought it would be great to get involved.

'The Brotherhood is piloting a very exciting Caring for Carers model.

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Hilary Irwin

Home is where the heart is

Sambell Lodge resident, Janet Brawley is once again enjoying life – and lots of community engagement – after coming to Sambell 18 months ago.

Janet recalls being hesitant about going into a home. Raising her family kept her very busy, along with her love of reading and being part of a writers' workshop.

'That was great for sharing ideas and I had plans to write a novel, too.

'I also enjoyed going to the movies – my son is a cinematographer.

'But I was living by myself and I was frightened of falling. I've had two or three horrible ones, and we thought it was time I came in here.'

'I came to Sambell for respite in 2007 and I really liked it. Where I lived I was very much alone, but here there are plenty of people to talk to – even late at night, that's what I like about it.

'I've made plenty of new friends. My daughter just lives up the road and she pops in quite frequently.



Janet and Aiden at Sambell Lodge

'Crosswords are my favourite activity. We do them early in the morning so it gets you going every day. We do swimming and outings to parks. We've been to the zoo – I really enjoyed that, they pushed me around in a wheelchair.

'This is home to me now – every time I go out and come back I think it's good to be home.

'And I love it when my daughter, Anna and grandson, Aiden visit.'

Eight-year-old Aiden is also enthusiastic about having Janet close by. 'I love coming to see Gran – it's just across the road from my school.'

Sambell Lodge is a 43-bed low-care home run by the Brotherhood of St Laurence in Clifton Hill.

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'This is an outreach program that will assist those people caring for a loved one with dementia, as well as paid carers, to develop new models of managing and responding to common challenges.

'There is a great opportunity to develop new levels of care, and to ease some of the stresses and issues faced by people in this predicament.

'It's been a real joy for me as a donor to be able to make a financial contribution toward part of the cost of the pilot program, and to work with the wonderful Brotherhood staff developing the model,' Hilary says.

'The Aged Care Committee keep me up to date with progress on the program and I am really excited about being able to assist people in need in such a direct way.

'It is good to be making a contribution toward a program that could conceivably make real changes to the way we care for those with dementia, not just on the Peninsula, but if the program expands, it could change the way we care for people with dementia Australia wide.

'This project has broadened my horizons and expanded my understanding of the issues faced by so many in our community.'

AXA serves up a treat at Coolibah



AXA's Lucy Watson with Mr and Mrs Hu at the Coolibah

Members at the Brotherhood of St Laurence Coolibah Centre are smiling after enjoying a special treat last month, thanks to the generosity of a corporate partner.

AXA funded a two-course dinner and enthusiastic staff volunteered their time.

'Everyone at the dinner really enjoyed their meal,' says Lucy Watson of AXA.

'After they finished they all got up and applauded us. It was so nice to see how grateful they were for the meal and for us being there to serve them.

'The most rewarding aspect was seeing what a difference you are making to other people's lives. Being able to help out for a few hours and give these people a hot meal is truly a rewarding feeling.

'This was my first time volunteering at Coolibah and I am looking forward to coming back again.

'It was great to be shown around Coolibah and come away with a better understanding of what great work is done there. I am coming back in September to serve up breakfast.'

Deputy PM launches our book

Brotherhood – Stories of Courage and Resilience is on the bookshelves after being launched in Melbourne by Deputy Prime Minister, Julia Gillard.

This wonderful new book is a milestone publication for the Brotherhood. It presents the raw and personal stories of 29 people who have experienced the harsh realities of life; realities that have moulded them and transformed them.

Written by the Brotherhood Chaplain, Fr Jeff O'Hare, this compelling book features a foreword by Russell Crowe and is illustrated with the revealing portraits of international photographer, Peter McConchie.

At the launch, Ms Gillard recognised that 'disadvantage is something that can strike at random, and many factors can suddenly impair our capacity to cope and trigger disadvantage – such as illness, injury, addiction, domestic violence, family breakdown and unemployment'.

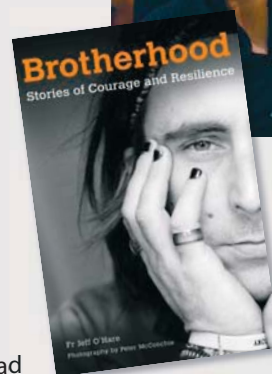
She said it is a book of 'truth telling' and all Australians needed to show the kind of resilience and strength of spirit demonstrated by the people featured in *Brotherhood*.

Engaging with people at crucial moments in their lives can provide the opportunity for a turning point that will change their lives in a positive way by empowering them. This was certainly the case with the book's subjects.

We encourage you to take time to read about some of their amazing journeys. And remember – your purchase of the book will enable us to continue our work towards an Australia free of poverty.



Julia Gillard at the recent launch of *Brotherhood*.



Brotherhood – Stories of Courage and Resilience is available in bookshops

or order today at www.bsl.org.au or by phoning 03 9483 1301.

Just \$29.95 plus \$3 postage and handling per copy (total \$32.95 incl GST).

Dignity and respect keys to aged care

Sumner House Manager Robin Fuller is committed to the Brotherhood of St Laurence and the high standard of care provided to nursing home residents.

'In our aged care facilities we look after residents who are on a low income and have suffered from poverty during their lives,' Robin says.

'In Sumner House at Fitzroy, for instance, we have residents who lived in isolation in boarding house accommodation, many with psychiatric conditions and most often with no family support.

'The Brotherhood is able to offer a home with high quality services and all of the advantages and expertise that working in a large organisation affords. Highly trained staff include nursing staff, a lifestyle co-ordinator, volunteers, ministers of religion and allied health professionals.

'The residents are supported in a respectful and dignified environment which results in an improvement in lifestyle and health outcomes.

'It gives me great satisfaction to see the positive benefits, comfort and dignity that can be afforded in the final years of a person's life.'



Robin Fuller

Staying together at home is our dream

Reg and Shirley Green will celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary on Boxing Day.

'In the early years of our marriage we liked to go out to the movies or a show,' Shirley says.

'When our two girls were growing up we enjoyed picnics, bushwalking and orienteering and the beach. Our annual holidays centred around those activities. We also enjoyed playing a game of cards with friends or with the family.

'In later years Reg and I enjoyed going to afternoon performances of the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra at the Melbourne Concert Hall, also the Australian Ballet at the State Theatre.

'But Reg is unable to share in this interest now because of his Alzheimer's dementia.

'Nowadays, we participate in some of the social events which are organised by the Brotherhood. We like to go for short drives and have a walk by the bay, or through the Frankston Botanical Gardens. We still go out for meals to celebrate family occasions such as birthdays and our two daughters keep in close contact.

'The Brotherhood has been helping us since February, 2008,' Shirley says.

'Reg had just come from five weeks in rehabilitation at Mornington and he was put on the Extended Aged Care at Home program.

'The Brotherhood is our service provider and we have a care manager who organises our care. Someone comes every morning to assist Reg with his shower –



Reg and Shirley Green on their wedding day in 1959

and they give me a break.

'Reg goes to Banksia Respite Centre on Saturdays and also for a whole weekend once a month, plus on the days I have carer support meetings. It's good to be able to talk to people in similar situations and I enjoy the company.

'The dementia respite is good for Reg – he gets to be with people other than me. They have activities and the socialisation is important for him, too. There are a few blokes he can talk to and they had an outing to a country football match.

'The new centre is very comfortable and the staff are lovely. It keeps me functioning – if I didn't have the support I don't know how I would cope. But now we can both be at home together.'

A strong youth focus at EMC

Eighteen-year-old William Manhom has just started his new role as a volunteer youth worker with the Brotherhood's Ecumenical Migration Centre, and he is combining work with studies in Certificate II in Community Service.

'I did the Brotherhood's Future Pathways program at Richmond Public Housing Estate as a participant in 2008 and now I am involved with the program again – but this time it's me encouraging the youth to get motivated.

'It helps me to understand them and the role of work in the community.



William Manhom

'Migrant youths face many challenges such as drugs and violence and the Brotherhood is there to support them individually and as a group.

'This is something I like doing – I'm helping the community in a good way.'

Building better lives



Banksia Respite Centre

Boost for aged care services

Respite services are in the spotlight following the official opening of a modern \$4.2 million dementia centre in Frankston.

Officially opening the facility last month, the Federal Minister for Ageing, Justine Elliot, says the Brotherhood of St Laurence's Integrated Community Aged and Disability Services Centre will significantly enhance services and options for respite and community care.

The Brotherhood acknowledges the wealth of community assistance received for the project, including generous bequests by the late Barbara Parker and the estate of Mrs Ruth Powell.

Many enthusiastic volunteers helped to raise funds. We especially recognise Dizzy Carlyon, former Brotherhood Executive Director Peter Hollingworth and the local Lions and Rotary Clubs as well as the Myer family and many others. This has been a true community project and we look forward to welcoming members of the community into the centre for workshops, information sharing and support.

Home cooking makes a world of difference to Joan's life

Thursday is a highlight of the week for Joan Morcomb of Pascoe Vale, one of 54 Brotherhood of St Laurence clients who benefit from the new Good Food Matters service.

Project officer Donna Coombs says many older people and people with disabilities don't often enjoy home cooked meals.

'Good Food Matters is a return-to-work initiative inspiring mature-aged people with a passion for cooking to create healthy home-style meals for Brotherhood clients,' she says.

'It's a social and nutritional program that focuses on individualised meal preparation for people who are aged, have disabilities or are financially disadvantaged and our aim is to re-introduce them to healthy home cooking. No wonder it is so popular – many more people are being referred each week.'

Joan is now very enthusiastic about Thursdays. 'We made shepherd's pie and pasties and patties – I enjoyed it.

'This week I'm going to have a casserole and curried sausages. We cook enough to last a week, until Patricia comes back. I come up with menu ideas and I do the



Joan Morcomb with her cook, Patricia Mudge

shopping with Brotherhood home help, then we just cook it on a Thursday afternoon.'

Joan says it gives her more time to pursue her great passions in life – painting, knitting and ceramics.

'I can just go to the fridge and put the food in the microwave – I love it.'

An initiative of Brotherhood Community Care, Good Food Matters is a collaboration with the Victorian Government's Department of Human Services Workforce Innovation Grant Program.

The Integrated Community Aged and Disability Services Centre incorporates:

- Banksia Community Respite Centre, which provides both short-term respite care and carefully tailored day programs for people with dementia
- Brotherhood Community Nexus, which supports 150 people with a disability and their carers to participate in community life

- Brotherhood Community Care Southern, which arranges packages of care services for older people and people with disabilities, to help them live independently
- The Social Inclusion Program, which involves older people and those managing a chronic illness or disability in a multitude of leisure activities.

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