



Education – the greatest gift



Gil and her daughter Bianca – helped by the PACTS program.

“ **Neither my husband nor I had the opportunity to finish school and we know from our own experiences how difficult that makes life. Without proper qualifications it's harder to get a job and even when you do, it's low paid and insecure.**

We really wanted our children to have better opportunities than us, but we didn't know how to best advise them.

Although we went to the general parent information nights, we couldn't understand what they were talking about. All the acronyms they used meant nothing to us and we felt so stupid we didn't like to ask any questions.

When we had the opportunity to go to the Brotherhood PACTS (Parents as Career Transition Support) program it was great. We finally understood all the various education options for our children and we could go home and talk to them about their future.

It was particularly helpful for Bianca as she really wanted to leave school, but after talking it over with PACTS staff, she realised it would be far better for her to finish school before she decided whether to start an apprenticeship or some other form of training.

We are enormously relieved that our children will have the opportunities they need to get ahead in life.

*Gil – parent of children helped by PACTS.
Gil is now a PACTS parent liaison officer.*



Executive Director's Message

Generosity and a willingness to help the least fortunate in the community are the things most worth celebrating at Christmas time. This year you, our loyal and generous donors, have given us much to celebrate and I warmly thank you for the contributions you have made to the Brotherhood's work.

This year your contributions helped us to:

- Help more than 1,300 disadvantaged job seekers into work.
- Assist 700 'at risk' young people to either stay at school or successfully make the transition between school and training or employment.
- Directly assist 1,100 children and their families through our childcare and family support programs.
- Help our Given the Chance program successfully assist more than 150 refugees with employment, education or training pathways.
- Assist 1,300 older Australians through our aged care programs.

Thank you for working with us over the year to support families and help children.

This Christmas, our Appeal focus is on kids making the transition between school and work or training. As I write one in six teenagers aged between 15 and 19 are not in full time education and not in full time work. Today's economy requires skills, education and flexibility. Young people without these resources are at risk of falling into long-term unemployment or never making it off the bottom rung of the employment market, trapped in dead end, no future jobs. The transition from school to work is a key turning point in the life of every young person, a time when the right investment can make a huge difference. With your support we can make a huge difference for these kids and families – not just in the short term either. The investment we make now can last a lifetime.

Thanks once again for your support over the year and my very best wishes for a joyful Christmas and New Year.



Tony Nicholson

The ABC Giving Tree

We are delighted that 774 ABC Melbourne has chosen the Brotherhood of St Laurence as their partner for The ABC Giving Tree. Last year nearly 10,000 gifts were received and given to disadvantaged people throughout Victoria, providing untold joy and excitement to the lucky recipients.

When donating gifts

Please make sure gifts are unwrapped, not perishable and new. They can be presents for any age group and may include items such as books, sporting goods, games, blankets, cosmetics, educational toys, jewellery, clothes, bags, quality food hampers, clothing and sunglasses, skate boards and bikes.

Gifts for young children, babies, teens, mums, dads and grandparents are all welcome.

Your gift will be given to people living in poverty. They may be people in aged care or nursing homes, homeless, refugees or asylum seekers, unemployed or have a range of disabilities. All of those helped through the Giving Tree will be living in very disadvantaged circumstances.

Please remember to think of people in need when you are doing your Christmas shopping this year. Buy an extra gift and drop it off at the location points listed below. It would be very helpful if you could try and give your gift early as this will ensure your present will reach the recipients in time for Christmas.

The Brotherhood Community Resource Bank will coordinate the collection and distribution of all the presents given via the ABC Giving Tree.

This is a fantastic opportunity for all of us to support the ABC Giving Tree. Gifts may be left at any metro and regional station and ABC Shops in the city :

Southbank - 9626 1796

Ripponlea - 9524 2226

Chadstone Shopping Centre - 9568 8245

Highpoint Shopping Centre - 9317 4652

Melbourne GPO - 9662 4522

Northlands Shopping Centre - 9471 4863

Eastland Shopping Centre - 9879 5094

Westfield Shopping Town - 9583 5589

Knox City Shopping Centre - 9800 4965

ABC Ballarat - 5320 1010
ABC South West Victoria - 5560 3110
ABC Gippsland - 5143 5510
ABC Central Victoria - 5440 1710
ABC Western Victoria - 5381 5310
ABC Goulburn Murray - 6049 2010
ABC Shepparton - 5820 4011
ABC Mildura Swan Hill - 5022 4541

ABC Giving Tree Party

The ABC Giving Tree was launched with a much anticipated community party held in the courtyard adjacent to Sumner House aged care facility and behind the Coolibah Day Centre. 774 ABC Melbourne presenter Red Symons attended the party, adding a special excitement to the day.

The party was primarily for residents of the Brotherhood city services and while the elderly isolated people who came all thoroughly enjoyed themselves, we are sure the party provided many of the young disadvantaged children with a fun event they will remember all their lives.



Breakfast Club Excitement



The children at the Brotherhood Breakfast Club were very excited recently when comedian Corrine Grant called in to say hello.

Corrine, who has supported the Brotherhood for some time, came to see firsthand how our services actually work.

The Breakfast Club provides nutritious food to approximately 50 children every school day of the year. The Club receives substantial financial and volunteer support from Diners Club and Freehills.

Where are they now?

Many of you will remember Halima Satari, Muluken Mekonnen and Amir Shamoi, three refugees who were being assisted through the Brotherhood's Given the Chance program. Here is an update on where they are now.

Halima Satari

THEN – Halima Satari was a doctor practising in Kabul until she was forced out of her job by the Taliban. Together with her husband and children Halima fled to Pakistan and then came to Australia.

NOW – While making a new life for herself and her family and working on improving her English, Halima studied for several years in order to pass the Australian Medical Council exams and qualify as a doctor in Australia. With the help of Given the Chance and with encouragement and support from her mentor, Halima has succeeded in gaining a position as a doctor.

Muluken Mekonnen

THEN – Although Muluken and her family were refugees from Ethiopia, they came to Australia via New Zealand and the family was therefore not entitled to income or education support.

NOW – Muluken was a primary school teacher in Ethiopia, and while she would like to train and work as a teachers aide here, she needed paid work immediately to help support her family, including her five year old son who has a disability.

With assistance from Given the Chance, Muluken applied for a job at a Coles supermarket near her home. She was very happy when she was successful in gaining a part-time position in customer service.

Amir Shamoi

THEN – When he lived in his homeland, Iraq, Amir was a very experienced architect who managed major projects for World Vision. He was forced to flee his country when he and the projects he was working on were targeted by terrorists.

NOW - Given the Chance matched Amir with a mentor who was a practicing architect (who himself came from a family of refugees in an earlier generation). His mentor provided advice which helped Amir to be successful in his first interview and he now works in a drafting company. Amir hopes to use this experience to help him gain work as an architect in the future.

www.bsl.org.au

ANZ helps out Education Packs

Every year many thousands of disadvantaged families across Victoria struggle to pay for their children's school needs. They are invariably forced to juggle their finances – will they pay the rent or buy school books for their children?

To help families facing this dilemma, the Brotherhoods Community Resource Bank makes up and distributes over 4,000 Education Packs containing a range of stationary items. The packs are then distributed, via local agencies, to families right across Victoria.

Putting the Education Packs together is a big job that requires many hands. We were delighted that this year staff from ANZ bank volunteered to help. They worked so hard and were so efficient that we now have the entire 4,000 packs completely ready for the new school year.

Beautiful Balconies

A group of volunteers from ANZ are giving the elderly residents at Sumner House, the Brotherhood's aged care facility in Fitzroy, a special gift. They are going to transform two bare concrete balconies into beautiful outdoor sitting areas. The volunteers are not only providing all the 'manpower' for the project, they are also making a substantial financial donation towards the purchase of all the necessary materials.

The Brotherhood of St Laurence Furniture Works program will also provide expert assistance by building timber screens, planter boxes and furniture.

The balconies will become a perfect place for the elderly residents to sit on a warm summer evening and enjoy their stunning view across the city skyline. Planter boxes, brimming with herbs, vegetables and flowers, will also give the resident gardeners plenty to keep them busy and inspired.

David Kirkpatrick, Channel 10 gardening expert, has kindly donated his time and artistic skill to create beautiful designs for the balconies

This entire project will be filmed by Channel 10 and shown on its *Mornings with David and Kim* program.



'We give to the Brotherhood of St Laurence because they are doing a bloody good job!'

'Avalon and I have lived a very fortunate and lucky life and are comfortably off – although we have given to the Brotherhood continually for about thirty years, really, we feel we could have given more.

Virtually every day I think about how luck or chance completely changes lives. For example, I never forget my friends who died in the war when they were only eighteen or nineteen. I am always concerned, too, about the many thousands of people in our society who struggle every day simply because they haven't had the opportunities we have. It's hard not to be overwhelmed by worry when you think about the thousands of refugees who have had to flee their homeland and start again with nothing, often with no family or friends for support.

It worries us that so many people in our position live a life cocooned in their own comfortable, relaxed and, to a certain extent, luxurious life – they simply don't want to acknowledge that many people in our community, through no fault of their own, don't

have access to the necessities of life. Things we take for granted.

Perhaps some people refuse to acknowledge the inequities in life because, if they did, and really thought about it, they would find it impossible not to help.

We chose to support the Brotherhood because we believe them to be non-judgmental. They seek to identify and help people who are underprivileged but they don't ever condemn them. They undertake very worthwhile research and they do not discriminate on religious or racial grounds. Those principles are very dear to us.

Many, many people haven't had the opportunities in life that we had. By supporting the Brotherhood of St Laurence we are helping people who have not had the good luck to have the opportunities that have made our life so privileged.'

Avalon and Graeme Stewart



Working for an Australia free of poverty



**Brotherhood
of St Laurence**

Working for an Australia free of poverty

Return to: The
Brotherhood of St Laurence
67 Brunswick Street
FITZROY VIC 3065
Ph: (03) 9483 1301
Fax: (03) 9483 1336
Web: www.bsl.org.au

Please send me
information on including the
Brotherhood in my Will.

Please send me
more information on the
Brotherhood

I wish to join the Brotherhood's regular giving program and give a tax deductible monthly donation.

Please deduct monthly donations of \$ _____ from the credit card below, until further notice.

Please deduct monthly donations of \$ _____ from my bank account by Direct Debit, until further notice.
(The Brotherhood will forward a Direct Debit authority for you to sign).

I would rather give a single, tax deductible gift of: \$50 \$100 \$360 \$500 Other \$ _____

I am paying by: Cheque/money order Master Card Visa Amex Diners Expiry date ____/____/____

Card number ____/____/____/____ ____/____/____/____ ____/____/____/____ ____/____/____/____

Card holder's name _____ Card holder's signature _____

Name (please print) Dr/Mr/Mrs/Miss/Rev _____

Address _____ Suburb _____ Postcode _____

Phone (h) _____ Phone (w) _____ Mobile _____

Email _____