



Parramatta  
Mission

# Autumn Issue and Lenten Appeal

Transforming Lives

## Governor-General visits Parramatta Mission



Above: Sir Peter Cosgrove assisting in handing out Christmas Hampers and Gifts

Parramatta Mission was delighted to welcome His Excellency General the Honourable Sir Peter Cosgrove AK MC (Retd) Governor-General of the Commonwealth Of Australia, and Her Excellency Lady Cosgrove, during our hamper drive in December. Both Sir Peter and Lady Cosgrove greeted families from across Western Sydney, and handed out gifts and food hampers.

We were also thrilled to have the major broadcasters, channel 9 News and Sky News, covering the visit which in turn increased PM's profile across Australia, and further raised awareness on issues surrounding poverty, homelessness, domestic violence and mental illness.

Following are transcripts from various interviews, conducted on the day.

### Who does Parramatta Mission help?

*Well, there are folks who are homeless who are given shelter, people who are living rough and are given nourishment through Meals Plus. They have care for people who are victims of domestic violence. It is the full range of services,*

*often for people who have some psychological challenges, who just need understanding, care and generosity - of which the Church is famous for.*

### What does it mean to you to be here, helping out at Parramatta Mission?

*Well, Parramatta is one of Australia's great communities. It has a huge population, and there are activities like Parramatta Mission, whilst centered in Parramatta, actually reach out well beyond city boundaries, to the Blue Mountains to the inner Sydney areas.*

*I value its philosophy, that is, wherever there are needy people, and they are within reach, they will be helped by the Uniting Church operation, which is Parramatta Mission.*

*I said a moment ago, there are a range of services for people under pressure. For example, this year 80 women fleeing domestic violence were assisted, including housing for 125 kids.*

*In addition, Meals Plus serves 120,000 meals each year. That is a rounded number but it is obviously growing all the time. There are people who come here (Meals Plus) routinely, and it's about the nutrition they'll get during the day. They'll get at least one meal that is balanced, nourishing and affordable. They are asked to pay a very small amount of money, and those who simply don't have the means, are assisted to come and have that meal anyway.*

*I think it is a wonderful example of Australian's generosity, with sleeves rolled up, helping others.*

### 2015 saw a strong campaign against domestic violence. What can we do in 2016?

*Yes, you're spot on. This is a year (2015), where we focused on domestic violence. I suppose we mustn't say we've done it in 2015, and that's it. We have to reduce it to zero, and that is always aspirational. The statistics are just mind boggling and I think what we need to reveal in modern Australia is that there is a lot of work to do to have a peaceful environment at home, where people don't use power to oppress others, and it's particularly, of course, women in Australia that suffer this way. So it needs to be perhaps just the start of the campaign, and not the end.*



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Parramatta Mission, the Uniting Church of Australia

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Above: Sir Peter Cosgrove and Channel Nine News presenter Mike Dalton

### What is Christmas time about?

*I think at Christmas time particularly, whilst we are set for 51 weeks of the year with the reality of a modern life, with all of its pressures, I think we ought to turn inwards at Christmas time, and consider the good fortunes we've had as a nation, as a community, and other good fortunes where we recognise there are some doing it tough, and we reach out to them – it is our good fortune to be able to do that. We are a fortunate country. At Christmas time, whether you are a Christian or not, it is a time to say, "I'm lucky, who else can I make lucky?".*

### What message would you like to pass on to Australians about giving?

*I think Australians should do what they are famous for doing and that is to look at themselves and say "yes I have energy, I have means and I will go and help".*

*Volunteers are always at the heart of this sort of help, and of course, there are the material ways assistance can be made (via a donation)... During the year there are plenty of ways where people can help with their volunteer spirit.*

### PM thanks our Hamper Donors and Volunteers



Above: Sir Peter Cosgrove presenting award to David Webster of Thomson Ford for their ongoing support of Parramatta Mission.

Parramatta Mission awarded Thomson Ford a special thank you in 2015 for 10 years of support for our Christmas Hampers Appeal. Each year David Webster, the team at Thomson Ford and their customers donate literally ute loads of food and gifts to our appeal.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank David for

his loyal and generous support, which has allowed PM to supply over 1100 hampers in December – a new PM record!

With all the food and gifts to pack, we couldn't do it without the assistance of our volunteers. Thanks to everyone who assisted in pickup, delivery, sorting and packing hampers for Christmas 2015.



Above: The team from NRMA helped get our hampers underway with a day sorting and packing.

### A word with Lisa Wylie, Volunteer Coordinator

#### Why volunteer with Parramatta Mission?

With a growing need for the services that Parramatta Mission provide for our community we rely heavily on our volunteers to help our services run seamlessly.



#### How do volunteers enhance the work of PM?

Volunteers are very important to Parramatta Mission. Without our volunteers we wouldn't be able to reach as many people in need as we do. Our volunteers bring with them a wealth of knowledge, compassion and friendship and help to transform the lives of the people in our community that need it most.

#### What types of volunteer opportunities exist at Parramatta Mission?

Parramatta Mission have a range of volunteering opportunities across all of our services: including administration, gardening, painting and maintenance. In addition, volunteers can assist in Meals Plus by preparing and serving breakfast and lunch, 5 days a week, Monday to Friday. We are also seeking assistance in establishing various programs across our services, including art therapy, yoga classes, singing lessons, financial services, computer training, painting, cooking, photography lessons, Christmas hamper packing, Lifeline BBQs and Bunning's BBQ.

#### How do I become a Parramatta Mission volunteer?

Parramatta Mission has an application and interview process, which enables us to match the volunteer to the right volunteering opportunity.

To request an application form or further information please email: [volunteer@parramattamission.org.au](mailto:volunteer@parramattamission.org.au)

# PM WEEK

Parramatta Mission just finished launching its debut PM Week, dating between February 8 to 12.

PM Week aimed to inform the community on issues surrounding poverty, homelessness and mental illness, and ran a series of conferences, seminars, workshops and lunches, with key stakeholders, across Western Sydney.

Also, at the centre of PM Week was the commencement of Lent. Consequently, PM Week launched Parramatta Mission's Lenten Appeal, which hopes to raise funds to feed the hungry, via Meal Plus – a food service providing over 120,000 meals each year.

Parramatta Mission would like to thank our partners, donors and stakeholders, who participated throughout the week. A special thanks to Grill'd and Baxter for their donations, and a special thanks to the Hon. Julie Owens for attending and providing the vote of thanks, also closing PM Week.

## PM Week Overview

### Day 1: Conference, Lunch and Workshop

On Monday, 8 February, PM held a Conference, Lunch and Workshop, with our strong and loyal donors. The conference heard from the Senior Minister / Group CEO, Keith Hamilton, and CEOs Dianne Hart and Karen Burns.

Donors were also invited to provide constructive feedback and insight, also advising how they would like to see PM grow.

*"I think PM Week is a great concept and I was delighted to attend. I think it creates a great opportunity to drive awareness, understanding and support, as well as giving the PM team the chance to share PM's story with a wider audience."*

*"Thanks for the invite - very informative!"*

*"Thanks for inviting me to the PM Week event today. It was a great chance to hear more about the great work you are doing. It inspired me to put a little more money into the collection to help you carry on your great work. I have designated Meals Plus, because as I found with the PM Week lunch today, a conversation over lunch can be a wonderful stimulus for the soul as well as the stomach!"*



Above: Senior Minister / Group CEO, Keith Hamilton accepting a cheque from Grill'd staff.

We would like to thank Grill'd for their generous donations, presented on the day.

### Day 2: Shrove Tuesday Pancake Race

On Tuesday, 9 February, Parramatta Mission held the third annual Shrove Tuesday Pancake Race, in support of Raising Hope for women facing homelessness. The Pancake Race welcomed participants from the CBD, including the local Police, Ford, ANZ, RRT, ESI, YWAX, Amada-amavic, Cake Mania, SNAP and Hope radio. Many of PM's services also attended.

A special thanks to RRT for their donation, and for providing food and drinks on the day. Congratulations also to Thompson Ford for taking home the Golden Pan (1st Prize).



Above: Pancake Day race in Centenary Square.

## Day 3: Raise Awareness Day & Ash Wednesday Service

Parramatta Mission works tirelessly with partners to feed the hungry, accommodate the homeless and aid mental illness across New South Wales. Raising awareness of our mission is equally critical to our success as it builds additional support from the community, allowing PM to increase its services across Western Sydney. On Wednesday, February 10, a small team set out to raise awareness, via letter box dropping, across the suburbs of Oatlands, Homebush and Winston Hills. If you would like to assist in future please email [jenny.fuda@parramattamission.org.au](mailto:jenny.fuda@parramattamission.org.au) expressing your interest.



Above: Postcard maildrop

In addition to raising awareness, PM also provided an Ash Wednesday service, at Leigh Congregation, which was celebrated by Rev. Dr Manas Ghosh.

## Day 4: Revitalised Gloster Udy Society Meeting, with Mr Fred Anderson

In addition to launching PM Week, Parramatta Mission is delighted to announce the revitalisation of The Gloster Udy Society. The first event, for 2016, took place on Thursday, 11 February, which welcomed 35 participants. The guest speaker was Mr Fred Anderson, a highly experienced social worker and senior coordinator of Meals Plus. Fred will be retiring late February, and will be deeply missed. We were honoured to hear Fred speak, sharing his experience of 13 years at Parramatta Mission.

## Day 5: Wine and Cheese, with the Board of PM

One of Parramatta Mission's partners, Deloitte, kindly offered its conference room in Parramatta, which has stunning views looking over Sydney. Parramatta

Mission, and the Board of PM, invited partners, donors and stakeholders, on February 12, to join them for canapés, wine and cheese, and to provide an overview of Parramatta Mission.

We would like to thank Baxter for presenting a very generous gift of \$25,000.00 to Senior Minister and Group CEO, Keith Hamilton. In addition, a special thanks to the Hon. Julie Owens, who very kindly said some words of praise, of both PM and Baxter, finishing PM Week on a high note.



Above: Senior Minister / Group CEO, Keith Hamilton accepting a cheque from Steven Flynn, GM Baxter.



## CONSIDER A BEQUEST

The lasting impact of bequests—both large and small—have helped shape Parramatta Mission today, and will further go on to secure its future tomorrow.

For many supporters of Parramatta Mission, a charitable bequest is the easiest and best way to make a gift. Consider leaving a portion of your estate to Parramatta Mission, to secure and advance our work of helping the homeless, feeding the poor and aiding mental health.

For more information, contact Parramatta Mission's Director of Development, Michael Mendieta, on [Michael.mendieta@parramattamission.org.au](mailto:Michael.mendieta@parramattamission.org.au) or call 0422 259 305.



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