

The Lazarus Centre Chaplaincy Project Report

Fr Philip Gill, Chaplain to the Lazarus Centre

Introduction

This paper reports on the Lazarus Centre Chaplaincy Project. The Lazarus Centre operates from the Anglican Parish of St Peter, Eastern Hill, Melbourne. At present the Lazarus Centre consists primarily of a Breakfast Program. The Breakfast Program is a partnership between the parish and Anglicare Victoria. Breakfast Program staff prepare meals; offer personal support and provide referral services for the homeless and those in danger of homelessness. It operates 365 days per year and also offers the Health Time Barbeque lunch on Fridays. The Breakfast Program provided over 20,000 meals in the twelve months ending September 2012.

In October 2012 St Peter's, Melbourne, Charitable Foundation chose to fund a chaplaincy position for two days per week to provide pastoral care and counselling for participants, staff and volunteers of the Breakfast Program. Along with participation in the worshipping life of the parish, the chaplain's brief included exploring programs and partnerships that could enhance the work of the Lazarus Centre.

The project focused on two days at St Peter's usually Friday and Sunday. Friday included early morning Mass (with homily) followed by conversations with Breakfast Program participants, a meeting of Breakfast Program staff, preparations for the Health time Barbeque and further conversations over lunch. Sunday focused on contact with Breakfast Program participants and involvement in the Liturgy. Research was undertaken on Friday and Sunday afternoons and steering committee meetings were held at varying intervals on Wednesday morning.

The following points emerged from pastoral contact and research:

- An increase of 38% in the number of meals served at the Lazarus Centre over the period 2009 – 2012
- An increase of nearly 60% in the number of instances of assistance such as clothing, legal, health and housing referrals
- A continuing lack of affordable housing in Melbourne
- Those who are homeless often lack the personal resources and self-confidence to seek housing, education, employment, health care, and positive relationships. Advocacy is required if they are going to achieve what most would consider reasonable quality of life
- With intensive support it is possible for chronically-homeless people to be re-established in housing
- The provision of chaplaincy is an important component in this intensive casework as a means of encouraging and supporting the homeless and disadvantaged, adding significant voice to the proclamation that the Church offers hope, healing and community.

Over the course of the project I had the privilege of engaging in more than 200 significant conversations with Lazarus Centre participants, staff members, volunteers and other health professionals. The most significant insights were provided by those participants who witnessed to the resilience of the human spirit and the staff members

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It's great when you sit and talk with us... You can't always find a priest when you need one!

Breakfast Program participant to the Chaplain

and volunteers who modelled true care and service while sustaining a healing community.

In presenting this report I would like to acknowledge the support received from the St Peter's Charitable Foundation and members of the Steering Committee: Fr Hugh Kempster; Dr Ree Boddé, Sarah Ward, Louise Lang, Peter Thompson and John Taaff. I have also appreciated greatly the collegial support of staff members of the Breakfast Program.

Background

The Breakfast Program at St Peter's Eastern Hill began with interactions between homeless people who found sanctuary from cold Melbourne nights by sleeping in the doorways and alcoves of the Church precinct and those who came to worship in the early morning. Worshippers would often share breakfast together following the services. One worshipper remembers asking one of the homeless people where he slept the night before, "In a 5 star hotel", he replied – in other words, under the stars. The parishioner offered the homeless person a cup of tea. Parishioners began sharing breakfast with the homeless and numbers steadily grew.

In order to cope with the growing numbers the parish entered into a partnership with Anglicare Victoria, St Peter's Parish, St Paul's Cathedral and St Peter's Charitable Foundation. The partnership was named the Lazarus Centre. The Cathedral provided drop-in facilities. Anglicare Victoria provided the professional personnel, infrastructure and networks needed to cope with the numbers now accessing the service. The networking included connections with services such as health care, housing, and personal support. Due to restricted space and aging facilities management decided to close the site at the Cathedral.

The Lazarus Centre Breakfast Program now offers breakfast 365 days per year and each Friday hosts a lunch known as the Health Time Barbeque. Breakfast Program staff and volunteers strive to create a welcoming and respectful atmosphere. The program is known for its generosity, hospitality and inclusiveness through which staff gain the confidence of participants, build rapport and begin to explore with them possible pathways for the future including enhanced relationships, nutrition, accommodation and employment.

The number of people accessing the Lazarus Centre continues to climb. Statistics indicate a rise in the number of meals served from 16,002 in 2009 to 22,145 in 2012, an increase of 38%. There was an increase of almost 60% in instances of support such as clothing and medical and housing referrals.

According to the City of Melbourne *Homeless Strategy 2011-13* findings, on any night in Melbourne there may be 101 people sleeping rough (outside/unsheltered), 118 staying with family or friends, 872 people living in rooming or boarding houses and 211 in accommodation provided by SAAP (Supported Accommodation Assistance Program) [page 9].

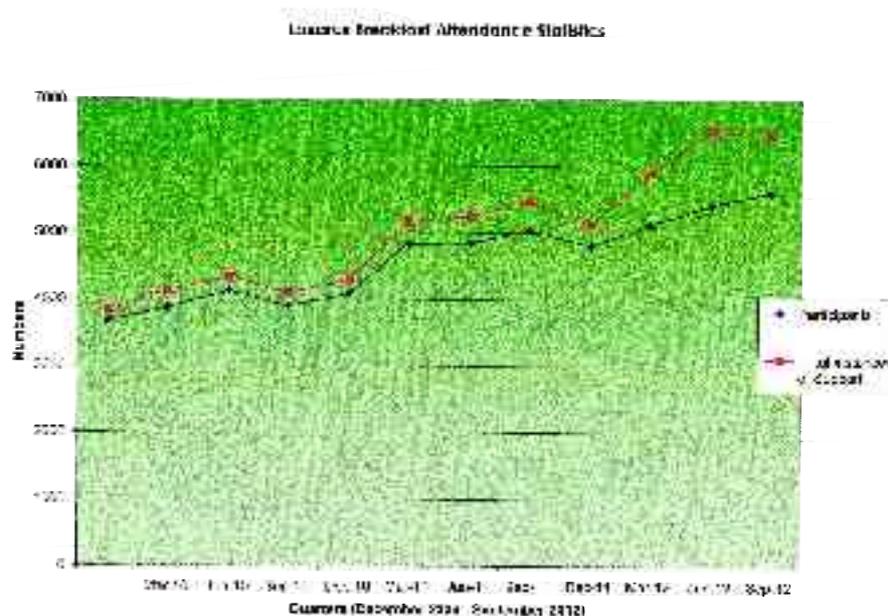
Since partnering with Anglicare, Lazarus Centre staff members have consciously moved towards a case co-ordination model of care. Under the supervision of the manager, Anglicare Victoria Homeless Services and the Co-ordinator of the Breakfast Program there has been a concerted effort to link clients with community agencies that can



Case Study

Robert * had been "messed around" by clinics and became reluctant to make or keep medical appointments. At the Lazarus Centre during lunch word got around that Robert had a badly ulcerated leg for which he would not make an appointment to have treated. A nurse from Dousta Gala Health Services approached Robert and asked to see the wound. The nurse was able to dress the wound on the spot and prepare a plan for treatment.
(* Name changed)

assist with physical and mental health, housing, legal matters, clothing and the need for community and social interaction.



The Breakfast Program also has a strong culture of volunteering, with parishioners, community members and corporate volunteers such as bank staff giving their time to help set up for breakfast or the Health Time lunch, and to assist with cooking and cleaning up. Though this form of volunteering is task-oriented by its nature, there is still significant engagement with participants. Volunteers regularly comment on the friendly atmosphere of the Lazarus Centre and the efficient organisation that gives them a feeling of having contributed positively to those who are homeless in tangible ways. As a result many seek regular involvement.

The Lazarus Centre Chaplaincy Project

In October 2012 the St Peter's Charitable Foundation provided for the appointment of a part-time chaplain to the Lazarus Centre. The initial appointment was for two days per week for a period of six months. The chaplain's brief consists of three main aspects:

- Pastoral care of Lazarus Centre participants, volunteers and staff
- Production of a report exploring the future directions of the Lazarus Centre
- Taking an active part in priestly ministry at St Peter's Eastern Hill.

The chaplaincy project is supported by a steering committee and the chaplain contributes to weekly meetings with other Lazarus Centre staff members.

This project appears to be unique among the agencies offering 'front-line' care to the homeless. While the lack of provision of chaplaincy does not necessarily suggest that the spiritual needs of the homeless and disadvantaged are not being taken into account by helping agencies, the provision of professional chaplaincy makes a profound statement that St Peter's, with the Lazarus Centre, does indeed take the spiritual and pastoral needs of participants seriously.

Pastoral Care

There are many approaches to the provision of pastoral care. Considered among the most appropriate for work amongst the homeless are those that show respect towards those who are often derided and marginalised by society and who therefore have no "voice". Edward P. Wimberly offers a relevant model based on "story listening" and "story telling". Donald Capps' image of the pastoral carer an "agent of hope" is also relevant for this ministry.

Wimberly [Dykstra, 180-187] contends that stories can be used to help people find healing and wholeness through visualising how God is at work in their lives. He notes the danger that the pastor may dominate by preferring his or her narrative over that of the person seeking help but a narrative approach can assist the carer to enter into the other's world.

According to Wimberly, another important aspect of narrative pastoral counselling is "story-listening". This involves listening with empathy, seeking to understand the troubled person's perspective. The listener needs also to acknowledge the feelings of the person as they emerge. "It is only when the story has been fully expressed", writes Wimberly [Dykstra, 185], "and the caregiver has attended to it with empathy that the foundation is laid for story telling".

Capps [Dykstra, 188-199] declares that those in ministry are "agents of hope by definition". He gets his inspiration from John Bunyan's *The Pilgrim's Progress*. For Capps hope is engendered in the experience of reliability in others that provide patterns of providence. Hopes are thus rewarded in their fulfilment. We should, says Capps, entertain those hopes that are not contradicted by what we know about ourselves and our potential.

To hope is to put oneself at risk because failed hopes may lead to shame, disappointment and even humiliation. One may come to realise that one's hopes are unworthy or ultimately unsatisfying. Hoping for the future may dampen awareness of present satisfactions. Finally it is possible that hopes may be detrimental to others.

Capps offers hopefulness as an approach to pastoral counselling. Through hopeful envisioning of time, the past may be "revised" thus changing the person's perception of what is possible for the future. More specifically they are asked to envisage themselves at specific intervals in the future – weeks, months or a year for example. They are asked to describe what life is like with the problem resolved and to outline the process that they believe enabled the resolution.

Images of pastoral care emerge not just from Holy Scripture, tradition or from the minds of pastoral theologians but also from contemporary practice. This image comes from an encounter with a prisoner in a maximum security remand centre. I was sitting in one of the yards talking with a young man. As we talked one of his friends came over and said "Hey man what you doin'". He was making fun, I assumed, of the fact that his friend was speaking to a chaplain. The young man sitting with me responded instantly, "Having a decent conversation for once. Now get lost!" Now I can add my own model of pastoral care to the canon. Alongside wise fool, agent of hope, circus clown and indigenous storyteller now we have the "decent conversationalist".

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How are you going today?

Great now! I can face the day after a good breakfast!

Chaplain with Breakfast Program participant

These approaches to pastoral care have borne fruit with more than 200 significant conversations conducted with Lazarus Centre participants, staff members, volunteers and visiting professionals. This number is estimated from an average of 10-12 conversations of 15 minutes or more on Friday and Sunday mornings. Issues discussed include:

- Current lifestyle including safety and interpersonal issues, survival strategies
- Grief and loss regarding former life, family self-esteem, health, employment and wealth
- Plans for the future
- Current interests, sport, technology, current affairs, papal election
- Issues regarding religion and faith
- Letting-off steam, sharing laughter, jokes, etc.

The following table summarises the chaplain's ministry activity:

Ministry Activity	Frequency	Comments
Attendance at Breakfast	30	Friday and occasionally on Sunday
Attendance at Health time BBQ	21	Friday lunch
Significant Pastoral Conversations (15 mins+)	200 (approx)	Including clients, staff and interested parishioners
Sermons referring to Lazarus Centre	2	<i>The rich Young Ruler</i> , October 14 th 2012 <i>The Gift of the Magi</i> , January 6 th 2013
Lazarus Centre Chaplaincy Steering Committee Meetings	9	
Anglicare Homeless Services staff meetings	20	
Significant events	2 1 1	Memorial service Peter Burns talk End of year Eucharist
Significant interviews	6	

Parish Involvement and Liaison

Parish involvement was an important part of the project. This was fulfilled primarily by liturgical involvement in one weekday Mass and the 9.30 am and High Mass on Sunday. Taking on the chaplaincy project meant a shift from general pastoral involvement to focus on the needs of the Lazarus Centre. One outcome of this shift has been an increase in the number of St Peter's parishioners offering to volunteer with the Breakfast program.

A summary of involvement in the liturgical life of the parish is offered below, however the pastoral significance of these pastoral links between the Breakfast Program and the parish is best illustrated by case study. A participant in the Breakfast Program died of cardiac arrest on 9th November 2012. He was only 28 years old and his death affected staff and members of the Breakfast Program as well as many others who had tried to help him. Sarah Ward, the manager of the Breakfast Program suggested we hold a memorial service for him at St Peter's. Forty-five people attended the memorial Eucharist for the participant. The Mass provided a time for people to



*“Thankyou to all here who looked beyond the obvious as you tried to accompany Justin * through the difficulties of his life. Thankyou for helping him to see past what many others would have seen as the obvious choices of his life.”*
From the Chaplain's homily for Justin. (* Name changed).

reflect and give thanks for his life and grasp the eternal hope of the Gospel. See the full case study attached.

The following table summaries the chaplain's liturgical involvement:

Liturgical Involvement	Week Day Mass Friday		Sunday 9.30		High Mass
	October	5 th	7.15 am	7 th	Celebrant
	12 th	7.15 am	14 th	Preacher	Preacher
	19 th	7.15 am	21 st	Celebrant	Deacon
	26 th	7.15 am	28 th	Assistant	Deacon
November	2 nd	All Souls 7.15 am 6.15 pm Deacon & Preacher	4 th	Celebrant	Celebrant
	9 th	7.15 am	11 th	Celebrant	Choir
	16 th	7.15 am	18 th	Gospel	Deacon
	23 ^d	7.15 am	25 th	No 9.30	Deacon
	30 th	7.15 am			
December			2 nd	Celebrant	Celebrant
	7 th	7.15 am	9 th	Gospel	Deacon
	14 th	7.15 am	16 th	Preacher	Preacher
	21 st	7.15 am	23 rd 25 th	Assistant No 9.30	Deacon Deacon
	28 th	7.15 am	30 th	Preacher	Preacher
January 2013	4 th	7.15 am	6 th	Gospel/preacher	Deacon/preacher
	11 th	7.15 am	13 th	Celebrant	Celebrant
	18 th	7.15 am	20 th	Preacher	Preacher
	25 th	Annual Leave	27 th	Annual Leave	Annual Leave
February	1 st	Annual Leave	3 rd	Annual Leave	Annual Leave
	8 th	7.15 am	10 th 13 th	Celebrant Preacher (Ash W)	Celebrant Preacher
	15 th	7.15 am	17 th	Gospel	Choir
	22 nd	7.15 am	24 th	Celebrant	Celebrant
March	1 st	7.15 am	3 rd	Gospel	Choir
	8 th	7.15 am	10 th	Celebrant	Choir
	15 th	7.15 am	17 th	Gospel	Celebrant
	22 nd	7.15 am	24 th	No 9.30 am	Deacon
	29 th	7.15 am	31 st	Easter Day Celebrant 9.30 am Officiant Evensong & Benediction Celebrant and preacher at 6.30	

Research

Defining Homelessness

A consideration of homelessness must go beyond the reality of those who are actually "sleeping rough". According the Australian Bureau of Statistics has arrived at a definition that also includes the degree to which a person has security of tenure and the adequacy of the dwelling. In working to define homelessness the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) surveyed both Australian and overseas research. Influential was the European Typology of Homelessness and Housing Exclusion (ETHOS) [2012: 16-18].

ETHOS describes homelessness within four broad categories:

- Roofless (living rough or in emergency accommodation)
- Houseless (hostel and supported accommodation)
- Insecure (those living under the threat of violence or eviction)
- Inadequate (unfit or over-crowded accommodation).

Included is the ABS search for a definition is the work of Statistics New Zealand. Using ETHOS as a foundation for their definition Statistics NZ proposed a definition based on three domains:

- The social domain (allowing for privacy, social interaction and safety)
- The legal domain (exclusive possession, security of occupation or tenure)
- The physical domain (habitability).

Also discussed in the ABS Report [2012: 19] is the definition of Australian researchers, Chamberlain and MacKenzie, "Minimum community Standard: a small rental flat – with a bedroom, kitchen, bathroom and an element of security of tenure". Building on the work of Chamberlain and MacKenzie the ABS definition includes:

- Adequacy of the dwelling (habitability, basic facilities)
- Security of tenure
- Control of and access to, space for social relations.

Contained in these definitions is the insight that to be homeless should not be equated to being "roofless" and that if we are to continue to use the term homeless in such rhetoric as "we need to help the homeless", or "let's bring an end to homelessness" then social, spiritual and cultural aspects need to be taken into account.

There is a lack of adequate housing stock in Melbourne. Some who are expected to live in the places that are available, such as rooming houses, have spoken to me of feeling unsafe, with little or no real say over their "space". Betraying a high level of frustration some say they would rather be sleeping rough or that they would rather be in jail.

A snapshot of homelessness in Melbourne is available in the findings of the City of Melbourne street count of those homeless and sleeping rough. Workers went into the Streets of the municipality of Melbourne to count the homeless. In 2011 key findings included:

A total of 105 people were counted:

- 77% were male and 12% were female
- The gender of the remaining 11% was unable to be identified.
- 34% of those counted were aged 41 – 69.
- 35% were aged 26 – 40
- 8% were aged 18 – 25
- 8% were aged over 60.

<http://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/CommunityServices/SocialSupport/streetcount/Pages/StreetCount.aspx#previous>

Some Important Responses to Homelessness in Melbourne

Among the responses to homelessness in Melbourne include some cutting-edge projects, including Journey to Social Inclusion, Melbourne Street to Home and Wintringham Housing. Each project is summarised below:

Journey to Social Inclusion

Journey to Social Inclusion (J2SI) is a pilot program run under the auspices of the Sacred Heart Mission, St Kilda. It offers accommodation linked with intensive case work support for up to three years. The project is directed towards the chronically homeless and is based on overseas research indicating that a permanent transition to housing is possible when people are provided with, "...individually tailored, on-going, intensive support...".

<http://www.sacredheartmission.org/Page.aspx?ID=77>

Melbourne Street to Home

Based on a US model, Street to Home is a partnership between the Salvation Army, HomeGround Services and the Royal District Nursing Service. Street to Home focuses on breaking the cycle of chronic homelessness by providing quality housing and on-going

support. Street to Home draws on US evidence that suggests it is more cost-effective to house people than to rely on temporary accommodation and the welfare, health and corrective services.

<http://www.homeground.org.au/case-studies/streettohome>

Wintringham Housing

Wintringham Housing is a subsidiary of Wintringham which was formed in 1989 out of concern for the "aged and homeless". Wintringham has developed services that include residential aged care. They also assist people to maintain tenancies through managed care packages. Wintringham operates as a Housing Association registered with the Victorian Government. Wintringham Housing consists mainly of one bed room units with ensuite. The housing is located in Williamstown, East Bentleigh, Kensington, Avondale Heights, Delahey, Geelong and Central Victoria.

<http://www.wintringham.org.au/wintringhamhousing.aspx>

The literature indicates that the most successful programs seeking to re-house the homeless are those that offer intensive support. It is also clear that people should be housed as soon as practicable with issues of addiction, health and social inclusion being dealt with concurrently. However there is still a need for "places of first approach" where those who are homeless can find sustenance and social acceptance before they are ready to deal with finding permanent housing, a process that is made more traumatic for those who have adapted to living rough or "couch surfing".

Models of Ministry among the Homeless and disadvantaged

Some prominent models of dealing with homelessness and disadvantage relevant for the Lazarus Centre are summarised below.

Community Chaplaincy

The Lazarus Centre Chaplaincy Project may be likened in form to community chaplaincy. Broadly speaking community chaplaincy is a ministry that has developed from the need to provide spiritual care to those who may not have affiliation with an organised religious group. Because of the circumstances of their lives, for example through homelessness, addiction and mental illness they may lack the self confidence to approach or join a church group. While chaplaincy to organisations is well known, community chaplaincy is a more recent development and focuses on disadvantaged sections of society. The most developed expressions of this ministry are in Canada, the UK and some states in the US and focus on the care and resettlement of those who have recently been released from prison. Community chaplaincy provides flexibility able to build on findings that assertive outreach and intensive case co-ordination bear most fruit in caring effectively for the disadvantaged.

The website of the UK Community Chaplaincy Association has a link to a positioning paper which states:

Community Chaplaincy engages with the lives of many people in our society who are in deep trouble; disaffected, judged in the popular press, depressed and anxious, affected by troubled family relationships, or suffering from drug misuse issues. In short, already in prison. Our society's culture is not one that encourages long term relationships, delayed gratifications, civic responsibility, personal depth or self respect. It is inevitable that many people fall foul of the law and find themselves in prison.

<http://www.communitychaplaincy.org.uk/images/CommunityChaplaincyandFaithv6.1.pdf>

Community chaplaincy is one way in which the Church can engage with those "in deep trouble" and the model seems easily transferable to ministry with the homeless. The Community Chaplaincy Association indicates that their work has assisted in lowering the rate of recidivism. Perhaps one day community chaplaincy offered to the homeless may be able to point to significant instances of rebuilt lives as well.

Christ House

Christ house, Washington DC offers medical care for the city's homeless men and women. Residential care is offered 24 hours a day and has about 34 beds. Staff members include a team of physicians, nurse practitioners, nurses and assistants.

Services provided include pre and post operative care, testing, management of medication, immunisation and dressing of wounds. Christ House operates a case management model with case managers meeting weekly with patients and devising a care plan including referral to outside services and also offers emotional support and health education. Christ House is supported by a team of 200 volunteers from local Churches, businesses and former patients.

<http://www.christhouse.org/services/index.html>

Bromley by Bow Centre

The Bromley by Bow Centre serves the community of the borough of Tower Hamlets in East London. It was established by Andrew Mawson, the local United Reformed minister, who sought to revitalise the congregation through opening the church buildings to the community. The first project, which commenced in 1984, was to offer child care. The guiding principles for Bromley by Bow include responding to the needs of the community and breaking down barriers between people. Bromley by Bow has continued to develop as a secular organisation offering a vast range of services in the areas of:

- Legal and welfare advice
- Art and design
- Employment
- Enterprise
- Health and wellbeing.

<http://www.bbbsc.org.uk/pages/art.html>

Emmaus Inc. UK

Emmaus has developed into a housing project that offers the homeless community life, accommodation and work. Participants in an Emmaus project have their own room and share common meals. Work is provided through an onsite workshop enabling the renovation and sale of furniture and white goods. There is usually a bistro on site providing training and work for Emmaus participants. People stay for varying lengths of time. From their earnings they receive an allowance and have money saved for when they leave.

<http://www.emmaus.org.uk/>

Conclusion

Research suggests that those who are homeless or in other ways disadvantaged in our society are best helped by intensive case co-ordination. Essentially this means that there are many helpers needed to assist in rebuilding damaged lives. This is best illustrated by the Melbourne examples of *Journey to social Inclusion* and *Melbourne Street to Home* summarised above. While this form of care represents a significant outlay of time, money and energy for the community in the long run it is a good investment. This is simply because helping someone back into full productive community life is more cost-effective than continued stop-gap care. Spiritual care is part of this helping equation. The provision of substantial and professional spiritual and pastoral care is something that the Church can contribute to the wellbeing of individuals and therefore the good of the community.

The Lazarus Centre Chaplaincy Project has been pioneering; it is a great start to the provision of such care and it should be continued, encouraged and built upon following a model such as Christ House, Bromley by Bow or Emmaus though a unique model will no doubt emerge if, like Bromley, St Peter's listens to the community and remains open to meeting the needs of the most disadvantaged.

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In Memory of Justin *: A Lazarus Centre Chaplaincy Case Study

Fr Philip Gill, Chaplain to the Lazarus Centre

Justin * was a client of the Lazarus Centre Breakfast Program. He died on the 9th November 2012. He was 28 years old. He was a troubled soul, heavily addicted to drugs and taken advantage of by acquaintances. He was also genuinely endearing and his death deeply affected those who knew him and those who cared for him. Those who cared for him were literally trying to keep him alive and also give him a semblance of dignity. Even though he could be chaotic, Justin showed a natural ability to engage others in conversation especially about current events and sport, particularly basketball and the possibility of sharing a cigarette.

Breakfast Program staff were distressed by Justin's death. They had done much to support him over many years. The manager of Anglicare Homeless Services, Sarah Ward, asked to receive Communion to mark his death, to commend him to God's keeping and as a means of supporting her own self-care. I conducted a Mass in St Peter's Chapel of the Incarnation Wednesday 14th November. The Breakfast Program co-ordinator, Louise Lang, joined Sarah and me for the Mass.

In subsequent days it became apparent that other participants in the Breakfast Program, as well as carers from other agencies, were also deeply affected by Justin's death. Sarah suggested a public memorial service for him and that the service should be a Eucharist. The Mass was arranged for 10.30am Thursday 22nd November. Being Chaplain to the Lazarus Centre as well as a priest associated with St Peter's made organising the service seamless.

The Mass was a memorial as the family had decided to have a private funeral. There had been little communication between Justin's family and the agencies that had tried to help on the street. A table was placed at the entrance to the chancel for the placement of symbols representing his life. The chancel altar was set up so that the main body of the church could be used.

Forty-five people attended the Mass for Justin. The readings were Ecclesiastes 3, Psalm 23 and John 14. Breakfast Program staff members Alex Gamser and Louise Lang read and Sarah presented the Eulogy. Louise also acted as altar server and administered the chalice. In the homily I took up the theme of giving thanks for those who were willing to look beyond what they first encountered in Justin to what lay beneath.

Among the symbols lovingly placed for Justin were flowers and cigarettes. The greeting of peace was a particularly moving time as those from helping agencies and clients were brought together to offer each other God's peace. I was conscious during the prayer of consecration that many in the congregation would be survivors of brokenness just as Justin was, and I hoped that the words of hope, of death and resurrection would find resonance with them, "Therefore with thanksgiving for the gift of your Son, we here proclaim his passion and death, and his victory over the grave."

Hospitality was offered for the congregation in the parish hall following the service – lovingly organised by staff of the Breakfast Program. It was significant that Justin's mother, brother and other family members attended the service and expressed deep thanks for all that had been done for him.

"Thankyou to all here who looked beyond the obvious as you tried to accompany Justin through the difficulties of his life. Thankyou for helping him to see past what many others would have seen as the obvious choices of his life."

From the homily for Justin.

(* Name changed.)