

Good morning everyone. My name is Peter Burt and I am the Relationship Manager Gifts in Wills at Anglicare Victoria. Thank you Father Richard for inviting me here today to talk to you about the wonderful and diverse work that Anglicare does right across Victoria.

As per today's reading from Exodus 17, the children of Israel journeyed according to the commandment of the Lord, led by the pillar of cloud and fire, yet they came to a place where there was no water for them to drink. We may be in the way of duty, yet may meet with troubles, which Providence brings us into, for the trial of our faith, and that God may be glorified in our relief. They began to question whether God was with them or not. This is called their "tempting God," which signifies distrust of him after they had received such proofs of his power and goodness. Moses mildly answered them. It is folly to answer passion with passion; that makes bad worse. God graciously appeared to help them. How wonderful the patience and forbearance of God toward provoking sinners! That he might show his power as well as his pity, and make it a miracle of mercy, he gave them water out of a rock.

As God helped the children of Israel and showed them mercy, surely God would wish this for all children. Anglicare takes up this call and provides children across Victoria with love, care, water, food and nutrition as God would have wanted us too.

First of all I want to dispel one myth. Anglicare is actually the largest foster care provider to young children and young adults in Victoria, and is not, as is often believed, an aged care provider in Victoria. Anglicare is the largest provider of residential care facilities for your children and young adults in Victoria with 26 homes manned 24 / 7 by highly trained staff. The care and support offered by our staff to children in our care is second to none. They are highly trained, passionate and compassionate people who love what they do. Children, babies and young adults are the core of our organisation and the main reason we are in business.

The Anglicare Board and Senior Management Team have always tried to meet the complex needs of the many vulnerable and disadvantaged children, young people and families right across the state of Victoria. Most of the time we do more than our fair share to assist and this can result in deficits for programs like our residential care unit. It is so important to Anglicare Victoria that our 26 residential care homes across Victoria continue to operate and run efficiently and most of the time are at near capacity with four children per resi care house or up to 96

children per night accommodated. While the state government provide significant funding to Anglicare to run our programs including resi care, at times we need to dig into our reserves to cover such large deficits. You could say that we act as a form of disciple so that these programs continue to operate so that these 96 high risk kids can be accommodated each night. If we didn't, where would they go? Many are removed from homes where they are at substantial risk whether that be as a result of drugs, alcohol or domestic or sexual violence. If we did not have places available, the outcomes could be terrible.

So what are the facts...

- We provided **Foster Care and Kinship Care** for **1,298 children and young people**.
- In the past 12 months, **1,181 Foster Carers** have provided care to children and young people in need.
- Our **Family Services** programs provided early intervention services for mothers, fathers and families, and provided support to **9,187 families**.
- **5,058 families** were helped by our **ChildFIRST** services that provide a community referral point for children and family to access Family Services.
- The **Broadmeadows Women's Community House** gave frontline support to more than **769 women primarily from multi-cultural backgrounds** seeking safety, advice, healing or friendships.
- **Cradle to Kinder** supported **30 young families** with complex needs, from pre-birth up until the child reaches the age of four.
- Our **TEACHaR Program** provided specialist education support to **223 children and young people** in Out of Home Care.
- Our **ParentZone** program provided parenting skills and training to **2,500 parents**, with 78 per cent of parents agreeing that their and their child's behaviour had improved.
- AV's **Alcohol and Other Drugs** services supported **1,661 people** over the financial year.
- Through our **Financial Counselling** services, our Financial Counsellors improved the financial situation of and provided education to **6,384 people**. They are also core to Anglicare Victoria's response to the horrific bushfires in Gippsland and North East Victoria
- Since launching **Functional Family Therapy – Youth Justice (FFY-YJ)** in April, **48 families** with children involved in the youth justice system have been listened to, educated, coached and supported to prevent further involvement with the law.
- Last year our **Rapid Response** teams supported more than **200 families** at imminent risk of losing their children to the Out of Home Care

system. 95 per cent of children in the Rapid Response program remained safely with their families.

- **Gippsland Community Legal Service** supported **764 clients** in need of legal assistance.
- Our **Toy & Food Appeal** collected **8,000 toys** for kids in need, with 19 schools participating, as well as 21 parishes and 18 corporates donating to the cause.
- Anglicare Victoria currently has **87 project partnerships** in place with more than **264 Anglican Parishes** across Melbourne and Regional Victoria, through its **Parish Partnerships** program.
- This year, across **14 Emergency Relief centres**, hundreds of dedicated AV Volunteers supported the delivery of frontline assistance to **4,667 Victorians** in urgent need.
- **1,637 staff and 2,300 volunteers** worked tirelessly to deliver programs across **30 Victorian offices and 14 Emergency Service locations**.
- AV appointed **Aboriginal Cultural Advisor and Mentor, Uncle Ian Goolagong** to support future leaders and to help AV stay connected to culture. **Buldau Yiooghen 'Big Dreams' Youth Leadership Academy** is a partnership between Anglican parishes and 30 different cultural, sporting, indigenous and community bodies.

Anglicare Victoria operates so many programs and you may be surprised to know that we now employ over 1,600 people across Victoria but importantly, we also rely on the support of well over 2,000 volunteers helping us out with Emergency Relief programs, as Foster Carers and volunteers with a wide range of programs and parish partnerships. And we are always on the look-out for more Foster Carers.

For more information about us and the programs and services that we operate, I have left some brochures and booklets on the table at the rear of the church. Please feel free to take anything from there and please ask me any questions after the service should you have any.

And finally, it remains for me to pay tribute to your Parish for your wonderful support of Anglicare Victoria since at least 2006.

Should your parish wish to fundraise for children in our care, can I suggest that you have a look at the "Better Tomorrows" program brochure. Funds raised by parishes and individuals for this program are provided to children in our care via their care worker or case worker for any worthwhile purpose such as school uniforms, educational needs, sports equipment or sports uniforms, a laptop or I-pad, books,

excursions etc. All funds donated go directly to children via their case worker. If you want to know more please let me know after the service.

Thank you so much for the opportunity to talk to you today. I will stay around for a little while after the service and join you for morning tea.