



THE CATHOLIC FOUNDATION

# Sustaining Faith Hope Charity

NEWSLETTER



**Left:** Bishop Vincent greets staff from the Ephpheta Centre at The Catholic Foundation's pre-launch Mass

## Welcome

**Welcome to the first “Sustaining Faith, Hope and Charity” newsletter, produced by *The Catholic Foundation*.**

The DWF (now *The Catholic Foundation*) has received many generous gifts which have in turn helped thousands across Western Sydney and the Blue Mountains.

Many mothers facing homelessness or fleeing domestic violence have received refuge and a second chance. Families struggling to remain united have been healed and restored. The deaf and elderly have been cared for and nurtured, and many others who have responded to the call of faith have been strengthened on their heavenly journey.

There are many good works, and many good stories which occur, resulting from your generosity.

This newsletter aims to inform *The Catholic Foundation's* faithful and generous supporters, by providing updates and testimonials from the agencies it supports – namely, the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine, Holy Spirit Seminary, Ephpheta Centre and CatholicCare Western Sydney and Blue Mountains.

We hope you enjoy these good news stories, and are further inspired to sustain Faith, Hope and Charity across Western Sydney and the Blue Mountains.

***The Catholic Foundation Team***

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# The Catholic Foundation's Pre-launch Dinner

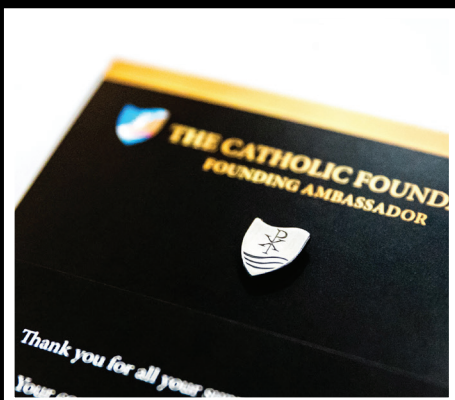
On 4 November, 2017, the Diocese of Parramatta held a Pre-Launch Dinner at the Novotel (Parramatta) with Heads of Agencies and major donors across the Diocese, to announce the launch of The Catholic Foundation, which took place in parishes on 19 November.

The event showcased the recently created website – [yourcatholicfoundation.org.au](http://yourcatholicfoundation.org.au) – and the newly produced video describing The Catholic Foundation and the agencies it supports - video available for viewing on the website.

The heads of agencies – Mrs Cecilia Zammit (Director of Confraternity of Christian Doctrine), Fr John Hogan (Rector of the Holy Spirit Seminary), Mr David Parker (Manager of The Ephpheta Centre) and Mr Joe Cashman (Executive Director of CatholicCare Western Sydney and Blue Mountains) – each provided details of the agencies' achievements and future ambitions.

The Bishop of Parramatta, Most Reverend Vincent Long Van Nguyen OFM, also delivered the keynote presentation.

Although the evening was not intended as a fundraising event, but rather an opportunity to thank our donors, the news was still very warmly received, and donations just shy of \$100,000 in total were received in connection to the night.



*Bottom Left: Special pins were awarded to guests recognising them as Founding Ambassadors for their generous support over the years*

*Top: Seminarian Jack Green (right) shares his testimony, leading into the seminary*

*Middle: Fr Peter Williams welcomes guests as the evening's Emcee*

*Bottom Right: Mr and Mrs Bachmann were recognised for their generous support over the year, with Bishop Vincent (far right)*



# David Parker (Manager at The Ephpheta Centre) Shares His Journey in Auslan



**Hi I am David Parker I have been with Ephpheta for 7 years. I became a Catholic last year and I am a proud Catholic. I am still a rookie. My deaf wife and my hearing daughters are all Catholics. I use Auslan - the sign language of the deaf community in Australia. It is my language that I use to express myself fully and participate wholly in society.**

I have a lovely interpreter here, Nicole, who is very experienced in spoken English to Auslan and Auslan to spoken English translation. She is also an experienced Catholic interpreter and familiar with Catholic signs for the Australian deaf

***“We do a lot of pastoral care work. We visit deaf inmates in jails. I am sure that everyone here knows how isolating it can be for all people if we are sick, in hospital or in a nursing home. Imagine how isolating it would be to be deaf as well – you cannot talk with the nurses or the staff, and you cannot talk to the people around you. Also being a deaf person in jail is very isolating.”***

community. She is a fully trained paid interpreter – Nicole is a member of our Ephpheta staff. Ephpheta engages trained professional Auslan interpreters for our daily work at Ephpheta and other events that the deaf people attend, such as Mass services and pilgrimages for example.

A bit about myself. I am the manager of community at the Ephpheta Centre. I am a deaf person from birth. There are no deaf members in my immediate family but I have found an Auslan interpreter from Brisbane, a nun, and about 8 deaf people in my extended family as well as more than 12 convicts. Quite a few naughty cousins way back! Basically we are all “cousins” in a way. One humanity. Difference races. Different ways of life. Different languages. Different abilities.

The Ephpheta Centre is the Catholic Centre for Deaf People in Sydney and we are located in Punchbowl. We are an agency of the Catholic Archdiocese of Sydney, Dioceses of Parramatta and Broken Bay respectively. We provide pastoral care and support to deaf and hard of hearing people. The work of our Centre mostly supports people who are deaf and who use Auslan. There are many different deaf people living in Parramatta and in the West. Many of my team members here, most of which are profoundly deaf,

are from Sydney West. We are the only Catholic organisation for deaf people in NSW.

We have many successful projects, especially Mass services and special pilgrim tours, Deaf Cafe events in Sydney,

Penrith, Central Coast and Milperra, Deaf Youth Sydney program in collaboration with Deaf Society and various social events, Deaf Mens Outings, Deaf Womens’ Outings, Ladies Craft on every Wednesday and a monthly computer workshop.

As an organisation, we are proudly Catholic but we will provide support for any deaf or hard of hearing person. Much of our work is religious in nature – we provide Mass, marriage support, sacramental preparation and support for funerals. But a lot of our work is pastoral – Jesus tells us through the Gospels to go and help others. We do this every day in our work at Ephpheta.

We do a lot of pastoral care work. We visit deaf inmates in jails. I am sure that everyone here knows how isolating it can be for all people if we are sick, in hospital or in a nursing home. Imagine how isolating it would be to be deaf as well – you cannot talk with the nurses or the staff, and you cannot talk to the people around you. Also being a deaf person in jail is very isolating. We have very regular visits to nursing homes and hospitals to visit and support sick and invalid deaf people. There are also many isolated deaf people living in their homes alone throughout Sydney, especially Western Sydney.

So we are very excited to have an enhanced relationship with the Parramatta Diocese and we wish *The Catholic Foundation* a very successful future.

We dedicated to serving the wider community with wide open arms. We work very hard to make a difference in people’s lives. We are very proud to carry on God’s work.

Thank you very much for your support and for the opportunity to tell you a little about the work of The Ephpheta Centre.

Peace be with you all.

***David***



## A Young Mother's Hopelessness and CatholicCare's Charity

**Sarah, from 'Houses to Homes' – A CatholicCare program assisting young mothers facing homelessness, and who are often fleeing domestic violence – was interviewed for the launch. Sarah, a young migrant and now mother, was pregnant, isolated and alone when she was first received by CatholicCare's "Houses to Homes" program. The following interview details her experience and journey, and was recorded and played at The Catholic Foundation's pre-launch dinner. Here are some excerpts from the transcript. Names and images have been changed to protect their identity.**

***Tell us a little about yourself.***

My name is Sarah, I'm 26 years old, and my baby girl is 6 months.

***What advice would you give other young mothers facing homelessness?***

Find professional help, there is a lot of help out there. Don't face it alone, it's difficult.

***What's your wish?***

I did at one stage wish they gave my

baby to another family, because when you are in a problem, you can't see your own strengths, and you become hopeless. But if you can get someone to listen to you, that way you find your own strength, and that is what happened to me. I felt so helpless and was thinking I could never take care of a child. I was even thinking I might be in a mental hospital and they might take my baby. When I get those who helped me, they talked to me, they find there is something good in me. That's my wish.

***How did CatholicCare provide a helping hand?***

I was homeless, I was hopeless, I had no family, I didn't have friend. They understand me, they know that I'm in a problem, they know that I need help. They give me safe place to live when I was in labor. The manager she went with me. It was a long labor, it was like 2 days. We slept there, she slept with me there. She was with me like family. I wasn't expecting that. I was thinking that I would be lonely. But I wasn't, they were there for me like a family. They even come midnight, I can call them

anytime. They come and settle my baby.

***What's in store for the future?***

Diploma in community service work. I'm thinking of doing next year (2018).

***Why do you want to give back to the community?***

First of all I like helping people, because I see myself, I get help and now I am a better person. No woman hates her own child. But if there is no hope, you, they, do bad things to the child and they do bad things to their own self. So the services are very important.

***How did you experience hope and love at CatholicCare?***

I have no family, I don't have anybody who knows my background, I don't even have anyone who speaks my language, who can talk with me. Yes, so when I get this help, it just helped me like a family. I'm even better than before my pregnancy. Before I was so lonely, now I think my baby also she feels my heart.

***On behalf of everyone at The Catholic Foundation and CatholicCare, thank you for providing a second chance.***