



BLIND EYE MINISTRIES

'Blind Eye Ministries is a grass-roots Catholic ministry devoted to journeying with the most vulnerable in society. We achieve this one person at a time. Our current areas of focus are homeless, Indigenous and pro-life issues.'

PROGRESS REPORT - 18/02/15

Hi Blind Eye supporter!

I would like to start by expressing my most deepest appreciation for your support over the last 12 months! Your prayer and financial support has not only made another year possible, but managed to reach hundreds of vulnerable men and women throughout our city and nation!

In August of 2014 we managed to secure a lease on large warehouse style base for our ministry to open its first inner-city Drop In Centre. Many years of prayer and planning went into the preparations of this initiative and the last 8 months have born incredible fruit. The location of the Blind Eye Drop In Centre is 19 Merivale Street, South Brisbane. The centre is open Monday to Thursday 9:30am till 3:30pm. Our stage one set up is complete and we have been serving the local community since September.



Each day between 15 and 35 men and women attend the centre for a variety of needs and reasons. We have basic facilities at the centre; tea and coffee, lunch, clothing racks, washing machines, toilets, showers, a range of recreation activities and plenty of 'chill out' space. We also provide a platform for other organisations to assist those in the centre in a range of professional ways.

The Drop In Centre is made up of mostly a voluntary staff many of whom the ministry has encountered over the years of its outreach. All of these volunteers have experienced many difficult times in their lives and have made incredible transformations and recoveries back into society! Myself and a

few other leaders manage and oversee the daily activities and ministry within the centre and we have recently formalised an advisory board to assist the centre and the general movement of the ministry.

The vision statement for the Drop In Centre is as follows:

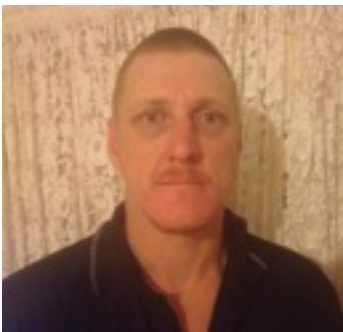
'The Blind Eye Drop In Centre is a daytime sanctuary for the most vulnerable in our city. The centre is based on Christian values and behaviour with each individual being treated with dignity and respect. The centre consists of regular activities, basic facilities and services to assist those with a variety of needs. The centre desires to not only meet the material needs, but the fullness of the individual; mind, body and soul.'

The ministry, in collaboration with other supporting organisations, assist many men and women each week with housing, mental health services, drug and alcohol detox and rehabilitation, attending appointments, reporting for parole and probation, food parcels, clothing and any other

particular needs that arise. Greater than assisting practically, the Drop In Centre has been providing individuals with a sense of community and a safe place to belong and rebuild their lives.

Everyday we are learning and growing both as volunteers and as a ministry. We have a code of conduct that we ask each individual to abide by when attending the centre, and for the most part these are followed. There are opportunities for prayer, scripture study and sacraments throughout the week at the centre. It's highly important each day that we create a culture of prayer and faith in the centre to maintain the ministries integrity and to communicate authentically our Catholic Christian faith. We never take a heavy approach when communicating faith, but rather keep the door to spirituality wide open. We are proud to announce that at Easter this year we have 3 recipients of the Drop In Centre being Baptised and Confirmed into the Catholic community. They are currently completing the RCIA program and journeying towards their initiation to the faith.

Below is a testimony of a recent recipient of the Blind Eye Ministries Drop In Centre.



'Hi my name is Rick. I am 41 and grew up in Brisbane. I grew up with a good Mum and no siblings. My Nan was basically my Dad and I lost her 9 months after my Mum passed away. I was doing well for a year after losing my Mum and Nan and then the grief hit me! It was here that I turned to drugs and the only family I had left turned me away and I had to resort to the streets. I have been on and off the streets the last 3 years. My use of drugs increased in this time and I was always trying to help myself but never putting up my hand for others to help. I met the Blind Eye team a few years back and had a positive effect on me. It wasn't until early this year (2015) that I had had enough of the life of

homelessness, drugs and my lifestyle that I really needed to get back on track. I knew about the Blind Eye Drop In Centre and I went down there to chat with guys. I shared my situation with them and for the first time asked for help and soon after the guys had helped me with a stable place to live. Today my life has changed and I see a good future for myself. I'm clean of drugs and no longer homeless. I have a good community of people who care for me and it's as though I'm at home with Mum again!'

We managed to secure fundraising for the Drop In Centre lease and running costs for its first 8 months of operation. We are currently seeking a further 8 - 12 months lease and running costs. The lease is a month by month contract costing \$3000 per month. This is an incredible price when considering the location and size of space. Other locations in the inner-city area are close to twice this amount with a minimum of 2-3 year contracts. We have been blessed with this space and we look forward to continuing to reach out from this location with the support of many who believe in the mission we are working towards!

In other areas of the ministry, our regular outreaches in hostels continue to operate. Each Monday, Thursday, Friday evenings and Saturday mornings, teams of volunteers attend hostels throughout the city providing regular services and ministry support. These outreaches all fuel the common vision that we have of journeying with the vulnerable and helping individuals rebuild their lives through ongoing support. These are fantastic outreaches and the recipients are always appreciative with their words and actions.

Our Indigenous ministry supported two projects in the last 12 months. The first was a building project on Palm Island of which 4 members of Blind Eye spent a week on Palm Island helping with maintenance and extensions within the parish. They also had amazing time with local people on Palm where they continued to foster the relationship between our ministry and them. This will be a regular trip in the cooler months each year and we hope to continue to grow the relationships and connections in the future.

The second was our annual trip to Darwin to assist the Darwin youth office with its annual youth weekend. Many Indigenous youth attend this weekend and its a great opportunity to share faith and encourage them to grow deeper in their identity and culture. The team supported in a variety of ways from music through to small group leading. This is always a rich experience and we value our strong connection with the Darwin Diocese.

It is proposed that we will visit the community of Santa Teresa twice this year and continue to strengthen our connection and relationships with them. This too has been a rich experience and seen a number of community members attend the Ignite Conference in Brisbane in September. We look forward to continuing the work of Reconciliation through extending our faith opportunities into the remote communities and beyond!

In summary, the past 12 months has been the most incredible time! Our Blind Eye family continues to grow and expand each week and we are privileged to see transformation unfold in the lives of so many considered unreachable! Once again your support of our ministry in of the highest value and it is because of your generosity and willingness to give finically to our ministry that this is possible! Without your contribution and role none of this is able to happen.

From each one of our Blind Eye team we say thank you and ask that you continue to support us!

God Bless,

*Roby Curtis
Ministry Coordinator
Blind Eye Ministries*

(Please visit our website for more updates and visual testimonials - blindeyeministries.com)

