

August 2020 Newsletter

New Beginnings

After almost 17 years of operation in Maylands, The Shopfront has a brand-new building to operate from as we begin our new adventure of being able to offer hospitality and support to the people of the South East corner of Perth. We will continue to be available to people from the wider metropolitan area supporting the homeless, the unemployed and those finding life difficult due to issues such as loneliness, substance abuse and mental illness.

As ever, volunteers are and will continue to be the lifeblood of The Shopfront.

Although at the present time we are finding it quiet with small numbers of visitors attending, we anticipate that before long the word will get out and the number of people coming in each day will increase.

Over the coming weeks I would like to provide an orientation to all the volunteers re our new home and the way we can make best use of the facility and remain COVID safe. As part of my sharing with each present volunteer I would like to take the opportunity to outline the new on-line course on "Professional Boundaries" that we will be asking all new volunteers to do as part of their induction.

Damian

Official Opening – The Shopfront

On Friday 18th September at 10.00am, The Archbishop of Perth, Timothy Costelloe, will conduct an official opening and blessing of the new Shopfront building at 59 John St, Bentley.

Volunteers are invited to attend and should have received an invitation via email. If you didn't receive it, please RSVP as soon as possible.

How do we make sense of death?

Wednesday 31st July at around 11.00am we received a phone call telling us of the sudden death of Br Russell. The news came as quite a shock. As I tried to process my own reactions, I was quite aware that Rosemary was representing us at the funeral of one of our Wednesday volunteers, Patsy Ahern. Patsy is the sister of another of The Shopfront long-term volunteers, Kathy Coulson.

Patsy had been with us for a little over 3 years. Prior to joining us she had been battling cancer for almost 10 years. Patsy had shared with Rosemary and Paula that her coming each week and whenever she could on another day was a source of great hope for her. She enjoyed the company of her fellow volunteers but also the talking with our visitors. The shared coffee at Mrs S coffee shop was a highlight of the day as volunteers, staff and friends made the most of the 30 or so minutes of sharing, laughing and generally chin wagging.

Whether it is the suddenness of Russell's going or the longer process that Patsy and her family endured, the death of someone we know and loved is, or can be, a real burden.

I know that Russell was a man of deep spirituality. His daily Mass attendance was the religious side of him. His practical giving of himself, his time and the always friendly demeanour was a sign of his deeper need to always searching for what his God was calling him to in life.

Patsy was not religious. Yet she, like Russell, had a deep spirituality. Patsy and I had many discussions about meaning making and what life is about. Her giving of herself and her limited energies to the visitors was a sign of her knowing that life is more about what you do rather than what you say.

Russell, Patsy you will both be missed.

May the families of both know that we are thinking of them and holding them in our hearts.



I'm not sure about this!