



# St. Merkorious Charity

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## Issue 13. November – December 2019

***At St. Merkorious Charity, we assist the less fortunate to relieve them of the misery that builds up when hunger consumes every waking moment with thoughts of desperation and futility. Our program opens the way for people to realise that they are not forgotten, and that someone cares enough to visit them, talk to them, and support them in their time of need.***



*Paula Nicolas  
Founder and President*

## **SYDNEY STREET FEAST- NOVEMBER 15, 2019**

For the second year in a row we celebrated Sydney Street Feast at St. Mary's Cathedral. This event is in response to Pope Francis', "World Day of the Poor". The event was hosted by the Justice and Peace Office of the Archdiocese of Sydney and the Catholic Archdiocese of Sydney. We are grateful to our sponsors PAYNTER DIXON and PAYCE FOUNDATION who without their support this would not be possible. We shared a meal and enjoyed companionship with the less advantaged.

Thank you to all our volunteers from St. Merkorious Charity who generously provided their time, support and kindness to embrace and celebrate this event.





## **PARRAMATTA STREET FEAST- NOVEMBER 20, 2019**

In the spirit of friendship and compassion the Diocese of Parramatta hosted a lunch for 200 marginalised people across Western Sydney and the Blue Mountains. St. Merkorious Charity were delighted to prepare, cook and serve the food for this event and share in the compassion and conversation at Prince Alfred Square as part of the inaugural Parramatta Street Feast. To complete such a wonderful event, we were entertained by Sydney Street Choir and Riverwood Community Choir who performed many of the audiences favourite Christmas songs.



## **BURWOOD MAYORAL CHRISTMAS APPEAL- DECEMBER 5, 2019**

We were honoured to be part of the Burwood Mayoral Christmas Appeal at Burwood Woodstock Centre. Guests were invited to contribute non-perishable hampers for St. Merkorious Charity and St. Paul's Anglican Church Burwood to distributed to local families in need this Christmas.

We thank the St. Merkorious Charity committee members and all the attendees who donated items for the less fortunate. Special thanks to Burwood Mayor, Mr John Faker for including our Charity in this wonderful initiative.



## WESTFIELD CHRISTMAS GIFT WRAPPING STALL

As a result of receiving the Burwood Local Hero Award, we were grateful to be provided with the opportunity to receive proceeds from the Christmas gift wrapping stall at Westfield Burwood. This money will in return assist with our monthly gathering to share a hot meal and activities that we host in Burwood Park.

None of this is possible without the efforts and time so generously donated by our volunteers- thank you to all those who represented the Charity and helped wrap gifts.



## FAIRFIELD HUB

We celebrated our annual Christmas Event at Fairfield Youth and Community Centre. We were blessed to share a wonderful meal, sing hymns and engage in a few games as well as some lucky visitors winning raffle prizes. To conclude the event our clients took home beautiful Christmas teddy bears.

Many thanks to our regular volunteers who attend every week to support this service. Our clients enjoy and value this event each week and are deeply impacted by the kindness shown.





## HOT MEAL AND FELLOWSHIP, RHODES

We celebrated Christmas at St. Merkorious Church in Rhodes with our Hot Meal and Fellowship evening. Our special guests who volunteered with us were our major sponsors, Paynter Dixon. We hosted Christmas for 80 homeless guests, who were picked up on buses from Martin Place, Woolloomooloo and Parramatta. Together we shared a delicious Lebanese BBQ, listened to the singing from our wonderful youth choir and our guests left with some beautiful Christmas gifts and lucky raffle prizes.

We thank Paynter Dixon for their continuous kindness, support and generosity and we look forward to working in partnership and “Sharing the Bread” with you in the New Year.



## HOT MEAL AND FELLOWSHIP, BURWOOD- RSL CLUB VISIT

Our Burwood Hot Meal and Fellowship located in Burwood Park is becoming a favourite for many of our clients. In November, we were honoured to have a few special guests attend to offer support and encouragement. Burwood RSL Club provided St. Merkorious with \$10,000 to fund these monthly events and Burwood Council provides the venue in-kind. Tracey and Michelle, representatives of Burwood RSL Club and John Faker the Mayor of Burwood dropped in to send us their best wishes and support. We all enjoyed the delicious food, drinks, games and raffle prizes.



## VOLUNTEERS LUNCH

We were able to pay tribute to our hardworking volunteers and celebrate our achievements for the year at Massaya Lebanese Restaurant. Without our volunteer's time, efforts and support we could never achieve what we do each week. We hope that we will see you in 2020 and that your lives are enriched through volunteering.

God Bless you all for your contributions and continued support.



## HAMPER PACKING

Thank you to all our generous volunteers who assisted with our hamper packing nights. It was wonderful to have so many youth involved. We had a special group of helpers from FX Tennis who not only are quick on the tennis court but were able to transfer this speed to our hamper packing. As we know, many are involved in playing a part to help bring joy to those in need this Christmas.

Special thanks to FX Tennis staff and students, for their support and generosity.



## COMMUNITY SERVICES COURSE

Seven lucky students participated in a 3-month Community Services Course facilitated by Sydney Community College. They were given the opportunity to gain knowledge, skills and Certificate II to begin their journey towards employment. Thank you must be made to St. Merkorious Church for allowing us to use their parish hall and to Sydney Community College staff for their patience.





## GLIMPSE OF HEAVEN AUSTRALIA

Bridget Elias, Founder of Glimpse of Heaven holds a yearly collection leading up to Christmas. Her Charity prepares hundreds of hamper baskets and bags for the homeless and disadvantaged which are then given out through various churches and charities. St. Merkorious is fortunate enough to receive hampers which were distributed at St. Paul's Mission Christmas dinner.

Thank you to Bridget Elias for generously donating the hampers.



## ST. PAUL'S MISSION CHRISTMAS DINNER- DECEMBER 18, 2019

Each Christmas, St. Paul's Mission hold a Christmas dinner for the homeless. They serve dinner, sing hymns and visit the church for a sermon. St. Merkorious Charity had the honour of attending and passing on hamper bags donated by Glimpse of Heaven. The homeless were extremely appreciative of the goodies and food they received.

Thank you to the event organisers at St. Paul's for involving our Charity.



## STRATHFIELD COUNCIL- DECEMBER 18, 2019

Strathfield Council held a Christmas gathering to thank community members for their support over the year. Attendees were asked to bring along items to donate to St. Merkorious and St. Paul's Church, Burwood. Strathfield Mayor, Antoine Doueihi congratulated the Charity on its success and hopes his new appointment as Mayor will allow him to work closely with us to assist the local disadvantaged community.

Special thanks to the Mayor and all councillors for inviting the Charity and promoting our work to the public.



## WARANARA SCHOOL- DECEMBER 13, 2019

Waranara School provides an environment for young people (aged 14–18) experiencing mental health issues and significant life challenges to re-engage with education. A group of students brought along donations and joined us pack hampers to distribute to families in need during Christmas. They also packed cookie containers and shared a lovely morning tea.

Thank you to the school staff for helping supervise on the day. It was a pleasure hosting the group.



## MONTESSORI ACADEMY CHRISTMAS APPEAL

This pre-Christmas period has seen our Charity van pick up donations from multiple Montessori Academy campuses to support our families and bring joy during the festive season.

We sincerely thank the parents, teachers, and especially directors, Charles and Colette Assaf for always supporting us.





## ST. JOSPEH'S PARISH SENIORS LUNCH- DECEMBER 19, 2019

St. Merkorious Charity had the privilege of attending St. Joseph's Seniors lunch. The guests attended mass and adoration followed by a beautiful buffet style lunch prepared by the Charity and parish volunteers. The elderly enjoyed a fun afternoon with music and raffle prizes. Parish Priest, Fr Maroun El-Kazzi announced that this service will be held monthly in 2020.

We thank the parish priests and wonderful volunteers who made the event possible.



## CHRISTMAS BLESSINGS AND A PROSPEROUS NEW YEAR

Every day we witness those involved with St. Merkorious Charity who reach out to assist the vulnerable in our community. This is not a challenge that can be completed by just one person, rather it is a team and a community that show compassion and support. A team who join and place their hands to the plough so that we can do God's work with love in our heart. We are so blessed to share the love with you all.

We wish to thank everyone involved in supporting St. Merkorious Charity. Our newsletters keep our readers up to date with all the events and support that we provide those we assist. However, so much goes on behind the scenes and none of this would be possible without the dedication and support of our volunteers and sponsors. We wish you all a very Merry Christmas and safe New Year. May the Lord bless each one of you and thank you for "Sharing the Bread" with us.

Stay updated via Social Media:



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