

Issue 35 July-Sep 2025

## FROM THE FOUNDER

PAULA NICOLAS

As we reflect on the July to September quarter, I am filled with gratitude for the incredible support, dedication, and generosity that make St. Merkorious Charity's work possible.

Our outreach services continued to bring warmth and care to those in need. Every Monday evening in Parramatta and Monday lunchtime in Fairfield, our volunteers shared meals, care packs, and friendship with our communities. In Woolloomooloo on Friday evenings, volunteers served hot meals, desserts, drinks, and care packs, bringing comfort and companionship.

In August, we participated in meaningful events that highlighted the power of connection and remembrance. Excelsea intern students joined us as part of their Social Work placement, gaining hands-on experience while contributing to our programs. We took part in the Wrapped in Love Homeless Week memorial at Parramatta, remembering those experiencing homelessness and raising awareness about the challenges they face.

Our Blanket Drive in Lebanon brought hope and warmth to communities across the country. Over three days, volunteers distributed blankets to children's villages, hospitals, nursing homes, and charitable centres, including SOS Children's Villages Kfrehey, Hospital Governmental de Tannourine, Hospital Al Koura, and Beit Rafqa in Bcharre. Thanks to everyone who helped make this project possible.

September was a busy month of progress and generosity. Work on our new Distribution Centre advanced significantly, bringing us closer to a more efficient and welcoming hub to expand our reach.

Our major event, Day at the Bay, was a joyful celebration of community, connection, and fun. Families, volunteers, and community members came together for a day filled with entertainment, activities, and delicious food, creating a vibrant and welcoming atmosphere. It was an opportunity not only to enjoy a day of laughter and togetherness but also to highlight our programs and the ongoing work of our charity. Seeing the smiles on the faces of children and the friendship among guests reminded us of the power of compassion and community spirit.

None of this would be possible without our remarkable volunteers, who work tirelessly in our kitchen, warehouse, and outreach services. Your compassion, energy, and teamwork bring our mission to life and touch the lives of so many in our community.

Thank you to everyone, sponsors, volunteers, donors, partners, and friends, for helping us continue to feed, support, and uplift those in need. Together, we are building a community filled with care, kindness, and hope.

With heartfelt thanks,  
Paula Nicolas





## Parramatta Outreach Service - Every Monday Evening

PRINCE ALFRED SQUARE

Every Monday evening, our Parramatta Outreach is filled with warmth, friendship, and generosity. With the support of our dedicated volunteers, Prince Alfred Square becomes a welcoming space of care and connection, where we distribute around 80 nourishing meals and care packs to those in our community who need it most.

A sincere thank you to our wonderful volunteer team for the compassion, energy, and teamwork they bring to our Monday Night Service each week, helping to feed, support, and uplift our community.



## Fairfield Service - Every Monday Lunch Time

FAIRFIELD COMMUNITY CENTRE

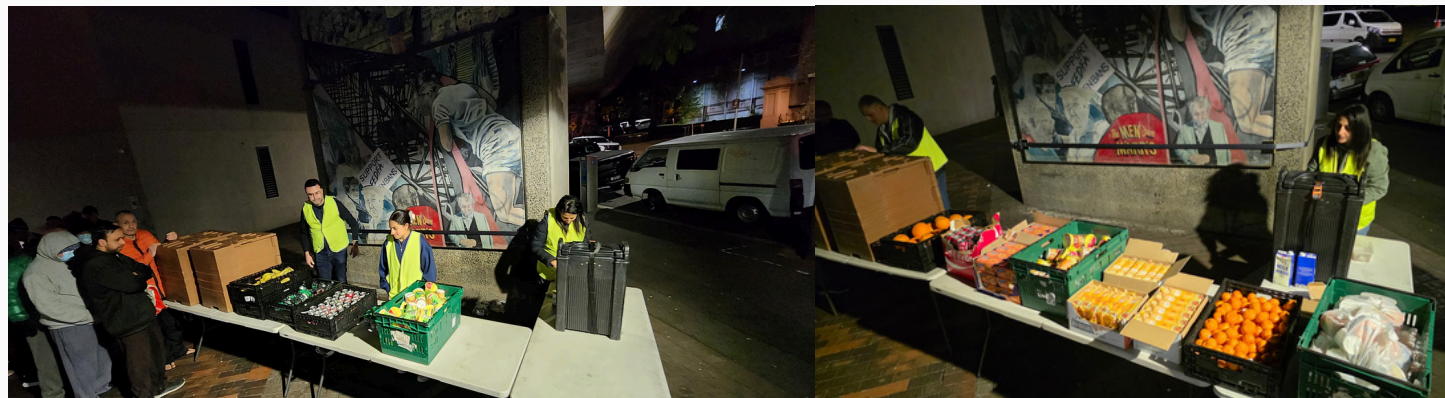
St. Merkorious Charity is proud to support our culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities. Every Monday at lunchtime, our Fairfield service welcomes 50–80 locals for a free morning tea and lunch. But it's more than just a meal — it's a place to connect, share stories, and celebrate both the things that bring us together and the richness of our differences, all within a warm and inclusive atmosphere.



# Woolloomooloo Outreach & Fellowship Service - every Friday evening

164 CATHEDRAL ST. WOOLLOOMOOLOO (NEXT TO POLICE STATION)

Every Friday evening, our Woolloomooloo outreach becomes a place of warmth, care, and connection for around 60–80 people experiencing hardship. With the support of our dedicated volunteers, hot meals, desserts, drinks, and care packs are shared — along with friendly conversations and genuine compassion that bring comfort and a sense of belonging. A heartfelt thank you to our amazing volunteers. Your generosity lights up every Friday night, reminding us all that it's not just meals being shared — it's hope, dignity, and human connection.



## Rhodes Outreach Service

2 CAVELL AVE RHODES

From time to time, St. Merkorious Charity hosts a special evening dedicated to supporting some of Sydney's most vulnerable community members. Around 80–100 guests — including people experiencing homelessness — are welcomed from Redfern, Martin Place, Parramatta and the local community, to the St Mary & St Merkorious Coptic Orthodox Church Hall in Rhodes.

Guests are invited to enjoy a warm sit-down meal, along with complimentary haircuts, fresh clothing, and take-home hampers. The hall quickly fills with laughter, conversation, and a genuine sense of community — creating a safe and welcoming space where people can relax, share their stories, and experience kindness without judgment.



# Volunteers

At St. Merkorious Charity, our volunteers are the heart and soul of everything we do. From preparing meals in the kitchen and organising hampers in the warehouse to serving in our outreach services across Parramatta, Fairfield, and Woolloomooloo, their dedication makes a real difference every day. Each volunteer brings their time, energy, and compassion, helping to ensure our community receives nourishing meals, care packs, and a welcoming space to connect. We are truly grateful for their unwavering commitment, teamwork, and kindness — without them, our mission to support and uplift those in need simply wouldn't be possible.



# Excelsea Intern Students - Social Work

On 4 August 2025, we were delighted to welcome Excelsea Intern Students to St. Merkorious Charity as part of their Social Work placement. The students contributed their time and skills across our programs, engaging with clients, supporting our outreach services, and gaining hands-on experience in community care. Their enthusiasm, curiosity, and compassion made a meaningful impact on both our team and the people we serve.



## Wrapped in Love Homeless Week Memorial Parramatta

On 8 August 2025, St. Merkorious Charity participated in the Wrapped in Love Homeless Week memorial at Parramatta, a moving event dedicated to remembering those experiencing homelessness. The memorial brought together community members, volunteers, and local organisations to reflect, show solidarity, and raise awareness about the challenges faced by people without stable housing. Through shared stories, moments of remembrance, and acts of compassion, the event highlighted the importance of connection, support, and hope for our most vulnerable community members.



## Donation Delivery in Lebanon

From 9 August 2025, St. Merkorious Charity carried out its Blanket Drive in Lebanon, delivering much-needed warmth and care to communities across the country. Over three days, volunteers personally distributed blankets, donated from Rotary International and lovingly prepared by our team, to hospitals, children's villages, nursing homes, and charitable centres, including SOS Children's Villages Kfrehey, Hospital Governmental de Tannourine, Hospital Al Koura, and Beit Rafqa in Bcharre. Special thanks go to volunteers Tony and Rhonda Sfeir for delivering to the final destination, and to everyone who helped fold, pack, and donate these blankets. Through this project, we spread warmth, hope, and compassion, one blanket at a time.



## New Distribution Centre work progress

On 8 September 2025, significant progress was made on the development of St. Merkorious Charity's new Distribution Centre. The team worked diligently to organise the space, streamline storage systems, and prepare for the increased capacity that will allow us to serve more meals and care packs to those in need. This milestone brings us closer to creating a more efficient, safe, and welcoming hub for our volunteers and community, ensuring we can continue to expand our support and outreach across Sydney.



# Day at the Bay\_ 2025

On 20 September 2025, St. Merkorious Charity hosted its major event, Day at the Bay in Lilyfield, bringing together our community for a day of celebration, connection, and fun. Guests of all ages enjoyed activities, entertainment, and delicious food, while volunteers and staff worked tirelessly to ensure a welcoming and vibrant atmosphere. The event was not only a joyful gathering but also an opportunity to raise awareness of our programs and the support we provide to those in need, highlighting the power of community, compassion, and togetherness.





**St. Merkorious  
Charity**

# **VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!**



## **TASKS WILL INCLUDE...**

- Assist in our commercial kitchen
- Assist in the warehouse with sorting and packing
- Hamper packing
- Various outreach services
- **Hours are flexible**

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