



Pavlo Titko reports that many Ukrainians need psychosocial support. "Many people are already traumatised. We expect that after the war millions of people will still need therapeutic support." Since February, Malteser International has supported almost 20,000 people in Ukraine with psychosocial services such as group or individual talks with psychologists or special services for children. Children in particular are suffering from the current situation. According to UN figures, 1.5 million children are affected.



## 100,000TH BIRTH AT HOLY FAMILY HOSPITAL

One of the Order of Malta's most famous institutions, The Holy Family Hospital in Bethlehem, just passed an important milestone – the birth of the 100,000th child since the Order has been managing the health facility. On the twelfth day of Christmas, baby girl Muhamad was delivered into the embrace of her parents.

Since 1990, more than 4,600 children have been born here every year, assisted by a staff of 200 including doctors, nurses and midwives. The hospital, located a few steps from the Church of the Nativity, is the only one in the area to have a neonatal intensive care unit for babies of less than 24 weeks' gestation. In addition to a pharmacy, a laboratory and a training centre, the hospital runs the Well Women clinic for menopausal women and the Mobile Medical Unit that assists remote communities and isolated villages in the desert surrounding Bethlehem.

The Order of Malta is proud of its doctors and all the staff at Bethlehem Hospital for this historic achievement.

Learn more at [www.orderofmalta.org.au](http://www.orderofmalta.org.au)



**ORDER OF MALTA AUSTRALIA**

The Order of Malta (ABN 37 142 209 121) is a Public Benevolent institution and is endorsed by the Australian Tax Office as Deductible Gift Recipient. Licence : SA - CCP3236, WA - 21310

## NEW PROJECT: SUPPORTING THE ISOLATED AND VULNERABLE IN DAREBIN

A new initiative from the Order of Malta and ACU Hub in Melbourne is a Social Engagement Program at the Agg Street housing estate located within the City of Darebin local government area. The program aims to provide the 55 residents at the estate, who are all over the age of 65 and living alone, with an opportunity for social connection.

The need for this project was identified during the height of the pandemic and lockdown, when community services went 'door knocking' in the area to provide welfare checks on residents. This exercise revealed a large number of individuals 'trapped' in their accommodation due to physical and/or mental health who were unable to access many welfare services and were isolated from the wider community.

As a result, the Social Engagement Program launched at the start of December 2022 and involves members and volunteers visiting the estate on a weekly basis at the on-site community

room. Volunteers socialise with the residents who are also offered tea, coffee, fresh fruit, biscuits, and fresh salad rolls. The volunteers initial focus is to build awareness and trust in our service with the residents and, if successful, the longer-term goal will be to expand the program and co-design additional projects and services based on needs identified in these interactions.

"We are off to a good start with numbers increasing each time and as we get to know more of the residents", explains Order of Malta member and volunteer, Mary Long. "We will learn more about their expectations of the program and it may be that they just like a cuppa and the company and a chance to chat or it may evolve into the chance to play a game, or do a jigsaw together over a period of time. We shall see, but so far, so good".

Residents also seem to be enjoying the interaction; "It helps me feel seen" explains Paul\*. "It's a great way to get residents out of their homes and meeting other residents".

The start-up expense for the initiative was funded by a grant from the Global Fund for the Forgotten People and the program is currently scheduled to run until the end of March 2023. A further extension of the program will depend on feedback from residents and volunteers - and our ability to secure ongoing funding.

Early indications are that the project has been well received, with Order of Malta member and volunteer Judy Ryan commenting, "It is quite clear that this program is needed. What we do and how we do it will improve as we get more experience. These good people are - to varying degrees - isolated, lonely, and vulnerable."

\*Name changed for privacy.



Please visit page 5 to make a donation to help us continue the Agg Street Social Engagement Program.

## "THE PEOPLE IN UKRAINE ARE TRAUMATISED"

The Russian war of aggression in Ukraine started almost eleven months ago. From day one, the Order of Malta's International Relief Agency, Malteser International, has been supporting the people in Ukraine. But the daily need is great. According to Pavlo Titko, Head of Malteser in Ukraine, many people will still be traumatised for years to come.

"Many people outside Ukraine can hardly imagine our everyday life," says Pavlo Titko. The psychological burden on people is high. Relatives live in embattled territories or had to leave their homes. Nobody knows when the war will end. About 30 percent of the country's territory is covered with mines: The life-threatening explosive are installed on gas pipes, in wardrobes, even in toys. The whole situation puts a lot of pressure on the people.

People are dependent on electricity. "We can check what time we will have power. Many people don't sleep well at night anyway and use the power to get some things done.", says Pavlo Titko. When the power is gone, the heating doesn't work either. Temperatures are below zero. When the power comes back, people quickly turn on the heating to get at least some warmth.

Malteser International continues to send aid to the Ukraine and the Order of Malta Relief Organisations of countries bordering Ukraine who are assisting refugees fleeing the war. Supplies include medication, generators, food packages and blankets.

"We are still dependent on every donation to help the people as much as possible," says Titko.

Donations to the Emergency Relief Fund to assist those impacted by the war in Ukraine are tax deductible and can be made on page 5.

**Facebook:** @orderofmalta.org.au

**Twitter:** orderofmaltaau

**Instagram:** orderofmalta\_australia

**LinkedIn:** linkedin.com/in/order-of-malta-australia

For more Order of Malta news visit [orderofmalta.org.au](http://orderofmalta.org.au)  
Follow us and learn about activities as they happen

The Australian Association of the Order of Malta  
PO Box 79, Caringbah NSW 1495  
Telephone: +61 2 9331 8477 | [info@orderofmalta.org.au](mailto:info@orderofmalta.org.au)  
[www.orderofmalta.org.au](http://www.orderofmalta.org.au)



IN THIS ISSUE - PROJECT UPDATES / SAVE THE DATES / LATEST NEWS



Dear Members, Volunteers and Friends

I hope you and your loved ones had a blessed Christmas and a happy and healthy New Year. As we look towards the challenges and opportunities to assist our Lords the Poor and Sick in 2023, I would like to take a minute to reflect on the work of the Order during 2022.

Last year we saw significant growth in our palliative care work in Melbourne stimulated by the generous donation from the estate of the late Fra' Richard Divall. His bequest has helped us to extend the volunteer work done through Eastern Palliative Care to Mercy Palliative Care and Calvary Bethlehem Care elsewhere in Melbourne.

In Sydney we established a meal kitchen for the homeless and disadvantaged in Bondi and it is going from strength to strength. Meanwhile the works with St Vincent's at Gorman House and Tierney House also continue. It was also pleasing to see the Community Hub in Melbourne, a joint venture with ACU, develop further to initiate an outreach project (more on this in a separate article in this newsletter).

The centre for the homeless in Southport at the Gold Coast is proceeding encouragingly and our work with the Emmanuel Community in South Brisbane is helping to prepare us to run the Southport facility. We anticipate this will be in operation by the second half of this year.

We held successful Youth Camps for the disabled in Sydney and Melbourne during the year and despite the challenges of COVID-19 restrictions, our national Coats for the Homeless program continued with the distribution of hygiene packs. The Community Care Vans in Melbourne, Sydney and Parramatta also continue to assist our volunteers to distribute our Coats to more people, in more locations and we are always looking for opportunities to expand our 'fleet'.

The natural disaster in Tonga and the human disasters in the Ukraine provoked very generous responses - and not just financially. A few of our members have taken themselves to Ukraine to assist on the ground there in remarkable displays of courage and selflessness.

The International Order's Timor-Leste medical clinic in Dili also continues to offer outpatient primary health care medical services to the people of Timor-Leste. The new outreach service, generously supported by the Global Fund for the Forgotten People, has ensured those unable to travel to the Dili facility can also receive care.

Our food service in the Northern Territory also continues and we are also examining the viability of a proposed aged care centre for the indigenous community there. I hope we will have further news on this later in the year.

All of the above projects mentioned, would not be possible without the

commitment of our members and volunteers who run them and the generosity of our donors who help us fund these activities. On behalf of those these projects help – thank you! I hope we can count on your continued support in 2023.

With my cordial best wishes,

**The Hon. James Douglas KHD KC**

President, Australian Association



A recording of this Mass is available online at [www.orderofmalta.org.au](http://www.orderofmalta.org.au)

## LOURDES HEALING MASS IN SYDNEY

On Saturday 3 December, the congregation at the annual Order of Malta Lourdes Day Mass at St Mary's Cathedral Sydney was joined by thousands who watched the livestream of this special celebration. Those in attendance received a blessing for good health and a bottle of water from the Lourdes sanctuary for their personal use.

Once again, The Most Rev Anthony Fisher Archbishop of Sydney, who is also an Order of Malta Chaplain, presided over this special celebration. For his homily he chronicled the intriguing, difficult and turbulent journey of the Order of Malta's Our Lady of Philermos icon from the 11th century to today, noting that it provided a powerful allegory of faith.

Sadly, whilst COVID-19 limited the physical attendance of many, members of the Order of Malta simultaneously attended nursing homes to join residents to watch the livestream and distribute bottles of Lourdes water.

### Upcoming Lourdes Mass celebrations in Australia:

- ✳ **Saturday 18 February 2023**  
10:30am at St Patrick's Cathedral, Melbourne
- ✳ **Saturday 11 February 2023**  
11.30am at St. Francis Xavier's Cathedral, Adelaide
- ✳ **Brisbane**  
date to be confirmed.  
Will be advertised on [orderofmalta.org.au](http://orderofmalta.org.au)

## PROJECT UPDATE: OUR LADY OF PHILERMOS ROSE

In 2023 the Our Lady of Philermos Rose project is expected to reach a key milestone. The initiative, which started in 2020, intends to have rose plants for sale by August, with the profits being invested back into the project.

*"The primary function of the project is to provide a gift to the needy, and the sale of the roses intends to make the project self-sustaining",* explains Order of Malta member, David Macintosh. *"By August we hope to have up to 200 plants for sale at a cost of \$50 each. We then expect to have up to 500 plants available in each successive year."*

The Our Lady of Philermos Rose is a new variety registered with the International Cultural Registration Authority. It is a red rose with a mild fragrance, growing on a medium bush with semi-glossy foliage. Its blooms appear in small clusters throughout the season.

Volunteers will distribute roses to patients in palliative care facilities, care homes and hospitals. The charitable act of gifting the rose, and the interaction with volunteers, intends to bring the recipients comfort and joy. However, the project also has spiritual significance. Our Lady's signature flower is the rose, making the two facets of the project directly align with the mission of the Order of Malta.



Pictured: Project team members Leonie Harle and David Macintosh with the Our Lady of Philermos Rose.

Volunteer opportunities will also exist outside of the distribution, with the project team needing assistance to plant, care and cut roses. The Order of Malta has also engaged Calvary Care Canberra ACT and Australian Catholic University campuses across Australia, to provide garden space to grow the roses and is also in discussion with various parishes to provide other sites.

*"Our immediate focus is to seek people with expertise, resources and ideas to help take project to the next stage"* explains David. *"I encourage anyone who is interested in the project to make contact, as I believe that this project has the potential to be successful, not only in Australia, but across the world".*

Email [info@orderofmalta.org.au](mailto:info@orderofmalta.org.au) if you would like to get involved in the Rose Project. Donations to the project can be made on page 5.

## MEMBERS AND VOLUNTEERS SPREAD CHRISTMAS CHEER

Order of Malta Members, Helen and Tony Smith, have once again provided Christmas gifts and cakes for distribution at the Adelaide Day Centre. The Centre provides assistance along with the Care & Housing for the Aged (ACHA) to financially disadvantaged frail aged people who are homeless or living in insecure accommodation and who are in the Intensive Rehabilitation Activity Program and has been supported by members in the region for many years.

Members and volunteers at Community Care Kitchens in Bondi, brought some gifts for our guests at our last service before Christmas. The Order of Malta Community Care Kitchen is at St Patrick's Catholic Church, is run by volunteers, who cook and serve warm and healthy meals to anyone in need every Wednesday between 6.30pm & 7.30pm.



Members of the Order of Malta in the Northern Territory arranged for the for a delivery of hygiene products and clothing items to the Women's Remote Community Safe Houses, whose services assist women and children who are at immediate risk of harm because of family violence. The distribution of goods was handed via Charles Darwin University, by Prof Hilary Winchester, one of our valued volunteers.

On Christmas Day, members and volunteers in Brisbane were up early to share blessings and good tidings with Emmanuel City Mission, offering hot breakfasts and treats. This special service was in addition to the regular food service members volunteer at each month at the centre.

In Thailand, members visited the Xaverian Mission Khlong Teoi to donate on behalf of the Order of Malta Thailand muffins, toys, and pampers for the needy and forgotten children of the Khlong Teoi Slum.

Further pictures from the delivery can be viewed at the Order of Malta Thailand's new website [www.orderofmaltathailand.or.th](http://www.orderofmaltathailand.or.th)

## WORLD DAY OF THE POOR 2023

Celebrated every year on the 33rd Sunday, World Day of the Poor aims to encourage Christians to "go forth" into the peripheries where so many people struggle with economic and existential problems and to offer service as "a sign of love, the love shown by Jesus himself."

The Order of Malta is committed to supporting the sick and poor and is grateful for this special day to promote the needs of some of the most vulnerable members of our communities.

To mark this special day, members of the Order of Malta Thailand responded to a request for assistance from Fr. Adriano to support elderly and disabled members of the community at St Mark The Evangelist Catholic Church in Pathum Thani. Members gathered to bring 50 survival bags, 50 blankets, boxes of dry food, 300 eggs, 60 kilos of rice, two wheelchairs,

plus their love and support to the community.

Our Community Care Van volunteers in Melbourne and Parramatta added an additional service to the homeless this week to mark the sixth World Day of the Poor. As per a normal service the volunteers distributed water, hygiene packs and Coats for the Homeless and also brought some food treats for the friends who call the street home.

In Brisbane, our volunteers at Emmanuel City Mission (ECM) homeless sanctuary prepared a free breakfast and delicious donuts and muffins, donated by the Order of Malta members. Over 50 people in need were served over the course of five hours. Including a free sausage sizzle BBQ lunch provided to hungry and thankful arrivals, who were happy to chat. Attendees were also grateful for over 20 donated books on faith, film and personal growth, to help build the ECM library.



## PALLIATIVE CARE BIOGRAPHY VOLUNTEERS RECEIVE 5 YEAR AWARD

Congratulations to Order of Malta members Tanya Murphy DMG and Sauro Antonelli AM KMG (Ob), who were acknowledged for their 5 years of service as volunteers for Eastern Palliative Care (EPC) biography program

EPC support people with a terminal / life-limiting illness who have complex symptoms whether they be physical, psychosocial, emotional or spiritual.

It is a partnership between the Order of Malta, Eastern Palliative Care Service Inc. and St Vincent's Hospital (Melbourne) Ltd.

Volunteers for the biography project undertake a significant commitment, with each biography volunteer working one on one with EPC clients allowing them to tell their story. Biography recordings alone takes place over 6 – 10 visits of one hour in duration.

The process of storytelling enables messages, philosophies, beliefs, memories and culture to pass from one person to the next. Many clients also report a reduction in anxiety, depression, pain and breathlessness and an increase in self-esteem as a result of undertaking this.

The biographies also help families and friends to deal with bereavement: they are a way to maintain a bond, to feel the presence of those who have left this world, to smile while remembering them.

In addition to members volunteering in the biography program, they also play an active part in the administration of EPC, which is fully accredited through The Australian Council on Health Care Standards (ACHS) ensuring quality, safety and performance at all levels of service delivery.



## REQUIESCAT IN PACE POPE BENEDICT XVI

The Sovereign Order of Malta mourns the passing of His Holiness Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI and recalls with deep gratitude his generous support of his works and the service he rendered to the Universal Church.

It was 1999 when the then Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger was admitted to the Sovereign Order of Malta with the rank of Bailiff Grand Cross of Honour and Devotion by Grand Master Fra' Andrew Bertie. Throughout his pontificate, Benedict XVI showed great interest in the Order of Malta's works in the service of the neediest and followed its action on five continents.

The Lieutenant of the Grand Master, Fra' John Dunlap, in expressing his personal condolences and those of the Sovereign Council, asked all the members of the Order of Malta to pray for the soul of this great servant of God and of His Church.



## 2023 INTERNATIONAL PILGRIMAGE TO LOURDES

For the Order of Malta, the spirit of pilgrimage dates from its foundation in the 11th Century; in its hospital in Jerusalem ailing pilgrims were cared for, as well as all who needed help. Order pilgrimages always include accompanying the sick, a sharing of love and care. It is a mission which distinguishes every pilgrimage.

The largest of all the Order of Malta pilgrimages is at the beginning of May each year. Members and volunteers from around the world

make a pilgrimage to Lourdes, France led by the Grand Master, bringing thousands of sick and wheelchair pilgrims (malades).

In 2023, members of the Australian Association will be accompanying six malades from Australia to participate in the International Order of Malta pilgrimage to Lourdes. For those malades, who without financial support, would be unable to attend, we are seeking donations to subsidise their travel and accommodation expenses.

Donations to support these malades can be made below and are tax deductible to Australian taxpayers.

## I WANT TO HELP

You can make a donation by completing this form and returning it in the reply paid envelope provided.

- I am happy for the Order to allocate my donation to where the need is greatest; or I would like to support:
- Agg Street Social Engagement Program
- Our Lady of Philermos Rose
- Malades expenses to Lourdes
- Emergency Relief Fund – Ukraine appeal
- Coats for the Homeless

REMEMBER, GIFTS OF \$2 AND OVER ARE TAX DEDUCTIBLE.

- Send me information about leaving the Order a bequest
- Please remove me from your mailing list.

Donations will be allocated to projects as requested by the donor. However if the needs of a project have already been met, we will allocate funds to another Order of Malta charitable activity.

Name

Address

State  Postcode  Telephone

Please find enclosed a Cheque/ Money Order (payable to 'The Order of Malta') for \$  or;

Please debit my credit card the amount of \$

Frequency  Once only  Monthly Card Type  Visa  MasterCard

Credit Card Number

Expiry Date  Cardholder name

Signature