

1 in 4 of us
is lonely



"COULD YOU NOT SPEND ONE HOUR WITH ME?"

[Matt 26:40]

Brad posing beside the Rosies van in Wynnum nearby where he used to sleep rough.



From Rosies Patron to Rosies Volunteer

When Brad lost his job in early February 2009 he was in denial of becoming homeless. Soon, he could no longer afford the rent. He exhausted his friendships sleeping on couches and found himself on the street.

"It is all the little things you miss, like being able to have a cup of tea when you want. It all builds up and affects your mental health. Getting up in the morning, being homeless makes the day very long. It is a very lonely time. I call it an existence rather than a life."

Brad used to pitch his tent in a park in Wynnum. He would roll it up every morning, hide it in the bushes and then jump on the train and head to the city to access homeless services. He quickly learned where to go to have a feed, shower, and do laundry. He went to Rosies because when he went there people remembered his name. After a long day Brad would head back to Wynnum by train, find his tent and pitch it in the dark.

I joined Rosies to give back and share my experience. Rosies was a very big part of those years I was homeless.

Being homeless makes the day very long. It is a very lonely time.

"I appreciated Rosies the most out of all the different agencies I used to access, because there was no judgement. There was no obligation. There was no writing of information. It was just a friendly smile and a listening heart. You could talk about the Collingwood Football Club or anything else. I even met a Rosies volunteer who was from my hometown. I enjoyed Rosies more than the 'system'."

Brad finally bounced back when offered a welding position in Wynnum. After his first pay he moved to a backpacker hostel. Seeing an ad for a Certificate 3 in Aged Care he decided to take on a new direction. He completed his certificate and worked for a while in an aged care facility, before undergoing a Diploma of Youth Work. Brad is now studying a Bachelor's Degree in Social Work specialising in homelessness.

One day recently as he left Uni, he strolled to the Botanical Gardens and sat on a bench with his text books beside him and was eating his lunch. He stopped and looked around him and reflected 'I slept on this very bench'.



We have to be on the street

Being lonely is a hellish place to be. We are all created to love and be loved. The ministry of Rosies is nothing if not loving the unloved through shared friendships and listening to the heart beats of one another.

Recognising who is lonely is not necessarily simple. Recently, as I wandered across from King George Square towards the Rosies outreach there was a man in his mid-thirties sitting on the stone wall staring across the city scape. A pleasant breeze was blowing and dusk was descending on a balmy summer evening. I commented to him, "enjoying the vista?" "Not really," he said and proceeded to share his experience of the last few weeks.

Damien had left New South Wales looking for work and got a short-term gig but it only lasted a couple of days. He was soon skint. He was struggling to find accommodation and was feeling alone. He was tentative about seeking help and unsure where to go. His disengagement from his family meant he had no one to turn to. I invited him down to the outreach for a coffee and his demeanour gradually improved over the next hour.

A few coffees, friendly conversation, some basic toiletries and snacks made a difference. A swag was available if needed. Our team were also able to give some advice on other services around. The opportunity to come back to the Rosies community each night gave him a feeling of belonging and security.

I hear Damien did find more work and life was on the up. Being lonely may not be long-term but it's still lonely.

Over the last three years as Chaplain it has been my privilege to hear the heartbeats of thousands of patrons. I have learned that we can't tell from afar whose heart is lonely – we have to engage with those on the street.

Fr John David OMI, Rosies Chaplain

The Rosies Prayer

O Jesus,
make our hearts so human,
that others may feel
at home with us,

so like Yours,
that others may feel
at home with You,

so forgetful of self
that we might simply
become the place
where You and they meet

in the power of
Your love and the joy of
Your friendship.

Amen



Rosies Liturgies

Each month one Rosies Branch holds a commissioning rite for volunteers as part of a local liturgical celebration. This quarter they are:

Wynnum Manly

15 March 7.30am, Iona College Chapel

Beenleigh

18 April 9.00am, Uniting Church

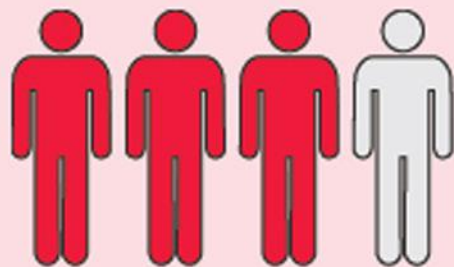
Brisbane

20 May venue and time TBA see website closer to date.

Loneliness: the new crisis

A study led by the Australian Red Cross last October and the appointment this year of a Minister for Loneliness in the UK highlights the social isolation crisis. In Australia the recent study reveals that 5.6 million Australians are suffering from loneliness. Meanwhile, a report from the UK office points out the impact of loneliness being 'twice as harmful as obesity, and comparable to smoking 15 cigarettes a day or being an alcoholic.' The need to connect with others is vital. Yet, it can be overcome. The most common remedy is to look for social interaction and friendship.

**Loneliness is
comparable to
smoking 15
cigarettes a day**



• **One in four** of us are lonely

• **55%** of Australians feel somewhat lonely (all the time, quite often, or sometimes).

• **66%** seek friendship as a remedy to loneliness

The Australian Red Cross Loneliness Survey was conducted in October 2017 by Mewcorp. Social Isolation and Loneliness in the UK: IOT uk 2017

Gold Coast

The branch hosted its annual Christmas on the street at the Southport Community Centre. Among the 350 patrons, Lidia came with her three sons and thirteen grand children. Her family was the biggest group of relatives present on the day. For Lidia it was a no brainer. Coming to Rosies was the only way she could celebrate Christmas with all her family.



Ipswich

Rosies is local. Communities such as Immaculate Heart at Leichhardt are like a mother to our Ipswich branch. They provide a great outreach base, enclosed shed for our van and regular in-kind consumables. We were so pleased to join their regular Saturday afternoon mass on February 17 to share friendship and their blessings as Fr John David commissioned our volunteers for the next twelve months.

Mareeba

It's Monday morning, the main street is busy and children can be heard playing at the school across the road. Unfortunately, Monday also means a court appearance for some of the locals and they are grateful to have a cuppa and a yarn with Bernadette, Kevin and Dot. This new outreach has been warmly welcomed by patrons, their families and court staff alike.

Wynnum Manly

Back in 2016, Rev Shan and her parishioners at St Paul's Anglican community, Manly enthusiastically offered a home base for our new Wynnum Manly branch. They gave us prime position at the front of the hall. Just last month Rev Shan retired and a number of Rosies representatives attended her final service. *Sharing friendship, creates belonging.* Happy retirement Shan.



Caboolture

Hey Mum, I've just been on outreach with Rosies in Caboolture and met: M who was recently paroled and needed a bandage; J who has low iron levels; R&S with their young baby; a young guy who turned up with pies and cakes for everyone; and N who entertained us with his guitar because Rosies had helped him when he was younger. Quite a family!

Beenleigh

There is a true ecumenical and inter-religious spirit in Beenleigh. Our annual branch thanksgiving service will be hosted by Beenleigh Regional Uniting Church led by Pastor Lu Senutuli on Sunday morning 15 April. All patrons, volunteers and supporters are welcome. We are also blessed with weekly support from the local Sikh community. Plus see the feature on Coordinator, Lisa (P6).

Christmas on the street in Logan



Toowoomba

Students from St Joseph's College in Toowoomba collected some old Rosies jumpers and made them into adorable teddy bears. The Teddies were a hit on the street for patrons and volunteers alike, everyone loved them. Children left our outreaches with a fluffy bear and a couple of our recycled jumpers have been adopted as branch mascots. Thanks St Joseph's College!

Cairns

Autumn is a welcome relief. Our volunteers are amazing how they remain consistent and smiling on the street through the heat and rain of summer. They have also been patient as we try and negotiate a permanent outreach location in a city that is developing strongly. Suitable locations are like hen's teeth. We have consulted extensively with the local community and hope to report a solution soon.

Brisbane

Engaging youth is an essential part of Rosies mission. Four of our younger volunteers served morning tea to over 600 students from schools in the Brisbane Archdiocese on Shrove Tuesday. Some of these young students will become volunteers in years to come having experienced the humble friendship of Rosies and noticed the ubiquitous van.



A group of staff and students from St Joseph's College in Toowoomba gathered for a number of working bees, making over 150 bears and about 50 shoulder bags. Many staff and students used their own time to cut out and sew these.

St Joseph's College made Teddy Bears out of some old Rosies jumpers



Sunshine Coast

In excess of 80 patrons and lots of Rosies red shirts celebrated Christmas together. Club Kawana continued their amazing support by providing and serving roast meats, vegies, plum pudding and custard. Meanwhile



our friends from the Barber's Shed very generously offered their services for the 4th consecutive year to our patrons by trimming beards, giving hot foam shaves and cutting hair because they care!!! To see the transformation in the patron's demeanour when they walked out of the Barber's Shed was just so amazing.

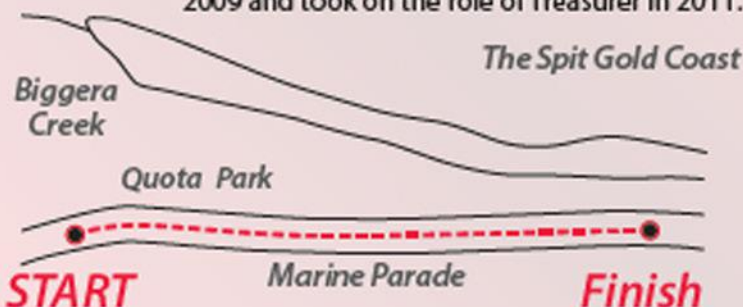
Logan

Our volunteers come with a range of talents which was evident at the annual Christmas on the Street. Apart from presents and plenty of celebratory food, face painting proved a real hit. Jo and her helpers made the evening a special memory for the many children who were there. When language is a barrier – some were recent migrants – other ways of engagement are needed to share friendship and create belonging.

Gold Coast Commonwealth Games Queen's Baton Bearer



Congratulations to Robyn Hunt, Rosies Team Leader and Board member for being selected to take part in the Queen's Baton Relay on Monday April 2. Robyn has been involved with the marginalised all her life. She joined Rosies as a volunteer in 2005 and has continued to be involved on the Street Outreach in Surfers Paradise as Team Leader. She was a Volunteer Trainer at the Gold Coast for 7 years. Robyn was appointed to the Board of Rosies in 2009 and took on the role of Treasurer in 2011.



COME CHEER FOR ROBYN

Monday April 2, 11.04am

FROM: 554 Marina Parade Biggera Waters

TO: 524 Marina Parade Biggera Waters

Rosies Survey 2018

Rosies has recently undertaken a survey of all active volunteers. 277 volunteers responded with solid representation across all eleven branches. The results indicate Rosies is a healthy organisation with a clear and well-understood mission. The details will be used to inform discussions at our annual Coordinators' Forum and Team Leader Refresher Sessions.

Feel safe on outreach

Feel training prepares them for outreach

Would attend a volunteer refresher program

The Rosies prayer is included in the team's pre-brief

Communication is effective

Effectively articulated Rosies mission

20% 40% 60% 80% 100%

Congratulations to Lisa, our Beenleigh Coordinator

What an exciting Australia Day I had attending the City of Logan Citizenship Ceremony and Australia Day Awards. I was nominated and judged to be part of the celebration for the 2018 Citizen of the Year for my work with ROSIES, youth diabetes and mental health.

It was an honour to stand on the stage alongside some amazing people who give their time to do what they love. Huge congratulations go to Aunty Peggy who was presented with the award and who has worked tirelessly with Education Queensland for many years as well as working with women and children who are victims of domestic abuse and sexual assault.

The nomination for this Award

is not about me but about community and friendship both on and off the street! It's about the volunteers who make Rosies happen each and every Thursday and Saturday in Beenleigh, the Logan businesses who donate food (Logan Village Family Favourites Bakery, Dine with Joy, bakeries in Beenleigh and Marsden), the Sikh family who make sandwiches and deliver fruit to outreaches, Pat who sews our hygiene packs and fills them with generous donations from our community, Windaroo Valley High and a teacher named Karen Gardyne who organises student donations of all of our long life milk, as well as the Beenleigh Region Uniting Church who took us in when we found ourselves homeless! My volunteer role is really easy and it's exciting to be coordinating our Rosies family in Beenleigh. Thanks to everyone for your congratulations and for working with me to keep on giving!



Rosies reaches new heights

Andrew Keogh is a Rosies volunteer and teacher at Glenala SHS in Brisbane. His passion for adventure and his desire to support Rosies and our many friends on the street led him to conquer the highest summit in Africa and the tallest freestanding mountain in the World, Mt Kilimanjaro at 5,895m.

Andrew had been drawn to climb Mt Kilimanjaro for as long as he could remember. After years of waiting, he was finally in the fortunate position of being able to take on the challenge. It is because of the people he met on the street while outreaching with Rosies, that Andrew decided to raise funds to support Rosies as part of his adventure.



THANK YOU

To our many supporters large and small for your valuable support this year. Special mention to:

Don Barton OAM • LJ Hooker (Gold Coast) • Iona College • Metricon Homes • St Bart's Anglican Parish Toowoomba • Lions Club of Helensvale • Flannery Foundation • BioPak • Daryl and Carol Pryke • Commbank Foundation • Gold Coast Concrete Design P/L • Lloyds Auctions • McCullough Robertson • Neumann Benevolent Foundation • E&M Scanlon • Club Kawana • Assisi Catholic College • Crust Bakery (Wurtulla) • Wal Giugni

Last, but not least, we can never thank our volunteers enough for their commitment and generosity.



Happy Easter



**March 11,
2018**

You can register via rosies.org.au or simply support me at link below.

Are You Ready to Take on Australia's Tallest Building?

Climb with me and support event charity partner, Rosies.



ROSIES
Friends on the Street

Andrew O'Brien,
General Manager
Rosies - Friends on the Street



<https://giving.pleazpay.com/au/Kym3/andrew-obrien-S9Mp>

"Could you not spend one hour with me?" [Matt 26:40]

Christians will celebrate Easter, the greatest feast on their calendar, very soon. What distinguishes Christianity from all other religions is the belief that God became human in the person of Jesus Christ and that he was crucified and rose from the dead for eternity.

Jesus experienced great periods of loneliness during his life as a man from Nazareth and most poignantly on the night before he was crucified. As he spent the night in agony anticipating his torture and crucifixion, he asked his friends to keep him company. They could not stay awake unable to spend even an hour with him. Early the next day after Jesus was arrested they deserted him out of fear for their own lives.

Although travelling with him for three years his friends only came to understand who Jesus was after they encountered him risen from the dead.

It is a personal encounter with the Risen Christ that inspires the Oblates to give their lives to serving the marginalised. Their reflection on the agony of Jesus, relived through the marginalised, no doubt inspired their initiative we now participate in, Rosies Friends on the Street.

Loneliness has been described as entering crisis proportions in our society. My prayer this Easter is firstly, one of petition that those who are suffering the agony of loneliness will be befriended; secondly, one of thanks to all our volunteers who share their time befriending the lonely; and thirdly, one of hope that our supporters continue to recognise the value of Rosies mission.

With Easter blessings,

Deacon Andrew O'Brien
General Manager



Our Patrons

- His Excellency the Honourable Sir Peter Cosgrove AKMC (Retd) Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia
- The Honourable Mrs Leneen Forde AC, Rosies Honourable Life Member



rosies.org.au • (07) 3396 4267

PO Box 908, WYNNUM QLD 4178

Rosies ABN 68041152768 CH1146

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