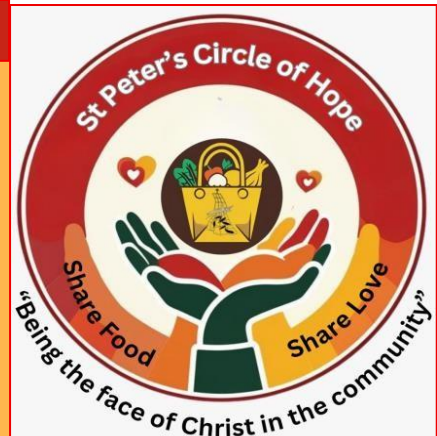


St Peter's Circle of Hope Newsletter

Aug 2026

A Very Happy 1st. Birthday to Circle of Hope



You can make a difference

Every act of kindness counts. Join us in being the face of Christ through your actions in the community!

- If you know of someone doing it tough, encourage them to seek assistance by contacting the parish office on 9749 300, Praful Albuquerque or Deacon Royden.

- You can donate long-lasting pantry items by dropping them off in the basket placed in the Church Hall.
- Financial contributions will help provide Veg, Fruit, Milk, eggs etc.

- You can donate using the QR Code. Please use the option Circle of Hope



- If you require a tax-deductible receipt, please scan this QR code and mention "Circle of hope" in your payment. Bayleaf provides us with fruit & veg.



With grateful hearts, we thank God as **Circle of Hope** celebrates its first anniversary on **04th August**.

Over the past year, what began with eight volunteers supporting around 20 families has grown to a team of 20 volunteers serving more than 30 families each week. Beyond providing fresh food and pantry essentials, we strive to offer every family friendship, dignity, hope, and the love of Christ.

We sincerely thank our Parish Priest, **Fr Laurence Cortez**, our generous parishioners, and our community partners for their unwavering support.

Your prayers, generosity, and service have enabled us to expand our outreach and support families with food, essential household items, winter doonas, and hot soup.

We celebrate this milestone, we give thanks to God for His continued guidance and blessings. Together, we will continue bringing hope and Christ's love to those in need.



St Peter Apostle Mission Parish

Serving a vibrant and multicultural Catholic community in Hoppers Crossing

Bakers Delight
Sanctuary Lakes. Point Cook



Note from our Parish Priest Fr. Laurence Cortez

It is with great joy that St Peter's Circle of Hope celebrates its First Anniversary. Since its inception, this ministry has catered for the needs of families within our parish community. This has become a visible sign of our shared mission to proclaim and bring hope to our brothers and sisters. I thank sincerely those who have been involved in this ministry, for they have attested and responded to the commands of our Lord to express the love of God.

I encourage our parishioners to be involved in this missionary endeavour of our parish as we continue to provide members of our community in need of support. And I also thank all our parishioners for your generous support to this ministry as we bring hope and love to all God's people. I pray that St Peter's Circle of Hope Ministry may continue to grow in the spirit of our missionary vision as Church and our common calling to become a true disciples of Christ.



Overwhelming Response to the Lenten Giving Tree



The Circle of Hope Ministry extends its heartfelt thanks to the parishioners of St Peter's for your extraordinary generosity in supporting this year's **Lenten Giving Tree Appeal**.

During Lent, we invited our parish community to donate pantry staples and essential household items for families experiencing hardship. The response was truly overwhelming. Your generosity was so abundant that our biggest challenge became finding enough space to store all the donations—a challenge we were delighted to have!

Thanks to your kindness, we have been able to distribute these items over several weeks, allowing families to choose from a wonderful variety of quality pantry and household essentials. The smiles of appreciation and words of gratitude from those we serve have been a powerful reminder of the difference our parish community is making.

The Lenten Giving Tree is much more than a collection of donated goods. It is a living expression of our faith in action. Through your generosity, we have once again witnessed the Holy Spirit moving within our parish, inspiring us to share our blessings, support those in need, and be the face of Christ to our brothers and sisters.



Grateful Hearts, Grateful Lives.

I would like to thank you guys so very much for helping us with a bag of groceries Monday of every week for the last few months, it really helped us. Just letting you guys know that we are doing ok now, and I think there's a family out there who needs that bag of groceries more than we do now. But we appreciate you guys for helping us. Thank you all so much. Praying for God blessings over you all

Leia's Family ❤️

From today onwards, we won't be coming anymore. Thank you for everything. We really appreciate it. We have been well supported by you'll and our family miss the hot soup and your friendship.

*Thank you again, Best Regards,
Naing*

Due to unforeseen circumstances our lives with 7 children spiralled downwards; I got to know of Circle of Hope through Facebook; where we received amazing support and love from all.. There are no judgements but just a lot of empathy and care.

My kids and I wait all week to come and see the beautiful hero's helping everyone tirelessly. The Christmas party organised by them was loved by us and was memorable for the whole family. We are eagerly looking forward for the Christmas in July event.

I always pray to God and thank him for getting to know these people. I love the warmth and affection from everyone here. I feel like they are a part of our family.

Samaira

Mondays are my new family get-together. I feel so much care, love and respect that I can't explain it.



Mamta

Spreading warmth to beat the winter chills



During winter, there's nothing quite like a warm bowl of soup and a friendly conversation to brighten the day.

With this in mind, the Circle of Hope Ministry has expanded its support for the families we serve. Along with providing fresh food and pantry essentials, we have distributed doonas to help keep families warm during the colder months. We have also



begun offering hot soup, tea, coffee, fresh bread, and biscuits each week when families come to collect their food packs.

More than simply providing a warm meal, this has created a welcoming space where families can pause, relax, and enjoy time together with our Circle of Hope volunteers. These moments of conversation and companionship are helping to build stronger relationships, foster a sense of belonging, and strengthen our community spirit.

The response has been overwhelmingly positive. Many families have shared that these simple acts of kindness have lifted their spirits, encouraged them through difficult times, and given them renewed hope as they face the week ahead.

We are deeply grateful for the continued generosity of our parish community, whose support makes this ministry possible. It is our prayer that, with your ongoing assistance, we will soon be able to replace the hot soup with a freshly prepared hot meal, allowing us to extend even greater care and hospitality to the families we serve.



Together, we continue to share Christ's love by nourishing both body and soul, one warm meal and one caring conversation at a time.

Rewarding experience - Mauricio



Volunteering with Circle of Hope at St Peter Apostle Parish over the past year has been a truly rewarding experience. My motivation came from a desire to live my faith beyond attending Mass by responding to God's call to love and serve others.

Each Monday, I help prepare for the families' arrival, welcome them, assist with their groceries, and spend time chatting with them. During winter, sharing a warm bowl of soup has created a wonderful atmosphere of friendship, hospitality, and community.

What has touched me most is discovering that while groceries are appreciated, it is the kindness, conversation, and sense of belonging that mean the most to the families. A welcoming smile, a listening ear, and treating each person with dignity has a profound impact. I live in a distant suburb; Although travelling to the parish each week can be a challenge, it is far outweighed by the privilege of serving alongside such a caring and dedicated team. The friendships among the volunteers are just as enriching as the relationships we build with the families we support.

Circle of Hope has taught me that true service is about more than meeting practical needs—it is about sharing Christ's love by building relationships, restoring hope, and helping people feel valued and welcomed.

"Whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me." — Matthew 25:40

Blessed to be able to serve - Sara

I felt called to serve within our parish community, and that led me to join the Circle of Hope Ministry in July. Although I have volunteered only a few times so far, each experience has been incredibly rewarding, and I look forward to continuing to help whenever I can.

One of the greatest joys is seeing people leave with a meal, a smile, and the knowledge that they have been welcomed with kindness, dignity, and compassion. Meeting families who are facing difficult circumstances can be deeply moving, but it has also reminded me how important it is to simply be present, to listen, and to show that someone cares.

Being part of Circle of Hope has shown me that even



the smallest acts of service can make a meaningful difference. If I can help someone feel welcomed, cared for, and reminded that they are not alone, then I know I have been blessed to be part of this wonderful ministry.

Looking Ahead - Expanding Our Support

As Circle of Hope continues to grow, so does our desire to respond to the changing needs of the families we serve. Guided by compassion and inspired by the generosity of our parish community, we are excited to share some of our plans for the future.



Our key goal is to **replace weekly winter soup service with a freshly prepared meal every Monday**. The warm response from families has shown us, sharing a meal offers much more than nourishment; it creates opportunities for connection, conversation, and genuine sense of belonging. We hope to make this a regular part beyond winter months.

We also aspire to provide practical assistance to families by offering support towards **essential household utility bills and school-related expenses**. By helping to ease some of these financial pressures, we hope to bring relief and encouragement to families during difficult times.

To help make these initiatives possible, Circle of Hope will continue its fundraising efforts. We have a **Parish Sausage Sizzle** planned for the **weekend of 1 August**, as well as an upcoming **Bunnings Sausage Sizzle 22nd Aug**. We warmly invite parishioners to support these events, by volunteering, attending, or contributing.



Families helping families

One of the greatest blessings of the Circle of Hope Ministry has been witnessing the extraordinary generosity of the families within our St Peter Apostle Parish community. Time and again, parishioners have responded with open hearts by preparing meals, donating essential household and pantry items, and offering practical support to families experiencing hardship.



As we celebrate our first anniversary, we take this opportunity to express our sincere gratitude to every individual and family who has contributed in any way to this ministry. Your kindness, generosity, and willingness to share your blessings have enabled Circle of Hope to be a source of hope, compassion, and dignity for many of our brothers and sisters in need.

Your support is a beautiful reflection of our parish family caring for one another and living out Christ's call to love our neighbours. Through your generosity, lives have been touched, hope has been restored, and our community has grown stronger.

We pray that God richly blesses you and your families for your selfless giving. May the Holy Spirit continue to guide and strengthen our parish so that, together, we can remain a welcoming community that reaches out with love and compassion to all who are facing difficult times.

Recycle for Good

Circle of Hope is delighted to support our parish's commitment to caring for God's creation through the "Recycle for Good" initiative.

By donating eligible cans and bottles for the 10-cent container refund, parishioners are making a positive impact in two meaningful ways. Not only are we helping to reduce waste going to landfill and protect our environment, but the funds raised are also helping Circle of Hope continue supporting families experiencing hardship in our community.

We are encouraged by the wonderful response during the first month of the program and sincerely thank everyone who has contributed. Your participation is already making a difference.

If you have been donating your eligible containers, we encourage you to keep up the great work. If you haven't yet had the opportunity to join the initiative, we warmly invite you to get involved. Every bottle and can donated is a small act of care that contributes to a cleaner environment and helps bring hope and practical support to families in need.

Together, through simple acts of generosity and responsible stewardship, we can care for both our common home and our neighbours, living out Christ's call to love and serve one another

