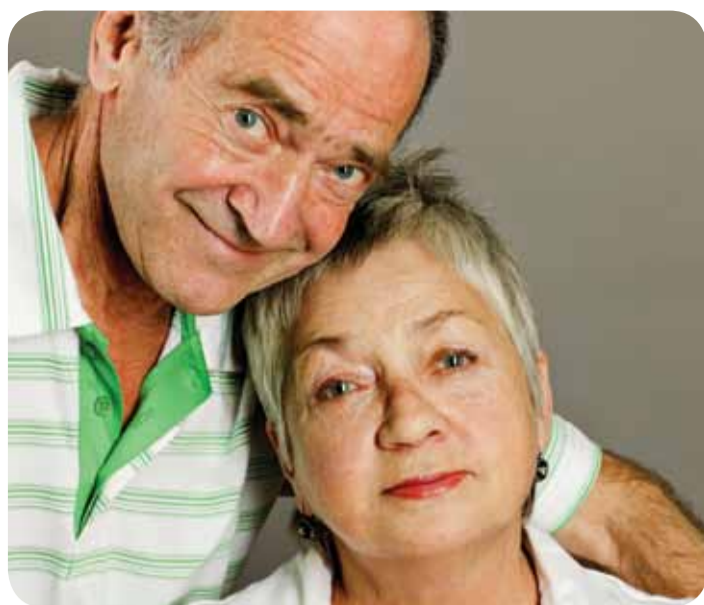




CHRISTMAS APPEAL 2011

Formerly Centacare Catholic Family Services



Dear (Name)

A gift of renewed love

We greatly appreciate the thoughtful support you have shown CatholicCare recently through the Church Appeal. As you prepare to celebrate Christmas with your family, spare a thought for families like Amanda and Charlie's who have experienced pain and suffering and need our help.

Seventy-two year old Amanda came to CatholicCare's Counselling Services seeking emotional support as she was torn apart by the thought of leaving her husband Charlie after 29 years together. Through counselling over the past year, Amanda and Charlie have been able to work through their pain and resolve the sources of tension between them. Their relationship is now strong again.

Amanda and Charlie's Story

Amanda says, "When I came to see our CatholicCare counsellor Annette, I was almost ready to leave Charlie. I had consulted a solicitor and gone through it all in my head. But I really had no one to talk to about our marital problems and I wanted to check that I was doing the right thing. I felt very alone. CatholicCare was definitely a life saver - I just wish I had sought help earlier. Annette was understanding and sympathetic. After listening to me, she asked to talk to Charlie as well and that was really the turning point in our relationship. I hadn't told Charlie that I was about to leave him. But by bringing it out into the open with Charlie in our first counselling session together, I gave us another chance as a couple to work through our difficulties."

A painful past for both

"Both Charlie and I had brought unresolved grief and more than a few problems into our marriage. I had been forced to struggle as a single mum for several years before I met Charlie and I had become very independent and headstrong. I had left my first husband (who was violent and controlling) when he had a gun and threatened to shoot my friend. I literally ran out the door with my youngest son in my arms - and I could never go back. I had no money, no furniture and worst of all, no way to reach my two oldest sons who were then teenagers. My ex-husband wouldn't let me even talk to them and he turned them against me.

"I had married him when I was pregnant at the age of 16. After a loveless childhood, I had thought I could find love in my marriage. But I made a terrible mistake. After escaping with my seven year old son, I set up my own business and made something of myself. But I almost had a nervous breakdown, worrying about my sons that I had been forced to leave behind.

Yes, I want to help families like Amanda and Charlie's who are in pain.

- MONEY ORDER CHEQUE CASH
- VISA MASTERCARD

CARD NUMBER

Cardholder name _____

Expiry Date ____ / ____

Signature _____

Date ____ / ____ / ____

Phone _____

Please make your cheque payable to CatholicCare or give online at www.ccam.org.au

Donations of \$2 and more are tax deductible.

Yes, I would like further information on (please tick):

- Planned Giving (eg monthly)
- Please send me information about how to include CatholicCare in my Will
- I have already included CatholicCare in my Will

“When Charlie and I got together, it was a new beginning for both of us. Charlie’s first wife had died suddenly and he had been raising four children on his own. I came into the marriage with three children but two of them estranged. Charlie helped me reconnect with my two oldest sons, which was wonderful. Charlie and I have worked through a lot together and we had what I thought was a good strong relationship. However, there were a few issues that increasingly began to come between us.

“When Charlie and I had been having problems for around nine months, I thought I could start again on my own if I have to - but the rest of my life would probably have been very lonely. Both Charlie and I would have been miserable. Yet the tension in our blended family had been driving a wedge between us and our communication broke down.”

“She got us talking again”

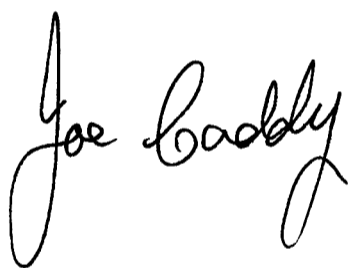
“When we started seeing Annette, she got us talking again. She helped us understand how the pain lingering from our previous marriages had impacted on us – and talked through how we could balance caring for our seven children and sixteen grandchildren with our need to care for each other. CatholicCare even ran a mediation session for us with Charlie’s daughter and since then, there has been less tension. And now, Charlie and I are making plans for our future together.”

Charlie explains some of his emotional journey: “I was absolutely devastated when I heard Amanda was considering leaving me. They say a lot of second marriages fail because of the children and we needed CatholicCare’s help to guide us through a very rough patch. We had enjoyed so many good times together in the past and I said to Amanda, ‘We need to talk through this and carry on... or we are going to be two very lonely old people’. I am proud to say we have recently celebrated our 30th wedding anniversary.”

Please help us continue our counselling services for struggling families

Name, through your contribution, you can help CatholicCare retain much needed counselling services to address the complex needs of families of all ages across Melbourne and Geelong. We can also provide marriage and relationship services to help build positive healthy relationships and post-separation services to help parents refocus on the needs of their children and keep them out of their battles. Please take a moment to make your tax deductible donation through completing this coupon and returning it to us, calling us on 9287 5555 or giving online at www.ccam.org.au

With thanks for your support throughout the year, and wishing you and your family every blessing for Christmas and the New Year,



Fr Joe Caddy
Chief Executive Officer

PS Please remember your support can enable us to bring a sense of peace and a new beginning for so many families.



As well as helping families, children and individuals through counselling, CatholicCare provides support to refugees seeking to settle in a new land. We help children to maintain critical relationships with separated mums and dads and we help those mums and dads who have been through bitter separation to put their children first and leave them out of their battles. We help young people contemplating a life together to communicate more openly. We help to keep prisoners connected to the community and to their families. We offer outreach and pastoral care for those who are living with mental illness and other health problems. We provide support to the communities devastated through the Black Saturday bushfires.

If you need help, please contact CatholicCare on 9287 5555 or go to www.ccam.org.au for information on your closest CatholicCare branch.

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Strengthening families and communities