

## **A Useful Tip      'Pre-Packed' Hampers**

*If you are dealing with people who arrive unannounced, often at very inconvenient times, it can be difficult to organise food quickly and efficiently. Many times it is a quick rummage in the rectory cupboards, or a walk over to the Church to the Pantry. This has within it certain risks and problems. These days safety has become an issue in dealing with strangers after hours and in empty buildings. It is also hard to provide a useful range of items when we depend solely on what has been placed in the donations basket on Sunday.*

*One great idea is to create a number of pre packed hampers ('Pre-Packs') and keep them close to hand for unannounced requests for assistance. Depending on your circumstance, they can be for single people, couples or families. The quantities and items might vary, but the way to develop this resource is the same.*

### **Setting Up and Using Pre-Packs:**

1. The person who receives the requests makes an estimate of:
  - a. How many visits you are likely to get over a month;
  - b. What sort of people are coming and what their needs are; and
  - c. What is an acceptable level of support the church can offer.
  - d. This is used as a basis for the initial set up of the program.
2. Announce the program in Church and solicit volunteers to take up a 'Pre-pack ministry'.
3. Place these volunteers on a roster, hand out the information sheets and make space for the pre-packs.
4. For the volunteers their commitment entails:
  - a. Commit to making up an agreed number of pre-packs - to be ready in a few months;
  - b. Be part of a roster and supplying pre-packs by bringing them to Church when their month comes around;
  - c. In preparation: collect / purchase the items identified on the list. They do this little by little in the months leading up to the rostered period. They can even encourage friends and family to help in this noble work;
  - d. When they put together the pre-pack its best to place all of the items in a sturdy plastic or supermarket recyclable 'green' bag.
  - e. These pre-packs are delivered to Church when rostered.
5. The pre-packs are kept in the rectory and church office for ease of distribution.
6. Distribute pre-packs on request.
7. Keep a record of:
  - a. How many requests are received
  - b. The types of people requesting help (e.g. family size);
  - c. Any feedback from the people you help.
8. Review your findings with the team in the pre-pack ministry after 6 months.

**Why not make up pre-packs as a deanery  
and share them out according to need?**

### **Pre-Pack Items**

This is largely determined by the people who are to receive the pre-packs and their circumstances. If they are people without secure accommodation, then there is little point in giving them large amounts of foodstuffs that require cooking. The pack also needs to be easily carried which means thoughtful purchases of small items and provision of a sturdy bag with handles. If they are families with children then filling foods like rice and pasta are essential.

If your Church is connected to an Emergency Relief program through Anglicare WA or other partnerships, there are a number of extras you can include such as bus passes and phone cards. These are invaluable to people experiencing homelessness.

**A Pre-Pack Example** – for single people who are homeless

Note: All tins are to be RING PULLS for easy opening.

- Small Cereal
- Small long life milk
- Small Tin baked beans or spaghetti
- Small Tin fish or meat
- Instant noodles
- Muesli Bar
- Small diced fruit or fruit lollies
- Fruit box
- Toilet paper / tissues (flat pack)
- Plastic cutlery
- Plastic Bowl
- A contact card (lists accommodation and support agencies in the area with addresses and phone numbers)
- *Toiletries (e.g. shampoo, toothpaste, small bars of soap, razor)\**
- *Small Ready tinned soup\**
- *Bus Pass\**
- *Phone card\**

\* *Optional depending on access to these resources.*