

Annual Meeting 2011

Prison Ministry report

I am quite confident in saying that in the last twelve months since my last report there has been a substantial increase in chaplaincy activities in all areas of the prison. Suffice it to be said that this would not have taken place without the cooperation and support of Prison staff and management, who I wish to thank at this time. There is however another dedicated group of faithful people who regularly visit the prison on a voluntary basis at the weekends and have done for a long time and to those I give my thanks.

So we ask what is happening:

In the main prison, every week we have six bible study sessions, and a book review. Every two weeks we have Meditation and relaxation and once per month a visit from the Buddhist monk takes place. The number in attendance at such sessions is approx 50. At weekends there are a number of volunteers who conduct church services at which between 50 and 60 prisoners are present

A very new area of ministry is taking place at Don Dale the youth detention centre where we conduct a bible study session every two weeks and on every Monday there is a prayer meeting, one week for boys and the other for girls, we would have approximately eighteen at the bible study sessions and thirteen at the prayer meetings.

The other areas in which chaplaincy takes place are; the remote communities, where connections are made with prisoners, their families and community elders. When requested, we visit prisoner family members in hospital. Now and again we will be asked to write letters of support for prisoners prior to their sentencing and actually attend the court by way of support if requested. This past year to date we have been able to conduct nine baptisms.

More recently, though not strictly in the area of the prison chaplaincies portfolio we have been able to conduct a religious service in the detention centre under the guidance of Patricia Williams.

I am happy to be able to report that chaplaincy in the prison has representatives from all main stream Christian denominations, also for the Islamic, Jewish and Buddhist communities.

As coordinating chaplain I am happy to say that I am well supported by a spiritual advisor and two colleagues who offer me the opportunity to debrief when I need to. Other areas of support come from the management and staff of Anglicare NT and the recent addition of Br. Gerry Burke who assists part time with pastoral issues when required.

Since I have been in the position of coordinating chaplain it has become clear to me that the growth of pastoral and spiritual activities that has taken place in the last twelve months is clear evidence that there is an on going need for such a ministry to develop and grow in line with the ongoing needs of the future increase in the population of prisons.

This on going development will be necessary as we look forward to the completion of a new prison complex by the year 2014 which is expected will accommodate some 800 residents.

In the future I would like to see

- 1) a broader and deeper connection with indigenous communities
- 2) Further development of spiritual and pastoral care consistent with staff and the prisoner's needs and the sourcing of resources that address those issues.
- 3) Maintenance and fostering of good relations within the variety of faiths present to service the needs of those in the prison

I pray that all we think, and do, and say in the service of others will bring peace, harmony, compassion, patience and God's Love to all we meet in his name.

Royal Darwin Hospital Chaplaincy Report 2010

Darwin Cathedral Annual General Meeting

The purpose of Chaplaincy and Pastoral Care at RDH is to evoke spiritual capacity, and possibility in each person, as they wrestle with pain and suffering, through a process of Pastoral conversation. Pastoral Care offers space and presence, through a listening and reflective framework, where ambiguity and paradox is examined and tolerated in the sight of God.

In 2010 the Pastoral Care and Chaplaincy unit at RDH has continued a process of being realigned from Nursing to Allied Health. This means that Chaplains are directly aligned to a range of Professionals including Social Workers, Occupational Therapists, Dieticians, Speech Pathologists, Physiotherapists and Audiologists. There is one full time position (Morris Bastian - Chaplaincy Co-ordinator). In 2010 the half time position (0.5) occupied by David Crawford from the Uniting Church has been extended to (0.8), to assist in meeting the Pastoral needs of patients in the new Oncology unit. This became possible through significant negotiation between the Northern Territory Council of Churches (NTCC) and the Northern Territory Government. I would like to thank Bishop Greg and NTCC members for their involvement in that process.

Tony Cunningham the Catholic Deacon continues to offer faithful and fruitful service to the Catholic hospital community. There is also provision of an on-call roster for after hours.

Again in 2010, there has been significant involvement of members of the Christ Church Cathedral at RDH. I would like to sincerely thank Pat and Keith Williams, Father Mike Nixon, Nicole Anderson, Jeremy and Garry Basset who have actively supported the provision of Sunday Services and visitation/pastoral care to patients. Thanks for the care and support of other congregation members who have visited patients from time to time and throughout the year. Some members of the congregation are also giving thought to being involved in the Clinical Pastoral Care Unit being offered by the RDH Pastoral Care and Chaplaincy Unit in 2011.

Through Bishops Greg's approval, and support from the Dean, I continue to provide the reserved sacrament as an extension from the Cathedral to patients upon request. This has been valued by several patients.

Early morning Holy Communion services for the Anglican Clergy are held in the RDH Chapel three times each year.

Thanks be to God.

Morris Bastian

Royal Darwin Hospital Chaplaincy Co-ordinator