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EVERYONE BELONGS

Fighting racism with inclusion
and care

9 Making a difference

We can each play a part
in ensuring equality for all,
individually and together

10 Simple joys

Taking time out to paint
the fence brings mental,
physical and spiritual respite

12 Racism is real

Reacting to a racist slur with
kindness is helping change
the narrative of hate

“Civilisation is the art of
living together with
people not entirely
like oneself.”

Helen Cam



What is The Salvation Army?

The Salvation Army, an international movement, is an evangelical part of the universal Christian Church.

Vision Statement

Wherever there is hardship or injustice, Salvos will live, love and fight alongside others to transform Australia one life at a time with the love of Jesus.

Mission Statement

The Salvation Army is a Christian movement dedicated to sharing the love of Jesus by:

- Caring for people
- Creating faith pathways
- Building healthy communities
- Working for justice

The Salvation Army Australia acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the land on which we meet and work and pay our respect to Elders, past, present, and future. We value and include people of all cultures, languages, abilities, sexual orientations, gender identities, gender expressions, and intersex status. We are committed to providing programs that are fully inclusive. We are committed to the safety and well-being of people of all ages, particularly children.



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Everyone belongs

Australia will soon celebrate Harmony Week (17-23 March). This week recognises our diversity and unites Australians from different backgrounds, ethnicities, cultures, genders and abilities. It's about inclusiveness, respect and a sense of belonging for all.

Harmony Day falls on 21 March – the United Nations Day of Elimination of Racial Violence – which emphasises that all people are equal and have the right to live in a world that is respectful, non-discriminatory, and offers equal opportunities for everyone.

In this edition of *Salvos Magazine*, we explore some statistics around discrimination in Australia. We also look at how some people have experienced racism, their positive responses, and what each of us can do to ensure equal and dignified treatment for all.

Jesus didn't – and doesn't – discriminate. He went out of his way to include and love those who society looked down on or rejected, and he asks us to do the same today.

For these stories and more, go to **salvosonline.org.au**

Simone Worthing
Editor

FROM THE BUS STOP TO THE COUCH



Sneha fights racism through education

by Lerrisse Smith

When a group of kids threw a banana peel at Sneha Sapkota while she sat at a local bus stop, the Nepalese immigrant initially laughed it off.

"I just thought it was kids being kids," recalls the International Student Coordinator who runs 'The Couch' program at Glenorchy City Salvos in Tasmania.

"But then my aunt remarked it was not funny, that is racism."

Primary prevention

Recognising the critical need to prevent discriminatory behaviour, Sneha plans to publish a book, once funding is secured, to educate schoolchildren about racism.

She believes primary prevention is key in combating the issue and

educating younger people open to learning about other cultures.

"As much as I would love there to be things for adults, it can only happen when they are already wanting to change something," she reflected. "But with kids, it is so much easier and there is more space for us to explore different cultures, [encounter] different types of people. It's primary prevention."

Sneha said a lot of the clientele and community members she worked with experienced racism "quite full on".

I think racist people know who the vulnerable community really is, and usually target them, which is very sad ... I believe racism exists because there is a lack of awareness, education and exposure to culture."

Building understanding

Last year, an event based on fashion called 'Couture with CALD', (Culturally and Linguistically Diverse) organised by Sneha and her team, showcased people's life experiences of moving to Australia, both good and bad.

One of the young community members involved with the show had faced racism at school every day with comments such as "Go back to your country," and "You don't belong here".

"It really stuck with me that young people aged nine and 10 who don't even understand what they are saying, what they are meaning, [are] making comments such as 'go back to your country,'" Sneha commented. "If we can really provide good sources or resources, there may be some space for us to bring some change." Sneha said she spoke to the young person who had faced racism at school and they wanted to turn their experiences into an educational book.

"We have an illustrator who is a refugee from Ukraine who also wanted to be involved. My hope is that once the book is



↑ Sneha Sapkota, left, with Sudina Ghimire, from the Multicultural Council of Tasmania.

published, we can get it converted into coursework and get it into schools through Salvos Schools.”

Asha's story

A local community member, Asha, and her family are among the many local residents The Couch team has helped since they moved to Tasmania in search of better opportunities for their family.

“I was so panicked about how I will make a life here,” Asha said. “The bills were piling up, and I had no one to turn to. The encouragement, advice and information I was able to receive from the

program kept me going. I am so very thankful.”

After Asha contacted the Salvos for support and was connected to the program, Sneha advocated for her, helping her secure a job and regain her confidence and inner strength through ongoing support. And having immigrated from Nepal to Australia, Sneha understands the importance of empowerment and support after overcoming challenges and learning English.

“It is meeting a critical need in the community,” says Sneha.

“I don’t have to say no to anybody. The Couch sees anyone that is culturally and linguistically diverse. A lot of other organisations that help migrants are very specific in who they are helping, so they will only take on refugees or they only take on humanitarian entrants.

“I like that our door is open to everybody. I will speak to anyone that I can. Some feedback that I’ve heard from a lot of my clients is that it’s nice to have someone that can be like an emotional support person.”

International students find community at The Couch, Melbourne

Prior to the opening of The Couch drop-in centre for international students, Project 614 Team Leader Major Brendan Nottle and his team met with the City of Melbourne and Victoria Police.

"We were really concerned about international students that were vulnerable, isolated, I think being targeted in some ways," said Brendan. "We wanted to work with those parties but also other agencies to say, collaboratively, what can we do to just help the experience here in Melbourne be a really good one for international students?"

The outcome of those conversations was the opening of The Couch in 2010. Phoebe, Senior Operations Manager of Project 614, describes it as "a really fun place for students to meet each evening, but it also is a really important place for

them to access important information during their stay in Melbourne. Whether it's Surf Life Saving Australia teaching students how to swim between the flags, the ATO showing students how to apply for a tax file number, or our really popular salsa dancing classes, it's an opportunity for people to meet and learn some new skills and important information while they're in Melbourne."

Safe space

"It's a safe place for international students," says Brendan. "It's a place where they can get support, really practical

support. It's a place where they can make friends and it's a place where they can have a wonderful experience, not just of The Salvation Army but of [their] local community."

Lavanya, who attends The Couch, agrees. "The people are the best," she says. "This team of volunteers, the attendees I meet, it's all like they are friends now, so it's always like this is a safe space for me to come and have fun."

The Couch is open from 6pm to 8.30pm each evening from Monday to Thursday.



↑ The Couch Program supports and includes students from all over the world.

Symbols, messages of peace mark interfaith gathering



↑ The Salvos' Captain Steph Glover, left, with representatives of different faith groups marked World Interfaith Harmony Week together.

Representatives from faith groups – including the Hindu, Bahá'í, Jewish, Sikh, Sufi, Alevi, Buddhist and Christian religions – gathered at Glenroy Community Hub in Victoria on 9 February to mark World Interfaith Harmony Week.

The event was hosted by the Merri-Bek Interfaith Network, which includes Captain Steph Glover from Merri-Bek Salvos.

Steph said the event was quite a moving one, especially for those who have recently had windows to their offices smashed or buildings

graffitied in incidents alleged to be religiously motivated. She explained that many Palestinian and Jewish residents in the area had been taking cover in fear of attacks and, as a precautionary measure, the event, originally planned for an outdoor location, had been moved to an indoor one.

Shared values

Steph said that reciting the Shared Act of Reflection and Commitment – a declaration spoken at the beginning of each meeting – reminded them of the values they all shared.

“As faith leaders, we wanted

to be the ones to go out and set an example and say, ‘Actually, we all might have slightly different beliefs, but what we do all agree on are these things’,” Steph shared.

Representatives from each faith tradition present at the event shared a message of peace through song, dance, prayers and spiritual readings. Attendees exchanged olive branches as a symbol of peace across religions.

Steph described the Network as a “really, really close-knit community.”

– **Kirralee Nicolle**

RACISM AND DISCRIMINATION

Racism can take many forms and includes “prejudice, discrimination or hatred directed at someone because of their colour, ethnicity or national origin”. Racism can be overt (where disadvantage against a particular group is openly acted on or spoken about), covert (where it is subtle, such as a ‘joke’ or when seemingly universal rules only actually affect one group) or structural (where processes or systems either purposely or inadvertently disadvantage a particular group).

Unfortunately, racism is a common occurrence

in Australia. Over the past 10 years, racist incidents have been reported in all aspects of Australian society, from everyday settings such as public transport, to essential institutions such as education and healthcare. While legislation protects against discrimination based on race, many people experience racism daily.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds experience racism at a higher rate than the general population. Racist

attitudes and behaviours often become more pronounced and less veiled, according to topical and current affairs in Australian society. This can sometimes lead to an increase in racial discrimination against specific groups in society at a given time. Sadly, we have seen examples of this, even as a result of events far from Australia’s shores. At the heart of racism is the failure to recognise that we are all inherently equal and valuable, so that is where we need to start in addressing racism.



Research shows a correlation between racial discrimination and poorer physical and mental health.

62%

INDICATED RACISM
A “**VERY BIG**” OR
“**FAIRLY BIG**” PROBLEM

62 per cent of respondents to a social cohesion survey indicated racism was a “very big” or “fairly big” problem.



60 per cent of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples reported experiencing at least one form of racial prejudice in the past six months.



Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples also experience the highest rates of workplace discrimination (50 per cent compared with 24 per cent of non-Indigenous workers).



WE HAVE THE POWER TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

WE CAN URGE ACTION FROM OUR GOVERNMENTS

Governments of all levels can strengthen and enforce anti-discrimination laws to ensure equal treatment for all citizens, including regularly updating legislation to address emerging forms of discrimination. One part of this is ensuring that it is easy and accessible to report instances of discrimination.

Young people are critical to eliminating racism and discrimination. Governments can work together to implement culturally appropriate educational programs that promote understanding, tolerance, and diversity in schools.

WE CAN IMPLEMENT CHANGE IN OUR COMMUNITY AND OUR WORKPLACES

In our workplaces, we can push for mandatory workplace diversity training to foster an inclusive and safe work environment.

When organising events, we can make sure they are welcoming and culturally appropriate. We can theme social events around celebrations of the value of diversity such as Harmony Day, NAIDOC Week or culturally specific holidays like the Lunar New Year.

We can also make sure that services, supports and business offerings we organise are accessible and empowering to diverse communities.



WE CAN HAVE INFLUENCE IN OUR PERSONAL LIVES

Unconscious bias is a driver of racism and sometimes we can unthinkingly act on beliefs that consciously we know not to be true. That gives us the opportunity to really examine some of the assumptions we may have made and then choose to act in a more deliberate and considerate way.

Racism is often subtle, so we can be hugely influential as individuals simply by seeing and calling out casual racism. This might look like not laughing at jokes that rely on racial stereotypes, critically examining arguments that make assumptions about people from other cultures, or even calling out statements that are discriminatory.

THE SIMPLE JOY OF FENCE PAINTING

Leaving life behind for an hour
to restore a weary spirit

by Faye Michelson

The other day I was tired. My body felt heavy; my brain seemed to have switched into neutral. I couldn't be bothered thinking or making any more decisions. I needed a rest.

So, I painted the fence.

The long paling fence in my vegetable garden is what I call my 'slow project,' as if it's some kind of special venture that must not be completed quickly. And in a sense, that's true. There's no deadline, so it's taking a long time to do. There's no stress because the fence is at the side of the property, out of sight of the rest of the house. That means there's no urgency to get it done because it's an eyesore, which is just as well because I started it months ago. I only paint if I feel like it and that day I felt like it.

I left behind everything I should be doing and headed into the garden.

There was something soothing about dipping a thick, wide brush into paint and making sweeping strokes over the palings. I didn't have to be careful about drips or make sure the paint was applied evenly. It was just a case of up and down, up and down, watching the paint cover the bare wood. It was a restful rhythm, standing there among the veggie beds, the brush moving up and down, up and down.

And as I painted, my head started to clear.

Taking a break

Rest can mean many things. Sometimes it's sitting down, having a nap or sleeping to recover from physical or emotional exertion. For me, rest in this case was time away

“We all need rest and it's as much about mental respite as it is physical.”



from my responsibilities. I could have given into the pressure of feeling I had to get on with life. I could have tackled a task from the many things on my 'to-do' list or tried to wrangle mentally with issues that needed resolving. Instead, I dipped



a big brush into a can of grey paint and focused on the rhythmical strokes. And as I did that, space seemed to open up for me to have a chat with God.

Life is complicated and at times it's exhausting. We all need rest and it's as much about mental respite as it is

physical. We need rest for our weary souls, something Jesus understood when he invited people to follow him.

"Come to me, all of you who work and have heavy loads. I will give you rest. Follow my teachings and learn from me. I am gentle and do not have pride.

You will have rest for your souls" (Matthew chapter 11, verses 28-29 New Life Version).

Take some time out, however that looks for you. And, like me, you might find it offers a chance to have a conversation with God.

RACISM IS REAL

In the fight against racism, kindness wins

by Kerry Berrisford

On Sunday 2 February, in our normally peaceful St Albert (Canada), a group of masked demonstrators dressed in black displayed their vile messages of racial hatred. Their covered faces gave me the feel of the Ku Klux Klan.

Between this and the incident at Helen's school on Friday 17 January (she received a note with a racial slur written on it), I am feeling unsettled.

(Helen is 10. Kerry adopted Helen from South Africa when she was just a year old.)

Helen is so full of light and kindness and humour. She is quiet and so popular in her class. So far, she is doing well. And just saying that she's letting it [the racism] roll off her shoulders, so I hope that is what she's doing. And she still wanted to do a presentation in class for Black History Month in February. And she also gave a presentation at St Albert's Chamber of Commerce!

Active support

It is heartening to see support and [sense of] fight from people who reject this hate. I am praying that we can all rise above this current wave of ugliness and through it all, our little Helly continues to know how loved, how precious and how treasured she is.

And we do have support. On the Sunday after the school incident, I took Helen and a couple of her friends ice-skating. And I've been feeling vulnerable about where I take her. Skating is a white thing to do. And she only decided that morning that she wanted to try it again after three years of not wanting to go on the ice.

When we got to the rink this man was there – your stereotypical, big hockey guy. He noticed Helen take her skates out of her bag and he complimented her about how nice they were. He asked if Helen had a helmet. I explained that we hadn't been able to find one yet. So, he grabbed

one out of his bag and helped me adjust it so that it would fit. "There you go, it's yours," he said.

I took the girls out onto the ice, and just felt so overwhelmed by such kindness from somebody who I was prejudiced against. So, I went back to tell him and his family what it meant to me, especially after what had happened at school.

Then he and his wife started crying. They were shocked at how Helen was treated, and were so embarrassed for our community. But I just thanked them for seeing her, encouraging and supporting her.

And then I called the parents of every girl in Helen's class. I asked them all for two things: First, introduce the 'N' word and concept of hate speech to their daughters, so they would be able to recognise it and report it immediately. And then I invited them to Helen's upcoming African dance



↑↑ Helen, left, with a friend at her African dancing class.

↗ Helen and her mum, Kerry.

↑ Helen presenting on Black History at the local Chamber of Commerce

→ Helen and her friend proud of their skills on the ice.

performance, to try to show her that we're taking interest in her culture, and we support her.

Changing the narrative

The reactions from all those parents were truly amazing. Some bought tickets to the event. Others called me back later to let me know how the chat went with their daughter. I felt so bad talking to a couple of

African mum friends and realising that this has been their reality forever. And understanding more about that generational heaviness, trauma and disadvantage.

I'm just trying to really be rooted on God, the rock of all ages, and to remind myself that nothing has spun out of his control. Racism is rife. And it's ugly, brutal and

destructive. We need to change the narrative. That could be through having a conversation with someone close to you about discrimination, prejudice and hate. It could be getting to know and appreciate people and cultures different from yours. And it definitely includes being respectful, safe and kind – overwhelmingly kind.



Pack your Lunch Day pinwheels



Ingredients

Tortillas, mayonnaise, sliced cheese, sliced ham, sliced turkey, lettuce leaves

Method

Lay tortillas flat and spread each one with mayonnaise.

Place 2-3 slices of cheese on bottom two-thirds of each tortilla.

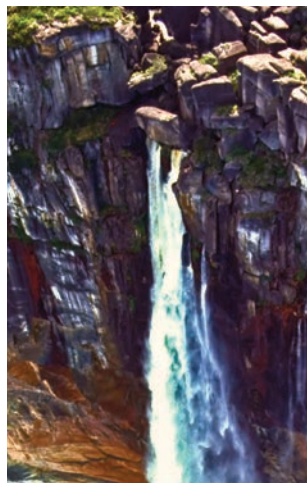
Place ham and turkey over the cheese.

Add 2-3 lettuce leaves and tightly roll up tortilla.

These can be refrigerated up to six hours, then sliced into 5cm-rounds when ready to serve.



Quiz



1. Which is the fastest bird in the world?
2. What is the tallest waterfall in the world?
3. Which planet is known as the 'Red Planet'?
4. Which food item never spoils?
5. How many scents can a human nose remember?
6. Which is the longest river in the world?



Tum-Tum



On which page of this week's Salvos Magazine is Tum-Tum hiding?



Believe in Good: Tips

"Correction does much, but encouragement does more."

– Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

Be an encourager to all those around you.



Who am I?



I was born in Melbourne in 1969.

I am one of Australia's most accomplished actors.

I've been recognised for my versatile work across independent films, blockbusters and stage.

My most famous roles are those in *Elizabeth*, *The Lord of the Rings*, *The Talented Mr Ripley* and *The Aviator*.



Answers

Quiz: 1. A Peregrine Falcon
2. Angel Falls, Venezuela 3. Mars 4. Honey 5. Around 50,000 6. The Nile
I am: Cate Blanchett
Turn-Tum: hiding in the frame with Sheha on page 5.

1	8	3	7	6	5	4	2	9
4	7	2	3	1	9	6	5	8
9	6	5	8	2	4	1	7	3
5	1	6	9	4	8	2	3	7
8	9	7	2	3	6	5	4	1
3	2	4	1	5	7	8	9	6
6	3	1	5	7	2	9	8	4
2	4	9	6	8	3	7	1	5
7	5	8	4	9	1	3	6	2



Sudoku

Fill in the grid so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9.

		8		9	1			2
						7	1	5
6	3		5		2			
	2	4				8	9	
8			2	3		5	4	
	1		9					
		2	3		9		5	
1							2	9



Have a laugh

Have you even noticed what's odd?
Every other number.

Who's in charge in a pencil case?
The ruler.

Why was the circle sad?
Because the triangle told it, 'You're pointless'.

Which civilisation was the best at algebra?
The Romans. X was always 10.

Bible byte

"Be generous with the different things God gave you."
1 Peter chapter 4, verse 10
The Message Bible paraphrase



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