

# DEPAUL DIARIES

Homelessness has no place

Your Depaul Supporter Newsletter | Summer 2022

“A lot of the homeless people who walk through these doors haven’t eaten properly in months.” —

## Homeless and Hungry: How Your Kindness Feeds Body and Soul

*A home-cooked meal. A cup of hot, sweet tea. A moment of humanity... Feeding hungry, homeless people is one of the most fundamental parts of the good work you power here at Depaul. Chef Mark puts your generosity into action every day, and he wants you to know the very real difference your kindness makes in the lives of the homeless people he serves...*

“**Y**ou wouldn’t believe the power of something as simple as a cup of tea and a biscuit,” says Mark, Depaul’s chef at Ozanam House homeless hostel in Wexford.

“A lot of the people I meet live most of

their lives on the street. It’s just a cup of tea... but you can’t underestimate the comfort of it.”

This will be Mark’s 13th year feeding Ireland’s homeless and hungry.

He says he loves every second of his job. And he’s forever grateful for generosity like yours. Because you keep the lights on and the kettle warm here.

Thanks to you, there is a place for all the lost and lonely people. A place where a hot meal, a kind word, and help and hope can always be found.

*Continued, over...*



**If you could see the appreciation people have of getting a hot meal...**

**They’re so grateful to have a plate of home-cooked dinner in front of them.”**



**On Page 4:** Ireland’s homeless children, not forgotten because of you...

(continued from cover...)

### More than a meal

For Chef Mark, his work is more than just a job. It's about delivering your love and humanity in every meal he serves...



Chef Mark

“

*Even if I'm finishing my shift and I'm out the door... If someone comes along and missed a meal – I don't refuse them, I make sure they get something.”*

"I've gotten to know a lot of people, and sometimes they will come to me feeling low. I say, 'come on, let's get a cup of tea and have a chat' — I'm not here to judge, just to listen. Often they have no one in their life they can talk to."

Mark remembers one older man who he hadn't seen before. "He came up to me after dinner and said 'thank you for talking to me like I'm a real person.' I couldn't believe that. Just being able to sit down to have a meal and a chat... it meant the world to him."

### Comfort food

In many ways, our Depaul kitchens are at the heart of the work you power here, fulfilling the most basic of human needs.

Mark makes hearty, comforting meals like cabbage and bacon, shepherd's pie, and always lots of fresh vegetables.

And when it comes to people sleeping rough and eating mainly fast food or meal deals, Chef Mark believes good food is vital for recovery...

"There was one young fella who came in. He was skin and bones. He probably hadn't had a proper meal in years. A few months later, he left our services, and he looked like a different person. It made me

## Chef Mark's Menu of Wishes

Will you help Chef Mark and his team fill hundreds of empty bellies every day? Please say... 'Yes, Chef!'

- ✓ A day of meals for a homeless person - €12
- ✓ Giant Pots and Pans - €50 (each)
- ✓ New Microwave - €150
- ✓ Set of canteen tables/chairs - €450
- ✓ Fridge/Freezer (catering size) - €700

Big wish! One of our services badly needs to replace its fridge/freezer — Could you help?

Please use the reply form enclosed to give if you can — Thank you!

\*Any funds raised above the amount needed for this appeal will support our wider work to help the homeless, and people at risk of homelessness.

really happy to be part of that transformation."

**For every moment of mercy and humanity you bring to people who are homeless and hungry... thank you. ❤️**

## His First Real Home

*Like so many young homeless people, Ryan grew up in care. With every odd stacked against him, it's a testament to his determination and your steadfast support that Ryan is where he is today...*

You'll remember Ryan from our recent youth homelessness appeal...

When his Mam died, he was taken into care, "I never really had a family or home after that," says Ryan.

Like so many care leavers, Ryan became homeless the day he turned 18. For him, it's been a long struggle to escape the cycle so many find themselves trapped in.

It was only when he came to Depaul's youth hostel that things began to change for

Ryan... 'It gave me stability and meant I could find myself a job.'

Thanks to your generosity, Ryan has just signed a long-term lease on a little flat, and he's over the moon. "It means I'll never be homeless again," says Ryan. "This is a gift. I will never ever go back to that life."

Ryan has had to fight tooth and nail to find his way out of homelessness.

But even so, he says he couldn't have done it without



your kind support.

"I look back on what I've been through to get to this moment and it just makes you appreciate what you have a billion times more, especially having a roof over your head," says Ryan. "I'm so grateful. I just want to say thank you..."

## In Charlie's Own Words...

*During the pandemic, your kindness protected the most vulnerable homeless people in Ireland. Charlie was one of those people. It was the stability you provided through Depaul Shielding Units that turned Charlie's life around, and he'll never forget it...*

"My name is Charlie and I've been homeless for 15 years. I came to Depaul's shielding unit addicted to drugs and alcohol. I decided then I had to make the most of the support Depaul staff and experts could give me there..."

Since then, my mental and physical health has improved so much. I've got structure in my life, and I attend daily AA meetings. Thanks to the people who give to Depaul and make this all possible, I have purpose in my life. I'm so grateful for the kindness of those who supported me. Today is a good day — thank you!"



Today and every day at Depaul, thanks to you...

 **1,278** home-cooked hot meals served.

 **801** homeless men and women provided with food and shelter.

 **2,400** cups of tea and coffee served.\*

\*figures approximate based on average people served

"One wee girl here is moving to a house with her family next week – she's so excited."

# How You Care for Homeless Children

*There are hundreds of children in Depaul's family services right now. But without your kindness, there could be no dedicated support workers like Fiona for children experiencing homelessness...*

**F**iona says the most important part of her role is making sure that every child who is old enough to remember being 'homeless', carries good memories with them.

That means everything from getting them registered with a GP and new school to making sure homeless children aren't missing out on fun...

"I say, what would you like to do? They say, movie night or a wee disco. And we'll make it happen."

Becoming homeless is traumatic. But for kids, with your help, coming here can be a positive experience. "There's one girl, Erin, she was so excited to have her own bed for the first time," says Fiona. "She couldn't believe it was all for her.



*With your help, Fiona looks after little ones like Erin in Depaul family services...*

I'd say, 'where's Erin?' and her sister would say, "she's still in bed!" She just loved it."

But nothing beats watching children go to their new homes. "One girl here, I've known her since she was 2. You'd love her, she's such a wee character. Her family is moving to a house next week – she's so excited."

**Thank you for all the good you do.**



## Kindness Crosses Borders

**B**eing the caring person you are, we know your heart is breaking for people who are homeless, no matter where in the world they are.

But did you know that Depaul is a part of 'Depaul International', a wider group of charities working on the frontline against homelessness in countries including France, Slovakia, Croatia and Ukraine.

With kindness like yours, Depaul International has been helping the homeless for decades.

And even now as the bombs fall, frontline staff are working across the country — in Kharkiv, Odesa, Kyiv and Western Ukraine — providing life-saving food, shelter and medication.

**If you'd like to learn more about Depaul International, you can visit [int.depaulcharity.org](http://int.depaulcharity.org). Thank you.**



Fr. Vitaliy from Depaul International delivers food packages in war-torn Ukraine.

**If you would like to give, visit: [depaul.ie](http://depaul.ie), or call: 01 453 7111. Thank you for your compassion.**

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To protect the privacy of the people we care for, all images which show faces are represented by stock photos. Thank you for your understanding.

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