

ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI TRUST

Helping people where they are



*Greetings to you all!
Thanks to those who supported the
St Francis of Assisi Trust in 2021!
We had an amazing year, walking
with our community and
volunteers. We are ever evolving
based on the Gospel message of
service and the example of St
Francis to 'walk with' and respond
to our community's needs. Read
on to see what we have been up to
and how to get involved in 2022 by
volunteering or donating.*

*Blessings,
Gerry O'Farrell,
Community Worker*



Who We Are

The St. Francis Trust supports people in need through practical means. When we began, we adopted the Coptic Friendship Icon of St Menas walking with Jesus as our logo, to illustrate how we walk alongside people with their burdens and accompany them whatever the outcome. Our trust listens and adapts according to the needs in the community. Last year our projects were:

- Meals to Families through Schools
- Firewood; collection, cutting and distribution
- Soup and Buns; free community meals
- Whiteware and furniture to Families
- Community Christmas Dinner
- Reflection/Prayer evenings

Meals to Families through schools

This program provided over 1000 cooked meals to families in 2021. Parishioners and Kavanagh students gathered on Wednesday afternoons for large cook ups, using rescued food from Kiwi Harvest and discounted vegetables from Veggie Boys, generously paid for by Mercy Parish. We delivered the meals on Friday



afternoons which went to families in need through our Catholic schools, St Vincent de Paul and other parishes. One volunteer says *"Why I help cook? Why not? was my first reaction to your question! I won't ever forget a time in my life where I could not have managed without the family benefit. It's great to give back now that I can."*



Firewood; collection, cutting, distribution

Last year we managed to provide about 80 trailer loads of firewood to families and this year we are hoping to provide 200. This massive project could not happen without the amazing volunteers from Mercy & St Peter Chanel parishes and Kavanagh College. The huge logs are donated and parish volunteers pick them up and chainsaw them into firewood. A special thanks to Hugh and Teresa Madden for the use of their truck and to Kavanagh students and teachers who help with the stacking and delivery of firewood. The firewood goes out 'no questions asked' to families who are known to Catholic Social Services and the social agencies that make up Lending Matters, of which St Francis Trust was a founding member. Like our 'Meals to Families through Schools', it is a service freely given to those in need to help them through a cold Dunedin winter. A shout out to thank Steve from Who Ate All The Pies for helping us to feed our volunteers!



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A current committee member says *"As a trust we endeavour to respond to the increasing needs that are evident in the community. We have built up networks that continue to source products, goods and services which has given our work a regional profile. This coupled with a well-articulated set of principles that underpin our work and purpose has ensured that the SFAT volunteers have credibility to walk alongside people."*

Soup and Buns

Over the last couple of years, for 15 weeks over the winter, we provided free soup and buns to our community. People from all walks of life come for nourishment of body and soul. A volunteer describes it is *"a happy recipe for fellowship and community! People from different backgrounds and ages coming together in the foyer of the Church, on a Thursday afternoon in winter, to enjoy each other's company. Delicious soup, the gel that brings people together and from that starting point something wonderful, humbling and real happens."*





Whiteware and furniture to families

Throughout the year we get requests for washing machines, dryers, fridge/freezers, furniture, etc. We circulate what is donated and deliver to those requesting. We were able to assist two families into their new homes with furniture, beds, bedding, whiteware, cutlery, almost completely furnishing their homes. Through the generosity of parishioners, we also managed to supply two former refugee women with sewing machines, assisting them to start their own businesses.

Community Dinners

For the last 6-7 years we have provided a Mid-Winter and a Christmas Eve Community Dinner. Parishioners, students and families, volunteer to prepare, serve and clean up for up to 90 people from our community. It is a very joyous and serious undertaking! The 'joy of service' comes through. But the pressure of providing a top quality four course meal on time, just how the 'customer' wants it is real! This year, with vaccine restrictions, our numbers were quite low. No problem! We managed to provide takeaways for a some and packaged up the rest into meals for the Dunedin Night Shelter.

Reflection and Prayer

Our trust's mission is rooted in the Gospel so we ground our work in prayer and reflection. Last winter, we provided a series of reflections on St Joseph the worker, as Pope Francis suggested we focus on in 2021. We had parishioners and Fr. Matthew from Taizé providing these reflections. It was a very prayerful time in the Taizé style of prayer with music and silence alongside the reflections. Our thanks to all who contributed. [You can watch the sessions here.](#)



How to get involved in 2022

- **Volunteer!**
 - *Cooking on Wednesday and delivery of meals on Friday*
 - *Do you have a chainsaw, trailer or ute? Join our firewood team!*
 - **Next opportunity is 10th March** when chainsaws, splitters and stackers are needed. At the end of the month we will need drivers with trailers or utes to deliver.
- **Donate!**
 - *by direct debit. \$5, \$10, \$20 a month*
 - *Online deposits can be made to the St Francis of Assisi Dunedin Trust, 06 0901 0663602 00 Please put your surname as the reference and email us: stfrancistrustdunedin@gmail.com with your address details so we can issue you with a receipt.*
- **To get involved contact Gerry:**
 - *email: stfrancistrustdunedin@gmail.com or gerry.tracey@xtra.co.nz. Phone, text: 0275424916*