

# OTHERS

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The Salvation Army  
Australia Southern Territory  
Social Programme Department



This designed photograph, by Ewan Arnolda, pays homage to Leonardo Da Vinci's 15th century mural *The Last Supper* (1495 to 1498). Da Vinci posed the apostles in groups of three around the central figure of Jesus as follows (from left): Bartholomew, James son of Alphaeus and Andrew; Judas Iscariot, Simon Peter and John; Thomas, James the Greater and Phillip; and Matthew, Jude/Thaddeus and Simon the Zealot. The cat is a light-hearted tribute to one of Da Vinci's predecessors, Domenico Ghirlandaio, who also painted *The Last Supper*. Ghirlandaio included the feline because of a narrative in a book of the apocrypha that said Jesus cared for a lost kitten.



## DIVERSITY IN DISCIPLESHIP

Florentine polymath Leonardo di ser Piero da Vinci's *The Last Supper* is truly a masterpiece. While many artists before and after him have admirably taken on the same subject matter, I don't believe their efforts come close to da Vinci's.

When we look at the people scripturally and historically depicted around Christ's table, we note a diverse range of both men and women. We know some of the diners' occupations and roles: builders, fishermen, wives, tax collectors, mothers and freedom fighters. This is a mixed group who we read about, see visualised by da Vinci, or capture in our own imagination. They obviously differ, yet they hold several things in common: they were all called into ministry by Jesus; they joined him to share a significant communal meal; they journeyed on a common quest.

On the whole, these men and women were from the same ethnic background but they all had their individual personalities, hidden fears, diverse cultural and socio-economic backgrounds. Yet through the power that bound them together as a diverse group of 'Jesus followers' they formed a

church and followed Jesus, even after his arrest and gruesome death. This bonding over a common cause did not occur without conflict or disagreement. Rather, because of those differences, and the process of working through them, they reached a common understanding of their mission.

Consider our challenges today. They are of a different character, but the mission and call are the same. Our community is divided, and not just by politics, economics, social structure, values and goals. The world is experiencing mass migration, with refugees and asylum seekers trying to escape starvation and warfare. This brings people across our paths who look vastly different from others and who, through cultural and ethnic influences and life experiences, think and act differently to others. They see the same challenges in us. Yet all are welcome at Christ's table.

In our own strength as 'disciples' we can only go so far. Many people outwardly embrace a multicultural, non-discriminatory philosophy. But when operating under pressure, or in familiar company, they express their hearts' true

feelings, contradicting their 'public face'. I believe that God, within us, empowers us to completely transform ourselves. This is necessary to accept people who are different to us, without discrimination.

This was the driving force of the early disciples; it's the driving force for us today. God is a force among us and within us, enabling us to embrace diversity in society and integrity in discipleship. God drives our mission throughout this great, colourful country. If our mission centres are to fully reflect the communities they serve, however, they need to embrace difference in our contemporary society.

Rather than seeing diversity as a stumbling block to divide us, we, as fellow examples of God's children, need to include everyone around us. We need to celebrate individuals and the richness of the tapestries they weave.

**Major Ron Cochrane**  
assistant territorial  
social programme  
secretary



# making disciples

The Salvation Army Australia Southern Territory Mission Intentions: Transforming Lives · Caring for People · Making Disciples · Reforming Society

'OTHERS'

William Booth sending a telegram to encapsulate the mission of The Salvation Army simply said, 'Others'. It helps us remember our purpose and inspires us to do the most good for others.

# WHAT DOES 'MAKING DISCIPLES' MEAN?

OTHERS TALKS TO A HANDFUL OF 'DISCIPLE-MAKERS' ABOUT DISCIPLING

## What does discipleship mean to you?

**MAJOR SIMON DAMEN, divisional youth secretary and corps programme secretary, Tasmania Division:** It's a 'whole life' process, it's not just a spiritual dimension. Discipleship includes employment, recreation, relationships, emotions, developmental issues and physicality. It's a question of holiness; God flowing through us in all aspects of our lives. My approach is based on Jesus' call for us to be 'in the world but not of it'. We bring Jesus with us into the world, with integrity. I believe teenagers want to have a connection between all of these

things; it can't be just in one area. God has to flow through all. Teenagers want to be emotionally moved, to feel changed; to feel God in worship and other aspects of their lives.

**CADET FLEUR HODGE:** A disciple is someone who learns from a teacher. Christian discipleship involves equipping people with learning skills so they can learn from the teacher, Jesus Christ, how to: talk and listen to God in prayer, read and apply the word of God, share life with the body of Christ, and participate with God in his mission to the world.

**JOHN MARION, youth department, WA Division:** Discipleship means following Jesus; believing the things he said are true and that they can happen. Discipleship is bringing his kingdom to earth.

**LIEUT RICHARD PARKER, CO, Mitcham Corps, Eastern Victoria Division:** It's following Jesus; to plagiarise from my wife, Katie, it's 'followership'.

We are following Jesus and we encourage others to follow us in following Jesus.

**MAJOR KATRINA POTTER, personnel officer, training college:** Learning what it means to be a follower of Christ.

## How does The Salvation Army 'do' discipleship?

**MAJOR SIMON DAMEN:** Very formally; through an academic approach. At times it doesn't connect with all aspects of people's lives; it just focuses on the spiritual. Jesus walked with his disciples. He lived with them, he ate and partied with a bunch of teenagers—scholars generally accept they were mostly between 14 and 21 years of age. Before they joined Jesus, they were doing the entry-level jobs of their society. In times past, people's lives were more segregated. Your home life didn't have to interact with work or school. Your church time and mates didn't have to meet your other friends. It's like our lives were broken up in to different sections, like ice cubes in a tray: all individual. Now, if you're aged between 13 and 30, your life may reflect a bowl of

spaghetti—everything is interconnected (things like Facebook have had a lot to do with creating that change). Discipleship cannot be in just one area of our life.

**CADET FLEUR HODGE:** I think we tend to tell people what we think they should know, rather than equipping people to follow Jesus, trusting that they will hear God powerfully in their lives. Many of our people are dependent on leaders to hear from God.

**JOHN MARION:** When it works best in The Salvation Army, discipleship arises out of people living Christlike, holy lives that are engaged in mission. Salvation Army discipleship is an activist model; it gives Christians opportunities to live out their faith.

**LIEUT RICHARD PARKER:** We 'do' discipleship through our words, and actions that match our words. In terms of the four mission intentions, and the mission values of human dignity, justice, hope, compassion and community, the truth is that discipleship won't work unless it's modelled. We have a mandate for 'active' discipleship.

**MAJOR KATRINA POTTER:** From life's early stages we take children through kids church and junior soldiership, then through youth Bible studies. Some youth groups have an intentional approach to discipleship. We need to mentor young children and young Christians; you have to walk alongside people who are new to the faith and show them the way.

## What are a disciple's most important characteristics?

**MAJOR SIMON DAMEN:** Integrity and grace.

**CADET FLEUR HODGE:** A posture of humility, dependence and lifelong learning.

**JOHN MARION:** Someone who reflects

Christ. In John's gospel we have the analogy of the vine (Jesus) and the branches (us). I see strong followers of Jesus as those people for whom God's presence is very real—people who have an intimacy with Jesus.

**LIEUT RICHARD PARKER:** Humility, compassion and a willingness to serve.

**MAJOR KATRINA POTTER:** They emanate from God: they care, and they authentically live out what they believe.

## What does discipleship mean in your work?

**MAJOR SIMON DAMEN:** It allows holiness into every aspect of my own life. I get close to people and they see the rough with the smooth. The guys I journey with see me at my best and my worst: like Lady Gaga, I have no poker face! I don't want people to think I never get annoyed or disappointed, or really excited about things. I just want to be open and honest. Love me or hate me for it, people usually know where I stand on any given issue or occasion.

**CADET FLEUR HODGE:** I'm a first year cadet. Discipleship means walking together with the other cadets and staff, encouraging and being encouraged.

**JOHN MARION:** It means pursuing the heart and mind of Christ. It means listening to his spirit, determining his will and then obeying and fulfilling that will. Discipleship means spending time with the marginalised and restoring the world to how it should be.

**LIEUT RICHARD PARKER:** It's being

an example—living out all of the above.

**MAJOR KATRINA POTTER:** It's a continued journey with cadets in their faith. They are growing and maturing in their faith. I walk with them to the point of ministry. I still have contact with some people I have mentored—it grows from mentoring to a peer friendship. It depends on whether it's formalised and if they want it to continue. There are different ways to disciple people.

# FINDING STRENGTH IN HOPE

Life seemed over for Steve\*. His marriage had broken down due to irreconcilable differences. His former wife lived interstate and he was trying to care for their three kids practically and emotionally, on a wage that was sitting just above the poverty line.

One day, when the kids were at school, Steve took a sickie, drove his car into an isolated berth at a shopping centre car park and spent a good half hour punching his dashboard and yelling out his frustration. Things were bleak.

Railing at life, Steve ended up swallowing his pride and turning to the Salvos for some assistance with paying utilities bills and a food voucher. The people he met were courteous, helpful, professional and warm. A Salvation Army officer, speaking with Steve about his children and their hobbies, encouraged him to bring them along to midweek children's activities and to kids church on Sunday morning.

As he sat in the worship meeting, with his kids doing craft and singing songs in the other hall, Steve felt the first hint of peace that he'd experienced in a fair while. He couldn't put his finger on it. It wasn't so much the words said or read. It wasn't just the songs and the quick chats with the other attenders.

It was in the midst of these Salvationists and their mates that Steve felt the company of Jesus. The bloke he was reading about in the copy of the New Testament the CO gave him seemed intimately at home in the lives of those people he was hanging out with at The Salvation Army. They cared. They gave him genuine help and some good advice.

Reluctant to be seen as 'committing' to a religion, Steve still found he was drawn time and time again to the local corps. His kids made friends. Steve found a regular 'possie' in the meeting. Old wounds are healing; delicate scar tissue begins to form over deep hurts.

Steve hasn't 'arrived'. He still struggles and doesn't pretend to have it all together. But the day he chose to exercise forgiveness was, he says, the first day of a new life. Steve says he's on a road to God.

*\*Name changed for reasons of privacy.*



# IT'S A LONG, LONG ROAD

## OTHERS CONSIDERS THE CONNECTIONS BETWEEN DISCIPLESHIP AND CHAPLAINCY

The evangelical movement that is The Salvation Army has an international mission statement that notes the balancing of a dualistic mission 'to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ and meet human needs in his name without discrimination'. What does this mean in the Australia Southern Territory? The marriage of words and actions. Thoughts embodied in programs. Prayers backed by millions of dollars raised and spent throughout 17 areas of social service.

There is a creative tension between providing services and sharing the Christian faith—both implicitly in our actions and as the motivation for programs, and explicitly as evangelism, or sharing the good news about Jesus. Salvation Army chaplains often work under specific codes of ethics, especially in the armed forces, prisons and courts, which guard against possible spiritual abuse of people by preventing proselytising, or evangelising.

'We don't encourage proselytising in chaplaincy,' explains territorial chaplaincy coordinator Major Anne Farquharson (top, right). 'Our services extend to people of no faith, of other Christian denominations and other faiths, and our chaplains are obliged to build relationships and to network with chaplains of other faiths.'

'While our chaplains are ready to share their beliefs individually, on an invitational basis, we take this non-proselytising measure to safeguard our clients against any form of coercion or abuse of power, because we respect the territorial value of "human dignity". Chaplains conduct ceremonies such as funerals and weddings without discrimination, for people who are in need of our help.'

'Making disciples' is a mission intention that is best met by growing organically out of relationship, an individual's spiritual journey and the chaplain's mandate. Chaplains journey with others, displaying grace, practising compassion and 'empowering them to live with hope'.

'Many Australians go through their whole lives without consciously recognising God,' says Anne, 'and if they do have an understanding of or an interest in spirituality then it's often

underpinned with an eclectic mix of world faiths.'

Major David Mundy (below, left), a chaplain at Melbourne Central Division's James Barker House (a facility for marginalised, older Melburnians), explains that the residents can be quite hostile to 'God talk'.

'We are on a journey, walking with people, and it's not a short trip. We need to be alongside folks for the long haul, and often our clients are burdened. Symbolically, they are often lying on the side of the road.'

'I am still coming to terms with the process of walking with people, and walking them "into the kingdom" in non-traditional ways,' he adds. 'It takes years before you can talk "God stuff" with some people; if ever. They test you. Even going to a funeral can be a big breakthrough for our clients.'

David explains that his 'road trips' with people thrive on two-way traffic. You can call it 'client focus', or the mission value of 'compassion', or 'meeting human need without discrimination': however you label it and regardless of any evangelical outcome, walking with people is a genuine expression of the Christian faith.

'We experience mutual learning,' he says, 'and I learn vivid lessons about compassion from our clients. They go out of their way to care for each other and support each other practically; they live out mateship. These people have a story to tell; they are people of worth and dignity. I help, I laugh and share meals and cuppas. I listen and I share. I'm there.'

'Until you see the residents as family, you haven't even started the journey. This environment is quite threatening for some people, but when you spend time there you see it is an incredible place, with genuine, authentic people.'

In the forest of words about making disciples and sharing faith, a prime aspect of The Salvation Army's existence, the following words from Anne and David bear repeating: Journey through life with others. Display grace, practise compassion. Empower them to live with hope. Until you see people as family, you haven't started the journey.

BARRY GITTINS



## IN/FORMAL SALVATION ARMY CHAPLAINCY

There are approximately 146 appointed or employed chaplains in the territory. They are officers, employees and volunteers.

The majority of officer/employee chaplains have received training for this role.

The Salvation Army Australia Southern Territory exercises chaplaincy in the following areas of life:

- » Airport chaplaincy
- » Adult services (including homelessness services)
- » Aged care
- » Ambulance services
- » Chaplaincy to retired officers
- » Community support services
- » Courts
- » Crisis
- » Drought/rural ministries
- » Fire and emergency services
- » Hospitals
- » Military
- » Natural disasters
- » Police
- » Prisons
- » Retired officers associations
- » Salvos Stores
- » Shopping centres (corps-based and territorial)
- » Sporting teams and associations
- » The Salvation Army Employment Plus
- » Salvos Stores
- » THQ premises/staff and chapel
- » Wills and Bequests
- » Youth services

For a sermon resource on making disciples, from the social programme department, go to:

[www.salvationarmy.org.au/corpsresources/post.asp?post=920](http://www.salvationarmy.org.au/corpsresources/post.asp?post=920)

