



Mercy Mail

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ACUTE FACILITIES:

Mater Rockhampton
(07) 4931 3313

Mater Mackay
(07) 4965 5666

Mater Bundaberg
(07) 4153 9539

Mater Gladstone
(07) 4971 3713

AGED CARE FACILITIES:

Mercy Aged Care
(07) 4999 1400

Bethany
(07) 4999 2700

Leinster Place
(07) 4926 6688

McAuley Place
(07) 4921 3867

Mercy Day Therapy
(07) 4928 0227

Mercy Day Respite
(07) 4926 7789

GROUP SERVICES:

Mercy Food Service
(07) 4922 3233

Mercy Linen Service
(07) 4927 6005

www.mercycq.com

Good morning friends in Mercy

Eighty years (1940 – 2020) of providing compassionate aged care services at Bethany Residential Aged Care facility in Rockhampton will be celebrated on Wednesday 5 February commencing with a Mass in the Bethany Chapel at 9.30am. This Foundation Day Mass will be followed by a Service Badge ceremony and a BBQ lunch.

One can only imagine the challenges that the Sisters of Mercy would have faced in 1940 when against a backdrop of World War 2, they agreed to a request from Bishop Hayes to establish aged care services at the old Leinster Hospital that had been made available to the Church as a home for aged care by legendary Rockhampton doctor, Dr Daniel Patrick O'Brien.

I will let the words of author Helen Gregory in her book *For God and the sick* take up the story of these very early days at Bethany:

"In February 1940, Mother de Sales transferred four Sisters to the old Leinster Hospital. Mother Mary Francis Lidster, the first Sister in Charge, won Bishop Hayes's competition for the most suitable name, Bethany, the home of Mary, Martha and Lazarus where Jesus often visited. Bethany was said to mean 'palm grove' and connoted 'rest in a placid home'. Over the centuries, the name Bethany came to be synonymous with hospitality.

The first seven residents were admitted to Bethany in 1941. There were many challenges in the early days. Leinster, about 60 years old, needed many repairs, but money and material were short in war time. The Sisters kept chickens and planted a large vegetable garden which some of the residents helped to maintain. Staff was also in short supply but, fortunately, some of the residents were well enough to assist the staff and many volunteers, including a sewing guild, helped to keep Bethany in good order".

There are so many people, Sisters, priests, staff, volunteers, residents, family members, Friends of Mercy Aged Care groups and the like who have made such an amazing and selfless contribution to the compassionate works of Mercy that have been carried out with generosity of heart and spirit at Bethany over the past eighty (80) years.

We express our heartfelt thanks to each and every person who has been a part of the Bethany story and we look forward to celebrating their wonderful service to the aged members of our community at the Foundation Day celebrations on Wednesday 5 February.

Just last week, a beautiful care story at Bethany was featured in our local media. The story was about Sarah Offord, who works as a recreational activities officer at Bethany. Sarah has played a key role in developing and implementing a program of engaging and meaningful activities for Bethany residents to help improve their quality of life. In recognition of Sarah's great work, she has been nominated for the *University of Queensland Create Change Award in the 2020 7News Young Achiever Awards*.



In the article Sarah said she was *"really shocked"* at hearing of her nomination and I think the following quote from Sarah very well sums up what a humble and caring person she most assuredly is:

"It was really wonderful. I appreciate the nomination, but to me just a smile and thank you from the residents is just enough rewarding". Thank you and congratulations Sarah.

Take care and best wishes


Phillip Bauman
Mission Coordinator