



MEDIA RELEASE

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Vinnies Christmas Appeal – feeding hungry Queensland families (with help from a man with a beard)

Confessed Christmasholic Bruce Laker provides more than just endless seasonal cheer – he’s out there putting food on tables, presents on doorsteps and tinsel everywhere in his wake.

You might spot Bruce in his beard, red shirt and bearing piles of gifts and if you mistake him for someone who sounds Noel-y identical he’ll be delighted.

For Bruce providing Christmas hampers to struggling families in the Loganholme and wider Logan area is one of his favourite times to be a Vinnies Vincentian (volunteer member).

Bruce said every Christmas he and his fellow Vincentians in Loganholme bring smiles to the faces of struggling children and the spirit of Christmas to families doing it tough.

“Their faces light up, when they see the presents are there, with single mothers especially they’re not going to have anyone really buy them anything, so we usually drop something in for them also, simple little things but there is always something for each kid.

“I make sure we have got the right ages so that we have suitable presents for them.

“When we do hampers, we try to give them a full meal, so they can sit down with bonbons and everything, things they would probably not be able to afford even on a good week, the pumpkin, potatoes, ham and fresh chicken.”

Bruce said the Vinnies Christmas Appeal helps people like himself and his fellow volunteers make a difference to people who are struggling not only at Christmas time but all year around.

“We have people every year that are always quick to get on the blower at that time of year as they can’t afford everything and they struggle sometimes, especially at Christmas time,” he said.

“I know one lady every December she is always on to the call centre at the beginning of December to say I need a hamper from Bruce.

“One young girl with two kids, we help her each year, simply because they can’t afford Christmas, they struggle through the year on benefits and they really look forward to us giving them a hamper with a couple of presents in it.”

Bruce is well known in the Logan area for his yearly Christmas spirit, which he puts to good use each festive season to raise further funds to help local people in need.

“I’m a Christmasholic, I do Christmas lights in a large way, I have a barbecue every year for Vinnies and all my son’s friends come over and it’s a gold coin donation, I wear a big red shirt and all the funds go to Vinnies,” he said.

“To be able to go around at Christmas and give hampers and just release that pressure that people have on them at Christmas time that they have to celebrate, or they must do something for the kids, you see the anxiety and stress come off their face,” he said.

“To me that’s what Vinnies is all about is providing that joy and that sparkle at Christmas, it’s something special.

“All it takes is a smile and thank you and I’m happy it’s all I need, if I can put a smile on someone’s face and get a thank you it’s well worth it.”

Donations to the Vinnies Christmas Appeal can be made at vinnies.org.au or by phoning 13 18 12 or at any Vinnies shop.

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