

Dear Sir

I note that recently, the Pope, John Paul II, has made a saint a person who appeared in two places at once.

I suggest that this person be made the Patron Saint of the New South Wales Bar Association.

Lindsay Ellison

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Dear Sir,

I'm laying on a typical hard wooden bed in the small town of Jorabat up in the thick forested mountains, about half an hour drive from the city of Guwahati in north east India. It is a pleasant day and the heavy rain of yesterday has stopped. The cool breeze generated by the ceiling fan is refreshing and its swirling swishing sound is soothing.

My mind goes back to yesterday in the heart of Guwahati when amongst the rain and flooded roads small children, some as young as six or seven years of age, rummaged in the foul stinking piles of garbage that were piled up on the sides of the road. What they were doing I'm not sure but I presume they could get some money or other benefit from what they could salvage from those vile piles.

It broke my heart to see those little children suffering such misfortune and my grief increased when I thought of my own little nine year old daughter and the absolute horror it would be to her if she was in like position.

We in Australia are indeed fortunate and even more so we members of a privileged profession. Such good fortune is a blessing from God and not so much from our own efforts. Some of those poor children and adults work from sunrise to sunset like beasts of burden with little reward, just enough to survive another day.

I would be mighty proud of barristers if it they could expand their presence to present to Guwahati a home titled 'The New South Wales Bar Association's Home for Destitute Women and Children'.

The virtue of course springs from compassion and is similar to the heart of the Bar Association's 'justice'. Compassion and justice both being virtues, but compassion, using the words of St. Paul is the greater.

I appeal to my brother and sister barristers and lawyers to help me found a 'Home'. We could start small and then if it is God's will it will increase from its own momentum.

I could probably start a 'home' going

from about \$A100 to \$A150 per week which would cover a leased house for 10 children, food and a couple of workers to run the 'home'. I have a contact in north west Bengal who would for free oversee and monitor the whole project in Siliguri, a town in North West Bengal, with similar problems.

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Dear Sir

Financial advisers often talk about the need to match one's temperament with one's investments. The same can be said about charities - we probably have a natural inclination to prefer some types of charities over others.

With that in mind, I have a proposal for people who may wish to contribute a little and get a lot in return. There is absolutely no risk. There is a guaranteed, very high return.

Shortly before his death in 1990, Sir David Martin, former governor of New South Wales, established a foundation to assist young people to recover their lives. The foundation, in conjunction with Mission Australia, runs a farm at Robertson in the Southern Highlands called the Triple Care Farm. The residents undertake a programme which involves detoxification (if necessary), re-establishment of self-esteem and personal confidence and training in an area of interest which may lead to employment. If successful, the residents graduate at a special ceremony and are supported in finding accommodation in the community as well as employment. This approach has been extraordinarily beneficial to a large number of young people - they have been able to break the cycle, regain control and move forward in their lives.

The foundation employs only one administrator and is supported by various groups and individuals, including many friends of Sir David Martin from the Royal Australian Navy. There is a Board of Governors and several committees that organise functions to raise money for the foundation.

There is a natural relationship between members of the Bar and the work that this particular charity undertakes. Very many of the people seeking assistance have been victims of

crime as well as being perpetrators. Barristers, as agents in the administration of justice, have a very real interest in seeing that these young people have an opportunity to rehabilitate.

The people who work with the residents of the farm have, and certainly need to have, enormous tolerance and resilience. But to keep going they, like everyone, need support.

The proposal is to form a 'resource group' of barristers. It is not intended to be just another fund-raising committee. The idea is to, first, let the foundation, the residents and the farm workers know that a group of people are interested in, and support what they are doing. Secondly, the foundation can approach the group from time to time if it needs specific assistance. Sometimes that assistance may be in the form of the farm needing a microwave or a printer or some sporting equipment. Someone in the group may have that item to contribute or know someone who could help. Or advice may be requested about what to do or who to speak to in relation to some problem that arises.

It is not intended that any person's involvement will be onerous or that there will be any ongoing commitment. Most communications will probably be by e-mail. However being part of the group will provide the participating barristers with an opportunity to make a small contribution to other people's lives which may have a huge impact. The mere show of support counts.

Please send me an e-mail or call if you are prepared to help. The more barristers involved, the more effective will be the message it sends.

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