



# MANNA matters

Newsletter of MANNA GUM.

## This edition:

### BIBLE & ECONOMY

The Perils of Wealth:  
Why did Jesus say 'Woe to the rich'?

*Jonathan Cornford (p.2)*

### POVERTY & JUSTICE

Orphanage Tourism

*Janette Pepall (p.6)*

### HOME ECONOMY

Many Hands: The benefits of co-operative  
purchasing of dry goods

*Eddie Daniels (p.9)*

Reflections from the *Arts of Home Economy  
Weekend 2015 (p.12)*



## News from Manna Gum

Advent is upon us and the year is galloping home to a conclusion. On the surface level, it seems as if not that much has happened since the last newsletter. This year we had a hiatus from running the *A Different Way Week* as we reconfigure into our new home base in Bendigo. All things going well, it should be back on deck by next year.

In October, Kim ran the *Arts of Home Economy Weekend* here in Bendigo with Janet Ray and Meg Holmes providing much of the input from their always-surprising storehouse of knowledge and experience. Everyone had a wonderful time being practical, creative and enjoying each other's company. This year, the group was all women, which had its own lovely

dynamic, but the weekend is just as relevant for men too! See the back page for pictures and reflections.

In late November, Jonathan had the privilege of attending the Association of Practical Theology's conference in Canberra on the subject of 'Politics in a Post-Secular Age'. This was a fruitful time of being able to imbibe some input without presenting, while making some new connections in largely Catholic circles.

Beneath the surface of this seemingly uneventful period there has been a hive of activity preparing for some significant developments in Manna Gum's work next year - but we'll say more about that in the New Year letter ...



# The Perils of Wealth

## Why did Jesus say ‘Woe to the rich’?

by Jonathan Cornford

### Finding Life in Jesus’ Hard Teachings on Money (Part 3)

So far in this series we have been looking at Jesus’ teachings on money and paying attention to just how counter-cultural and difficult they were. The underlying premise has been that although everyone finds Jesus’ teachings hard (and I mean everyone), once we plumb their depths we find something profoundly life-giving; something that is not only good for the world, but also good for us.

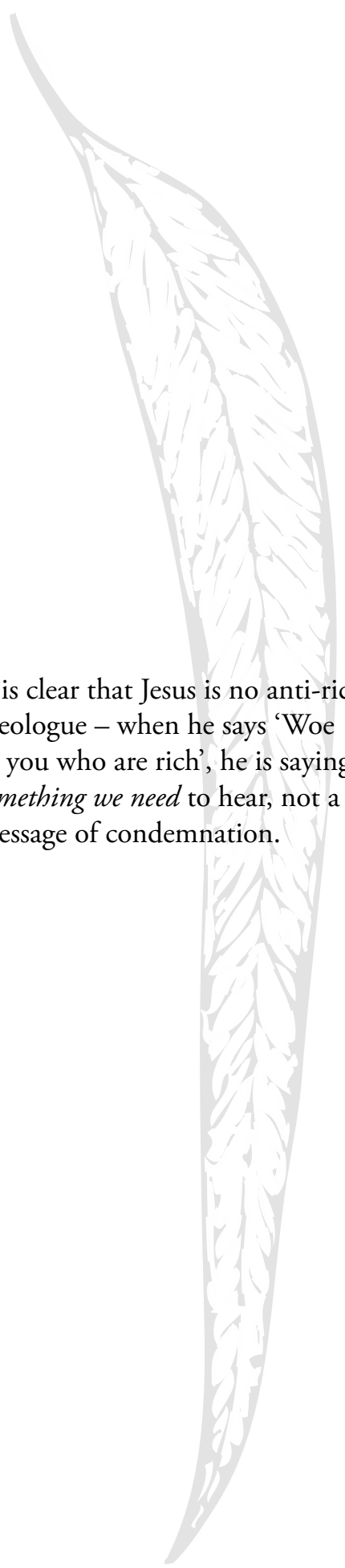
As I have often said in this newsletter, the whole meaning and purpose of Jesus can be summed up by that short statement, ‘I came that they might have life and have it in abundance’, and this statement can and should be applied not just to our own little lives, but to the whole Community of Creation. Jesus’ teachings on money should always be seen as a subset of this great purpose.

As we shall see, the core teachings of the New Testament about money revolve around the concrete practices of renunciation, generosity and contentedness. As with so much of the teaching of Jesus, these practices are commended to us for deep and broad reasons – they are simultaneously concerned with limiting harm, accomplishing good in the world and with personal liberation. In the great economy of God, there is no conflict between such things. The great question is how we enact such things in a complex global economy and hyper-consumer culture. To such territory we will turn in the next article in this series, but we are not there yet. We still have one more obstacle to be cleared away.

If Jesus’ teachings on money are meant to be life-giving, why would he go and say something so polarising as ‘Woe to you who are rich’ (Lk 6:24)? This is perhaps one of the most evaded texts of the gospels and certainly a candidate for the gospel text least preached on from the pulpit. Why would Jesus say such a thing? Is he really just some sort of ancient angry communist?

When approaching this declaration of woe to the rich, much depends on what sort of tone of voice we imagine Jesus speaking in. Was it the sort of righteous accusation you might hear being shouted down a megaphone by a Socialist Alliance agitator, or was it spoken slowly and quietly, with anguish and earnestness? We don’t know, but we can guess. Mark’s gospel tells us pointedly that when Jesus spoke to the rich young man looking for the secret of eternal life, he looked at him ‘and loved him’ and so advised him to sell all he owned, to give the money to the poor and then to ‘come, follow me’ (Mark 10:21). In Luke’s gospel, when the super-rich Zacchaeus undergoes a life-changing transformation, Jesus joyfully declares: ‘Today salvation has come to this house ... For the Son of Man came to seek out and to save the lost’. It is clear that Jesus is no anti-rich ideologue – when he says ‘Woe to you who are rich’, he is saying *something we need to hear*, not a message of condemnation.

We also need to be very clear about how our own position as readers/hearers shapes our response to a text like this. Do we enjoy this instance of Jesus sticking it to *them* (the rich)? Or do we squirm at the



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uncomfortable prospect that Jesus has denounced *us*? So let's get one thing straight: when Jesus is talking about 'the rich' in the gospel, by any standard that is meaningful, he is talking about *us*. One of the most enduring gifts of my time working in Laos and Cambodia is that it is now impossible for me to evade the fact that I am immensely wealthy. Although our family is in the lowest 20% income bracket for Australia, we nevertheless live *luxuriously*, forming part of the elite top 10% of income earners in the world (see 'How do you rank?' in *Manna Matters*, May 2015). I am reasonably confident that this also applies to most *Manna Matters* readers.

Although Luke's gospel is the only one that records Jesus saying 'Woe to the rich', there are a plethora of teachings across the New Testament (indeed, the whole Bible) which warn about the perils of wealth. Foremost among them, of course, is Jesus' anguished observation to his disciples as he watched the grieving rich young man (whom 'he loved') depart from him: 'How hard it is for those who have wealth to enter the kingdom of God'. There is also the letter from the Apostle James which strikes a very similar note to Jesus: 'Come now, you rich people, weep and wail for your miseries' (James 5:1). Not to be outdone, the Apostle Paul writes: 'But those who want to be rich fall into temptation and are trapped by many senseless and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil, and in their eagerness to be rich some have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many pains.' (1 Tim 6:9-10). And then there is the message to the church of Laodicea in the Book of Revelation: 'You say, "I am rich, I have prospered, and I need nothing." You do not realize that you are wretched, pitiable, poor, blind, and naked.' (Rev 3:17).

There is a lot going on in all of these texts, and each one warrants its own exposition. However, for our purposes, it is also critical to realise that there is an essential unity to the teaching of the New Testament on the matter of wealth, and that is a teaching that puts all of us in 21<sup>st</sup> Century Western civilization in an awkward position. Woe to the rich. How hard it is for those who have wealth to enter the kingdom of God.

What, then, could these warnings about the perils of wealth mean for us who are wealthy and yet would be followers of Jesus? There are two dimensions to these teachings that need to be considered.

Firstly, just as many fear, there is indeed an element of *judgement* to these teachings. This is particularly clear in the letter of James: 'Listen! The wages of the labourers ... which you kept back by fraud, cry out, and the cries of the harvesters have reached the Lord of hosts. You have lived in the earth in luxury and in pleasure; you have fattened your hearts in a day of slaughter' (James 5:4-5). Judgement is also central to the story of Lazarus and 'the rich man' in Luke 16.

In both these cases, there is a strong association between the existence of wealth and the fact of injustice, and, indeed, this is a very strong theme throughout the Old Testament too. Although not all inequality is the product of injustice, there is little doubt



that the vast chasm of global inequality in which 20% of the world's population consumes 80% of its resources is by and large the product of endemic and systemic injustice. Australian affluence today cannot be explained without beginning from the monumental fact of stealing a continent from its indigenous possessors. The cheapness of consumer products today – whether coffee, clothing or computers – cannot be explained without including the environmental negligence of so much large-scale mining and agriculture and the appalling work and wage conditions in much of the developing world, often literally involving the withholding of workers' wages, who surely still cry out to heaven.

The Bible is consistently clear that God is *outraged* by such things. This is the proper meaning of the 'wrath' of God – not that God is a harsh and angry deity, but that he quite rightly is outraged when humans treat each other inhumanely. He does not remain neutral about such facts, he makes a *judgement* about them. As the texts from James and Luke and so much of the prophets make clear, God takes sides. We should rightly feel uncomfortable about our implication in global structures of injustice.

Judgement is a difficult and uncomfortable concept, and one that has frequently been misconstrued when reading the Bible. When *we* 'judge' someone, it very often means that we have written them off – we do not permit them scope for an alternate possibility outside of our estimation of them. We must not imagine God's judgement is like that. The word that is most often translated as 'judgement' in our New Testaments is the Greek word *krisis*, from which we get our word 'crisis'. In the Bible, judgement is a time when things come to a

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head, when God makes clear where he stands. Yes, it is a scary and confronting moment, but other than the idea of 'a final judgement', which is beyond our scope to discuss here, God's judgement in the Bible is primarily an *opportunity for change*.

God's judgement of us is always a function of his love for us. It is indeed true that every crisis is a moment of opportunity. As Abraham explains to the soul of the dead rich man in Luke 16, the witness and judgement of the prophets was present in his life *continually* to permit him an opportunity to choose a different path.

And that is where judgement leads into the second dimension of the Bible's warning about wealth, which is *God's concern for the wealthy*. As I have said, the whole meaning and purpose of Jesus can be summed up in one verse: 'I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly' (John 10:10). But what are the things that get in the way of us 'having life'? In the diagnosis of Jesus, money and wealth is one of the primal forces that lure humans away from 'the life that really is life' (1 Tim 6:19).

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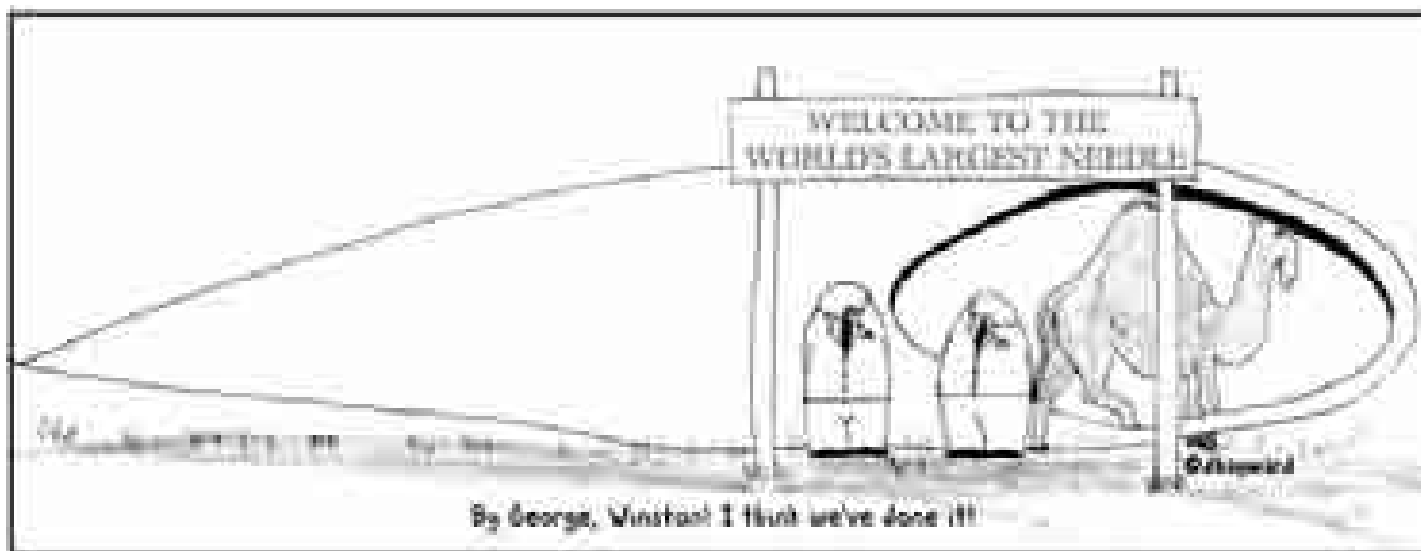
Let us look at the evidence. Since the end of the Second World War, real incomes in Australia have more than trebled, yet studies have confirmed again and again that there has been no gain in happiness whatsoever. This finding is eerily the same across all wealthy developed countries, irrespective of language and culture. In fact, in the last two to three decades, when wealth increase has been most rapid, there has been an alarming rise of symptoms that point to a deep malaise at the heart of our wealthy culture. Most prominent has been the breakdown of that which is most foundational to human wellness and thriving – relationships. This is reflected in the frighteningly high rates of family breakdown, but also in the incredibly high rates of people reporting a sense of isolation. Equally as prominent, and surely linked, is the dramatic rise in mental ill-health, especially depression and associated conditions. And then there is the phenomenon, surely also linked, of lifestyle diseases (obesity, diabetes, heart disease, renal failure): as drugs and medical treatment continue to increase our longevity, our *way of life* is making us increasingly unwell.

What we are witnessing is not just instances of social, mental or physical unwellness that have afflicted this person or that

person; we are witnessing a *culture* that is deeply unwell. All of us are affected. And we are putting our finger right on the heart of the matter when we describe this culture as an affluent consumer culture. It is deeply focussed around the gratification that comes from the consumption of things and therefore it is organised around money.

Mammon really and truly is an idol of immense spiritual power (see 'Unmasking Mammon', *Manna Matters*, May 2015).

But there is one more symptom which has been noticed far less, but which lies at the heart of this whole existential crisis. All the evidence points inexorably to one striking fact: the wealthier we have become, the harder it has become to believe in God. We all know about declining church attendance since the 1960s and the end of 'cultural Christianity' (not quite finished yet) is probably a good thing. Much more concerning



is the rate at which genuine Christian faith is being transmitted – or rather, *isn't being transmitted* – from parents to children. Also concerning is the deep theological, ethical and existential uncertainty being expressed by many who believe and are trying desperately to hold on to faith. You don't have to live in a big house or drive an expensive car to be affected by this – it is in the very air we breathe.

It is no accident that the loss of God has come at the same time as the triumph of Mammon. How hard it is for those who have wealth to enter the kingdom of God. In his famous Parable of the Sower, Jesus describes three archetypal barriers to faith and the third one rings particularly ominously for us: 'As for what was sown among thorns, this is the one who hears the word, but the cares of the world and the lure of wealth choke the word, and it yields nothing' (Matt 13:22). Truly, we are the generation amongst the thorns.

Why do we have so much trouble with this concept? It is a truth that has been almost universally acknowledged amongst all the great religious and philosophical traditions of the world, it is one of the most basic understandings of folk wisdom and it is something which most people (if they are honest and reflective) have some evidence for in their own lives.

Why does Jesus say 'woe to you who are rich'? Let us listen to his answer: 'because you have received your consolation' (Lk 6:24). In other words, because we get what we want. It is the tragedy of the human condition that so often what we think we want is not what gives us life; we are tempted towards gratifications which end up doing harm to ourselves and to others. It is the curse of the rich that we are able to give fuller expression to such temptations.

And there is a yet deeper implication. The rich – that is most of us in the affluent western world – receive 'their consolation' (what they want) through their own power, which is the power

of the money they hold. This means they are easy prey to the great deceit that they are self-sufficient, that they do not need God. In a previous article, I stated that this was the core deceit at the heart of the spirituality of the city – that humanity can fool itself into thinking it is self-sufficient – but it is equally the power that money has over us too. Indeed, cities and money are, excuse the pun, two sides of the same coin. This is the core dislocation of humanity that Genesis describes and its effects ripple out into all of the vast social injustices and ecological depredations that we can see today. Self-sufficiency equals independence which equals separateness which winds up as aloneness; and aloneness, as the Bible teaches, is another word for death.

The scandal of the gospel is that the road to life – 'the life that really is life' – runs in a different direction from the one we most often choose when left to do what we want: 'for the gate is wide and the road is easy that leads to destruction, and there are many who take it. For the gate is narrow and the road is hard that leads to life' (Matt 7:13-14). That is why Jesus confronts money and wealth so directly and so forcefully. It is one of the primal forces that creates division and the promotion of self against the other, when the very thing that gives and sustains life is the communion of love. In the Bible, love and life are almost interchangeable. That is why Jesus says, 'If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves ...' (Mk 8:34).

It is from these core teachings about 'the path that leads to life' from which Jesus' teachings on money flow. The monetary practices that are commended in the New Testament – renunciation, generosity, contentedness – are not hoops for us to jump through; they are not spiritual exercises that demonstrate the extent of our faith. Rather, they are the practical mechanisms by which the power of Mammon can be broken and we rich can be saved from ourselves. It is to these that we will turn in the next edition.

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# Orphanage Tourism

by Janette Pepall

When travelling through a developing country, it is easy to become overwhelmed by the situation of poverty. The children we see are dirty, hungry and seem unloved. Compassionate people feel they want to make a difference and to take immediate action. Often, visiting an orphanage for a few hours is seen as helping the children already in care.

We would all agree, though, that it is important we do not add to existing problems or create an environment where children are made more vulnerable. However, the growing phenomenon of 'orphanage tourism' may be having just some of those impacts.

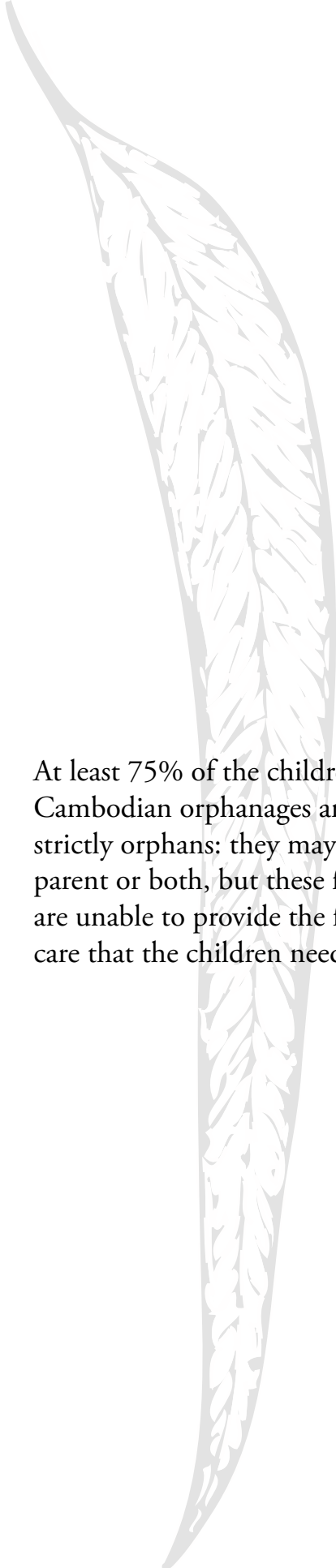
'Orphanage Tourism' refers to the practice of tourists from wealthy countries visiting orphanages in developing countries while on their holidays. This could be as part of structured, pre-packaged visits or casually while in-country; it might involve various things, from helping build a new building, reading or playing with the children, or even cuddling the kids. It is particularly common in countries such as Cambodia and the Philippines. A Google search of orphanage tourism and volunteerism resulted in over 400,000 hits. Hundreds of websites share stories and comments such as:

- The children are always thrilled to see visitors, come and visit for a day! They will welcome you with open arms
- Visit our children who have no-one, they are lonely and have a desire to get to know you
- Our children love to sing and dance, let them show you! It is a joy to sit, play and talk with our little ones
- Come and visit a working orphanage, let us make your trip unforgettable. See how happy and adjusted our children are, and your generosity will help us
- Our children will be so eager to meet you, just as if you are a relative who hasn't visited for a long time

Yes, we can visit orphanages across the globe, but who really benefits? While its popularity is expanding, it is a debatable phenomenon and is highly controversial. Research now shows that orphanages are a last option for children in need, unless for temporary and emergency care.

The vast majority of children in orphanages are not 'orphans'. It is estimated that 70-90% of children have a living and traceable relative. At least 75% of the children in Cambodian orphanages are not strictly orphans: they may have one parent or both, but these families are unable to provide the food and care the children need. One has to ask whether the resources often contributed through orphanage tourism would be better used to support the families to keep their children. Visiting orphanages can mean supporting a form of human trafficking, whereby unscrupulous directors need to 'fill' their orphanages to get funds from visitors.

Could rising visitor numbers be one factor driving a dramatic increase in the number of orphanages? In Cambodia, there has been a 65% rise in the number of orphanages since 2005. Locals and others can observe that setting up an orphanage and marketing it can be a profitable business, with money from visitor donations and volunteer fees. Therefore, not all are doing it in the best interests of the children. In the worst cases, some



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unregistered and unmonitored orphanages have been a haven for sexual abusers. While some have been prosecuted, most abusers are undetected.

Beyond these more insidious dangers, orphanage tourism poses a number of other drawbacks for the children involved. Visits tend to destabilise the home life of the children who need structure, rather than having a parade of strangers coming and going and taking their photos. Visitors violate the privacy of the children, especially if photos are taken. The children may even experience mistrust and longer-term psychological damage from such comings and goings.

The debate about the ethics of this form of tourism involves a wide range of interest groups, from the large children's agencies (e.g. UNICEF), travel and tour operators, orphanage directors and NGOs. Many visitors find the whole experience emotive and uplifting and believe their donation of time, energy (and money?) benefits the children. However, others perceive that unregulated visitation leaves the children open to further exploitation, supports and promotes orphanages as a model of care and encourages local corruption.

Progress has been made over the last few years in debating the issues, spreading awareness of unethical practices and developing guidelines and services that help people to practise ethical voluntourism.

This includes ResponsibleTravel.com, which was established in 2001. In July 2013, ResponsibleTravel.com removed all orphanage voluntourism packages from its website, a move that has led other package tour providers to do the same.

The NGO Friends-International has launched a campaign pushing tourists to end orphanage tourism in Cambodia. They state: "Travellers care for Cambodia and are often disturbed by the perceived situation of children. It is essential for them to understand the real situation and what positive actions they can take to effectively protect and support these children. Orphanages must be a safe place for children and not a tourist destination. We cannot just go and visit orphanages in our own countries, so why in Cambodia? For tourists who believe they are doing good by visiting the children directly, major findings

show that visiting orphanages impacts negatively on children's development and supports a system that is contributing to the separation of families. Visiting so-called orphanages can only lead to situations of further marginalization or even abuse for Cambodian children. Children are not tourist attractions.'

Excellent resources on this topic are the ChildSafe Initiative which

has been active in promoting child protection through its 7 tips campaign and the Better Care Network.

So what is ethical volunteerism and how can we practise it? Next Generation Nepal defines 'ethical voluntourism' as voluntourism practices that do not harm the host community in any way and that, ideally, improve the lives of the people in the host community alongside the personal development of the volunteer. (See over page for tips on ethical voluntourism.)

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**If you are planning a visit to an orphanage, the following may assist you:**

- Is the orphanage legally registered with the government?
- Does the orphanage have a child protection policy?
- Are visitors allowed to just drop in and have direct access to children without supervision?
- Are children required to work or participate in securing funds for the orphanage?
- Is there long-term, trained and well-supervised staff?
- Are sibling groups kept together?
- Does the orphanage have an active family reunification program?
- Is the orphanage located in the same community that the child previously lived in?
- Is the orphanage set up to replicate family living or small groups?
- Does the orphanage respect and accommodate children's backgrounds and religious beliefs?

**Suggested personal strategies:**

- Plan your visit, don't just 'knock at the orphanage door'
- Don't visit any orphanage without thoroughly investigating it
- An orphanage that actively 'advertises' its children on the web may have ulterior motives. Stay clear!
- To make a worthwhile contribution to the lives of the children, instead of visiting for a day/week, make a longer commitment
- Think about the skills that will ensure your valuable time is giving the most benefit. Teaching carpentry, for example, compared with teaching children to sing songs in English.
- Working and supporting the local staff may be more productive. Training in child care practice, for example, rather than bathing and feeding the children
- Do not hand over large amounts of money, gifts etc. Rather, be aware where the money will benefit the children, not in the staff's pockets. Instead, buy school books or stationary, or pay school fees.

*Janette Pepall provides training to international NGOs and missionary groups for people dealing with children at risk. She and her husband, Dean, were missionaries in Hong Kong in the 1990s, where she pioneered the fostering and adoption of Hong Kong children with disabilities. They have themselves adopted five children from Australia, Vietnam, Sri Lanka and Hong Kong, to join a birth son.*





# Many hands ...

## The benefits of cooperative purchasing in bulk dry goods

by Edie Daniels

This morning at breakfast, I considered my diminishing supply of oats and wondered whether it would last me to the upcoming organic dry goods day. As I pour rice for dinner tonight, I notice that my last order will keep me in supply until I am able to re-stock my large 10-litre container. My supply of dates finished a while ago now, so I'll just be waiting until the next dry goods day to enjoy those yummy treats.

A dry goods order involves a group of households each ordering small amounts of dry goods (i.e. rice, flour, dried fruit, nuts and beans) and collating these orders to be able to buy in bulk quantities. This means we can get good prices on organic foods. A morning is arranged for the weighing and distribution of the order.

While we lived in Footscray for six years, we were members of the Western Organic Collective (WOC). This is a group of households who purchase organic fruit and vegetables at wholesale prices and then work together to sort and distribute the boxes weekly to its members. During our time as WOC members, I took on the role of organising the dry goods days (held four times per year). This gave me the confidence in exploring options for a similar system when we moved to Bendigo 18 months ago. We now have a small, but growing, group of around ten families. I became interested in organising a similar system in Bendigo after our plastic waste increased when we arrived here. I also noticed that my supermarket bill and trolley were both larger.

I became interested in organising a similar system in Bendigo after our plastic waste increased when we arrived here. I also noticed that my supermarket bill and trolley were both larger.



Matt weighing out the rice. A good set of scales is an essential piece of equipment.



Reducing our plastic waste is one of my top reasons for buying in bulk. The average Aussie will throw away 200kg of packaging waste every year. Given the population of Australia, that's enough waste to fill the Melbourne Cricket Ground nine times over. Most food packaging has one use – we open the bag, consume the food and throw the bag away. A life-span of minutes! The process for making a plastic bag includes taking non-renewable resources (oil) from the earth and producing greenhouse gases to do it. It is estimated that 50 million bags enter the Australian litter stream every year. Once entering the environment, plastic bags take 20 to 1,000 years to break down.

Buying in bulk means I can afford to buy organic foods, which would be otherwise unaffordable for our household. In fact, at times, this is cheaper than buying some items from the supermarket. Organic foods mean that no pesticides and insecticides have been used in production, thereby being better for the earth and my body. This is a practical way in which I can practise faith and care for God's earth.

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The types of foods we order are basically pantry items including rice, flour, dried fruit, nuts, beans/legumes and grains. We are also able to order other specific products that some people may use, such as gluten-free flours or a range of legumes for vegetarians.

The supplier I found to have the widest range of products at reasonable prices is 'Honest to Goodness' ([www.goodness.com.au](http://www.goodness.com.au)). If you live in a major city, there are possibly other suppliers worth investigating. One of my next tasks involves investigating and sourcing local olive oil.

So far, I have held these dry goods days three times per year. This means you order what you need for the four-month period before the next one. In our household, my guesstimating varies: sometimes I run out of the item and sometimes I have over-ordered. This adds to the challenge for me! For example: endeavouring to do without purchasing more sultanas from the supermarket until the next dry goods or working out how can I use all the extra lentils I've got! At times, this often leads to sharing recipes with others.



### The ins and outs of ordering

I send around an email with an order form to those interested three to four weeks prior to the day. Orders are due back within 10-14 days, along with payment. Ordering involves giving your 'ideal' volume and your 'maximum' volume of the item. I then calculate the bulk amount we can order and how the bulk amount is to be distributed (using a very handy spreadsheet filled with formulas!) There is no minimum order, but orders are usually over the 1kg mark. This system does rely on households being somewhat flexible about what they receive (i.e. we may not have the required orders amongst the group for the bulk amount). The goods are then freighted to my house.

### The ins and outs of distribution day

On the day, everyone is present for the weighing of items. Each household brings its own large containers to fill with ordered goods. We purchased a set of commercial scales this year to assist with weighing. Each item is weighed and distributed, requiring a couple of people to help weigh and a person to cross off sorted items from the printed spreadsheet. Everyone chipping in adds to the shared workload. To add to the convivial atmosphere, everyone brings something to share for morning tea and we often have a cuppa during and after the job's done.

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I am involved in bulk food ordering for the reasons given above: buying organic, reducing packaging, economic sharing and saving money. In essence, it is a practical way I can live out my faith, a central aspect of this being care for the earth. I thoroughly enjoy the tasks of weighing and sorting on distribution day, because it is a chance to share life and work with others. It gives life to me and the community and means there are tangible connections between us.

Buying food this way means I am less reliant on an unsustainable food system, but, more than that, to quote Wendell Berry, it means I am 'becoming more dependent on my neighbours and friends and this requires more active involvement in my community. More than ever, we need communities that are productive and that work together. Promoting local self-sufficiency means that we become better citizens – local and global'.




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*Photos: [far left] Edie (on the right) and sister Cathy putting freshly ground peanut butter into jars; [centre] Anthony distributing sacks of bio-dynamic rice; [bottom right] Janet doing the key role of matching distribution to the orders.*



# The Arts of Home Economy Weekend 2015

'It was really lovely to be practical, when I feel like a lot of my life recently has been very theoretical. I have been thinking about and wanting to make my life more interactive and sustainable and have tried to implement a few things, but the weekend gave me confidence to act.' *Veronique*

'On a personal, level I found it grounded me and reminded me of the joy of simplicity.' *Lee*



'Making things from scratch is so much easier than I thought, much cheaper than I thought and SO satisfying, but it takes a great deal of preparation and forethought.' *Beth*

'One thing that struck me was how much the weekend came together from a place of sharing and collaborating. ... Also, I think what made the workshops a real joy to be a part of was the way these were shaped from personal experiences, your own knowledge and practice of what worked/didn't. I was really impressed, too, at the range and scope of arts we could delve into! So awesome to learn about beekeeping, sourdough baking and wicking beds in such a short time-frame.' *Gemma*

Photos: [opposite, clockwise from top left] Janet and Beth collecting honey; Lee and Beth making soft cheese; Naomi and Gemma bottling tomatoes; Meg (right) explaining self-wicking garden beds. [Above, clockwise from top left] Elise, Gemma and Beth making pasta; compost making; Veronique, Elise, Meg, Gemma.



## Support the work of MANNA GUM

MANNA GUM seeks to live within the economy of God – frugally, ethically and through the generous sharing of abundance within the community of faith. If our work resonates with you, please consider becoming a monthly financial supporter or making a one-off donation.

### Donate via PayPal on the Manna Gum website

(Go to the 'Become a Supporter' tab)

### Arrange an Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT):

BSB: 633 000 A/c No. 134 179 514  
A/c Name: *Manna Gum Initiatives Inc.*

### Send a cheque or money order

(payable to *Manna Gum Initiatives Inc.*)

## CONTACT US

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## About Manna Gum

Manna Gum is an independent non-profit organisation that seeks to:

1. Help Christians reclaim and practise Biblical teaching on material life; and
2. Promote understanding of the ways our economic lives impact upon ourselves, others and the earth.

Manna Gum is motivated by a vision of renewal of the Church in Australia as an alternative community that witnesses to the Kingdom of God.

Please contact us if you would like us to speak to your church, group or organisation; or if you would like more information about our work; or to discuss how we could support you and your church/group/organisation to explore some of these issues.