

Dear all who regularly give to the St. Salvador's Food Bank,

On Wednesday, 21st March, I was able to take to St. Salvador's the various items which had been collected at St. Mary's during the early months of this year.

The people who organise the Food Bank were delighted to receive everything. I spent some time with them and was given an insight into the operation. There are about seven regular clients who receive food. Some need to visit more often than others. Each client is able to select a variety of items which they can make use of. Most of the current clients are either single people or half of a couple.

Stocks of some items were very healthy, in fact possibly a bit too much to provide for current needs, but other items which can be useful were, and often are, in short supply. If you are considering making a donation then it would be useful to bear the following in mind: tinned meats, potatoes, vegetables (other than peas and beans) and tinned dessert items would be very welcome, as would sugar and instant coffee and jam. Jars of pasta sauce are also very useful – there is plenty of pasta and rice in stock at the moment. Bulk items such as sugar, coffee and tea bags are portioned into smaller amounts for distribution.

The clients do not have exotic tastes and items which do not go well include: sardines, pilchards, anchovies, and "fancy beans" although baked beans are very welcome. Tomato soup is always a favourite, but other types of soup would be welcomed for a change.

I realise that many of our congregation only shop for one person and may not necessarily think to buy items which they themselves have no use for. If anyone would like to make a monetary contribution, then this can be given to the funds which St. Salvador's collects specifically for the Food Bank and which the volunteers use to buy specific items when stocks of them are low.

The Food Bank initiative has been running for about six years. Another church, like ourselves, gives regular donations. The local school is also very supportive, especially at Harvest Time and Christmas.

One of the regular volunteers is not a member of the congregation at St. Salvador's but was on the receiving end of the initiative in the early days. Once her personal circumstances improved she has been volunteering and takes responsibility for the correct rotation of the stock, making sure that all items are not past their suggested use-by date and that those items with the shortest dates are issued before others. Clients are never knowingly given out-of-date items. The photograph shows the storage cupboard which the clients can choose from. There is another cupboard with additional back-up stock to restock the shelves at the beginning of each weekly session.



One amusing thing that we discovered during the unpacking of the eleven carrier bags that I delivered was that the mice in the Douglas Hall have a preference for dark chocolate! Neither the milk chocolate nor white chocolate had been touched but the dark had – in fact, about a third of the 100 gm bar had been scooped by our furry friends. Of course, maybe that particular bag had been lying on the floor and the others were up on tables but nothing else in that bag had been gnawed, although some of the items were in packets. We obviously have very discerning mice which thankfully are rarely seen while the hall is in use.

On behalf of St. Salvador's, I would like to extend their thanks and hope that we can continue to support their good work in the future.

Carole