

# Love, Joy, and Hope – Dignity in Jesus.

By Glen Coleman

It is only in recent years (the last 200 or so) that the word dignity has begun to mean something that is inherently owed to all humans. Originally dignity was used to define someone who had earned a special place, or honour amongst others. The few times the word is used in modern translations of the bible it could also be translated as meaning glory, honour, or even reputation. All words used to describe someone who has done something of value.

Today we speak about dignity as a human right, or at least as an ideal, through which we aim to

treat other people. This modern usage comes with the idea that there are people being regarded as having less dignity, or even no dignity that we need to raise up and support. This is certainly the case when it comes to how we see people with leprosy. For thousands of years people affected by leprosy have been thought of as having no dignity. They have been ostracised, banished, mistreated.

When Jesus was born, he was shown great dignity. Treated by shepherds and Magi as Lord of Lords and King of Kings. While this is true and good, it was not the aim of Jesus to be put high

up on a pedestal, out of the reach of mere humans. Instead, Jesus' birth was the beginning of what we might now call dignity. He came so that all may have life in its fullest says John in chapter 10 of his Gospel. Here we see Jesus described as a Shepherd, guiding and leading his sheep to safety, and to good pasture.

The value of human beings to God is measured in love. Love sent Jesus to earth. Love directed Jesus to teach and guide, bring healing and wholeness. Love opened the way to life through Jesus' ultimate sacrifice. By sharing the Good News, and that it was good news for all people, Jesus made clear that we are made in the image of God and are of great value. Not just us though, all of humankind are to be seen as being made in God's image.

We treat people affected by leprosy with dignity because we are a Christ-centred organisation who have experienced the love and dignity that God has shown us through Jesus. With love, joy, and hope we build pathways together to lives of dignity which can be lived to their fullest in the name of the One who came to find and rescue the lost.

Christmas blessings to you. Thank you for your faithful and compassionate prayers that help bring healing and dignity to people affected by leprosy, discrimination, disability, and poverty.



Leprosy  
Mission  
Australia

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**Keeping  
In Touch**

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## The Blessing of Protective Shoes



**Like so many people in Nepal, Raj loves playing cricket. During a game ten years ago, he stepped on a piece of glass. It caused a deep wound, but he couldn't feel it, and it wouldn't heal.**

After visiting multiple clinics, it was only when Raj attended the Anandaban Hospital, supported by Australians like you, that he was finally diagnosed with leprosy. It came as a shock.

"When I found out I had leprosy, I cried a lot. Some of the patients at the hospital said I could not have babies because I had leprosy. That really hurt me and my wife."

Raj thought his wife should marry someone else to have a better life. He worried if they had children, they would be born with a disability due to his leprosy. The doctors at Anandaban reassured him and started Raj on leprosy curing Multi-Drug Therapy.

Raj's wife took the leprosy diagnosis in her stride, and together they started a family.

"I am now very happy. I have three babies now, and they are all healthy."

A year ago, the wound on his foot reopened. He was so focused on working hard to support his family, he did not worry about it. Thankfully, he attended the Self-Care Unit you support, where he was



Raj's foot, bandaged and properly being cared for, thanks to proper Self-Care Training.

taught the importance of self-care and proper protective shoes.

Julie, a Leprosy Mission Australia supporter of more than 10 years recently saw the importance of protective shoes

firsthand during the Nepal Impact Adventure Tour alongside other supporters.

The staff that you and I support through The Leprosy Mission, embody Christ-like compassion and put their faith into action to transform lives.

"I met dedicated technicians who demonstrated exceptional skill and care in crafting and fitting footwear tailored to each patient's unique needs."

She says that patients respond with "smiles, optimism, even joy. They couldn't wait to thank us and The Leprosy Mission and tell us how much their lives had changed.

You are a blessing in the lives of people like Raj."

**See inside for how you can pray for Raj... and be a SOLE-SAVER!**







Rosemary Smoker outside the front of Dorcas Clothing.

## Be a SOLE-SAVER this Christmas!

Pray for Raj as he continues to learn how to care for his feet and provide for his family.

Give thanks for the recent supporter trip to Nepal and seeing first-hand the impact of the work of The Leprosy Mission.

Give thanks and pray for the staff of Anandaban who provide healthcare and practical support to people dealing with stressful situations. Give thanks for the love and acceptance shown to the patients, giving dignity and hope.

You can bless someone like Raj by providing protective shoes. Scan the QR code or follow the link below.

<https://www.leprosymission.org.au/sole-saver/kit12>



## The Lord is in it!

“Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you.”

—Luke 6:38

### By Glen Coleman

What would you do if the only charity clothing bin in town had been closed? Well, you start up an Op Shop of course!

3 1/2 hours east of Perth is the tiny town of Narembeen. The Church of Christ there found itself receiving bags of clothing following the removal of the local clothing bin. Rosemary Smoker suggested starting up a small Op Shop to help sell the clothes and give the proceeds away to help others.

The church cautiously agreed giving Rosemary a few months to see how it would go.

At first, they took over the Sunday School rooms, then the hall, but it kept growing, moving to separate premises, first in Narembeen and then a second shop in Narrogin about two hours south-west. What had started as a means to deal with the loss of a charity bin had become an opportunity to bless people around the world. Dorcas Clothing had been born.

Rosemary understands the importance of community banding together for both physical and spiritual support. A daughter of missionary parents who became a missionary herself, Rosemary has shown the love of God in many places such as the Canary Islands, and India, as well as closer to home in communities throughout Western Australia.

God's provision and blessing can be seen in so many ways. Needing larger premises in Narrogin in early 2020 Rosemary found a suitable site, but the rent was more than twice what they were currently paying. Was this too big a leap of faith to make? Rosemary leant on God's promise to her that he can provide but this was put to the test when COVID lockdowns shut down all non-essential shops for three weeks. Knowing that Dorcas Clothing was essential for many in the community, Rosemary and a volunteer kept the new premises open, while husband Des kept Narambeen operating. On their first day in the new shop, they sold enough to cover the first week's rent.

Clothes and goods kept coming in as people everywhere began cleaning out their homes during the lockdowns.



About a year later the building was put on the market and once more Rosemary began to wonder what would they do now? Perhaps it was time to close up for good she confided to a friend who promptly burst into tears.

“God has put it on my heart...to buy this building for you,” her friend cried out.

“I just about fell over backwards and said to her “You can't just do that!”” Rosemary recalls.

With the Narrogin shop's future secured Dorcas Clothing has gone from strength to strength raising in excess of \$800,000 for many community groups and charities including The Leprosy Mission Australia.

People travel from far and wide, even from Perth, to visit and pick up some amazing bargains. Children's clothes 50c, adults \$2, and on \$5 pillowcase days 120 people will visit to stuff pillowcases full of goodies, all for \$5! A good pillowcase day will raise upwards of \$2,500 between the two stores.

With nearly 50 volunteers, Dorcas Clothing is a community hub in both Narembeen and Narrogin. Support from local schools and community groups makes this a wonderful expression of what it looks like

to love one another, just as Jesus loves us. In the next year or two Rosemary is looking to retire. Already people have stepped up to the responsibility to continue the work God is placing before them in Narrogin. Until then, Rosemary is aiming to hit the \$1 million mark of donations. While this will be an extraordinary achievement which is already making a big difference in so many lives, it has only been possible because Rosemary chose to trust that “The Lord is in it!” and would provide abundantly.

**To find out more about Dorcas Clothing please check out their Facebook page**

<https://www.facebook.com/cofcdorcasclothing>

Pray for Rosemary, Des, and the amazing group of volunteers who contribute so much to their community and to organisations such as The Leprosy Mission Australia. Give thanks for their compassionate hearts.

Pray that God will inspire more people like Rosemary to use their gifts, talents, and hard work to raise much needed funds to ensure people affected by leprosy are able to access healthcare, education, and livelihood support.



If you would like to provide a gift where it is most needed and bring dignity and healing to someone affected by leprosy you can do so here...

<https://www.leprosymission.org.au/projects/where-needed-most/kit12>

