

ILT Foundation provides two sizeable grants to the Invercargill Salvation Army, which is alarmed by the increasing number of people queuing up for its weekly free meal.

Salvation Army

\$23,000 Grant 13 March 2008

\$24,000 Grant 27 March 2008

An experienced Salvation Army worker says everyone should be concerned by the growing number of struggling Invercargill people queuing up for a free meal.

Captain Ralph Hargest, of the Invercargill Salvation Army Corps, said 100 people on average were lining up for the free lunchtime meal on Tuesdays at the Tay Street centre.

“They come with babies, they come with toddlers,” Captain Hargest said.

“We also have 17 and 18-year-olds, and upwards to the 70-plus age group.”

Mr Hargest said the number of hard-up and lonely diners in Invercargill continued to grow at an “alarming rate”, but he was thrilled that the ILT Foundation had answered its call for help.

The ILT Foundation has made two significant grants of \$24,000 and \$23,000, respectively, to the Invercargill Salvation Army Corps.

Some of that money will be used by Captain Hargest and his team to buy desperately needed extra food for their Sallies Kitchen operation.

Funding would also go towards upgrading chairs and tables in the centre’s dining and meeting areas because the existing furniture was dangerous to use because it was 30-years-old and falling apart.

ILT Foundation chairman, Alan Dennis, said supporting the Salvation Army, and all the good work it does around the community, was vital.

“That’s especially the case with the increased demand for all the social services they provide, particularly their food bank and Sallies Kitchen operations. The Salvation Army provides a lifeline to many, and that needs to be supported.”

Mr Hargest said the ILT Foundation’s assistance, and understanding of the issues, was greatly appreciated because he felt few in Invercargill realised just what poverty and hardship many residents now faced.

“It’s easy to stick your head in the sand and go, ‘yeah, we’re all right, mate’,” Mr Hargest said.

“But there’s a lot of struggling people out there.

“And maybe just popping in on a Tuesday, and seeing the people that are there, or just having a drive around Invercargill to see what’s going on in some suburbs, especially late at night, would be quite beneficial for a lot of people.

“We do see a lot of people who are just so lost and lonely, and struggling.”