



Media release  
**For immediate release**  
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## **Auckland City Mission sees a sharp increase in need this Christmas**

The Auckland City Mission is seeing a sharp increase in need in the lead-in to Christmas.

"We've already provided emergency food grants or food parcels to 1207 families this season, compared to just 800 this time last year," Auckland City Missioner Diane Robertson says.

"Over 400 of the families we have helped over the last couple of weeks are first time users of food banks. We're seeing people who are among the 60,000 people made redundant in the past twelve months who have run through any resources they had, and are now really struggling.

"These are people who may never have needed to ask for charity before. They are often very embarrassed and apologize for coming to us. They usually ask for the bare minimum and if we try to provide further help, they are often reluctant to ask for anything more as they say they 'don't want to be greedy'."

The Mission's statistics show that the families helped so far this season include 4088 children.

"It's heartbreaking for parents to feel that they are not able to provide adequately for their children at any time, but it feels worse at Christmas when you have neither enough food, nor the means to give your children even a small present."

The Mission provides a new present for each child in any family which receives emergency food assistance.

"We are still in need of Christmas presents, particularly for 0 – 4 year olds and teenagers.

"People are generous to us at this time of the year, and we will welcome any more donations of gifts, non-perishable food, or money. Any assistance we can get will help us help Auckland's most vulnerable."

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