

Immaculata Shelter

Originally a church hall, Immaculata was converted into a shelter in 1993 by the Sisters of Mercy with the financial aid of a city subsidy. The shelter accommodates 80 men and 20 women, ranging from 25 to 60 years of age. The approximate stay by residents is less than eight months. Other Mercy Shelters in Johannesburg include the Strabane centre in the CBD and Primedia centre in Berea.

The residents get 3 meals a day, laundry, ablution facilities, TV's and books. Social worker services and an advice bureau are also available. The shelter helps those taken in by guiding them on how to apply for grants and there is a life skills programme that they can go through if they want. Computer courses are available. Evening prayer sessions are offered and a women's club where all the ladies talk and share their feelings. The shelter relies on a subsidy from the department of health and welfare and private fundraising to stay open. Donations are collected and some establishments, such as Fornos and the Rosebank Hotel, send their left over food of the day to the shelter.

Even though Immaculata can only accommodate 100 people, they provide food to hundreds more. A soup kitchen feeds 250 people at 10am every week day and the laundries and ablutions are opened to the homeless. They can also make use of the social services.

There is a dedicated band of soup makers in the parish who provide soup for the residents every Saturday and Sunday night. Groups of 3 people each make 8l soup and drop it off at the shelter. Volunteers for this group are always welcome. Please contact Anne O'Gorman at ogorman.anne@gmail.com if you would like to join this vital and rewarding ministry.

Any clothing, toiletries, food , furniture or donations are always appreciated. You can deliver these directly to the shelter and ask for the Manager Mike Ntuli.