

Quay Times

MQI

 Merchants Quay Ireland
Homeless & Drugs Services

The Newsletter for Supporters of Merchants Quay Ireland

SPRING 2026

Your love helped Caroline rediscover her strength

From a young age, Caroline's pain and trauma made her feel like an outsider. When she was sleeping on the streets of Dublin, she would see old classmates from school and feel so ashamed. At St. Francis Farm, she found her confidence again. She is now looking to the future with a newfound belief in herself, thanks to you.

If you met Caroline today, you couldn't imagine the pain she's experienced. She's a ray of light. The kind of person you'd meet and immediately think, *"I'd love to be her friend."*

Her father passed away when she was just a baby. Her mother was almost a child herself, and life wasn't easy.

At the age of five, Caroline was abused by an adult she trusted. A person who should have minded her and kept her safe. She felt like nobody around her could understand what she'd been through.

"I was lonely. I felt like I didn't fit in."

Can you imagine carrying this trauma at such a young age?

When Caroline was 18, she was badly hurt in a car accident

To help with the pain, she was given painkillers. They made her feel 'numb' to her trauma. The addiction led Caroline to start using heroin.

"My partner was really violent. I left him and ended up sleeping on the street. I cried every day. I'd ask someone for the time, and they wouldn't even look at me."

"I was sitting on O'Connell Bridge, and a girl I knew from school walked by. That just broke me."

When Caroline needed love the most, she was ignored. Kind person you are, I know

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Thanks to you, hope for men and women like Caroline can grow at St. Francis Farm.

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that you wouldn't have looked away.

Caroline knew she wanted to stop using drugs. *"I'd had enough. I wanted a better life."* She got in contact with an addiction counsellor and was referred to St. Francis Farm.

Arriving at the farm, Caroline's low self-esteem and anxiety made it hard for her to open up.

As the weeks went by, her trust and confidence grew.

She loved woodworking classes, feeding the animals and exercising in the gym. They gave Caroline her strength back. These small victories at the farm go so far in a person's recovery, and they are made possible by you.

"Group therapy was the hardest, but I started to realise that my trauma had led me to addiction. I couldn't see that before coming to the farm."

Caroline tells us that while working on the farm, she found her purpose. Pulling weeds helped her to process trauma. Each weed pulled was a relief – making space for something new to blossom.

"In the detox, I dismantled a flower bed, and in the rehab, I turned it over, built it back up, and planted seeds. By the time I was leaving it had begun to grow. It was like seeing my own journey and growth."

Before she left St. Francis Farm, Caroline's case worker took her aside...

"She told me that when I first came in, my confidence was the lowest she'd seen. As I was leaving, she said that she'd never noticed such a positive change in someone." Caroline tells us.

"When I first came here, I was always

“ At the farm, I came out of my shell. I believe in myself now.”



For Caroline, working on the farm helped her process trauma and make space for something new.

intimidated by people. When people were chatting, I'd stay quiet. Now, I love joining in. I know that I belong in conversations, too."

Saying goodbye was bittersweet. At St. Francis Farm, Caroline felt like she was at home, and the team felt like family.

Caroline now believes in herself. She has hope for the future. You helped to create this hope. She promised to come back to visit the farm, and we are so glad to tell you that it is a promise she has kept.

Now, Caroline is getting ready to move into her new home. She's excited to get back to work, and she enjoys everyday of this brighter, happier life you helped make possible.

"I used to pray for days like these."

Every time you support Merchants Quay, you answer someone's prayers. ■

Thank you



Your generosity means more men and women will find a way back to themselves at the farm. Thank you.



AT THE COALFACE

Meet Matthew

As Farm Manager at St. Francis Farm, Matthew sees himself as a teammate in every client's recovery.

What does a typical day look like for you and the clients?

Everyone works with me on the farm. Together, we sow seeds, tend to the plants and harvest produce which we cook in the kitchen. A lot of our clients have never set foot on a farm before and are often coming from difficult situations. Here, they have the chance to get away from it all.

How do you build a relationship with the men and women who come to St. Francis Farm?

A lot of the men and women here have trust issues because of their life experiences, so I try to relate to them as best I can. There was a man here recently,

and I heard he was a boxing fan. I went home that night and did some Googling about boxing. The next day he and I bonded talking about it. I've been thanked by clients for just having ordinary, friendly conversations with them while we work together.

Can you tell us about the benefits of this work for Caroline and other clients?

For our clients, group therapy can bring up trauma, which is difficult to process. Caroline found that working in an overgrown flowerbed helped her after group therapy. She'd work so hard at pulling the weeds, and when she was finished, she would tell me her head felt much clearer. And I could see it.

What would you say to the donors who make this healing environment possible?

Your generosity is doing fantastic work. I see it in every corner of the farm. You're changing people's lives, and that impact ripples out to their families and friends too. ■



You're invited!
4th of July at
St. Francis Farm

Your Special Invitation to Visit St Francis Farm

Please join us for a special visit on Saturday July 4th to St. Francis Farm and see your kindness in full bloom. You will set off from Dublin on a coach filled with other kind-hearted and like-minded supporters.

When you arrive, take some time to explore the grounds. Later, enjoy a cup of tea and some biscuits while you chat to Matthew, the rest of the team and clients about life at the farm. **We'd love to see you there.**

RSVP Shauna by calling **01 524 0139** or email **fundraising@mqi.ie**

Another year of hot meals and full bellies. Made possible by you.

Sunday Dinner is Safe, Thanks to You

Our Sunday Dinner Service is 100% funded by you. Thank you for keeping it going for another year.

Every Sunday, people who experiencing hunger and homelessness come to our Sunday Dinner Service.

They arrive knowing they'll receive a warm welcome, a hot dinner, and access to support in a safe space.

This is only possible because of your compassion and commitment to the men and women who come to Riverbank seeking comfort. **Thank you.**



A Springtime Wish List

The days may be brighter, but for men and women in homelessness, the conditions are always harsh when you're sleeping on the streets. You can help by donating essential supplies:

- Waterproof rain pants, track pants, and leggings.
- Gently used trainers or runners.
- New, packaged socks, jocks, sports bras, and underwear.
- Feminine hygiene products, toiletries, and shaving gear.
- Bath towels for people needing a hot shower.

Thank you!



Items can also be dropped off in person to MQI at **24 Merchants Quay** (just past the Riverbank homeless centre) from 10:00am to 3:00pm Monday to Friday.

Big Wish

This spring, **€1,500** will fund a new outdoor table and chairs for the High Park residential rehab facility's garden, giving clients in recovery a place to sit, relax and connect with nature.

Please call 01 524 0139 if you'd like to contribute.



Will you look to the future and share your compassion like Mary?

A Gift of Hope Now and for the Future

Like yours, Mary P's connection to our mission is deeply personal. For years, while driving down the Quays to work, Mary would see the early morning queues outside our Riverbank service.

She saw firsthand the cold, lonely reality of living on the streets. She was struck by the kindness with which people were treated.

"I see for myself that MQI offers people hope, a listening ear, and assists men and women out of addiction or homelessness."

Today, as a monthly donor, Mary is a vital part of the daily work we do. The MQI mission speaks to her. *"It's personal to me. My contribution means something and helps people who need it."*

Beyond her regular support, Mary looks toward the future and has included MQI in her Will. This special decision will ensure that the compassion she shows today will continue to change lives for many

years to come.

"I am leaving a gift to MQI in my Will because I hope what I leave will give someone a chance to find security and safety. It will make a difference. It will be the cups of tea, the dinners, the medical care, the counselling, the dignity."

If you are considering leaving a gift, it will ensure that vulnerable men and women in homelessness and addiction are never forgotten, and that we are always there to support them.

For information on leaving a gift in your Will, please call Katie Hennessy on 01 524 0139. ■



Write Your Messages of Love

The MQI Book of Love is such a special way for you to connect with the men and women you're helping.

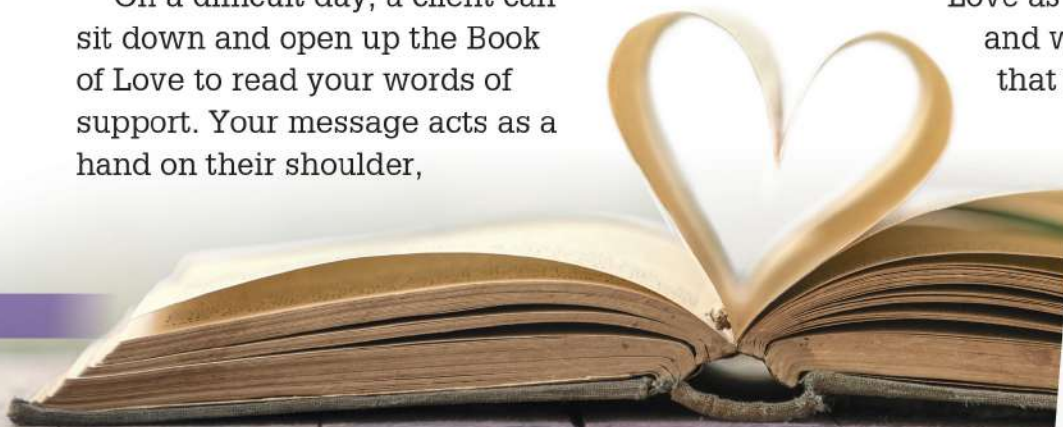
Every year, copies of the Book of Love are brought directly to St. Francis Farm and other services like High Park, where they stay as a constant source of support.

On a difficult day, a client can sit down and open up the Book of Love to read your words of support. Your message acts as a hand on their shoulder,

reminding them that they aren't alone.

Please write your message on the response device enclosed and return to us. We will add your words to the 2027 Book of

Love as a reminder to the men and women in our services that they aren't alone. ■



Your generosity changes lives and allows hope to blossom at the farm. Thank you.

Voices from St. Francis Farm

Here are some stories which show just how much your support is making a difference right now.



"From being here, I can make eye contact with people again. I do not bottle things up. I love helping others. I was a softie as a kid, and that has come back at the farm." Adam

"I was very low on confidence coming here, but working on the farm has really helped me build myself back up again." Bridie



"I am a different man. All I want in life is a chance, and they have given it to me here. I will never forget St. Francis Farm." Mark

"The farm has reignited my belief that I actually am a good person. I deserve a chance, and my son deserves a chance to have a father who is there for him." Dan



Thank you for making so many fresh starts possible

MQI

Merchants Quay Ireland
Homeless & Drugs Services

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Dublin 8

To make your gift by phone: please ring us on 01 524 0139.

☎ **Telephone:** 01 524 0139

✉ **Email:** supportercare@mqi.ie

🌐 **Website:** www.mqi.ie

📘 **Facebook:** Merchants Quay Ireland

✂ **X:** @MerchantsQuayIR

At MQI we respect everyone who turns to us for help – and many are just beginning their fresh start in life. So while client stories are genuine and true, names are changed and stock photographs of models are used for illustrative purposes and to protect client privacy. Thank you for your understanding.