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New campaign challenges Singaporeans to look closer at hidden poverty

Singapore, 27 July 2018 – If you have never cast a second look at your void deck where the shabby man spends the night, or a cartload of cardboard and recyclables which the auntie pushes during the day, The Salvation Army hopes to change your mind with its latest campaign “Making the Invisible, Visible”, in partnership with social enterprise imaginem.

The living spaces of beneficiaries with The Salvation Army will be shared by imaginem through black and white photography, whilst personalities are with them on the case. Many a times, they are with us in our neighbourhoods, but look again, the elderly with over-clutter in the flat is in need of basic necessities.

Personalities have joined The Salvation Army and imaginem in this campaign, to be with the poor and their spaces in the picture to share about their situation. ACRES founder and Member of Parliament Louis Ng, actress Cynthia Lee MacQuarrie and The Food Bank Singapore cofounder Nichol Ng in the spaces of Singapore’s poor will make you do a double-take.

The campaign is inspired by a similar one by The Salvation Army in Finland last year, which featured Rovio’s Peter Vesterbacka and former Finnish president Tarja Halonen as homeless people. The Finnish campaign won awards for its portrayals, and The Salvation Army hopes to bring the same message to Singapore. It has partnered social startup imaginem to run the photography campaign, with celebrated photographer Aik Beng Chia behind the lens.

The Salvation Army plans to feature several well-known personalities in photographs inspired by the stories of its beneficiaries, and will be rolling out the campaign over a year. The campaign will raise funds to support the poor who have fallen through the cracks via a giving.sg campaign page https://www.giving.sg/the-salvation-army/making_the_invisible_visible.

“We are hoping to raise \$150,000 to help people in need under our care through our social programmes and services,” said Major Lim Chee Kwee, Territorial Editor and Literary Secretary, The Salvation Army Singapore, Malaysia and Myanmar Territory. “In another version of reality, I might be the one sleeping rough, without enough to get by. If I were in those shoes, I would pray that I could find help, generosity, and humanity from those around me.”

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About The Salvation Army

The Salvation Army is dedicated to meeting the needs of the poor and marginalized in the community without discrimination. Since 1935, it has been touching hearts, inspiring minds and nurturing souls, making a life-long impact on countless lives all over Singapore. Throughout the years, it has established a comprehensive network of social services to meet a wide range of needs in the community. Its diverse programmes reach out to children who need care and protection, families in material need, ailing aged requiring quality nursing care, broken families in need of rehabilitation and other needy segments in society.

For more information, visit <https://sg.salvationarmy.org/>

About imaginem

What began as a personal initiative born out of a critical life challenge has become a full fledged initiative for social impact photography. imaginem is a social start-up for photography, that uses black and white photography to help individuals from various backgrounds, including physical, mental and intellectual challenges, youth-at-risk, and ex-offenders.

Incubated with ImpactTech Accelerator and based at Singapore Polytechnic entrepreneurship centre SPiNOFF, imaginem also aims to foster a community that is concerned about what happens in society around the world.

For more information, visit <http://www.imaginem.online/>

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FAQs on “Making the Invisible, Visible” campaign

The Salvation Army spokesperson: Major Lim Chee Kwee, Territorial Editor and Literary Secretary, The Salvation Army Singapore, Malaysia and Myanmar Territory

imaginem spokesperson: JQ - JiaQuan Lu, co-Founder

Q1: What is the purpose of this campaign?

In partnership with imaginem, a social startup for photography, The Salvation Army hopes that this campaign’s thought provoking visuals will help to share the plight of the unseen in the community, with the hope of making the invisible visible.

All the photographs are inspired by true stories of needy beneficiaries helped by The Salvation Army. Capturing well-known personalities at the beneficiaries’ homes or frequented locations brings a new level of social awareness of the hardships faced by the less fortunate.

Through this campaign, we hope to garner the support of donors to raise \$150,000 to help people in need under our care through our social programmes and services across Singapore.

Q2: Who are the personalities and photographer on board? When will all the photos be released?

The photos are scheduled to be released over the course of six to nine months from the campaign start date. Personalities to be photographed include:

Louis Ng (Member of Parliament, Founder of ACRES)

Nichol Ng (Co-Founder of The Food Bank Singapore)

Cynthia Lee MacQuarrie (Actress)

They will be photographed by:

Mr Aik Beng Chia (‘ABC’)

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Q3: How will this campaign be launched and on what platforms?

imaginem will be sharing the images via The Salvation Army's social media platforms and offline channels, imaginem's own social media and that of its partners, the social media channels of the personalities involved in the campaign, and through media reports.

This campaign will also help to raise funds to support the poor who have fallen through the cracks via a giving.sg campaign page.

Q4: Has The Salvation Army launched a similar campaign before?

Yes, this campaign was inspired by a similar one by The Salvation Army in Finland last year, which featured by formerly from Rovio's Peter Vesterbacka and former Finnish president Tarja Halonen as homeless people. The Finnish campaign won awards for its portrayals, and we hope to bring the same message to Singapore.

Q5: What is The Salvation Army fundraising goal for FY2019?

For this current financial year (FY2019), The Salvation Army's projected Social Fund expenditure is over \$39 million and we need to raise around \$8.2 million in donations. For every dollar spent from our social fund in FY2017, 94 cents was spent on social programmes to help our beneficiaries.

Q6: How much will this campaign cost The Salvation Army?

With the support of social enterprise imaginem, this campaign is on a pro-bono basis for The Salvation Army and we are truly grateful for their support.