




Speech By
Tony Perrett

MEMBER FOR GYMPIE

Record of Proceedings, 25 February 2016

ADJOURNMENT

Gympie, 10th Annual Mayoral Prayer Breakfast

 **Mr PERRETT** (Gympie—LNP) (6.53 pm): As breakfast goes, it was as big as they can get. Last Friday, Gympie hosted more than 650 people to breakfast. It was the 10th Annual Mayoral Prayer Breakfast. The guest speaker, one of Australia's most sought after voices on issues of social justice, leadership and ethics, the Reverend Tim Costello, was an irresistibly popular drawcard. He said it was extraordinary to see so many people at a prayer breakfast.

Tim drew on his knowledge and experiences from a variety of skills and roles to address the audience on the challenges of today's increasingly complex world. The hats he wears include not only the CEO of World Vision but also an ordained Baptist minister. Tim is a passionate advocate for social justice and ethical issues and he has a fierce intellect. Tim is the brother of former federal treasurer Peter Costello and an advocate who was once referred to by former Victorian premier Jeff Kennett as 'that leftist cleric'. Tim is also a former mayor of St Kilda, a casualty of council amalgamations and a National Trust National Living Treasure.

Tim put the spotlight on global poverty. He shared his experiences of extreme poverty and neglect from his trips to Africa where people had drawn 'the last ticket in the lottery of life'. Tim described the joy, the hope and the transformation of people in dire circumstances, concluding that poverty has more to do with attitude than circumstances. Tim expressed concern that Australians have lost their lives in a world increasingly focused on the individual, that hyper individuality was creeping into the Australian soul and that the 'all about me' way of thinking has become endemic in society. Tim said that perspective was important and that it was important to compare up and never compare down—to give a hand up and not a hand out—and to empathise and stand in solidarity to say, 'It's not all about me.'

The prayer breakfast is a joyful and enjoyable coming together of the local community. The organising committee of Kasey Webb, Michele Perrett, Angela Dunkley, Tony Kishawai and Helen Eyre have helped to ensure that the breakfast is a significant event on the Gympie region's calendar. Together with the many volunteers, the catering team, including students from Victory College who provided the waiters, car parking attendants and ushers, it was a wonderful and uplifting occasion.

I would also like to commend the organisers for securing the services of opera singer Andrew Pryor, who entertained the crowd. I also acknowledge the supportive role of emcee, Ben Ellingsen, and prayer readers Ashley Coleman, Karen Brus, Senior Sergeant Mick Symes and Johannes Solymosi.

The inaugural breakfast was held under the auspices of the old Cooloola shire council. The Gympie region is grateful that, after council amalgamations, the former mayor of Gympie, the late Ron Dyne, continued to support the breakfast tradition to ensure that we have had and will continue to have many more inspirational events.