



SHREWSBURY DIOCESE News

Turning Concern into Action

Issue 10 | Winter / Spring 2019



Mini Vinnies Summer Essential Pack Project

St Wilfrid's, Northwich

Thank you for all that you do throughout the year to care for our sisters and brothers across the world.

We are always in the season of **HOPE**.

Let us remember that all that you do for those who need your help brings;

- The Good News of Jesus Christ
- Hope of Reconciliation
- Hope of Peace
- Hope of Dignity

Your actions show God's love for all
SEE, THINK, DO.

YOUR SHREWSBURY MINI VINNIE TEAM

Mike, Marjorie, Janet, John and Bernadette

Our Mini Vinnie Promise for 2019 (and always)

As a Mini Vinnie I promise to make a difference in my world by:

*Caring for, respecting and loving myself.
Strengthening my friendship with Jesus
by talking to him each day and talking to
others about him.*

*Caring for others in my school and
community by being a friend to those
who are alone, in need or in trouble.
Making my family happy by my help,
respect and showing kindness and
consideration.*

*Caring for and enjoying God's world.
Treating others the way I would like
them to treat me.*



The St Vincent de Paul Society already produce a Winter Essential Pack for the homeless.

Mini Vinnies at St Wilfrid's suggested that the homeless are just as vulnerable in the summer. So they decided to ACT!

After discussing the needs of the homeless they came up with the idea of a Vinnie pack - Summer Essentials.

They put together a presentation folder that pulled together their ideas, and research, and they even produced a sample pack that was fully costed. Their research also included feedback from some local homeless people that were given sample packs.

The feedback from those who were homeless helped to identify the difficulties the homeless face and helped the Mini Vinnies think about what they could do to help.

This inspirational project was presented to their local adult SVP conference whose members were happy to sponsor the project to help the homeless in their community.

The Mini Vinnies are piloting this scheme and have produced some packs that they feel are a help to the homeless community.

St Wilfrid's Mini Vinnies have truly turned concern into action.

They saw a need, thought about what they could do to help, and acted.

This is the prayer that they used as their inspiration:

*Oh, God, when I have food
help me to remember the hungry;
When I have work, help me
to remember the jobless;
When I have a warm home,
help me to remember the homeless;
When I am without pain,
help me to remember those who suffer;
And remembering, help me
to destroy my complacency
and bestir my compassion.
Make me concerned enough
to help, by word and deed,
those who cry out.*





St Patrick's Mini Vinnies "Share the Journey"



This year St Patrick's students and staff marked the occasion of Refugee Week in school by taking part in CAFOD's 'Share the Journey' campaign.

They carried out an organised walk in an act of solidarity with our global neighbours who have been forced to flee their homes. Every step they took contributed towards CAFOD's target of 24,900 collective miles walked, which is the distance around the outside of the world.

Children in Years 1-6 walked from school to St Patrick's church where they also took part in a short liturgy of prayers, readings and hymns led by the Mini Vinnies.

In doing this they raised awareness of the plight of refugees and lived out their Gospel Message, "We Work, We Love, We Learn, We Pray, We spread the Gospel message every day."

How wonderful it is that nobody need wait a single moment before starting to improve the world.

- ANNE FRANK -

Supporting Kerala

The Holy Spirit, Runcorn

Mini Vinnies at The Holy Spirit have worked with their local adult SVP Conference to raise funds to support those affected by the terrible floods in Kerala.

They led a whole school assembly to raise awareness of the disaster, and shared prayers that they had written themselves.

Because of their hard work they were able to present Chairperson, Peter Keig with a cheque for £100.

They were also delighted to receive a letter of thanks from the St Edward's and Holy Spirit SVP Conference, with a promise that their contribution would be used to rebuild and equip new schools for the children of Kerala.

Christmas festivities!

St Joseph's Catholic Primary, Sale



Mrs Cox arranged for 19 members of the Mini Vinnies (from a total membership of over 40) to attend the St Joseph's (1914) Conference's Christmas Lunch on Saturday 8th December.

They sang a selection of Christmas favourites including Silent Night, O Come O Come Emmanuel, Away in a Manager and many more.

Their guests included many of the elderly visited by members of the SVP Conference - those living alone and from residential nursing homes.

Without exception, they commented on the real enjoyment of seeing and listening to the children singing.

This is a wonderful example of true Vincentian values - giving of our time and talents to benefit those we visit.

Pictured: The Mini Vinnies with their enthusiastic co-ordinator Mrs Cox.



What a year!

Shrewsbury Cathedral School

At Shrewsbury Cathedral Catholic Primary School and Nursery, the Catholic faith is central to all aspects of the school. The school prides itself in putting other's needs in front of their own based on the teachings of Jesus.

It is expected that the older children will look after the younger children and model the expected behaviour through their actions. The school has created strong links with the Cathedral Chaplaincy team, which means that the school regularly holds Masses for the wider parish, and Father Tom visits the school each Wednesday.

At Cathedral School, the Mini Vinnie group work both as a school council and as a group that supports the spiritual growth within the school. Over the Autumn term this group with the support of Mr Graeme Hawes have been instrumental in organising a successful Harvest Festival - three full car loads for the food bank, selling the Royal British Legion merchandise for the Poppy appeal, raising money for the Children in Need campaign and raising money for our local Caritas Charity. But the project they are most proud of was the donation of filled shoeboxes for the Operation Christmas Child appeal - Samaritan's Purse.

Here is a quote from a child who received a shoebox:

"It wasn't just my first Christmas gift - it was my first gift ever. When I held it, there was joy and love in my heart such that I never felt before. I knew there were people out there who cared for me. I was not alone... We were still loved." (Belarus).

The Mini Vinnies are now looking forward to Easter, and the Lenten period. As a school during this period we will look at a Mission week in which we can develop the theme of 'Mission' which has been inspired by Bishop Mark's - 'a call to holiness'. We will be aiming to raise money to help those that are less fortunate than us by coming up with innovative ideas, and I am sure these will have strong links to CAFOD and the Mission Together charity who we support during this time of the year.

Finally, with the support of Father Tom each class will be aiming to write a school prayer which we hope will encompass our family ethos and high expectations. I know the Mini Vinnies are looking forward to choosing the best one and for all of the school to say this at the start and end of our special events.



Holy Family Catholic Primary School, Sale Moor

This Autumn Term (September 2018 - December 2018), the Mini Vinnies (15 children in total representing years 2 to 6) have been extremely busy.

In October, the Mini Vinnies pledged to support a local foodbank, at St Francis' Church, as part of Harvest. They organised for each class to be responsible for collecting and donating different items that were urgently required. Once all of the items were donated, the Mini Vinnies proudly presented them to the foodbank where they were greatly received. Joan Tanner, the foodbank worker, explained to the children what a difference this donation would make and mean to the local Sale Moor families they support.

In November, the Mini Vinnies wanted to help support families on a wider basis within the diocese through the charity Caritas, particularly through their 'Keeping the light shining for Caritas Families at Christmas' appeal. This appeal was designed to support local families who were experiencing financial difficulties following the introduction of Universal Credit by purchasing electricity and gas pre-payment cards over the Christmas period. To do this, the Mini Vinnies generously made and purchased cakes which they then donated to school in order to run a cake sale. The cake sale was a huge success raising over £170.

Then in December, the Mini Vinnies decided to promote the 'Be a Santa to a Senior' Christmas appeal led by Home Instead Senior Care. The Mini Vinnies asked the children of Holy Family and their families to get involved and help to support this amazing appeal. To get involved, the Mini Vinnies asked the children to make a Christmas card and if they were able to, to donate a present for a local senior too. These were then dropped off at a local collection point and delivered to local senior residents through Wythenshawe Hospital, local Doctors and Pharmacists.

As well as leading these fantastic fundraising activities, the Mini Vinnies have met every fortnight. During these meetings, the Mini Vinnies lead a short collective worship and discuss how they can put their faith into action and support people in their local community as well as those on a wider basis.



Be the change you want to see in the world.

- MAHATMA GANDHI -

Mini Vinnies Bring Christmas Cheer!

St Martin's, Runcorn



All year 6 students at St Martin's, Runcorn, are proud to be Mini Vinnies.

Before the school closed for the Christmas holiday, Headteacher Mr. Phil Hallman and year 6 teacher and Mini Vinnie Co-ordinator Mr Peter McNulty arranged for the children to visit Halton Haven Hospice in Runcorn.

Whilst there the children gave a 45-minute carol concert for staff and patients.

They also delivered 50 hand-made Christmas cards with personal thoughts and messages to be distributed around the Hospice.

Mr McNulty reported, "It was a truly memorable afternoon and so uplifting and enlightening for the children and all concerned."

Support for Baby Feeding Station

SS Peter & Paul, Shropshire



Mini Vinnies at Saints Peter & Paul, Shropshire, received their SVP certificate for the £122 raised for the Baby Feeding Station campaign in South Sudan.

Also, and most wonderfully, a few days before this picture was taken, they increased their number by five.

St Vincent's Mini Vinnies have had a busy Advent!

St Vincent's, Altrincham

They supported Cornerstone Day Centre with a very successful Christmas Shoebox Appeal. They also held a wonderful cake and bookmark sale and prepared the entertainment for the SVP Christmas Party at Westleigh.



With the introduction of Universal Credit having a large effect on many families, this Christmas Caritas supported families by raising money to buy pre-paid gas and electricity cards and buy presents and hampers for those most in need.

When the Mini Vinnies heard about the Caritas Christmas appeal 'Keeping the light shining for Caritas Families at Christmas', they were keen to get involved.

Grace said, "It is important to help people feel happy at Christmas and be like us and have presents." Holly said "It will make a smile on people's faces because Christmas is a time to enjoy." Verity said, "It will make them happy and make them feel like they can afford things."

The Mini Vinnies decided to combine two fundraising ideas, to have a cake sale and a bookmark sale. Their fundraising was a great success and lots of delicious cakes were sold!



Our Mini Vinnie Prayer

Lord, Thank you for our gifts and talents.

Lord, Show us who needs our help.

Lord, Use our hands to help those who are hungry.

Lord, Open our hearts to love and comfort those who are sad and lonely.

Lord, Let us share our time, gifts and talents with those in need.

Lord, Help us to care for the sick.

Lord, May we all help and support each other as Mini Vinnies to build a better world. Amen.

Enrolment celebrations

St John's Junior School, Bebington, Wirral

The Mini Vinnies of St John's Junior School, in Bebington, Wirral, celebrated their enrolment at their school Christmas Mass in December. It was a proud moment for them as they declared their reasons for being Mini Vinnies and said their pledge. They were joined at Mass by the school community and members of the local SVP conference from the Parish.

Recently, the Mini Vinnies, along with the choir, had visited a local residential home in Port Sunlight called Birch Tree Manor. Here they sang to the residents and delivered home-made Christmas cards. It was a moving and spiritual celebration of the young and elderly in our community.

