

Young Vincentian News

Shrewsbury Diocese



Issue 3 • Summer 2024

Make Poverty a Priority – A time for action

Election year 2024 will be a landmark year especially in the lives and memories of our young people.

As Mini Vinnies and Youth SVP they are asked to see where there is need, think about how they can make a difference and act.

This year we and they will hear from many candidates who promise to be doing the same. Those who make decisions that can influence people's lives have a huge responsibility and are under scrutiny from our young people.

In July 2023, a 9-year-old Alessandro made a proposal to Pope Francis, that he should organise his first World Children's Day. In May 2024 it happened.

Pope Francis said: ***"Every child brings a new message, a new freshness... We need to listen to our children. We will all learn something. They are the hope for the future."***

The actions taken by our SVP Youth groups are celebrated in this newsletter. They demonstrate ambition, commitment, and practical action to tackle poverty.

Thank you for everything you are doing. Have a blessed summer.

Janet, Colette, Bernadette, Marjorie & Mike

Young Vincentian Development Officers

Chester & Ellesmere Port SVP District Gather the Family



In March 2024, the Chester & Ellesmere Port SVP District Council invited Mini Vinnies and Youth SVP schools to celebrate Mass together at The Chester Catholic High School.

The purpose was to gather the Vincentian family, young, older, and even older, to pray together and to recognise all as one family with a shared mission of seeking out need and offering help through a commitment to service and social justice. Therefore guests included SVP members, parishioners, beneficiaries and more.

Reverend Fr Paul Shaw officiated assisted by fellow clergy. Fr Paul's humour, the wonderful choir and orchestra at Chester High, and the participation of our young people created a memorable and joyous occasion for all.

Thank you to all who attended this Mass especially students and staff from St Clare's, St Bernard's, St Luke's, St Werburgh & St Columba's, St Saviour's, St Winefride's Primary schools, and Ellesmere Port and Chester Catholic High schools.

As with all families, to socialise and have fun together is also a priority. So, Mass was followed by an 'after-party!' Very special memories, and new friends were made.





Energy and creativity at St Mary's College Wallasey!

Lent is a very important time in the Liturgical calendar when we are reminded of the ultimate sacrifice Jesus made.

The YSVP at St Mary's organised the CAFOD Big Lent Walk to show solidarity with those living in poverty.

They provided each year group with an opportunity to walk the equivalent distance to the Vatican City.

Each student in St Mary's spent the whole of "inspire time" walking and managed a grand total of 1,376 miles between them - the whole college walking to the Vatican and beyond, a great achievement organised and run by the Youth SVP team.

During Lent they also held a cake bake-off and sale. The homemade millionaire cake was voted the favourite by the students with the gluten free cake coming in a close second, raising over £90 for their Pilgrimage to Lourdes next summer.

The YSVP and other students have also been celebrating mass each week with a special visitor from Holy Apostles and English Martyrs adult SVP conference. They are planning opportunities to collaborate on projects together.

In Holy week, the YSVP team also served all the staff members of St Mary's with cake and refreshments reminding us that we should serve all no matter who they are, just like Jesus did.

The YSVP group also celebrated Chinese New Year, hiding red envelopes with Chocolate coins around the college for students to find and bring luck this year.

They have cultivated various areas of school, creating a peace garden, a "no mow" zone, and a wildlife garden where they dug over an area of grass, and planted seeds and wildflowers which had been donated by a local garden centre.

Students also used their gifts and talents by creating a drama piece and leading a liturgical prayer time to show students what they do in their group meetings as an invitation to join them. They used the theme of the week Community and the parable of the Good Samaritan to demonstrate their work.

They are finishing the year with a beach clean-up in July, where they will be working with the local New Brighteners to clean the New Brighton sea of rubbish.

A very busy year so far!



St Joseph's camp out in aid of CATH

Twelve Mini Vinnies from St Joseph's Winsford organised a sponsored camp out at the school to raise money for a local homeless charity - CATH (Chester Aid to the Homeless).

The children thought about what it would be like to be homeless and even made shelters out of cardboard. The children helped to pitch tents and camped out on the school field to raise funds. They have raised over £350 for the charity and intend to repeat this activity next year.



St Clement's show their support for new four-legged mascot, Harry!



St Clement's Mini Vinnies have raised money to train guide dogs for the blind.

They sold bookmarks, painted rocks, and crocheted hearts during their break times, raising a whopping £126.60 for Guide Dogs U.K.

As result of their kindness they were able to meet a working guide dog when they presented their donation. Harry and his owner were invited into school and the children were lucky enough to make a fuss of Harry which he thoroughly enjoyed too.

Following his visit, Harry has been adopted by the Mini Vinnies as their mascot. Each week the Mini Vinnies nominate and present a "Harry Award" to anyone they have noticed for their acts of kindness during the week.



Sacred Heart Mini Vinnies lend a hand to their adult SVP

In the Spring term, Mini Vinnies at Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School in Moreton, Wirral worked with the SVP at their church to collect toiletries for people who find themselves needing emergency shelter and accommodation.

Each year group donated a different item such as shower gels, shampoo, flannels and dental hygiene items. The Mini Vinnies then sorted these into packs alongside members from the SVP.



St Saviour's smash Walk for CAFOD!

Mini Vinnies at St Saviour's in Ellesmere Port have led the Big Lent Walk initiative at school to raise money for CAFOD.

The whole school was involved including parents, staff, children from EYFS to Year 6 and even their wonderful school dogs!

They had a wonderful time sharing their initiative with others and raising awareness of CAFOD's actions to fight inequality in the world as well as raising £354!



A Prayer for our Vincentian Coordinators

Lord, We pray for our Vincentian Coordinators. Bless them and keep them strong as they guide our young people in bringing love and light to all. Inspire them to search deep within themselves for the love you have given us all, so that they can share that love with those in their care and all those who seek help.

Amen.

Making a difference at All Hallows CC



All Hallows Catholic College Macclesfield Youth SVP have been involved in various activities this term.

The College has continued to raise money and support the clinic it funds in India. On a local level the Youth SVP have contributed clothing to an appeal from St Benedict's RC Church, Handforth, one of their partner parishes. Plus they have sold Fairtrade Chocolate to raise awareness about a fair wage for farmers. This was particularly impactful as the sales followed student led assemblies on the theme of Child Labour.



Ellesmere Port Youth SVP are always happy to help!

March 20th was a busy day for the Youth SVP group at Ellesmere Port Catholic High School. They started the day by travelling to Chester Catholic High School for a District Youth Mass.

Angela, Vincentian Coordinator said, "It was amazing to see our local schools working together and celebrating Mass together. It was a great opportunity to make new friends.

But the fun didn't stop there! After arriving back at school, our YSVP group walked to Vale Court Care Home for an afternoon of Irish music and dance, for a belated St Patrick's Day celebration with the residents. The residents had a lovely time joining in with the singing and we all had a lovely time too."





Walking and talking for Lent at SS Peter & Paul Shropshire

When Katy Ramsey, National Mini Vinnie Manager visited Shropshire schools recently the Mini Vinnies at SS Peter & Paul were keen to share their news.

They took part in the Big Lent Walk and were happy to tell Katy all about it.



Aquinas College show support for the homeless

The last two terms have been both eventful and reflective for Youth SVP at Aquinas College.

A dedicated leadership team led by the president and vice president Mabin and Mani (pictured) took the lead in discussions, planning and galvanising the group. With a renewed commitment to supporting the homeless in their community, they continued to dedicate time to fundraising, with activities including a 'sponsored silence' through Lent, a Fairtrade sale and summer fair.

In the light of recent political happenings in the country, the youth SVP also took the lead on discussions around raising young people's awareness around voting and advocacy.

They are looking forward to the next academic year, full of hope and commitment to social justice.

Eager Youth SVP volunteers on hand to help at St Anselm's College Birkenhead



The Senior SVP ran the annual Mother's Day Gift shop. They made gift sets from the donations kindly sent in and then sold them to raise money for the SVP Summer Camps. They sold out quickly and raised over £300. Students and staff completed a sponsored run during Lent to raise money for local charities. The run took place over lunchtime and saw a large number of volunteers helping to make the run such a success. The event raised over £500.

Acts of kindness for the staff at St Bernard's

Using the Lenten "Make Poverty a Priority" resources Mini Vinnies at St Bernard's Ellesmere Port created a Stations of the Cross trail for all classes to use.

They also thought about small acts of kindness and decided to use their play time to make a hot drink for members of staff in school. The staff really appreciated their kindness.



SVP National Meeting – 180 Year Anniversary

180 years of SVP in England & Wales was celebrated at the annual SVP National Meeting in Staffordshire this June. The inspiration for the event was past, present, and future.



Thank you to Mini Vinnies from St Bede's Primary Weaverham, and St Vincent's Primary Altrincham, also Youth SVP from Ellesmere Port High and Loreto Grammar Altrincham who represented the Shrewsbury Diocese SVP at this event. Their presence, with 150 Young Vincentians over the first and second days recognised the importance of our young members for the future of the Society.

Working with our wonderful National Youth Team they met as a Vincentian family, enjoying games and activities together. Vinnie Bear also made an appearance. Mini Vinnies joined adult members over lunch to deliver bookmarks with special messages of love and inspiration. All Youth SVP joined delegates on day two for a liturgy led and accompanied by students from Northampton, and later for lunch to relax and socialise together.

David Wells, renowned motivational speaker and author met with and answered questions from Youth SVP which provided a wonderful finale to their day.

Also, thank you to our Young Vincentian Development Officers, Vincentian Coordinators and staff who attended. It was an occasion that inspired and confirmed our commitment to Vincentian service and our mission of tackling poverty.

St Alban's Wallasey are full of ideas!



Mini Vinnies at St Alban's have had another busy term, including fundraising for their local Community:

- They regularly stock the foodbank shelves in school for parents.
- The Mini Vinnies reached out to their school Grandparents on Grandparents Day, speaking about their achievements within the school. Grandparents supported their fundraising for The Sudan Crisis.
- They hosted a "Break the rules day" in school that everyone enjoyed! A list of rules were "broken", such as wearing a hat / sunglasses / own clothes / no homework to be given / extra playtime / crazy hair / bring a non electronic toy. Everybody paid £1. All money raised supported Sudan and the SVP.
- They organised a stall at the school Summer Fair. They had guess the number of sweets in the jar. This was very popular, and the money raised went to the school HSA.
- They organised a cake sale baking cakes with their families and asked staff to contribute cakes too. These cakes were sold over two days to the children and their parents after school. The Mini Vinnies donned latex gloves and took complete control of selling, taking money and bagging the cakes. They raised over £200 which was donated to the SVP Summer Camp.
- They organised their annual Scooter Dash. The money raised will also support the SVP Summer Camp.

The Mini Vinnies are known by parishioners because they introduce their fundraising ideas and projects to them at the end of weekly masses.

Teresa, Vincentian Coordinator said, "We are very proud of our Mini Vinnie group, how they support those in need and provide a vital link between school, church, and community. We look forward to another exciting year ahead, making connections and sharing ideas with other Mini Vinnies and teachers in our local schools."

Well done, James, John, Emma, Louisa, Hattie, Grace, Freddie, Flynn, Elizabeth, Seamus and Gabriel!

St Peter's Warrington



ST PETERS

COMMUNITY LITTER PICK Earth Day 2024

Our Mini Vinnie group organised a community litter pick.




During Well Being Week

Mini Vinnie's held a successful pre-loved cuddly toy sale.

EASTER BLESSINGS

We made Easter cards for members of the parish, thinking about the message they send and which symbols they used.






SS Peter & Paul New Brighton 'Make Poverty a Priority'

During Lent and Easter the Mini Vinnies at SS Peter & Paul's decided to collect products for a local hygiene bank.

They made seed paper tokens, which they sold on the playground to parents and carers and raised a total of £104.20. These Mini Vinnies visited the local social supermarket and Home Bargains to buy hygiene products.

To improve their local environment they have also carried out a local litter pick and a beach clean.



Sharing the Good News with Shrewsbury

Once again, in March 2024, Young Vincentian Development Officers were invited to share the "Good News" with Primary Headteachers, Governors, Clergy and Education Service staff at their annual conference.

The two-day conference is an opportunity to share and promote the SVP Mini Vinnie programme to a wide audience, and to display our wonderful resources.

It is also an enjoyable time to meet colleagues face to face, and to hear "real stories" about the impact of the programme.

We look forward to our fourth event next year.





St John Plessington support the Wirral community

The Youth SVP group at St John Plessington have been involved in a number of community events.

Most recently, as part of Refugee Week, they have supported the collection of items for Wirral heart4refugees organisation, to be distributed to local families in need.

A Prayer for the Guidance of the Holy Spirit

Charity and love are yours.
 Send the Holy Spirit to wake us up,
 May the Spirit be in and around us,
 Giving us new and loving ideas.
 Let us forget selfishness and do everything we
 can for others,
 No matter how small or insignificant.
 Amen.



St Bernadette's Have Got Talent!

Mini Vinnies at St Bernadette's Stockport raised a total of £567 for Caritas Good Shepherd Appeal by organising a sponsored St Bernadette's Got Talent and a non uniform day.



Bitesizenews

The Mercy Brothers Fundraiser

Thank you to all who promoted, donated, and attended our fundraising event for the SVP youth programmes in the Shrewsbury and Salford Dioceses.

The Mercy Brothers, a talented group made up of priests from both dioceses, plus lay people gave us a magnificently entertaining night at Our Lady & the Apostles Social Club, Stockport.

£1,500 was raised. Monies will be shared between the two dioceses to support our Mini Vinnie and Youth SVP projects, as well as the SVP children's camps.

Cash in coins for the SVP!

Have you been away over Easter, or have an upcoming holiday? If so, Cash4Coins is a great opportunity to make some money out of old coins and leftover holiday currency for the Society.

So often after a holiday abroad you have leftover currency which is not used. Alternatively, you have old coins and banknotes which are no longer legal tender that you can't change at the bank. Well now it can benefit the work of the SVP, both locally and nationally. Working with Cash4Coins, a currency service for charities, the SVP can collect:

- All foreign coins and banknotes
- Current UK coins and banknotes
- Any old British and Irish money
- Obsolete currency such as pre-decimal

Start collecting from your parish congregation, family, and friends. 50% of the funds raised will go to your local SVP Conference, and 50% will support the wider work of the Society. For more information and to get some handy resources, please contact the National Office Fundraising team at fundraising@svp.org.uk or call **020 7703 3030**.

Comments from our readers

Thank you to all our Young Vincentians & Vincentian Coordinators

"Great to see so many young people being involved and all credit to the staff who give up their time and energy to facilitate these wonderful activities."

"It is so uplifting reading these reports and gives so much hope for the future."

"Many thanks for all your hard work, dedication and service."

"It is wonderful to read about the inspiring work going on throughout our CC and Diocese by our young members. They are a credit to their families and schools. Many thanks to you for inspiring them."



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