

# Young Vincentian News

Shrewsbury Diocese



Issue 4 • Spring 2025

## 2025 Jubilee: A Holy Year of HOPE

**Pilgrims of Hope:** The theme of Jubilee 2025 is Hope: It is an opportunity to offer “signs of hope” to our world: hope for peace, hope for those who are in prison, hope for the sick, for the young, for migrants, for the elderly, for those who are poor. No one should go without what they need for a dignified life, no one should live without hope.



The Beatitude Values are:

**LOVE, COMPASSION,  
FORGIVENESS, SERVING  
OTHERS, RESPECT, TRUST.**

This edition demonstrates how our young people have witnessed to these values.

Let us join our Young Vincentians as they open “Doors of Hope!”

Have a blessed Jubilee,

**Janet, Colette, Bernadette,  
Marjorie & Mike**

Young Vincentian Development Officers

## Stockport & Hyde Youth Mass



**On the 12th November, students from Aquinas Youth SVP joined Mini Vinnie’s from the Stockport and Hyde SVP District for a joyful Mass celebration at Our Lady and the Apostles Church Stockport, to celebrate Young Vincentians and the start of the Jubilee Year. Schools had displayed artwork on the altar depicting their understanding of being “Pilgrims of Hope.”**

This event was a great success with talented Aquinas College students volunteering as ushers and musicians plus entertainers at the “after party,” where everyone wore a fun hat donated for the occasion by a supporter of the SVP. Equally talented Mini Vinnies read, presented the Offertory gifts, or served on the altar, and all sang beautifully. Parishioners and SVP members joined the young people in celebration, all accompanied by talented musicians Noel and Aquinas student Patrick. Thanks to Fr Martin and all who attended, especially Young Vincentians from St Bernadette’s, St Philip’s, Cheadle Juniors, St Mary’s, Our Lady’s, St Ambrose, St Paul’s, St Peter’s, and Aquinas College. Thank you for making this such a joyful occasion.

## St Peter & Paul’s Wirral help refugees

**The Mini Vinnies at SS Peter and Paul, New Brighton have had a very busy and successful Advent.**

They raised money by selling reindeer food and Christmas sweets and made a donation to The Flying Seagulls refugee support charity as well as buying Cafod World gifts to support refugees. They also visited a local care home where they sang Christmas carols and delivered handmade cards to the residents. The children made cards for their school neighbours too. Earlier in the term they raised money through a Halloween disco to buy pyjamas for refugee children, donating 34 pairs! Finally, they joined in the ‘local churches together’ Street Nativity.





# Love – Compassion – Living life to the full

## ***A Report from Aquinas College Chaplain, Laetitia***

### **Our vibrant Youth SVP group started the current academic year with positivity and determination.**

Led by love and compassion, in the example of the good Samaritan, they were eager not just to live out their faith through prayer for those in need, but also to work for the common good by following the guidance of our catholic social teaching, taking action to support those in need. This year, they opted to take action to help with cancer research through MacMillan.

From the first term, they immediately embarked on planning our Cultural day event. This event took place during our Diversity Theme week in October, when our Youth SVP led our college in a celebration of the uniqueness of each member of our community, while working for the common good, fundraising for MacMillan cancer support. It was a jubilant celebration of cultures with unprecedented student participation; a bring-



and-share lunch with foods from different cultures, Bollywood and afrobeat dance performances, with a wonderful group of students performing a cultural dance in live assemblies every day. A celebration which will remain in our memories for a long time!

In November, a group of volunteers from Aquinas Youth SVP joined Mini Vinnies, senior SVP members and Parishioners at Our Lady and the Apostles Church to celebrate Young Vincentians and the launch of Jubilee 2025. This event was a great success with our talented Aquinas young people volunteering as ushers, readers, musicians, and entertainers for the Mini Vinnies, in a wonderful testimony of faith, bringing to life our John 10:10 mission of living life to the full.

Our Youth SVP ended the Term joyfully with a Christmas-themed fundraising event in December. This event was another opportunity for our young people to share their gifts and talents by running various activities, from tombola, bake sale, dance and more, to continue raising funds for Macmillan. So, far this year, they have raised over £650 for this good cause.

## **Together we care at St Bernadette's Stockport**

### **On 23rd September, Mini Vinnies at St Bernadette's visited St Anthony's Church, Wythenshawe to venerate the relics of Blessed Carlo Acutis.**

There were many schools from across the diocese present. It was a prayer filled day with lots of fun activities provided by the Shrewsbury Youth Mission Team. Two Mini Vinnies proudly took part in the offertory of the Mass.

The Mini Vinnies at St Bernadette's were also busy in December making Christmas cards for the residents of their local care home. The children created the cards over several weeks and enjoyed giving them to the residents.



# Fun and joy together at St Clement's Runcorn!

During the Autumn term, Mini Vinnies from St Clement's Runcorn sent out invitations to local Mini Vinnie groups to join them for an afternoon of fun and refreshments.

Mini Vinnies were asked to bring along an item for the local foodbank, a pebble to decorate as a "Pebble of Hope," and "Gather the Family" bunting to decorate the school hall.

Through an afternoon of team games and activities all the Mini Vinnies got to know each other and made new friends. They started with their Mini Vinnie prayer, talked about what a Mini Vinnie is, and does, and why and were presented with a motivational wristband. They realised that they belong to a huge Vincentian family with the same aim.

Later in the afternoon parents and grandparents of the Mini Vinnies were invited to join their children for refreshments. The Mini Vinnies talked to the adults about their afternoon and involved them in their activities. Adults made Pebbles of Hope, and contributed a brick of kindness to the "Small acts of kindness make a big difference" brick in the wall display.

At the end of the afternoon everyone said the Mini Vinnie promise and Mini Vinnies from St Clement's presented their guests with SVP bookmarks with positive messages.



They have received thanks and lots of positive feedback from the event:

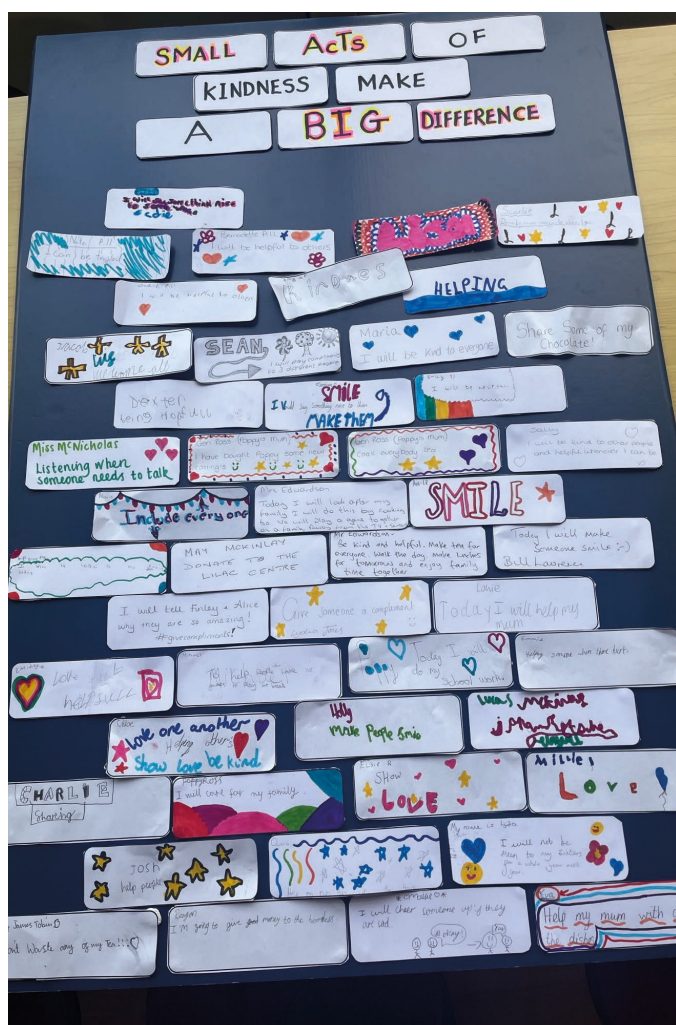
***"Thank you very much for yesterday's Mini Vinnies event. The children thoroughly enjoyed it and were making plans... just in case there is another one next year."***

***"It was a lovely way for the children to get together and share their work and ideas. Our children thoroughly enjoyed the afternoon - one of them asked me... "when is the next one?"***

Thank you to the Mini Vinnies from St Luke's Frodsham and The Holy Spirit Runcorn for making it such an enjoyable afternoon.

During Advent, St Clement's Mini Vinnies and staff also brought joy to the residents of Simonsfield Care Home, Runcorn. They entertained with carols and songs that residents and care staff sang, clapped, and danced to. They presented each resident with a Christmas card that had been handmade by each Mini Vinnie and included a special Christmas message.

Santa also made an appearance to sing and dance with residents, before presenting the Mini Vinnies and school staff with an early gift.



# Service, love and respect from pupils at St Mary's YSVP Wallasey



*A report by Chaplain Lisa*

**The Chaplaincy Team has been very busy this term, welcoming our new Academy Chaplain Mr Broekman who has become a valuable member of our community helping with weekly mass and the SVP group, He has also run a popular scholars Greek language group and a classic film group.**

Family Fast day was one of our first ports of call this year and was a hit with students and staff who replaced their usual meal all week with a cup a soup, a piece of dry bread and a digestive biscuit. This allowed all to experience the feeling of poverty felt in the world.

The SVP ran the soup kitchen so successfully Thursdays are going to be Soup Thursday where a small donation is given for a soup experience.

It was a delight to be once again celebrating our feast day with a whole school mass, with our SVP group reading and mass being celebrated with Father Mike who led our prayers on the Feast of the immaculate conception.

Throughout the term, Mass has been held in our chapel celebrated by our local priests. A fabulous memorial ceremony was held on Remembrance Day with students wearing their uniforms from the various armed services they represent. The college was filled with an abundance of different uniforms. It was a very moving day led by the SVP group.

The annual Wallasey 'Churches Together' nativity was a huge event welcoming lots of local children from our community. The choir sang carols and the Chaplaincy SVP group read the nativity story as the



Churches Together acted out the special nativity story. Refreshments were served and the Youth SVP sold the baubles and gifts they had made this term.

During Advent, the Chaplaincy team challenged all forms to raise money for Planning for Tomorrow ([p4tglobal.org](http://p4tglobal.org)) a charity providing education to refugees in Uganda. For 3 weeks the college has been buzzing with students running stalls full of candy canes, raffles, guessing the sweets and of course a multitude of very talented bakers selling their cakes.

The SVP also supported "Red Wednesday," a commemoration held annually by Aid to the Church in Need to highlight the fact that today one in seven Christians face extreme hostility, violence, and repression because of their faith in Christ.

The youth SVP have taken over an area of the canteen and created a wellbeing hub where they meet daily and plan activities. They also look after the food hub making food parcels for those in need. Our thanks go to NEO, our local hub which provides help for those who need it.



## Stockport Hyde SVP District trolley shop!

Following a similar initiative last year with the Mini Vinnie groups at St James Hattersley and St Mary's Dukinfield, the conference of St Mary & St Paul Hyde organised a food shop alongside the Youth SVP at All Saint's Dukinfield and then the Faith in Action group at St Paul's Primary Hyde.

They each filled two trolleys with basic foods and Christmas treats and took them back to their schools to make six Christmas hampers each. These were presented to families in need.

SVP President Peter Chorlton said "It was great to see the enthusiasm of these young people in their desire to help those in need. We must continue to develop close links with our Young Vincentian groups as these young people will hopefully be our adult SVP members of the future."

## Working for all at St Alban's Wallasey

The St Alban's Mini Vinnies have had a great start to the '24/'25 year, with some new children joining the group.

They have once again contributed to making Christmas cards for prisoners. They also made Christmas cards for their local care home residents and the elderly people of their parish. Local "older Vinnies" kindly donated an Advent calendar and chocolates to these younger Vinnies. The children also created some homemade wrapping paper for the holiday season which they gave out to the local church parishioners.

St Alban's Mini Vinnies regularly organise stock in their school foodbank which is available to the school family and local community. They are ready to embrace the New Year with some exciting activities to plan together, involving the school and their church community.



## A special year for St Bede's Weaverham

Congratulations to the St Bede's School Family who celebrated their school's 60th Anniversary in 2024. Headteacher, Ms Conlon said: "We are very proud of St Bede's and each and every member of our school community."

We also thank Ms Conlon and her wonderful Mini Vinnies for representing Shrewsbury at the SVP National conference last year. Ms Conlon said: "It was a wonderful experience for our children and I could see how much effort had been made to make their experience so worthwhile. There was so much energy in the room and it was lovely for the children to complete the planned activities and chat with members of the SVP."

We also thank St Vincent's Primary, Loreto Grammar Altrincham and Ellesmere Port High who also represented Shrewsbury SVP. We are proud of them all.





## Busy and caring Mini Vinnies at Sacred Heart Wirral!

**In September, the Mini Vinnies celebrated their brilliant Teaching Assistants by giving them individual cards with messages of gratitude.**

At one of their school coffee mornings, the Mini Vinnies spoke to adults and visitors about the work that they do in the Sacred Heart community.

The Mini Vinnies have made over 70 Christmas cards for the staff at their school, as well as neighbouring houses, businesses, and schools. They have also encouraged each child in the school to make a Christmas card to present to parishioners.

At their school Christmas fair, the Mini Vinnies sold books and toys and raised a brilliant £100! They decided to purchase 30 pairs of pyjamas. These were donated to the local SVP conference who gave them to children in their community who were in emergency accommodation over Christmas.

The Mini Vinnies also spent their lunch time packing food donations to give to families in the Sacred Heart community who needed support over the Christmas period.



## Kindness in the Community at St Vincent's Knutsford

**St Vincent's have had a very busy Autumn term thinking of others before themselves.**

During Advent, they visited the residents of their local care home to help decorate the Christmas tree, read stories, and lead a sing-a-long! There was lots of laughter and smiling faces all round.

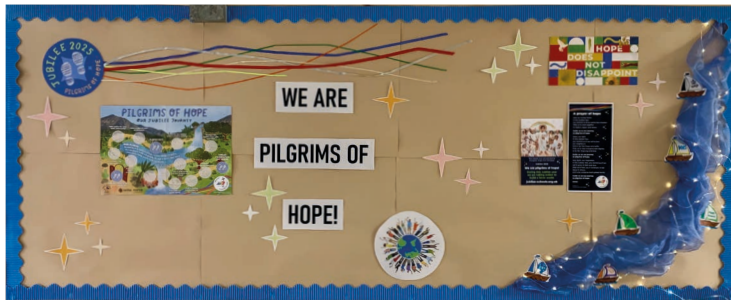
They also arranged a whole school reverse advent calendar to gather food and toiletries. They even helped to load it into the vehicles to be taken to Hope Central for the benefit of those in the local community.

# A symbol of hope at Chester Catholic High School

Jubilee 2025 was launched at The Chester Catholic High School with a Celebration of the Word for each year group, followed by the opening of a handmade “Holy Door,” purposely built as a symbol of their commitment to bring hope to people. The door will serve as a reminder of their commitment to be “Pilgrims of Hope.”



The Chaplain and the students have invited parishioners to send them suggestions on how the school could bring hope to their community. They look forward to hearing people’s thoughts and suggestions. The Youth SVP group along with the FIA AWARD group aim to respond and bring hope to those who desperately need help. A Jubilee display using the image of the boat from the Jubilee logo demonstrates the many charities that these young people also aim to support this year.



## Shining stars at St Winefride’s Shropshire

**Mini Vinnies at St Winefride’s have supported a local charity called Little Stars that supply baby needs.**

The adult conferences requesting help are grateful for the input provided by these Mini Vinnies as their efforts help them to provide everything for new babies from prams, pushchairs, baths, baby clothes and hospital kits.

These items are especially welcomed by Afghan and refugee families living in the area.

# Mini Vinnies at St Benedict’s Handforth

**The Mini Vinnie group at St Benedict’s RC Primary school have embraced their see-think-do mission wholeheartedly in their first term.**

The new group were welcomed by the Parish Priest, President of St Benedict’s SVP Conference, and parishioners at their commissioning service in November. Supported by their class teacher and the rest of Year 4, they made their pledge to make a difference in the world.

During Advent they:

- Re-cycled Christmas cards for the SVP Working with Prison Group so that children with a family person in prison receives a card, those isolated in prison with no friends and family receive a card and a church charity had enough cards to give to the homeless.
- Made Christmas cards for the people supported by the adult conference who really look forward to the handmade and creative cards. They were helped by every year group in the school.



- Hung plastic baubles onto the school fence asking for food items, ranging from mince pies to a hamper, to be donated to the local foodbank. They spent an enjoyable morning at the foodbank filling up the bags.

# Role models of hope at Ellesmere Port Catholic High School

During Advent, each form collected food to make hampers for local families. The Youth SVP group took charge of wrapping boxes and making Christmas cards to wish recipients hope and joy.

They are now focusing on the Jubilee Year as, 'Pilgrims of Hope'. Youth SVP have researched the founders of the SVP and discussed how they brought hope to people all over the world. They aim to create a social media page to allow other young people to learn more about them, and to see them as role models. The Youth SVP / singing group are currently rehearsing Irish songs ready for a visit to the local nursing home for St Patrick's Day.



# Mini Vinnies in action at St Hugh's Catholic Primary!

**Mini Vinnies have had a busy and active Autumn term:**

**Commissioning Mass:** On Wednesday 9th October, Mini Vinnies celebrated a commissioning Mass with children from their Catholic cluster of schools. They travelled to St Joseph's Church in Sale, where Fr Woolley celebrated Mass, and spoke to the children about their mission of service. The Mini Vinnies were full of enthusiasm and dedication, embodying the values of compassion and charity, looking forward to taking on an active role in their faith community.

**Macmillan Coffee Morning:** The Mini Vinnies took a leading role in organising a Macmillan Coffee Morning, raising both funds and awareness for cancer support. With the help of staff and contributions from families, the event was a huge success and served as a meaningful way to engage our children in charitable activities. This experience also helped reinforce the importance of giving back and standing in solidarity with those in need, a key aspect of our Catholic ethos. The event raised a huge £1221.03.

**Harvest Food Collection:** Their next project was organising the annual Harvest food collection to support their local food bank. The Mini Vinnies invited all children and their families to contribute. The response was overwhelmingly positive. The Mini Vinnies organised the donations into a beautiful display which encouraged us all to offer gratitude for the Harvest. They then set about bagging up and distributing the Harvest gifts.



**SVP Parishioner Christmas Meal:** The Mini Vinnies were invited to join St Hugh's Parish SVP Christmas Meal. The children enjoyed chatting to the SVP about the work they do in school. They then distributed Christmas Cards which they had made for the parishioners. Mini Vinnies entertained everyone by singing popular carols and Christmas songs, and they enjoyed meeting Father Pat's large family. Robert Ashley, a long serving SVP member, was able to share lots of interesting information from his many years of service. Lots of lovely conversations were heard across the hall and a return visit is planned for Easter.

They are now looking forward to sharing their ideas for the Jubilee Year of Hope so watch this space!



# Mini Vinnies at St Vincent's Altrincham spread community kindness

**Spreading kindness in the community** St Vincent's Mini Vinnies have forged excellent links with a local care home and visit the residents to keep them company, play games, plant, and paint. They also make them cards at Easter and Christmas and enjoy finding out about their lives and interests.

Always turning concern into action, the Mini Vinnies have been making Christmas cards to deliver to their befriending charity - Cyril Flint - who look after the isolated and elderly in the local community and to the beneficiaries at their parish church.



- **Mini Vinnies National Meeting:** St Vincent's Mini Vinnies attended the National Meeting in Stoke and participated in a range of engaging activities, meeting other Mini Vinnie groups from around the UK. They were delighted that Leon won the 'Design an SVP shop window' challenge and his design has been used in an SVP shop in Leeds.

- **St Vincent's Bake-Off:** Their annual bake-off was a fantastic success. The theme this year was 'Wellbeing' and so many creative and delicious cakes were brought into school to purchase. All the proceeds went towards the SVP summer camp for underprivileged children in their local area. These summer camps provide safe, inclusive, and caring holidays for children in need of a break. Over £500 was raised for this vital charity. The treasurer visited to talk to the Mini Vinnies about their work and to thank them for their efforts.



- **Fundraising:** The Mini Vinnies sold poppies and accessories to raise vital funds for the Royal British Legion (raising over £700) and hosted a successful Macmillan coffee morning (raising over £300), where they sold cakes and Fairtrade coffee and tea to raise awareness of the farming communities in underdeveloped countries and their unjust wages.
- **Live Simply CAFOD Award:** The Mini Vinnies' hard work has earned their school this award by encouraging their community to live simply, sustainably and in solidarity.



# A caring group at St Wilfrid's Northwich



## Mini Vinnies at St Wilfrid's, Northwich were very busy on 'World Earth Day' promoting the Catholic Social Teaching value 'Care for Creation.'

They decided that their beautiful Prayer Garden needed a little bit of love and attention so that it would be a beautiful place for the whole school community to spend some quiet time in prayer, amongst God's wonderful creation. They weeded, tidied, and planted new flowers to attract the Bees and Butterflies.

These kind Mini Vinnies supported Year Four children who were making their First Holy Communion by creating a thoughtful prayer card for them to keep.

The Mini Vinnies heard that a local charity shop was struggling to provide socks for refugees in the area and so they decided to organise a sock collection in school. They made posters for each class and asked the Headteacher to reach out to parents in the weekly newsletter. Families were so generous, and they were able to send snugly socks to those in need.

During the Autumn term they spent the morning with the elderly in their Parish. The Mini Vinnies volunteered and took part in a Mass for the Sick and elderly. After mass they helped with refreshments and enjoyed a chat with the parishioners.

Also during Advent, these Mini Vinnies made Christmas cards for the elderly of the Parish. The Mini Vinnies received a lovely card to thank them for attending and helping parishioners at a Mass for the elderly and sick: "The children welcomed everyone to the Mass, handing out hymn books, reading the bidding prayers... they were happy to help with the refreshments, a real bonus to us and to many of the guests. In short it was a joy to have them with us."

# A plan of action for St Winefride's Neston



## Mini Vinnies met at the end of November regarding their 'Action for Advent' and have been busy making a positive difference to many.

They decided upon four key actions at the start of this holy season, which they have dutifully carried out:

- To be models of true listening to others; striving to take time to hear what people are sharing and being warm-hearted companions to all.
- To sing at the SVP Christmas lunch, organised by the local conference for people of the parish. The children sang with energy and characteristic 'St Winefride's sparkle', filling the room with joy. Parishioners even got up to dance as they sang!
- To lead the school community in contributing to a local initiative to donate gifts for children this Christmas. Many kind donations were given to the Mini Vinnies by the school's families which were distributed locally.
- To write Christmas cards for the housebound of the parish - assuring them of our prayers and fellowship at this time, and all through the year.

These Mini Vinnies and their Vincentian Coordinator are grateful to be working closely with their local SVP conference of St Winefride's, who support them so much.

## St Luke's Trench working in partnership

Christmas cards made by the Mini Vinnies at St Luke's were delivered to the Chaplaincy Team, represented by Mr Kevin. He shared that the cards would be distributed on Christmas Day to patients visited by the Team.

Additionally, Mini Vinnies marked the beginning of an ongoing partnership with the Chaplaincy Team with a lovely handshake. As part of this partnership, they plan to deliver cards for Easter as well. The Mini Vinnies also decorated pebbles to celebrate 180 years of the SVP. They painted 200 in total!



## Work, love, learn, pray at Shrewsbury Cathedral School

The Mini Vinnies have had a very busy Autumn Term.

They reached out to those in need through holding a Mufti Day for the Harvest - raising money for CAFOD,

encouraging food donations for the local foodbank during Harvest and Christmas, raising money for a local Caritas partner and supported the Poppy Appeal in November. The Mini Vinnies also supported the school team in reviewing the mission statement and creating a new one: We work, we love, we learn, we pray, we spread the Gospel message every day.



## All Hallows YSVP Macclesfield

During the Autumn term, through organising CAFOD Hunger Lunches and donating almost 100 Food Hampers through the SVP and Churches Together/Silk Life Food Bank to families struggling with food poverty, these young people recognised Jesus' call to help those in need. The Young Vincentians distributed £1,500 worth of gifts purchased for families at Christmas.



# St Joseph's Upton show love & compassion

**Mini Vinnies at St Joseph's Upton have worked with SVP members Rose and Dominic to learn about the work of the Society.**

In October, they visited the school to talk about their work and how small acts can make a huge difference to support those in need. The children were so inspired and following this, 22 Year 5 children committed to joining the Mini Vinnies. Since then, they have acted to be God's helping hands.

Rose spoke about how there were over 150 children in the local area living in temporary accommodation and how the SVP were aiming to provide each child with a new set of pyjamas for Christmas. The Mini Vinnies prepared an assembly that inspired the whole school to engage in this mission. What was even more wonderful, was that one of the mums said her business would support their mission. Some of the Mini Vinnies designed pyjamas and these designs were then printed and given to those in need. St Joseph's community donated close to 100 pairs of pyjamas.

In addition to this, the children gave the gift of time to support the elderly in their community. During December, they visited two local care homes



to sing carols and present cards made by the children. The children were kind and caring and loved spending time talking with the residents. They hope to visit again during the summer term.

Finally, during the last week of term the Mini Vinnies held a festive fundraiser after school. The children had spent time making and packaging a range of Christmas gifts. These were sold after school, and they raised £183.16!

So many achievements in one term. Mini Vinnies, we are so proud of your dedication.

## Comments from our readers

### Thank you to all our Young Vincentians & Vincentian Coordinators

*"It's just wonderful. The young Vincentians are truly thriving in the diocese and doing so much."*

*"Thank you, always a good read and its inspiring when you see how much is going on. It is such a joy to read of all the wonderful work that our young people are involved in across the diocese."*

*"The Young Vincentian News is very high quality and a tribute to all the work that is going on all over the CC."*

*"Keep up the good work."*



## Young Vincentian News



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