



MEMBRE DE LA SOCIETE
DE SAINTE-VINCENT DE PAUL



SOCIETY OF ST VINCENT DE PAUL

News in Brief

November 2016 | Issue 14

Welcome to our latest e-news, which is filled with stories from around the country from hard-working volunteers and staff who are helping people in a practical way every-day. If you have a story you would like us to share, please email it to us at: national@svdp.org.nz

Congratulations Nelson Vincentians

The opening of the new Stoke Conference shop was held on Sunday 27th November.

Fr Bill Warrick blessed the building and those present.

A warm welcome was extended by the Nelson Area President, Margaret O'Connor and the National President thanked volunteers and Vincentians for their commitment and dedication to the Society. The afternoon concluded with afternoon tea.



Picton Holiday Home

This holiday house is made available for the use of families in need, in particular those recovering from the recent earthquakes, people under stress or pressure or those in need of help through financial difficulties.

The house is made available only through direct representation from a conference of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul. In order to qualify for the use of the house, a family or individual must be recommended by a conference, and a written confirmation of this must be made to the representative of the Picton Conference.

For more information contact:

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Van spreads the love

Article from the Daily Post, Sep 30, 2016.

By Georgina Harris.

A white van driving around the streets of Western Heights and Fordlands can be spotted every Tuesday and Wednesday afternoon.

It is the Society of St Vincent de Paul Full Fill van providing afternoon tea to anyone that comes to meet them.

Manager of Full Fill Catherine Phizacklea says it is about providing a bit of aroha to the families in the area.

"It's just to let them know that someone's there."

There are around 20 volunteers who help with the van, including students from John Paul College. The society aims to serve those in need regardless of creed, ethic or social background, gender or political opinions.

While Catherine is grateful for the current volunteers, she is appealing to the Rotorua community to get on board.

"We need more volunteers as often students have exams or prior commitments and it's hard to get them along."

The volunteers also try and help those who come to them as much as possible, directing them to the Society of St Vincent de Paul organisation if they themselves can not help.

Peter Fothering, who is involved with the Society of St Vincent de Paul, says the Full Fill van is one of the more practical ways the society can offer a hand up to those in need.

It was purchased in 2008 through a generous donation by a local.

Since Catherine has come on board in May, she has made a few changes to how the van is run.

She says the Full Fill van previously used to drive around the streets honking the horn until people came out to meet them.



"I found this a bit invasive... it totally goes against the culture of the areas we go to. My idea instead was that we should consistently park in different locations because that's where people expect us to be."

On Tuesdays the van can be found from 4.30pm opposite Western Heights Primary School, and on Wednesdays from 4.30pm at the Fordlands community centre.

Catherine says they tend to stay for an hour or so. Each time she estimates normally 20 to 50 people turn up.

When asked by the Rotorua Weekender where she gets the food and drink they supply, she says she receives donations from the community and the rest is supplemented by the Society of St Vincent de Paul's account at Pak'n Save.

Catherine says she has several goals for the initiative moving forward. She says she would like to get more involved with community groups and would like to get out to Owhata.

"That's one area we haven't made it to yet."

Western Bay Area Council win Award - Congratulations!

The Society of SVDP Western Bay Area Conference was recently awarded a Trustpower special commendation for providing an invaluable service within their community.

Here are the judges comments...

"By seeking out those in need and using many different avenues to support them the volunteers at St Vincent de Paul are meeting a variety of needs in the community. They provide food either through food parcels, where their Fullstop van delivers six nights a week and the group also provide school lunches to children who arrive at school with no food.

Volunteers distribute clothing to those in need as well as blankets to the homeless and clothing packs for new babies and young children.

They may also help financially when they get behind with bills and housing costs, arranging to help pay arrears of rent and electricity. They also deliver free firewood to many households during winter.

The young vinnies programme teaches children about helping neighbours by getting involved in projects and donating toys for other children.

This group don't do what they do for the recognition, but we thank you for reaching out to make a difference."

Computers

Thanks to a long term relationship between one of our members and the Director of IT of ARA Christchurch (formerly Christchurch Polytechnic), we received a donation of 250 computers from ARA Timaru campus. The loading of these computers and peripheral equipment was carried out by Hornby Conference members with Keith Norton driving the truck for us.

These computers were unloaded into our member's garage and the work commenced refurbishing them for distribution to those families who can't afford a computer for their children. After testing, cleaning and reassembling, - Google Chrome and other educational programs were placed on them. Currently many families either rent Chrome Books from their school or make use of the limited number of Chrome Books that the school has available for students.

Prior to this donation some members were involved with supplying desktops and installing them in homes that were designated by Hornby High School Social Worker Jude Howie. Hornby High School undertook a trial with a Spark Trust, to supply wireless modems to families at a cost of \$15 for 20 gigabytes of data. This trial has been declared a success and the Spark Trust are going to roll out modems to more schools, with an upgrade from 20 to 30 gigabytes still for \$15. There were 25 installations carried out in this program.

Hornby Conference members approached several low decile schools with the opportunity for them to identify families who could benefit from having a computer in their home, at no cost to them. Commencing 25 October, we start installing the first of 38 desktop computers and desks (if required) into the homes identified by one of our local schools.

Other schools locally and in other areas of the city are currently going through the process of identifying families in their communities, who could benefit from this project. Currently 20 have been identified by one school in a cluster in the Western area.

With so many computers available, we are identifying those families, who do not have a computer, but whose children would benefit from having one available at home. We are making these assessments when delivering food parcels.

Other communities, individuals and Islands have benefited from donated computers over the past several years.



Food for thought

'Lifelong learners in a connected world' is one of the goals that teachers in the 21st century are working towards to develop. At Sancta Maria College, two Year 9 classes have had the opportunity to experience a project that perfectly fitted this cliché. Under the supervision and guidance of Dr Laux, teacher of General Science and Biology, the two classes embarked on a project they didn't imagine would automatically allow them to work alongside and within their community. Their aim was to design, develop and produce food parcels to be donated to family in needs as part of the St Vincent de Paul food appeal programme. Each parcel had to meet the energy requirements for an average size family. Recipes were designed meticulously using knowledge the students gained during their Food and digestion unit. They were asked to plan for the food collection in the community or to organize fundraising events to be able to buy the non-perishable items. The whole project created partnerships between whanau, local businesses and the local community. Students used their personal, interpersonal and critical skills to cope with the stress of meeting deadlines, demands from the stakeholders, and instructions from their teacher! At the end, they all did it! With a big smile of their face, they stand proud, knowing that they have made a difference to many people out there!

President Tonia Greatbatch of South Auckland SVDP addressed the group and thanked them for this most generous inspirational act of love and commitment. There was a special acknowledgement of Dr Wilda Leux the wonderful teacher who instigated and coordinated it all.



The Year 9 students proudly displaying their food-boxes with Dr Wilda Leux and (Centre) SVdP South Auckland President Tonia Greatbatch.

HEALTH & SAFETY

The new Health & Safety Policy is about to be released and will be available on the Society website. A big step for the Society - the focus is on our people.

"EVERYONE HOME SAFELY - EVERY NIGHT"

Report from Sri Lanka

St.Mary's Conference - Mattakkuliya Colombo

Celebrating the Feast Day, 27th September of St Vincent de Paul, the Mattakkuliya Vincentians joined hands with the Oblates working in the difficult missions in the missionary Dioceses of Anuradhapura & Trincomalee by dispatching 15 boxes containing dictionaries, exercise books and nearly new used clothes to be distributed among Catholic children, living in predominantly Buddhist areas whose education is impaired due to poverty.

These children could be moulded with leadership qualities and with the spirit of Christ in order to serve the Church and Society in the future.

The same evening Holy Eucharist was celebrated by Rev. Fr. Leo Perera, Deanery Spiritual Director and Rev Fr. Lloyd Fernando, Parish Priest of St Mary's Church.

After the service, the Vincentians handed over Gift Packs containing Rs.200/- and refreshments to 80 Donees.

Nesta Gunasekera
President



Presentation for John Mulvaney



A special Mass was celebrated by Fr John Craddock at St Mary's Manchester Street for John Mulvaney who has served the Society of St Vincent de Paul for 40 plus years.

Pictured at left: John Mulvaney with his certificate and Vincentian Cross



Papal Awards

Three St Vincent de Paul members have been awarded Benemerenti (Papal) medals.

Gordon and Linda Holmes (standing) and Pat Hewson (sitting) are pictured after the presentation which was held at Mass at Our Lady of Grace, Heretaunga. Gordon and Pat have over seventy years of Vincentian service between them while Linda, a relative newcomer to the ranks, nevertheless has always been at Gordon's side when there was Vinnie's work to be done.

Gordon and Linda are members of the Stokes Valley conference while Pat has been a member of the Heretaunga conference before stepping down this year as Treasurer due to ill health. All three have contributed much in service to parish life in their respective churches of St Francis Xavier and Our Lady of Grace. This has involved most duties including being Sacristans, extra-ordinary Ministers of the Eucharist, Proclaimers of the Word and the more mundane but necessary church cleaning, laundering and flower arranging.

Each member have been Christ-servants to those in need upholding the true spirit of the Vincentian movement.



Linda and Gordon have been heavily involved in the sponsoring of refugees and the care of foster children while Pat has been particularly supportive of the "bread and fruit and vege run" enjoying the one to one contact in a humble, non-judgemental manner.

They can be justifiably proud of their work as true Vincentians and for unstinting service to the church.

Fashion fundraiser for clean water

Article from the Marlborough Midweek, Sep 28, 2016.

A group of Picton school children got to strut their stuff on the catwalk in aid of families in Fiji affected by Cyclone Winston.

The children showed off a range of clothing supplied by Picton and Blenheim Vinnies op shops at the Mini Vinnies Fashion Parade on Thursday last week.

Organiser Leanne Cooper says around 50 people turned out to enjoy the evening of op shop high fashion, which provided some entertaining moments.

"mMini Vinnies is the children's branch of St Vincent de Paul. Members of St Vincent de Paul Picton conference work with teh students, regularly focussing on projects aimed at raising their awareness as young Christians of teh importance of social justice, both locally and abroad.

"This year the theme has been water."

The children learned about how millions of people die from unclean water.



They decided to help families in Fiji affected by Cyclone Winston and raised just under \$300, almost enough for three installed water filters, Leanne says.

"A great effort given there are only 11 students on the school roll.

"The children chose Fiji in particular because they already have Christmas boxes to under privileged children in remote communities there for the past three years.

"The feedback from ththose who attended the fashion parade has been fantastic and it is likely to now become an annual event on the school's calendar," Leanne says.

Society of St Vincent de Paul AGM

Our Annual General Meeting was held last month 28-29th October at The Rydges Hotel in Auckland. Here are some photos from this event...



The Parable of the Wool & the Knitting Needles

A visit to the Motueka Night Shelter at the end of Term One sparked a project which saw the Vinnies based at St. Peter Chanel School in Motueka and fellow parishioners knitting up a storm.

The project which involved knitting numerous peggy squares to make a peggy square blanket for the shelter, saw parishioners not only teaching the Vinnies how to knit but also knitting peggy squares themselves. Says, Vinnies Youth Coordinator Philippa Winch, "Despite these efforts by the end of Term Two it looked as though we weren't going to have enough peggy squares to even make one blanket."

Things however did a complete turn-around for this project when at the beginning of Term Three, the St. Paul's Vinnies performed for the Richmond Senior Citizens. Philippa goes on to add, "At the end of our performance, a lovely lady came up to me with three large bags of peggy squares which she wanted to donate to our project." The same week Philippa received a call from one of the St. Peter Chanel parishioners informing her of a lady in the community who had offered to sew up the blankets for the St. Peter Chanel Vinnies.

"In the short space of time our project had gone from not having enough peggy squares to make one blanket, to being informed that we would end up with at least six peggy square blankets we were going to be able to donate to the Night Shelter by the time the peggy squares had all been sewn up."



To add to this, the St. Peter Chanel Vinnies held a Fair Trade drinking chocolate fundraiser serving hot drinks to children and staff in the school community in order to raise money for toiletries for the Night Shelter as well. Being only a small school community, the concern as to how far the money raised would actually go was soon relieved when it was discovered that a local retail chain were running a special on toiletries. As a result of this, a basket of toiletries was able to be put together from the funds raised.

The St. Peter Chanel Vinnies and parishioners who had been involved in the project were able to present to Mike James and Shelley Alekna from the Motueka Night Shelter the blankets and toiletries on Thursday 1 September. The presentation was the final chapter in a project that in many ways reflected the biblical story of 'The Loaves and the Fishes', showing that God is able to multiply the efforts of people so that in turn we can be a blessing to others.

FROM THE ARCHIVES

A Last Message (Bishop Ambrose Kelly C.S.Sp)



God's loving Providence has brought us to the threshold of a new year, 1952. He is giving us more time to glorify Him and to save our souls.

Yet, the time He gives is given not in years, or months, or weeks, but in the present moment. Moment by moment precious time is given to us. We can be sure only of the present moment. The past has gone, the future is uncertain. Yet we know that the present moment as it comes to us from our Father contains the rich treasure of His love. At every moment He gives us the opportunity to return our love for His love.

We must at every moment in this New Year have our heart and mind inclined to Him and the doing of His holy will. Our faith gives us the conviction that His fatherly love and omnipotence can make everything in life turn out for the good of those who love Him.

On the eve of 1952 Bishop Ambrose Kelly of Sierra Leone, West Africa, wrote the message at left for his beloved people amongst whom he had spend 23 years of his priestly life. His unexpected death took place some weeks later.

1928: Ordained Priest - Ireland

1929: Left for Sierra Leone, W Africa
"The White Man's Grave"

1937: Consecrated Bishop at Blackrock College, Dublin

1952: Gave his soul back to God in
Freetown W Africa

Rest in Peace

Joe Gibbs

10.12.1924 – 20.08.2016

St Patrick's Palmerston North Conference lost a stalwart and long serving member. Joe Gibbs, into his 90's, passed away at the end of August and Vincentians from Palmerston North joined family and friends at a Requiem Mass held for Joe in Wanganui. Joe had served in the Air Force during WW2 and his early married life was in Wanganui. Subsequently he, his late wife Moira and their three daughters moved to Palmerston North. Joe joined SVdP and was a very active member for decades. He never aspired to leadership role on the committee but worked tirelessly in carrying out the works of the Society. With the passing of his wife and 'anno domini' Joe returned to Wanganui where some of his daughters resided. He was a humble man but at the same time very strong in his views which were not easy to change once he had made up his mind. Joe was very much his own man, a man of action and foremost, a man of God. R.I.P.

Philip Dolan

16.03.1945 – 28.08.2016

Philip was an active member of St Mary's Foxton conference for over 20 years. In his unassuming way he was always willing to lend a practical helping hand in a manner of all activities - helping people. R.I.P.

Brian O'Loughlin

Passed away in Wellington on the 8th Nov. Brian was very active in St Mary's conference in Tauranga for many years. He was secretary of the conference for some time and also chaired the loaves and fishes project. His wife Kay helped and supported him in his work and they both have worked in the Cameron Rd shop. Brian will be remembered by Vincentians by his strong support and commitment to the Society.

News in Brief

Society of St Vincent de Paul in New Zealand

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We'd Love to Read your Stories:

If you have any news items that you would like us to put in our next 'News in Brief' e-newsletter, please send us a short article and a photo (if you have one) to Anne-Marie McCarten, email: national@svdp.org.nz

Nano Valerie Hurdle



Nano Valerie Hurdle was born on the 18th October 1930.

As a child of six she contracted Polio and spent many months in hospital and rehabilitation. She didn't allow her disability to interfere in her determination to lead an active and productive life bringing up a family and spending many

hours working for the church and community in many roles.

Nan will be remembered within Saints Mary and Joseph Parish of Otaki and Levin, especially in Levin; as a courageous, caring, spiritual person, devoted to her Church and Family.

For many years Nan played a pivotal role in the Liturgical life of St. Joseph's. She was Sacristan, designed our Banners, served on Liturgy and Music groups, maintained the All Souls book until recently and was a member of the Parish Council, to mention a small part of her duties over the years. She was a Life Member of the Catholic Women's League being Chaplin of the Levin branch, having been involved for over sixty years. Society of St Vincent de Paul Levin Conference was also a benefactor of the Nan's tireless energy. In spite of failing health, she was still attending meetings and was the current Vice President.

Nan didn't suffer fools gladly but was always ready to give her time selflessly when she saw a genuine need.

The Lord called Nan to her Reward on 22nd August 2016. She lived a life devoted to her God.

Peter Douglas Malcolm

10 March 1934 - 29 August 2016

Past National President of the Society
(1988-1993)

May his soul rest in peace.



In 2017 we will be celebrating our 150th Anniversary as a Society in New Zealand and we need your help!

If you have any old photos, newspaper clippings or any archival material that we could use in our celebrations then please contact:

Anne Marie McCarten

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