



MEMBRE DE LA SOCIETE  
DE SAINTE-VINCENT DE PAUL



SOCIETY OF ST VINCENT DE PAUL

# News in Brief

August 2017 | Issue 16

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](mailto:national@svdp.org.nz)

## Celebrating 150 Years of Service

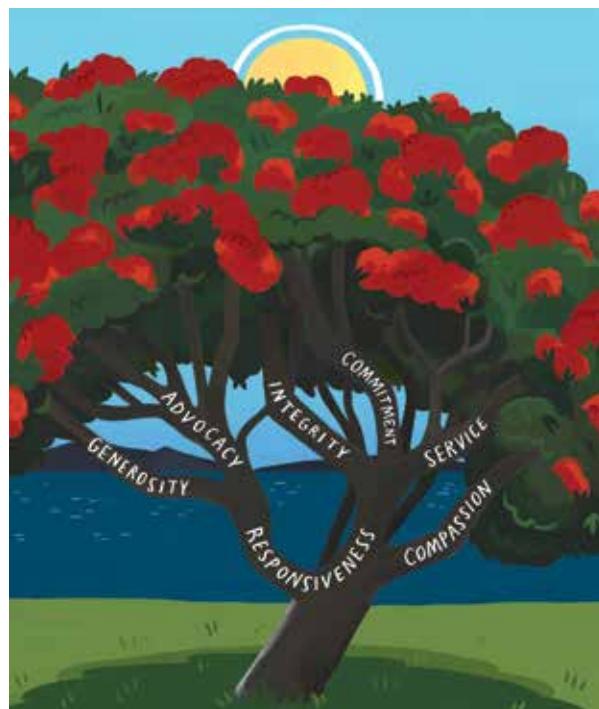
Vincentians from around the world and throughout New Zealand will gather in Christchurch for a weekend of anniversary celebrations in October.

This year the St Vincent de Paul Society celebrates 150 years since it was first established in New Zealand. The first Conference was formed in Christchurch in 1867 and has flourished in Catholic parishes throughout New Zealand since then. Today the Society has around 6,000 members in New Zealand, including associates and volunteers, 23 Area Councils and 135 Conferences.

Anniversary celebrations are planned for the weekend of October 13-15 in Christchurch. On Sunday October 15, an Anniversary Mass will be celebrated by Apostolic Nuncio Archbishop Martin Krebs as well as Bishops Owen Dolan and Charles Drennan. Celebrations will also be attended by

representatives of countries with which New Zealand has 'twinning programme' arrangements – Tokelau, Tonga, Sri Lanka and Samoa. Other international guests will include the Council General International Representatives, Tony Muir, and International Territorial Vice-President, Frank Brassil.

"The weekend will be a wonderful opportunity to give thanks to God for all the blessings the Society has enjoyed over 150 years," says Terry Comber, National President of the Society. "We remember especially our brother and sister Vincentians on whose shoulders we are standing, those caring people who have gone before us over many decades,



**SOCIETY OF ST  
VINCENT DE PAUL  
IN NEW ZEALAND**

150 years of  
generosity, service  
and compassion.



carrying out their Vincentian vocation often under very trying conditions."

In addition to the Christchurch celebrations, local Conferences of the Society are also hosting local events and celebrations, such as the very successful garden party which was held in Hamilton in July.

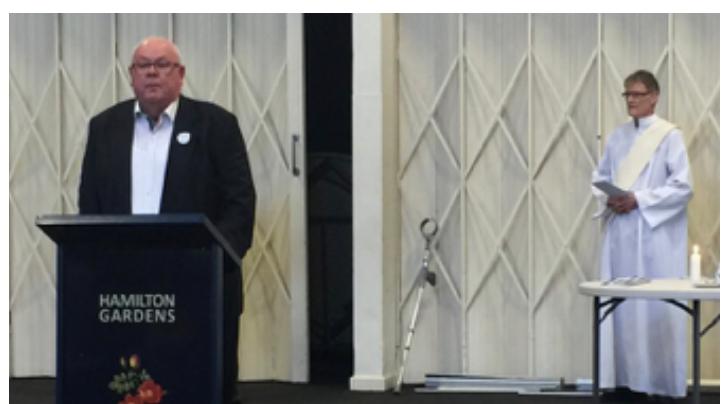
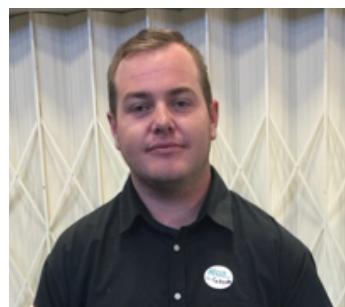
The Society has published a special Anniversary Publication to mark this major milestone in its history. The publication includes a visual timeline of the major milestones in its 150-year history, as well as reports about what local Conferences have been doing around the country. In his message to Members, Cardinal John Dew said: "the Church in New Zealand and New Zealand Society owes an incredible debt

of gratitude to the members of the St Vincent de Paul Society who have worked quietly and humbly to care for others in the name of Jesus.

"I offer deep thanks for the way you have been Christ's presence to those who needed a sign of hope and a gift of love and generosity."

The St Vincent de Paul Society is the largest Catholic lay organisation in the world. It is estimated that the Society's 800,000 members work with around 30 million people in need worldwide.

*Photos below from the July Hamilton Garden Party*



## Tongan 'Material Goods' Appeal

Recent visits have confirmed the need for the following goods across the main island of Tongatapu. The supply of these items will greatly assist the Conference members to support many elderly and infirmed people.



### The goods needed are:

- Wheelchairs
- Walkers
- Walking frames
- Commodes
- Household goods ie pots, pans and utensils
- Bed linen - sheets and pillow cases
- Towels
- Soap, toothpaste, toothbrushes
- Disinfectant
- Mattress overlays - rubber/waterproof
- Adjustable/mechanical hospital beds x 2 (preferably sourced from Auckland area)
- Beds and mattress (preferably sourced from the Auckland area)

We would also like to source for the Nuku'alofa Society shop good quality, clean, (not torn or missing buttons etc) lightweight clothing. (Must be packed in banana boxes and clearly labelled).

The items are to be shipped from Auckland to Tonga.

### The address for delivery is:

Storage King  
7 Wagener Place  
St Lukes  
Auckland 1025  
St Vincent de Paul - Tonga Project

### Please advise Del Soti dispatch details and date goods are due to arrive:

Email: [del@stvinnies.co.nz](mailto:del@stvinnies.co.nz)  
Phone: 09 815 6122 or Mobile: 021 447 868

Any assistance in the supply of these materials is greatly appreciated.

## Nelson Vinnies Youth Receive Award

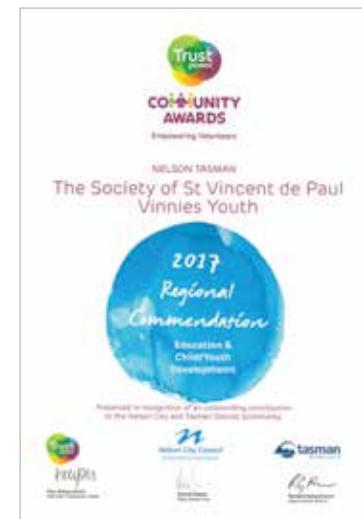
On Monday 26 June, the Young Vinnies in the Nelson/Tasman region received a commendation in the Education and Child/Youth Development section of the Trustpower Community Awards for their work in the community.

This is the third Trustpower Community Award these young people have received since 2011 and is a tribute to the time and effort that these young people put in to helping people in need.

The award which is based on work in the community from June 2016 - June 2017, was introduced by Trustpower stating, "Over the past year these students have been involved in projects bringing entertainment to senior citizens of the community, practical resources to people in need and a sense of purpose for those who have worked with the group from the wider community.

Thank you for empowering our young people with the opportunities and knowledge that they too can make a positive difference in our community."

Not only does this award bring both recognition and encouragement to our young people, it also shows the important value the Vinnies youth programme has not only in our local area but throughout New Zealand. Catering for our young people through providing them with the skills to help others is something that the Society of St. Vincent de Paul can truly take pride in.



## Edgecumbe

Following the delivery of washing-machines, fridge-freezers and other whiteware goods, we have been able to support the victims and residents of Edgecumbe by visiting a number of them in their homes, sleep outs, garages and other abodes of temporary accommodation.

We accompanied our S.V.d.P. National President, Terry Comber and our Past-National Presidents Des Mulhern as we visited the devastated Puriri Crescent and Rats Avenue residents and saw the homes directly affected by the breach in the stop-bank by the Rangitiki River. There is no doubt that it will take many months before all the evacuated families are able to return to their homes and some 17 families will not be able to return to their homes as they are condemned. The National Presidents saw for themselves exactly what the situation is; and where the generous donations of our parishioners and those of the Diocese of Hamilton and further afield along with other individuals and organisations, will be spent.

Our Area President Brenda Whelan, working closely with the District Council Representative, Paula was informed that the Edgecumbe Community Hall was to close and the distribution of donated goods such as furniture, household equipment and other essentials would be housed in other dedicated locations in Whakatane, i.e. the vacant Holden Building on Bracken St. and the Old Countdown Building in Kopeopeo.

At a meeting attended by over 200 residents and interested parties, many questions were raised about the ongoing situation and residents concerns were voiced. These questions are being collated and organised into a coherent manner by Jade Elliot and her helpers to be put to the relevant authorities. Residents who have lost their property and whose homes are under repair need to visit their properties daily and meet for support and companionship. This need is being undertaken by the residents themselves and are able to meet in the Presbyterian Church Hall of St. David on College Road. St. Vincent de Paul Conference in Whakatane are supporting this initiative by providing tea, coffee, milk, sugar and biscuits and by being a presence to support individuals who require household items as they return to their homes on a more permanent basis.

The present Whakatane Conference President, Margaret Maynard, Sister Margaret O'Neill the Conference Spiritual Director, Breen Metcalfe the Conference Treasurer and Trish Murphy our local resident will together be the S.V.d.P. local point of contact. They will be liaising with all the various agencies concerned with the ongoing support including the Council reps., the diocesan reps., the S.V.d.P. Area and National bodies, the Edgecumbe Community through the Primary School and Edgecumbe College and the Community Board, in order to fulfil the huge ongoing task in which we have been involved from day one of the disaster.



## A call for Prayer on the 10th, 20th and 30th of the month

On the occasion of the International General Council Meeting this coming June 14-16th, a new program will be launched proposing a common prayer for all those who share in the Vincentian vocation: in the year when we celebrate the 100th anniversary of the appearance of Our Lady of Fatima (May 13th to October 13th), the 400th anniversary of the Vincentian Charism (September 27th) and the 20th anniversary of Ozanam's beatification (August 22nd).

The spirit of this initiative is to motivate each member of the SSVP to take 15 minutes every 10th, 20th and 30th day of each month to ask the intercessions of our Lady of Fatima, St. Vincent and Blessed Frederic Ozanam for the prayer intentions of the poor, for ourselves, for our families and for the other members of the SSVP.

May our prayers serve to commit ourselves more fully to the Lord, through the spiritual union of all members of the SSVP and our families, along with the Poor, "our masters", as Saint Vincent de Paul used to say.

The prayers can be found on the website

[www.svdp.org.nz](http://www.svdp.org.nz)





**International Confederation  
Society of Saint Vincent de Paul  
Council General International  
16<sup>th</sup> President General**

**Letter 17/2017  
Paris, May 5<sup>th</sup>, 2017**

To brother  
**TERRY COMBER**  
President  
National Council of NEW ZEALAND

**Subject:** Many thanks.

*Dear President,*

1. On behalf of the Council General International (CGI) and on my own behalf, I would like to express heartfelt thanks for the warm welcome I received during my visit to your country last March.

2. It was a wonderful experience to spend time with you and other members, learning about the reality of the local SSVP and being given the opportunity to communicate a message of unity, charity, peace, friendship and evangelisation which is the fundamental mission of the President General.

3. Wherever I went, in the events I attended, in all the Conferences, projects and Councils I visited, and in all the members I met, I could see that the Vincentian is basically the same everywhere even though customs, language and culture differ.

4. I thank God for allowing me to visit your country and to see at first hand the remarkable Vincentian work being done there. Long may it continue, with God's help. I deeply appreciate the generosity of the National Council in meeting the various expenses of my visit such as accommodation, food, travel and other costs. Without this support, my visit would not have been possible.

5. I sincerely hope that my presence among you will be recognized in the future as an important milestone in the development of the relationship between the Council General and your National Council.

6. With renewed thanks and every good wish for the continued success of the SSVP in your country.

**Brother Renato Lima de Oliveira  
16<sup>th</sup> President General**

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*Motto of the Mandate 2016/2022: "If anyone wants to be first, be the last of all and the servant of all" (Mark 9, 35b)*  
6, rue de Londres - 75009 PARIS (France)

## Sacred Heart College Hamilton

The SHGC girls cook the St Vincent de Paul soup kitchen lunch 4 times per term as part of Religious Education development and social understanding of the local community. The Society in Hamilton work alongside a number of schools in this way.



### REMINDER NOTICE

Documentation regarding Employment Law, Health & Safety, Human Resources, National Policies and Promotional material is available to members on the Society Website.

[www.svdp.org.nz](http://www.svdp.org.nz)



## Rest in Peace

### Jill Biddick

RIP – 21 April 2017 – former secretary of our New Plymouth St Joseph's conference.

### Noeline Howitt

RIP – passed away 23 June 2017 after many years of service to the Society in Te Aroha.

### Jim Breen

Dedicated member of the Immaculate Conception Conference in Stratford for many years.



## A Reflection on my 60 odd years as a Vincentian

In the earlier days we were just a small number of women working away quietly with fortnightly meetings in small rooms. The work wasn't so busy then – mainly visits to private homes, rest homes and hospitals. Later the men's conference joined us so we could increase the work load, which included visiting the various boats in the port, especially the Russian sailors. Food parcels, power bills and school requisites were the main causes for help.

The current times have seen an increase in solo dads seeking help. As to the future, I can't see any changes anytime soon.

Personally I have enjoyed being a Vincentian and get a lot of pleasure from meeting and helping God's family.

Noeline Brennan

**ST JOSEPH'S CONFERENCE, TIMARU**

## Vincentians support Bishops' Statement

The New Zealand Catholic Bishops' Election Statement, Step out and Vote, has received a resounding endorsement from the St Vincent de Paul Society.

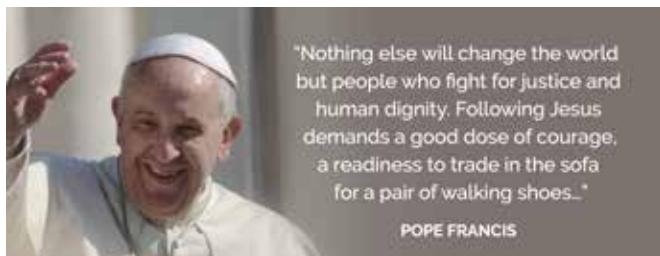
Society President Terry Comber said that the social issues that the Bishops raise are at the forefront of the Society's work.

"On behalf of Vincentians in New Zealand, I would like to publicly support their Statement.

"We encounter people every day who are facing the personal and social challenges the bishops are talking about – particularly lack of affordable housing, mental health issues and the struggle of many elderly in our society to get by each week. Their situation cannot be ignored. It is up to everybody from politicians to local communities to address these issues.

Terry Comber urges Catholics to read the Statement carefully and act on its guidance.

"The Bishops' Statement covers complex topics honestly and sensitively. It shows real awareness of what the reality is out there, a reality that our members are encountering every day.



When we vote, we need to consider the common good and the vulnerable in New Zealand society, not just ourselves."

The Bishops' statement calls for a tax structure which is fair to low income earners and advocates a thorough review and strengthening of the mental health sector. It calls the growing prison population a "national disgrace", and advocates pro-life attitudes and policies from inception to the last days of life.

The Bishops emphasise the role faith has in the public forum. It calls on all brothers and sisters in Christ to let faith guide them in their political choices, and to vote in accord with what's best for all of New Zealand, not just the individual voter.

"Faith has a vital role in the public forum," says the Bishops' Statement. Stand up, uphold the common good of our nation, choose wisely and your vote will be a blessing for our nation."

For more information, contact:

**Terry Comber** - SVDP President

**View online:** You can read the Step out and Vote Election Statement here...

[www.tinyurl.com/stepoutandvote](http://www.tinyurl.com/stepoutandvote)

## Western Bay Area Council

In May The Warehouse, Fraser Cove, Tauranga donated a quantity of duvet inners and blankets to The Society.

There were eight laden shopping trolleys and the total value was about \$5000. The Store Manager, Dave Eaton is a frequent customer at our Vinnies Stores in Tauranga and he is aware of the Charitable work the Society does. Dave stated that his team at Fraser Cove were delighted to be able to help the Society provide blankets and duvets to the needy in the Tauranga area.



The photograph shows the Western Bay Area Manager, Lorna Edlin, receiving this generous gift from the Fraser Cove Warehouse team. Dave is standing to Lorna's right.

### 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](mailto:national@svdp.org.nz)

