

# News in Brief

E-news October 2018 | Issue 20

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)



MEMBRE DE LA SOCIETE  
DE SAINT-VINCENT DE PAUL



## A message from our new National President - Marlena Hoeft-Marwick

Dear Area Presidents, Conference Presidents, Area & Conference office bearers, Conference members, Associates and all Volunteers assisting in our shops and other Vincentian work in New Zealand.

Now that the dust has settled somewhat I would like to say thank you to all who put your trust and faith in me with your votes last Saturday, 13th October. And to those who didn't, don't despair, I am confident we can find many ways to work together harmoniously with the mission of the Society foremost in our words, actions and hearts. It was comforting to know a clear

mandate was achieved in the first round. This makes my heart sing to know the majority of our Society here in New Zealand are desirous of the same goals, in serving Jesus by following the guidance of our founder Blessed Frederic Ozanam based on the principles of St Vincent de Paul.

Three years sounds like a long time, but there is much to do and I am looking forward to working with each and every Vincentian in achieving our short and long-term ambitions for the Society and for better outcomes for the poor and oppressed in our country.

Serviens in Spe - to serve in hope.

God Bless,

**Marlena Hoeft-Marwick**  
- National President



Inauguration of the New National President of the Society in NZ. *Pictured right- Marlena Hoeft-Marwick (National President). Centre - outgoing President (Terry Comber). Left - National Spiritual Advisor (Bishop Owen Dolan)*

## International Formation & Training Resources for Councils and Conferences

You will find a link to these excellent resources on our NZ website [www.svdp.org.nz/page/resources/](http://www.svdp.org.nz/page/resources/)



### Topics covered in the resource material:

- Personal Fulfilment
- History & Origins
- The Rule
- The Life of the Conference
- Spirituality
- Relations with international organisations and with the church

## Rhodes Medal Award - Michael Hanrahan

Ashburton historian and author, Michael Hanrahan, was awarded the Rhodes Medal by the Canterbury History Foundation (CHF).

Mr Hanrahan worked with Fr Kevin Clark over the years on the Diocesan Archives and published numerous books on the history of the Christchurch Diocese including 'Built in Faith, Catholic Churches of the Christchurch Diocese Past and Present, 1840-2010' and 'A Suitable Temple, A History of the Cathedral of the Blessed Sacrament 1905-2005'. The AC Rhodes History Medal was established by a gift from Mr Paul and Mrs Sally Rhodes in memory of Paul's father, Alfred Cecil Rhodes in 2001. Cecil Rhodes was a respected businessman and community leader in upper Riccarton, Christchurch, until his death in 1970.

The medal honours and recognises lifetime achievement in support of historical research, archives, museums or community awareness of the value of History.

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*Professor Geo Rice, Christchurch Mayor Lianne Dalziel and Michael Hanrahan*

## Cyclone Relief Samoa

Shelters suffered major damage in the cyclone earlier this year and thanks to fundraising efforts they have now been rebuilt, photos below show some of the damage and then reconstruction. Many thanks to those that donated to this relief fund.



# The General Council launches the film festival on the seven founders of the SSVP

During the annual meetings of the International General Council (CGI), held in Salamanca (Spain) in June 2018, we announced the rules for participating in the Festival “The Seven Founders”, which seeks to focus on the moment when the first Vincentian Conference was founded.

The festival aims at stimulating the knowledge and research, in a playful and talented way, about the origin of

the SSVP and the main role of the seven founders: Antoine Frederic Ozanam, Auguste Le Taillandier, Jules Delvaux, Paul Lamache, François Lallier, Félix Clavé and Emmanuel Bailly de Surcy.

Only the active Vincentians in the conferences can participate in the festival. The videos or films presented can be produced in three formats: short film (up to 40 minutes), medium-length film (from 41 to 69 minutes) and feature

film (70 minutes).

The deadline for the submission of videos or films to the General Council is **15th May 2019**. The audio-visual works will be evaluated by a special commission and the announcement of the winners will take place on **9th September 2019**, date of the liturgical feast of Ozanam. The awards range from 1,000 to 2,000 euros.

“We hope that there will be very interesting productions, set in the Paris of 1833, when those seven visionaries had, under the inspiration of the Divine Providence, the brilliant idea of founding the Society of St. Vincent de Paul. The seven of them, without exception, were instrumental in the establishment of this important charity, which today provides relevant services to mankind”, stated the fellow member Renato Lima, 16th President General.

**Click here** to know the rules of the festival. Take part! Do not miss this historic opportunity.



## Twinning Update

We recently at the request of the President General we asked Area Councils and Conferences to support if they could donations for flood victims in India and those affected by earthquake and tsunami in Indonesia. You can be well proud of your effort, NZ\$92,000.00 was donated. At the request of donors it ended up as a near equal split between both disasters so it was treated as such. The funds were forwarded to CGI Paris to be distributed.

In an email from Thomas Tan, ITVP Asia, he commented on the Indonesian situation, “Bro. Wirawan has informed me that they will be collaborating with YKBS, an NGO founded by the CM Fathers in Indonesia, to bring relief aid to the victims of the earthquake and tsunami in Sulawesi. They will be meeting next week to plan their works; as they have done similarly in Lombok.”

Thank you for your generosity.

**Arthur - NZ Twinning Officer**

# Young Vinnies in Southland Catholic Schools

The Catholic Schools in Invercargill and Southland in 2018, are like 'beehives' of positive activity to support those less fortunate than themselves. Each of the Catholic Schools have committed groups of Voluntary Young Vinnies here in the South:

- St Patrick's South Invercargill
- St Joseph's Central Invercargill
- St Therese's North Invercargill
- Sacred Heart Waikiki Invercargill
- St Patrick's Nightcaps, Southland
- St Thomas Aquinas Winton
- St Mary's Gore, Southland
- St Theresa's Bluff
- Verdon College, Invercargill - (secondary school)

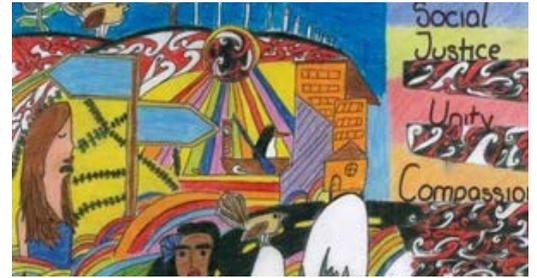


Each of school has their own Young Vinnies group which is accompanied by a teacher from the school who supports and empowers the students to be creative and caring. The interventions are very creative and have made life easier for others. Some of the actions include things like a sleep over in the school hall, coin trails, sausage sizzles which involve parents and caregivers, visits to the children in hospital and celebrating the feast day of St Vincent de Paul with a School Mass in the evening to which parents are invited.



The Catholic School groups are committed to making a difference for those in need. So are the Principals and their staff, parents and caregivers! God bless these kind and practical followers of Jesus.

*Left: Young Vinnie leaders from St Patrick's Invercargill*



*Above: Some of St Therese's Young Vinnies with the collections they had for their end of year Eucharist where the students had collected toys for those less fortunate than themselves. In the photo Ann Kennelly Young Vinnies Co Ordinator for Southland.*

## St Vincent de Paul Marlborough Community Foodbank

In May 2018 the Mayor, John Leggett visited to view the procedure/operation of the Marlborough Community Foodbank Inc.

Pictured at right: St Vincent de Paul Marlborough & Community Foodbank members, left to right: Pat Cairns (Committee Member), Wynnie Cosgrove (Manager), Chros Knowles, Tania Silcock, Helen Faulkner (Volunteer) and the Mayor, John Leggett.



# Country kids reach out to suffering farming families



BY PETER OWENS (Re-published with permission from NZ Catholic.)

St John's Catholic Primary School in Ranfurly, Central Otago is small. It has a roll of 62 students from the town of Ranfurly and the surrounding Maniatoto Region. Ranfurly is a farming service town these days, but has a colourful past as one of the key areas in the 19th century Otago gold rushes. Geraldine Duncan teaches 24 young people in years 6, 7 and 8 at the school and they all belong to the school's branch of the Young Vinnies, the youth branch of the Society of St Vincent de Paul. Recently, the young people in the school branch did something that has been applauded throughout the South and which has focused local attention on the school.

The members of the branch all made cards to be distributed to farmers affected by the dreaded mycoplasma bovis disease that is having a serious impact on the New Zealand dairy industry, including in the South. The Young Vinnies at St John's School then sent the cards to Gavan Herlihy of Wanaka, who is chairman of the Otago Rural Support Trust and who also has a close association with the school, for distribution to farmers and their families whose lives are affected by the animal disease.

Mr Herlihy told NZ Catholic that he was quite overcome with the cards and congratulated the students on what he referred to as a "caring gesture". He said the outbreak has caused a very stressful time for the farmers impacted by the disease and their families.

Herlihy said the cards were deeply appreciated by the recipients who treasured them.

According to Mr Herlihy, the mycoplasma bovis outbreak has hit the southern rural community and that "we now have a situation when the rural people of the South must support one another".

He said the generous gesture of the Young Vinnies at St John's is a "shining example" of that support.

In sending the cards to Mr Herlihy to distribute, the St John's Young Vinnies told him their organisation was there to help people in need.

The supporting letter said the focus of the branch for 2018 is on helping and comforting the community at large. They had decided to do this through a variety of projects.

According to Ms Duncan, the other projects undertaken by the local Young Vinnies include baking for the elderly and visiting residents who live by themselves. She said the young people have a strong sense of "practical charity" and of their duty as Catholics and members of the Young Vinnies.



Above: Some of the cards sent to farmers.

Below: Geraldine Duncan (left) with members of the Young Vinnies at Ranfurly.



# Vincentian in Paris leads effort to resettle migrants fleeing danger

by Dale Gavlak

**PARIS - As Europe continues to struggle with migrant and refugee arrivals, Catholics in the French capital are heeding Pope Francis's call to come to their aid by providing practical and spiritual help to the newcomers.**

A key figure coordinating Catholic aid is Jerome Perrin, president of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul in Paris and a member of St. Rosalie Parish, located in a Left Bank neighborhood south of the Seine River.

"As a young student, I took a course on immigrants and how to assist them. At the time, it was the Algerians," Perrin, 63, told Catholic News Service in a parish office adorned with a photo of Francis.

Fast forward four decades to 2015, when a massive influx of refugees from Syria and elsewhere made the dangerous journey to Europe, riveting the world's attention.

It was the call of Francis and retired Paris Cardinal Andre Vingt-Trois to respond to the newcomers in need that pushed Perrin and other Catholics into action.

Perrin discussed the situation with St. Rosalie staff, established a communication system to contact refugees, and began a refugee association. Nearby parishes joined the effort.

"For me, that means in the spirit of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, carrying the message to those near at hand and in solidarity," said Perrin, a vice president at automobile manufacturer Renault and the holder of a doctorate in physics and bachelor's degree in Catholic canonical theology.

Perrin first focused on accommodations for refugees. In Paris, finding housing is a challenge, even for Parisians, but he was able to locate a house for Syrian and Iraqi refugees. "Then I found a place called La Mie de Pain (breadcrumbs)," he said.

Not far from St. Rosalie Church, the modern complex mainly housed homeless men. At Perrin's request, managers agreed to take in 60 migrants from Sudan, Eritrea and Afghanistan. A lawyer was recruited to handle legal issues. A program was introduced so refugees could learn French and the local culture through monthly outings and special meals to encourage relationship-building between the Parisians and the newcomers.

"Sharing a meal together and chatting, a young Sudanese migrant began to show photos, recounting the details of



Jerome Perrin, president of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul in Paris and a leader in coordinating Catholic aid to refugees, talks with colleague, Anne de Buffevent July 10 outside the city's St. Rosalie Church. (Credit: Dale Gavlak/CNS.)

his harrowing journey, during the first parish meal," Perrin said. "This deeply impressed me and underlined that each person who comes to France has their own unique story to tell."

Integration for the refugees and migrants into French society is a significant challenge.

"Another young Sudanese picked up French quickly, in six months, found a place to live and work as well. A success story, we would say. But he told me, 'It's tough. I feel alone. My neighbors don't know me and with other Sudanese, relationships tend to fall along tribal lines and don't guarantee friendship,'" Perrin said of the young man.

St. Rosalie is providing housing for a Syrian family and is helping two other families from the war-torn country. One of the refugees is George, a Catholic from Aleppo. He asked that his real name not be used out of fear for reprisals to relatives in his homeland.

A one-time car parts distributor, George, 46, speaks fluent French. He said he left Syria in 2017 because of the war and feels "Christians in the Orient are no longer properly represented in their society."

"Life is easier with my French friends," he told CNS. "I have found solidarity and fraternity in the context of Catholic parish life in Paris."

George, who eventually hopes to be cleared for work by French authorities, credited Perrin with finding his family a place to live and being a source of continual hope for refugees.

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“Jerome has helped me, them and everybody,” George said of Perrin. “That’s why I call him, ‘Super Jerome.’”

Perrin only credits God and the Holy Spirit for some of the miraculous interventions.

Ever the networker, Perrin said he has a portfolio of associations and organizations providing specialized aid to migrants and refugees.

“It’s important to link people together, rather than for individuals to provide help solely on their own,” he said.

“Now, I feel like a small orchestra conductor,” Perrin added. “So, I appreciate the cooperation we now have among associations and parishes.”

In the north of Paris, Father Kokoli-Ce Herve Loua of St. Denis de la Chapelle Parish hosts a weekly Saturday breakfast with parishioners and migrants and refugees from the nearby Porte de la Chapelle area where many live. He coordinates with the St. Rosalie team as well.

“It’s very diverse. There are a lot of Sudanese, Eritreans but also people from West Africa, including Ivory Coast, Mali,

and Guinea,” the young priest, who hails from Guinea, told CNS during a breakfast gathering.

“We have breakfast together, people can also recharge their cellphones and do a small French course. Everyone is welcome who needs a smile, a small word of encouragement,” the priest said.

“We also pray with people. We tell them the Good News, we celebrate and we serve” the mainly Muslim families, Loua said.

Paris Archbishop Michel Aupetit has highlighted migration and the importance of serving refugees since he was installed in January, Perrin said.

“A huge meeting with the archbishop and about 400 people from all the parishes working with refugees took place just days following his (installation),” Perrin said.

“It wasn’t just a symbolic passage from one archbishop to the new one, but a recognition from the French Church of the vital ministry needed to be given to refugees and migrants.”

## Levin Conference

Donations are received on a regular basis from members of the Parish and from the local school children. An example of donated items:

- 75 dozen eggs
- 20 boxes of Weetbix
- 10 large pumpkins
- Large bags of carrots
- 12 bags of pinecones
- A large box of apples along with 5 boxes of food
- Whiteware & household items
- Several boxes of bread from Yarrows
- A member of the Parish recently donated \$300 towards the food pantry

A recent membership drive resulted in 10 new members who will assist with Conference work in the area.

Visitation is done by two people, male and female if possible. There are currently 62 clients, 113 adults, 9 teens, 135 children within a 3-month period. The school children have been raising funds for Tonga.

Donations are gratefully received from locals living in Levin and that helps the conference to assist those in need in the community.



# Obituaries

## Jim Norris

Passed away on October 5th, 2018. Vincentians and family farewelled Jim with the Rosary followed the next day with a Requiem Mass at what was referred to as his second home, St Anthony's Church in Mangere, Auckland.

Jim was a long time Vincentian and was fully committed and dedicated to helping the needy.

He often worked without consulting others but did what he perceived as appropriate.



Jim was prepared to take on other duties in addition to being a Conference President, he became the area President of South Auckland and also became the editor for national newsletter.

Jim has truly earned his place in the kingdom of God, having faithfully worked for the Lord and caring for the needy.

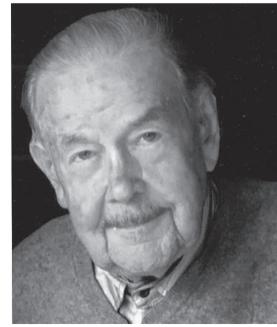
*May he be united with his loved ones and enjoy his eternal rest.*

## Max Fitzgibbon

29 September 1926 – 30 July 2018

Please pray for the repose of the soul of Max Fitzgibbon, member of St Joseph's Conference Papanui, Christchurch, who died on 30th July 2018 age 91. Max was a former Conference treasurer well known for his sage advice on conference affairs. He will be missed.

*Rest in Peace*



## Contact Us

### News in Brief

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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)

## New Look Website

You might have noticed our national website has gone through a bit of a makeover [www.svdp.org.nz](http://www.svdp.org.nz)

The way in which people can donate online has also changed, we now have a dedicated givealittle page

<https://givealittle.co.nz/org/society-of-st-vincent-de-paul-in-nz#>

