

News in Brief

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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

Celebrating the Society of St. Vincent de Paul International Youth Day – A Piece of Cake.

On Thursday 4 July, young people from around the world had the opportunity of celebrating The Society of St. Vincent de Paul International Youth Day. The theme of International Youth Day 2019 being, ‘Young Vincentians Caring for the Environment! Caring today to generate sustainability and ensure tomorrow’.

As part of International Youth Day celebrations, The Society of St. Vincent de Paul Nelson Area Council held a competition for Vinnies from all groups within the area to design a cake as to what it means to be a young person in the Society of St Vincent de Paul. The winner of the cake competition was St. Peter Chanel Vinnie, Finn Campbell whose design not only fitted well with the theme of International Youth Day but represented ‘new growth’ depicting the important role that young people play in The Society of St. Vincent de Paul throughout the world.

According to William Alves, International Vice-President for Youth, Children and Teenagers for The Society of St. Vincent de Paul Council General International, *“Starting back with a 20-year-old university student in France, young people have always instilled an enthusiastic and proactive spirit over time to achieve an organised, multi-*

faceted and fearless society that is building networks and forging bonds.” Examples of this include “Vincentian Youth” who have taken on the role of national president in regional and central councils throughout the whole structure and are involved in developing international strategic plans. International Youth Day emphasises that young people are of paramount importance to The Society of St. Vincent de Paul.

For Finn and the St. Peter Chanel Vinnies celebrating International Youth Day was indeed a piece of cake. Finn was presented with the cake of his design which he nominated to share with his class, all of whom are involved in the Vinnies programme. Says Finn, *“I wanted to share the cake with my class because they care about each other and their work.”* Finn was also presented with a \$20 voucher to spend at the Richmond St. Vincent de Paul Centre.



Above: Finn's winning cake design
Left: Finn and the cake based on his design.



MEMBRE DE LA SOCIETE
DE SAINT-VINCENT DE PAUL



For Vinnies at Garin College and St. Paul's School, International Youth Day was an opportunity to live out the message this year's theme sent to the world. With plastic bags being banned the same week, Vinnies from both groups set to work creating material bags from upcycled and repurposed t-shirts. Over thirty of these bags were created and donated to the Richmond St. Vincent de Paul Centre for customer use.

With the fact that "Vincentian Youth" around the world are part of communities that are leading the change, seeking sustainable practices as new ways of practicing charity is going to be very much the way of the future in preserving the planet, meeting human needs and focusing on the common good.



Above: Young Vinnies from Garin College and St. Paul's School.

Confirmation candidates in New Plymouth prepare and serve Community Meal

Bishop Charles Drennan confirmed 25 young people in New Plymouth on Sunday 26th May.

As part of the preparation for confirmation, the candidates wanted to carry out an Act of Service. One of the youth leaders, who is also a member of the St Vincent de Paul conference, suggested that they might like to cater for one of the weekly SVdP Community Meals.

What followed was an energetic food preparation session on Sunday 10th May prior to the Tuesday night meal. The young people and their supporters cooked a three course meal for up to 50 people and then served it to the regular diners on the following Tuesday evening. The diners were treated to soup, nachos with meat sauce, sour cream, pasta bake and coleslaw followed by a fruit crumble dessert.

This photo shows the confirmation candidates with the fruits of their labour. They have been joined in the food service, by one of the regulars who is and enthusiastically drawing attention to the food which is ready to be served. This Act of Service enabled the candidates to understanding the gift of giving and being charitable to one another. They encountered Christ through the people they served and experienced how serving and helping others is a beautiful grace This is one of the love languages that demonstrates Gods' love.



Lounge a 'long-lasting legacy'

Money bequeathed to the Society of Saint Vincent De Paul Westport has helped the O'Connor Home build residents a new lounge. The money was left to the society by the late Seamus Murphy.

Mr. Murphy had left them the money with the wish that it be "spent in Buller for Buller people". The society decided to give the money to help with the home's six-stage development which included a lounge in the hospital wing of the home, now named after Mr Murphy.

St Vincent de Paul president Julie Hands said the development would fulfill Mr. Murphy's wishes. "It keeps our elderly in the area instead of them having to go elsewhere".

O'Connor Home general manager Susan Watson said the hospital wing upgrade would not have progressed without the donation. The wing was fully occupied. Mrs. Watson said through his generosity Mr. Murphy had left a long lasting legacy for Buller.

The lounge was popular with the residents. "The residents enjoy being here because there's lots of coming and going. People stop and say hi to them". Other upgrades to the hospital wing included the addition of 20 beds.



St Vincent de Paul members Lto R: Kath O'Connor, Ailsa Coghlan, Anne Killkolly, Moira Lamont, President Julie Hands with the plaque, Daphne Fitton and O'Connor Home General Manager Susan Watson.

St Joseph's Levin Young Vinnies Term 2, 2019

During the last four weeks of Term two, an enthusiastic group of seven new Young Vinnies under the guidance of Margaret and Teresa; spent one hour a week gaining an understanding of the St. Vincent de Paul Society, finding out what we do, why we do it and how we do it.

Week one was spent in learning a bit about the origins of the Society of St Vincent de Paul and how the founder, Frederic Ozanam was inspired by St Vincent de Paul's care for the people in prisons and hospitals. Margaret then conducted a tour of the Food Shed and described the ways in which the Levin St Vincent de Paul members cared for people in the Levin community.

The next session began with discussing the different ways a person can be needy. The group continued the discussion while making handy containers from recycled tin can and paper straws and came to a consensus that, while families and others might need food and shelter, the elderly can be lonely because they have no family support and often can't get out to meet with ours. By the end of week two we had decided to make gifts of biscuits and to visit a group of elderly citizens to show that we cared!

During the third session, with the help of Margaret's "Magic Machine" we made Almond and Chocolate Chip biscuits in the school hall kitchen, only burning one batch (not the children's Fault)! The assembly line made, baked and packaged nineteen individual packets with labels in an hour.

On the last Wednesday of the Term the seven Young Vinnies, accompanied by Margaret and Maggie (class Teacher) visited The Madison Lifestyle Village bearing gifts. They were warmly received, conversing with some of the residents and singing an impromptu song. One of the residents then invited the group into her villa to show them her memoranda.



Papal honour for four decades of exceptional stewardship to the elderly and to liturgy practice

A joyful Mass of love and thanksgiving on Sunday 26 May 2019 was concelebrated at a packed-out St Anthony's Church, Seatoun, Wellington, in the Holy Trinity Parish, to present Mrs Julie Marshall with the papal honour of the Benemerenti Medal and framed scroll awarded in January 2019 by the Holy Father Pope Francis. Julie has been associated with the Seatoun & Miramar Conference for nearly forty years.



Julie Marshall receiving the Benemerenti Medal and scroll from Fr Ephrem Tigga, Mons David Bell, and Fr Sanele Finau.

Ever since she came with her family to Wellington in the early 1980s and continuing strongly today, Julie Marshall has carried out her compassionate and devoted stewardship in God's name on a daily basis to the spiritual, physical and social wellbeing of 20-30 elderly parishioners and their families in the eastern suburbs. With her band of dedicated helpers and members of the St Vincent de Paul Society, Julie also organises "Thursday Friends" for the elderly in the St Anthony's Church community comprising of the rosary, Mass, updates and birthdays, lunch, social get-together and transport on every Thursday except in school holidays.

At the forefront of Julie's outstanding service has been her life-long personal prayer, and leadership of liturgy and faith practice in our community and in other parishes she has lived in.

Julie has also been quietly archiving a precious and substantial treasure trove of interviews, celebrations, eulogies, reflections and photos of many people and events over these four decades in St Anthony's Church community.

Brendan Quirk

President, Seatoun & Miramar Conference,
Holy Trinity Parish, Wellington.

CONFERENCE OF ST. JOSEPH, PICTON

Holiday Home

The Vincentian Holiday Home, located at 110 High Street, Picton and operated by the Society of St. Vincent de Paul has been completely renovated. The home was originally made possible by a grant from an estate bequeathed to the Society in Nelson in 1978 circa. It was envisaged that a holiday house in Picton would be made available for the use of families in need: either recovering from mental or physical illness, for people under stress or pressure, or those in need of help through financial difficulties. In the main, people who qualify for the use of the house would, for one reason or another, not be able to have a holiday otherwise.

Former Picton President, Ron Peters, said that many NZ Councils contributed to the renovations namely; Nelson, Thermal Lands, Canterbury, Auckland North, Westport Conference, Holy Name Conference, Ashburton, Blenheim Conference, Dunedin, Manawatu, Hutt Valley and Wairarapa. There were contributions from other private entities also, but these councils and conferences donated a total of \$58,500 which was a great support.

Please circulate this information to your conferences and councils and encourage them to seek out those in need (Rule 1.5 To seek out the poor Vincentians strive to seek out and find those in need and the forgotten, the victims of exclusion or adversity).

In order that visitors to the holiday home have as happy a time as possible, certain guidelines have been set.

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. When a firm booking is made by a Conference we ask that payment accompany the letter. The charge is \$25 per night or \$150 per week. [Note: If the family is unable to meet the cost of the holiday, then the conference or council concerned will assist with costs).

As the majority of families needing the facility often have



children, or have some sickness or financial difficulties, we suggest that, where possible, a conference enquire about the travel arrangements and assist where necessary. There have been occasions where families have cancelled because they could not afford the fares. This is frustrating to all parties and an empty house is of no benefit to anybody.

The house accommodates 6 people comfortably. It is fully furnished with linen, blankets, quilts, pillows, towels, tea towels, dishcloths, etc. The kitchen is fully equipped and has a refrigerator. There is no bath, but the house has a shower and hand-basin. There is a washing machine in the laundry, and visitors are asked to wash the linen and hang it on the line, weather permitting, on the day of their departure. There is a colour TV set and there is an electric heater provided.

The house is normally let for one week at a time - from Saturday to Saturday. This is to allow the maximum number of families to have a holiday. Extensions to two weeks can be made under special circumstances but not in school holiday times.

If the house is not booked it may be used for weekend travellers recommended by conferences or members of other conferences.

When arrangements are being made for the use of the house, we ask that the conference concerned let us know how the families will be arriving in Picton (e.g. by ferry, bus, train or car) and approximately at what time they can be expected. If they are coming by car and their arrival time is indefinite, then the address of our SVdP member should be given to them, so that they can pick up the key. Our SVdP representative, if required, will meet those travelling by ferry, train or bus. We would then transport the families to the house, and at the end of their stay we will arrange to take them to the station or terminal.

We do not supply food, but there are many shops and services very close to the house.



Welcome. We trust that everyone who comes enjoys their stay in our town.
We are more than ready, and always available, to help in any way we can.

For bookings please contact Maria McConway - 0273536756 or 03 573-7111



How to maintain a generous spirit when you are in the middle class

By Philip Kosloski. July 12, 2019

St. Louis Martin is a great example of a comfortable middle-class man, who was generous in everything he did.

While much is said about the rich or the poor, very little is every spoken about the middle class. This is a class of people who live comfortably in the middle, with enough money to live on, plus a little extra. They aren't worried about putting food on the table, but they aren't rich enough to spend money recklessly.

St. Louis Martin (father of St. Therese of Lisieux) was in a similar situation. He was a business owner, along with his wife, and they had enough money to support their growing family in 19th-century France.

Yet, Louis practiced concrete actions to keep him humble, always remembering those who were less fortunate than him.

For example, when asked why he always attended the 6 a.m. Mass, Louis remarked, "Because it is the Mass of the poor and the working people." Furthermore, whenever he went on a journey, he always travelled third class, deliberately choosing to be less comfortable and to associate with the poor.

Louis also responded immediately to the needs of others. When he heard about family members in a difficult financial situation, he would sell his stocks or do something else that would help alleviate their burden.

When Louis met an old man at church in need of food, he asked him to come over for a family meal. When the poor man was about to leave their home, Louis knelt before the poor man and begged him for a blessing.



Sometimes it's easy in the middle class to be overprotective of your finances, fearing that you will end up in poverty. Yet, according to Louis, this kind of attitude is harmful and can lead to an uncharitable spirit.

Instead, it's important to be both wise and generous, giving what you can to others without endangering your own situation or family. There will always be someone less fortunate than ourselves, and being in the middle class doesn't exempt a person from giving to others.

Above all, keep a generous spirit, remain humble and associate with the poor. It will help you amass a great treasure in the next world, one that is far more valuable than we can imagine.

Tip Top comes to the rescue

James Williams (Northland Area Council) managed to get 66 loaves of bread from the Tip Top in Whangarei for lunches in low decile schools.

James was picking up the regular Sunday order when he was asked what he did with all the bread - he had been seen picking up large quantities previously. James told the gentleman about the school lunches and was told he would be given free of charge, 66 loaves every Sunday as part of Tip Top's service to the community.



Regional Seminars to Revitalise Vinnies

A series of regional seminars are being run throughout New Zealand focusing on spiritual renewal and the recruitment of new members to join the Society of St Vincent de Paul.



The seminars, run by the Society's National Spiritual Adviser Fr Jeff Drane, are being held in response to requests from the National Board and members at the grassroots level. The theme of the seminar series is: There's work to be done – renewing the Society's Vision in New Zealand.

"The seminars will provide an opportunity for people to be inspired once again by the vision of the Society and to be re-motivated in putting their faith into action," says Jeff. "Together we will re-look at the mission of the Society and re-evaluate what we are doing locally to meet the needs of the disadvantaged, particularly those on the fringes of society.

In his Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium*, Pope Francis reminds us that the liberation and promotion of the poor is fundamental to being a Christian, says Jeff.

In the words of Pope Francis: "None of us can think we are exempt from concern for the poor and for social justice. Spiritual conversion, the intensity of the love of God and neighbour, zeal for justice and peace, the Gospel meaning of the poor and of poverty, are required of everyone. (#201)"

It is hoped that new initiatives and new ventures will come out of the renewal seminars, says Jeff.

At the seminars, there will be a strong focus on recruiting new members and pooling members' experience of what works well in attracting new and younger members.

"The membership of the Society is ageing and we need fresh blood," says Jeff. "We need to invite people from a range of faith communities – Maori, Pasifika, Filipino, Indian, Korean for example – to set up Vinnies groups in which they feel comfortable. There is a great opportunity to harness the

vitality of these communities in the service of those most in need in society."

The Society's National Youth Adviser to National Board, Paola Minehan says there is huge potential to attract young people to the work of the Society.

"Young people are always searching for something meaningful, something worthwhile to contribute to," says Paola. "There's plenty of untapped potential in the Catholic community but there's the wider community of young New Zealanders who are also looking for a spirituality. They are just sitting there wanting to help and they want to do things."

The challenge for the Society is to be flexible enough to engage with them, says Paola.

"We need to come up with projects which young people can do and which fit in with their schedules. Young people have lots of skills and talents and they can offer those to the Society if you give them the opportunity. The way the Society is organised, meetings can be hard for young people to get to and it can be a bit of a closed shop.

"These days you have to think flexibly if you want to reach the volunteer workforce. Offer them a project, maybe using social media, so they can join in and get involved as part of their busy lives."

The Society of St Vincent de Paul was established in New Zealand more than 150 years ago and there are currently more than...

5,000 active members in New Zealand



Roadshow meeting in Wellington, Hutt, Mana region



Roadshow meeting in Wellington, Hutt, Mana region



Roadshow meeting in Hastings/Napier

For further comment
on these seminars
please contact:

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Society of St Vincent de Paul
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Tribute to Mark

The darkness of the garden
Had nought to do with light
Two men, solemnly sitting
Staring at anything but each other
As if connecting eyes would confirm
And hasten the prognosis
Sombre mood, impending loss
Uncertainty and fear...but stoic
People depend on us

Early memories, mere feelings
Of pre-natal intertwined limbs...touching
Secure, safe and loving, protected in the darkness
Young laughter, fun, competing
Striving to outdo, learning, testing limits
Identical shells confusing all but those closest
The outworld seeing one, our inworld being two
Growing, together, building two personalities
Reaching separate manhood, but forever linked

Separate lives, separate roles
Life's tumult distanced identical souls
Separated, never apart, two beating hearts
Conjoined by intimate understanding
How the other thinks, reacts
Instincts moulded in the womb
Honed by close companionship
Over the formative years
Two souls, but one

by Terry Jordan, 13 June 2018

The phone call split my soul
Calm statement, "asbestos...not long now..."
Shrieking denial, fury, anger...Can't, won't happen
We'll beat this if it kills us
"Harden up" he says..."it is what it is"
Passive acceptance, no fighting back
Only watching, waiting, wasting
Black humour displacing denial
Equity and justice, empty words in hollow hope

The dark hospice garden bathed in sunlight
Identical twins, touching hands, brushing arms
Reminiscent of intertwined limbs of our genesis
Silent communication, unspoken words but not unheard
Thanks and love, unvoiced salutes to each other
He slowly turns, eyes lock, weak voice
"Do you want any spare parts?" Sly grin
"I'll have your wallet" is my riposte
The garden lights up briefly

Long final nights of hospice love
Watching cricket recalling Naenae backyard games
Where skills were crafted and bonds built
Too weak now, no talk, just arms touching
Silent sign of love...unspoken...deeply felt
Guilt in health, contrasted to a wasted frame
The final struggle, ragged breaths, no pain
Darkness is complete...I am halved! Numb!

Obituaries



Nancy Clare Waayer (nee Roberts)

Died on Wednesday 1st May, 2019, peacefully with family by her side. Loving wife of the late Leo. Beloved mother and mother-in-law of Maria and Anaru, Martin and Elisabeth, Jim and Karen, Tom and Jan, Leonie and Chris. Nanna to her 18 grandchildren and Grandnan to her 8 great-grandchildren. Special friend to many, including Roland (deceased) and Raewyn.

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



Father John Pearce - Beloved Parish Priest

A parish which runs from Kaikōura to Picton is in shock after their priest suddenly died.

Father John Pearce died on Sunday afternoon at Blenheim Airport, where he was about to depart for Rome.

On Sunday morning, Pearce gave a lively sermon at the St Mary's Church in Blenheim encouraging the community to live their faith daily, by being in it, being present and aware.

Hailing from Sydney, Pearce, 68, had served the Marlborough parish for two and a half years.

Described as charismatic, energetic, a good mate and someone that loved a joke, the death of Pearce has left the Star of the Sea Catholic community in mourning.

Star of the Sea Marlborough Catholic Parish includes the communities of Blenheim, Havelock, Kaikōura, Picton, Renwick, Seddon and Ward.

Assistant parish Priest Father Pat McIndoe said everyone was in shock. "It's been a slow burn, I'm stunned really, I'm still getting used to the fact that he's not going to be walking in.

"He was so large in life, in his interests, in his love for people. He loved to joke, he loved life. The spirit of hospitality was very much him."

Pearce was one of the 'prime movers' behind a vigil in Blenheim to honour the victims and families of the Christchurch Mosque Shootings, McIndoe said.

"He embraced New Zealand. He embraced Māori taonga. He had just started taking lessons in Te Reo Māori," McIndoe said.

Pearce moved to Marlborough in January 2017, having previously worked as a parish priest in Sydney. He had two brothers and a sister who were living in Australia.

He made his vows as a Passionist and was ordained as a priest in 1976.

Parish pastoral council chairperson Greg Stretch said Pearce kept himself very busy, living and loving life.

"He was always smiling. He was a great story teller and loved to talk. Everyone was welcome in John's eyes."



Father John Pearce