



MEMBRE DE LA SOCIETE
DE SAINT-VINCENT DE PAUL



SOCIETY OF ST VINCENT DE PAUL

News in Brief

E-news May 2021 | Issue 27

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

TWINNING REPORT - APRIL 2021

TONGA

A container of school desks and chairs and other miscellaneous items of furniture has been unpacked in Tonga earlier in the month. These goods came from Baradine College, University of Auckland, Ormiston Hospital and Regus Auckland Chancery.



Detail from SSVdP National President Sakapo Lolohea indicates the equipment that is still needed. We intend to dispatch another container from Napier probably in June. The list includes:

1. wheelchairs (15)
2. bedsheets (single & double)
3. single mattresses
4. pillowcases
5. diapers
6. toilet papers
7. house shoes for the elderly
8. walking staffs and walkers
9. hospital beds
10. kitchenware - pots & pans, cutlery

We will circulate the request detail to Area Councils this month.

SAMOA

Communication is ongoing re needs. There is another container been loaded currently in the Kapi-Mana area. Keith Norton has also advised of hospital and medical equipment been consolidated for a container to be shipped from Christchurch.

SRI LANKA

At the AGM we spoke of our 60th year of Twinning with Sri Lanka. The following are key aspects of the presentation.

In 2021 we will celebrate 60 years of Twinning with Sri Lanka.

During these years we have contributed in so many ways in the assisting of those in need and we can be well pleased with what our Twinning funding support has achieved.

Reflecting on historical detail we have given assistance in the areas of health, education, housing, sanitation, land procurement, the elderly, families and specific projects. We funded recovery aid after the Tsunami of 2010 and the Bombings of 2019. Support was there during the years of internal un-rest. Assistance is ongoing and it is important that we continue to support a country with much need.



Land purchased after Tsunami 2010

Twinning - Sri Lanka 60 years - Highlights



Housing, Ragama, Colombo



Montessori School, Kotehena, Colombo



A home in Gurugalla



SVdP Home for Elders, Nagoda, Colombo



Providing meals, Kandana



Material aid, Wattala



Water supply, Sevuwanthivu, Chilaw



WC project, Sevuwanthivu



Home for disabled, mentally and physically, Batticola

Sri Lanka report continued...

In Sri Lanka poverty measured at varying levels. Indicative detail is if you earn US\$1,200.00 (NZ\$1,700.00) per year you are not in poverty. When reviewing the minimum wage detail below there must be many people living in poverty, est: 3% c800,000.

The Minimum Wage to be paid in Sri Lanka in 2020 was:

- Minimum income per month Rs 10,000, NZ\$71.00
- Minimum daily income Rs 400, NZ\$2.84

What we need is for Area Councils and Conferences to consider is taking on an extra Twin. This relates to NZ\$80.00 per quarter. This would further enhance the opportunity to assist those with great need.

There are currently 27 Area/Diocesan/Central Councils and 325 active conferences. We support 25 Councils and 167 Conferences.

As we refer to the Rule Part 1:

“4.1 Twinning Conferences and Councils help others in need, both at the national and international level. This is one of the activities most cherished by the Society. The awareness of acute poverty in a great number of countries and the Vincentian preferential option for the poor spurs Conferences and Councils to assist others with less resources or in particular situations.”

COST OF LIVING, BASIC NEEDS:

Toothpaste	Rs. 100.00 (120g)	NZD 0.70
Body soap	Rs. 55.00 (100g)	NZD 0.40
Laundry soap	Rs. 50.00	NZD 0.35
Milk powder	Rs. 390.00 (400g)	NZD 2.80
Tea	Rs. 120.00 (100g)	NZD 0.85
Sugar	Rs. 105.00 (1kg)	NZD 0.75
Bread	Rs. 85.00	NZD 0.60
Rice	Rs. 100.00 (1kg)	NZD 0.70
Vegetables	Rs. 200.00 (1kg)	NZD 1.40
Coconut	Rs. 100.00	NZD 0.70
Lentils	Rs. 165.00 (1kg)	NZD 1.20
Eggs	Rs. 264.00 (1 doz)	NZD 1.90
Wheat flour	Rs. 105.00 (1kg)	NZD 0.75
Canned fish	Rs. 250.00 (425g)	NZD 1.80
Fresh fish	Rs. 1000.00 (1kg)	NZD 7.10
Chicken	Rs. 400.00 (1kg)	NZD 2.85
Normal doctor’s consultation fees	Rs. 350.00	upwards NZD 2.50
Specialist doctor’s consultation fees	Rs. 2500.00	upwards NZD 17.75
School footwear depending on size	Rs. 1250.00	upwards NZD 8.90
Tuition fees depending on grade	Rs. 2000.00	upwards NZD 14.20



POMPALLIER CATHOLIC COLLEGE

Mrs Williams (Religious Education teacher and also runs the Whangarei Conference of the St Vincent de Paul Society) was running out of meals for Vinnies so some of our Hospitality students stepped up, spending Monday’s lesson chopping onions until they cried, and Tuesday’s lesson busily cooking a healthy and nutritious meal. They don’t gain anything from doing this work - neither credits or anything to eat - true service to others.





The Spirituality of Charity

This article is an abridged version of Jim Consedine's keynote address to this year's St Vincent de Paul AGM.

The central command of Jesus, 'to love God and love your neighbour' leads to our understanding from scripture that charity and justice form the component parts of this command. Today, I have been asked to reflect on, 'the spirituality of charity'. But this can only be done by linking charity with justice the way the scriptures do. You cannot love your poor neighbours properly (charity) without also seeking to help heal the social situations that keeps them poor (justice).

The St Vincent de Paul Society founder, Frederic Ozanam, was clear about this connection in the 1840s. For him, charity and justice formed two sides of the same coin. He founded a newspaper to link the two truths. As the Vincentian website tells us, 'In 1848, 15 years after the establishment of the Society, with poverty widespread in Europe, massive slums in the cities and 275,000 workers unemployed in France, he started a newspaper, *The New Era*, dedicated to securing justice for the poor and the working classes.' (*Famvin website*)

To return to the present, I would suggest that at the heart of our response to need initially is neither charity nor justice but compassion – placing ourselves into our neighbour's shoes and allowing our hearts to expand and be touched. Accessing the situation, we then discern where to head to from there.

In essence, spirituality is a way of being, a way of living out our lives. And there is not just one way of doing so. While different spiritualities will have differing emphases, all authentic Christian spiritualities should share the basic imprint of the scripture to underpin their evolving traditions. For Christians, Christ is the beating heart of their spirituality. Our arms, legs, tongues, brains and actions give flesh to Christ in our time. Christ relies on us to act.

CHARITY

Pope Francis speaks specifically of charity in his latest encyclical, *Fratelli Tutti*, which essentially is about living a conscious spirituality for our time. In addressing all religious faith traditions, he spells out how charity should be practiced in relation to

others, in the spirit of what he calls, fraternity – brotherhood/sisterhood. He says, '*only the closeness that makes us friends can enable us to appreciate the poor today, their legitimate desires and their own manner of living their faith. The 'option for the poor' should lead us to friendship with the poor.*' #234

This is helpful for Vincentians, as it places relationships at the centre of charity. Our work is primarily exercised at a grassroots level interacting with the poor at a level of relationship. Working at grassroots with the poor poses special questions for us – how do we interact? What relationship do we have with them? Are they clients? Do we assess their needs objectively or are we judgmental about them? Do they become friends? Relationship sits at the heart of our connection with them, as it does in God's connection with us.

HOLISTIC GROWTH

To accept that the heart of Christ sits at the heart of the world, which is what our theology teaches us, requires us to constantly expand our own hearts, deepening our faith and love at each step. For it is only as love grows within that we can experience the love growing without.

This modern generation is privileged to see, understand and accept the enormity of our Creator God, whom most of us have constrained to a manageable level. This Great Spirit is much bigger than anything we have ever known, more colossal than anything the mind can imagine. And we teach that the Cosmos, with its billions of galaxies of which we humans form an infinitesimally tiny part on the tiniest planet, is where this Great Spirit of Love dwells, always available to us, always caring about us, continuing to create, always calling us forward to greater practice of love, compassion, justice and mercy. As Vincentians, it is this Divine Spirit we draw on as fuel for every act of charity. Charity and justice call us to expand our hearts throughout our lives to the point where they are at one with the heart of Christ, active in this amazing, wonderful Cosmos.

Continued...

Our physical hearts are the size of a small pudding. But our emotional and spiritual hearts can be as large as we want to make them, or as shrunken as a dried-up piece of fried sausage. I have met many people, sadly, who have allowed bitterness, a lack of forgiveness, unresolved grief or anger to shrivel their hearts to that size! Jesus said, *'By their fruit you know them.'* (Matt 7)

However, I also know many more people with hearts so massive in their capacity to love, embrace and forgive, so inclusive, that you wonder at the depth of their holiness. Think Mother Teresa, Desmond Tutu, Dorothy Day, mosque shooting survivor, Farid Ahmed, Pauline O'Regan, Suzanne Aubert. Think of some of your own relations and friends, some even in your parish.

We are called daily to expand our hearts. When we fail to expand our hearts through love, we are holding back the plan of God for ourselves, humanity and creation. The key to growing such a spirituality is to see that personal sacrifice is often asked of us, not just an institutional response, which can appear at times quite 'cold'. The saying 'as cold as charity' speaks to giving without a heart. Philanthropy can often appear like this. Vast sums given away may not necessarily be heartfelt, but more like re-arranging the bookkeeping and one's conscience. That is not the way of Christian charity which calls each of us to a personal response, to keep reaching out and growing in spirit.

Within an ever-expanding universe, followers of Jesus are invited to be open to a greater penetration by the mystery of Christ. Paradoxically, the more we engage with Christ and the greater our love for others becomes, the more the Cross of Christ will present itself on our road as we empathise with them, understand their burdens and walk with them on this sacred planet, which itself needs our love and protection. Like St Paul, *'We preach a Crucified Christ, to the Greeks a scandal, to the Jews an obstacle, to the pagans, madness.'* (1 Cor 1/22-25) It's nuts! But it is our gospel in a nutshell (pardon the pun!).

This teaching sits at the heart of all loving relationships, the bitter-sweet subject of a million songs and poems. We all know that love is much deeper than mere romance. Bitter-sweet, death-resurrection. This is the essence of both Jesus and St Paul's teaching. Charity is a practical expression of such love.



CONCLUSION

Today's theme, 'the spirituality of charity' is a useful phrase if we can see it as a concept challenging us to grow and expand our hearts towards justice as well as charity, to keep making them more inclusive, more compassionate, less judgemental, more tender, more Christ-like. As Vincentians, we are privileged to have the opportunity to be in close touch with the poor, to meet Christ and to expand our hearts by recognising the divine presence within them. Each encounter we have is an eternal moment. In this, we are most blessed.

Passover

lean, hungry, jail-tatted
he swoops on my car
one night in Holy Week
'got a tenner, I'm desperate, man
those synthetic drugs are dangerous,'

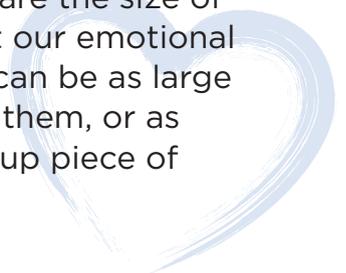
an hour later, still talking
inside a fast-food outlet
two specials, plus chips and salad
washed down with coffee
a changed man

burping with satisfaction
he leaves up a side street
'I'm off for a shower
no more synnie shit for me
I'm back to group tomorrow'

a different Easter, yet not
a taste of liberation, tiny portion
Passover played out locally
at a fast-food chain
with under-paid staff

- Jim Consedine

"Our physical hearts are the size of a small pudding. But our emotional and spiritual hearts can be as large as we want to make them, or as shrunken as a dried-up piece of fried sausage."



NORTHLAND

March report

- 65 food parcels delivered
- Budgetter delivered another 15 to clients on behalf of the Society
- Trips to Kaikohe to families
- A member has repaired 4 doors and 6 car windows
- 30 meals made and delivered to the elderly
- Babysitting a 94yr old who was suffering with an infection
- Delivered Easter Eggs to children and families



Kaikohe meals and food parcels

Prior to christmas we were very busy making roast meals for singles and couples, plus food boxes. Pictured are some of our amazing helpers.



NAPIER

November 2020 flood

On 9th November 2020 a flood hit Napier which was the worst flood Napier had experienced in 250 years. Over 100 homes were deemed immediately uninhabitable and many had to leave their homes without being able to take any contents with them because of water damage. The majority of these people were housed in temporary Napier City Council accommodation and at the time of writing this article, many are still there until their homes

are either fit to inhabit again or new permanent accommodation found. Our Napier and Taradale Conferences reached out to those who needed immediate assistance with beds, linen, towels, pots and pans and other household goods and clothes.

These items were all donated through our Vinnies shop in Napier which was one of the few businesses in our street which was not affected by water damage.

Deo Gratias!

Young Vinnies Report

TERM 1
2021

By Yumiko, Shyra, Sharon and Kaelahlee.

The Young Vinnies team at Pompallier College meet every Thursday at lunchtime, at these meetings we say opening prayers and then discuss what is coming up and what involvement we need to be. A number of the seniors have been involved for up to 4 years now and this has helped to create a smooth transition into the new year.

We have 4 youth leaders who are co running these sessions. Shyra, Yumiko, Sharon and Kaelahlee. Mrs Williams remains our mentor.

This first term we were involved in three different events.

The first event we were a part of is Relay for life.

We organised a team of sixteen senior students in our Young Vinnies club to participate in Relay for Life which is an event the cancer society holds to raise money for people impacted by cancer.

As a whole team we raised \$1527 for this charity event and participated in the Northland relay for life on the 20th-21st March. This event was an 18 hour team relay that we partook in to show our support for the cause. To make this happen we required two parents or adults to be there for our team.

The second event was the annual bunny run competition. At school we organised and ran an interhouse competition to collect eggs for people in need. This event encouraged students in our school to bring in chocolate eggs and through this event we collected over 4000 eggs. We also were given eggs by the catholic church community.

The Easter eggs were delivered to families who were struggling, Kamo home and village, Selwyn rest home, the Whangarei hospital 2 preschools attached to decile 1 schools and the hospice in Dargaville.

The final event Young Vinnies did to finish off the term was the bake sale fundraiser at the year 7 & 8 social on the 8th April.

Members of our Young Vinnies team baked and brought in baking such as biscuits, brownies and slices. In total we were able to raise \$150 which has been given to the food bank to help families in need.



PORIRUA

Vinnies Shop Blessed

The Kapi Mana area council of St Vincent de Paul recently conducted a Blessing ceremony to mark the completion of the refurbishment of their shop in Porirua East.

The Council was pleased to welcome to the ceremony Pat McGill and Margaret Warmington who were members of the council when the shop was purchased in 1985.

The refurbishment was carried out after much deliberation about the site, modern shopping practices, customer needs and the welfare of our customers and staff. Many positive comments have been received from customers and visitors. As one person said "you may be an Opportunity shop but that does not mean looking like a junk shop"

While the work was under way we were able to operate a Pop up shop from vacant premises next door and this meant we were able to maintain our service to the needy. This was made possible by the hard work of the shop manager Vicki Truyens and our volunteers.

For most people the shop is the face of St Vincent de Paul and is often the first point of contact by people in need. All stock is donated and the funds raised are used to help with the work of our Vinnies conferences from Levin to Tawa.

In his remarks at the ceremony Area President Gerry Stevens offered his thanks to all who helped with the refurbishment especially the staff who kept things going under difficult conditions and to the National Office for their support and guidance.

The Blessing was conducted by Fr Alan Roberts from Otaki.

PALMERSTON NORTH

Papal Medal Award

On Sunday 29th November 2020, Mons Brian Walsh during 9:30am Mass at The Cathedral of The Holy Spirit in Palmerston North, blessed Anne O'Grady and presented her with a Papal Medal from the Vatican, the occasion was witnessed by a large Congregation.

This was such an honourable reward for a very special person who has spent her lifetime caring, including 22 years of service to the Society of St Vincent De Paul as a volunteer and managing the Palmerston North Vinnies shop. While residing in Taranaki during tough times of the 2nd World War, before moving to Palmerston North, Anne also supported her widowed mother and four siblings, after the war she continued caring as the family grew older. Anne by nature is very humble caring person and recently took residence in a Palmerston North retirement village where she is again giving voluntary care for those less fortunate.

There is no better person than Anne to be recognised with the Papal Medal for she has lived her Catholic Faith now for 87 years.

Those who know Anne are deeply moved by her always putting other people first, she fully deserves the Papal Medal and remains her humble self.



A thank you to all Vincentians

Some years ago, my granddaughters developed tumors behind one ear, they were removable and non-malignant. After a number of year's they regrew and were going to be removed again. However, it would be the last time they could operate because of scar tissue and the proximity of nerves and she would therefore need to have radiation therapy to make sure they would not regrow.

But then she became pregnant with her first child and radiation was postponed until the baby was 6 months old. Her mother went down to the Kapiti Road where she lived to help out. The radiation was 5 days a week for 6 weeks at Wellington hospital. It was completed at the end of September 2020.

On 17 December we received the following text:

Christmas Spirit Story - We got home today, and someone had dropped off a food parcel. We were not expecting anything but thought 'how awesome'. Had a quick peek and saw a whole chicken, 1 custard, boxes of microwaved popcorn and regular food items....the note said from St Vincent de Paul wishing you a happy Christmas. Not only that, inside an envelope were two gift cards for \$25 for Pak & Save.

It was such a lovely thing to happen to her after a very stressful year and I thought all you lovely Vincentians of Kapi Mana ought to hear about it.

May God bless you all

Kind regards from Grandma Anne



Papal blessing for Bishop Owen Dolan's 25 years as a bishop



www.nzcatholic.org.nz - January 13, 2021 by Sue Seconi

Typical of Bishop Owen Dolan's warm and big-heartedness, the invitation to join with him to celebrate 25 years since his episcopal ordination went out to all across the largely rural diocese of Palmerston North.

On Thursday, December 10, parishioners, friends, religious and clergy gathered around the altar at the Cathedral of the Holy Spirit to thank God for Bishop Dolan's generosity and years of faithful service.

After the welcome, presider Cardinal John Dew read the *Apostolic Blessing of Great Joy* from Pope Francis.

Translated from the original Latin, the words of the blessing were: *Congratulations, combined with a spirit of faith, preaching with the inquiring mind of Christ and particular care of the clergy*, awarded to emeritus coadjutor Bishop Owen. The words prompted a long round of applause from the congregation.

"A saying has it that it's an ill-wind that doesn't bring somebody some good". My heart attack in 1990 was the turn of events that brought us Owen, in 1995". said homilist Bishop Peter Cullinane. "It completed a circle, which started in Palmerston North and finishes in Palmerston North".

Born not far from the cathedral, Bishop Dolan's mother died when he was a week old. He was raised by his father's family in Hawera. After ordination in Hawera's St Joseph's church on July 21, 1954, his appointments took him to parishes in the Taranaki, Manawatu and northern Hawkes Bay regions, which would later become part of the Palmerston North diocese. Then it was to Peru for five years, where he worked alongside the Columban and the Maryknoll Fathers in Lima and Arequipa. Working with the Latin American people had an impact on him, and shaped his life as a priest forever, he reflected when celebrating his 65th year of priesthood.

Back in New Zealand, it was parish ministry in Wellington, prior to being appointed vicar general for the Wellington archdiocese.

The day before the then-Fr John Dew was ordained a bishop in May, 1995, the Apostolic Nuncio,

Archbishop Thomas White, spoke to then-Fr Dolan about the situation in Palmerston North. Given Bishop Cullinane's ill-health, the decision was made for a coadjutor rather than an auxiliary bishop.

"As I watched John Dew lay prostrate on the floor during the litany of the saints at his ordination, I thought - Oh golly, I could be the next one on the floor. And so I was," said Bishop Dolan in 2020.

Five months later, he was ordained the coadjutor Bishop of Palmerston North on December 10, 1995. He was back at his birthplace.

"If you had suspected that travel is in Owen's DNA, you're going to have to acknowledge that he really is a homing pigeon. To put that more theologically: God is Lord of all history, not just some of it, and so every moment in that circuitous route was meaningfully within God's providence," said Bishop Cullinane.

"So, in Owen's name and mine, I call on the Catholic community to take pride in what is best in the priesthood. And we call on Catholic parents, and grandparents, to at least point out that priesthood is a privileged and focused way of helping people - in things that will still matter when much else no longer does!" Bishop Cullinane added.

Lunch followed in the diocesan centre, where there was also the cutting of a celebratory chocolate cake.



Pope Francis appoints the SSVV President General to join a Dicastery of the Holy See

Pope Francis has just appointed brother Renato Lima de Oliveira, 16th President General of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, as a member of the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development.

“I received with great emotion the news of the appointment by the Holy Father to represent the SSVV members of the world in this important Dicastery, whose focal point is very close to our Society’s charity action. It is an immense honour and also a great privilege to be part of this Dicastery, which is one of the most important of the Holy See”, the President said.

The Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development was created by Pope Francis as a result of the merger of several pontifical commissions and councils, including the defunct “Cor Unum”, of which the Society of St. Vincent de Paul was part.

According to its statutes, in force since January 1, 2017, the Dicastery works in the areas of justice and peace, migration and refugees, health, charitable works and the care of God’s creation. In the light of the Gospel and the social doctrine of the Church, the Dicastery promotes integral human development, with special attention to the needy, children, the sick and unemployed, including assistance during natural disasters.

The Dicastery is also responsible for promoting solidarity with the most vulnerable, in particular through the celebration of the World Days of Peace (January 1), Migrants (June 20) and The Sick (February 11). In addition, as stated by the Dicastery’s statutes, there are three working commissions: “Charity Commission”, “Ecology Commission” and “Health Commission”.

The Dicastery is chaired by a prefect (Cardinal Peter Turkson), assisted by a secretary (Msgr. Bruno Marie Duffé) and a secretary deputy (Father Augusto Zampini Davies), as well as four undersecretaries, consultants and experts. The program of activities for 2021, which includes a Plenary Assembly, will be published shortly on the website of the Dicastery (www.humandevlopment.va) in English, Italian and Spanish.

Besides this Dicastery, the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, through its President General, is also part of the Dicastery for Laity, Family and Life since 2018 (www.laityfamilylife.va) and is in the process of joining the Dicastery for Communication, at the invitation of the Vatican.

The word “dicastery”, unusual in several dictionaries and languages, can be translated as “department of the Roman Curia”, and it exercises governmental functions, equivalent to country ministries.



The Vincentian Foundation For The Elderly



The Vincentian Foundation for the Elderly was formed in 1976 by the St Vincent de Paul Society as a Charitable Trust with the aim of **IMPROVING THE WELFARE OF ELDERLY IN NEED.**

Our current project is to provide grants to assist senior members of society on low incomes with the purchase cost of hearing aids.

The Foundation continues to be dependent on external funding from donors to support its level of activity which grows in demand. The impact of Covid-19 has affected the Foundation's ability to access donations from individuals and organisations. Donations so far this year are at a record low at a time we are experiencing an unprecedented demand.

The Foundation recognises the marked effect inadequate hearing can have on a person's wellbeing. It can lead to them experiencing poor communication, isolation, depression and other health problems. Many pensioners struggle to find funds required hearing aids. Hearing aids can range in cost from \$1,500 to \$8,000.

Our average grant per recipient has reduced, due to reduced donations from up to \$1,000 to up to \$400 a pair per applicant. Most of our grant requests are channeled through audiologists.

An audiologist recently wrote.... *I understand that it is always hard for a small organisation to survive and not to mention charity institutes. I really hope you guys can keep going because it does help a lot of elderly people that don't have extra support.*

Our grants along with available Government assistance, go a long way towards enabling pensioners to buy suitable hearing aids which dramatically improve their quality of life.

Hearing Aid Grants

In the 9 months of this financial year the number of grants has equaled last year's numbers. We awarded 39 hearing aid grants totaling \$12,600 to recipients throughout of New Zealand - Whakatane, TePuke, Rotorua, Auckland, Horowhenua, Kapiti Coast, Upper Hutt, Lower Hutt, Wellington, Nelson, Christchurch, Invergarill, Gore.

We accept applications from any over 65 year old throughout New Zealand who meets our criteria - this means we cannot apply to the big fund raising organisations such as NZCT as their criteria like many others is regionally restricted.

Testimonials from Hearing Aid Grant Recipients

Many thanks to your organisation for the grant of \$300 towards my hearing aids. Since I moved to New Plymouth - downsizing, I have made new friends some of whom have very soft voices! I knew my hearing was deteriorating and finally got round to doing something about it. Friends/social communication/interaction are vital factors in enhancing good health/positive outlooks especially as we grow older and I am enjoying them! I am also sure that my neighbours are gaining here as I have the volume on the tv much lower!!

- Margaret, New Plymouth

Thank you very much to your committee for the contribution of \$300 for my hearing aids, it's great to see what's been put in place for our SVDP members when they are in need of their old age, I just turned 65 Wed 12 Aug 2020 and already I'm so supported as a pensioner and enjoying my retirement. I do chair our SVDP Christchurch East Conference. Keep up the great work. Once again Faafetai Lava. God's Blessing's.

- Samuga Poliko Vili

Thank you for your prompt reply and grant. I am most appreciative of your support. Having hearing Aids has made a great difference to my life & especially now I am able to have a decent conversation with my husband & everyone else. Hearing better will make my life so much more enjoyable.

- Bessie, Rotorua

How can you assist the foundation?

1. Make a donation

One third of any amount donated is generally eligible for a tax donations rebate. Please forward your cheque to the Vincentian Foundation at the address above or make a donation to the Foundation's Bank Account **02 0528 0234390 002.**

2. Make a Bequest in your Will

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION ON THE FOUNDATION AND ITS ACTIVITIES CONTACT:

Kathy Whelan - Secretary 04 496 1732
Email: h.trust@wn.catholic.org.nz

Our mission statement: To improve the welfare of elderly in need

Growing conferences and membership

Helping conferences gain new members was the focus of a meeting held recently in Ashburton. Taking part were National Executive Officer Anne-Marie McCarten and Penny Marks who has recently been appointed Conference Co-ordinator and support person by Christchurch Area Council and Michael Hanrahan, national board member with responsibility for membership.

It is initially planned to develop techniques and resources through the establishment of a new conference in the rapidly growing Selwyn District and then to supply these to other areas where they are needed.

“The Society, in recent years, has had a focus on compliance issues and growing its retail operation,” Michael said. “If we are to continue working in New Zealand that focus now needs to change to growing conferences and membership so there are people to do the work the money is being raise for.

A number of matters were discussed, one being raising the Society’s profile in the wider local community by using local news media and making sure shops were painted in the corporate colours. Another was members being enthusiastic about what the do and telling their friends about Society work.

A visit was made to the Society’s very successful Ashburton shop, which is a conference run shop. Some of the innovative display techniques were noted, and also some of the storage facilities in the food pantry that were designed and built by conference members.



Two things stood out, Anne-Marie said. The first was the very cheerful atmosphere among everyone in the shop and the second was the obvious ethnic diversity that now exists in Ashburton.

In the evening they attended the fortnightly Holy Name Conference meeting, with 27 members present. Again, the cheerful atmosphere was noted with a certain amount of banter, while the business, including some quite complex welfare issues, was efficiently dealt with. A paragraph of part one of The Rule was used for the spiritual reflection, with members being rostered to prepare and read this at each meeting.

The Society of Saint Vincent de Paul today

The Society of Saint Vincent de Paul is present in over 150 countries, with 800,000 members and 1,500,000 volunteers.

**EVERY DAY SSVP HELPS
OVER 30 MILLION PEOPLE**

The SSVP is an associate member of UNESCO and a special adviser to the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). It is also part of the Global Catholic Climate Movement and is aligned with the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) proposed by the United Nations in its Agenda 2030.



Fostering connections through kanohi ki te kanohi

The Vinnies Food-hub continues to receive requests for assistance from numerous families and individuals finding themselves in situations where they are not able to make ends meet.

From March 2020- January 2021 Vinnies responded to 23,400 requests for food support. This number will hopefully level out as families settle into employment and also receive other forms of support.

Aside for the large number of people who get assistance through referrals from agencies and those who contact Vinnies for assistance, there are many who are not able to access help.

There is an increasing number of the invisible poor; those who are unable to reach out for help and continue to fall through the cracks. This a sad reality due to many factors such as mental health issues, break down in relationships, domestic violence, poverty and isolation to name a few.

As a response to this issue, Vinnies have organised staff and volunteer teams to regularly visit housing sites, put on community meals and events to build relationship and also to connect with those who find it hard to reach out.

Each fortnight Key worker Beau Takapu preparing packages for his fortnightly visit to a local residential flats for pensioners. Beau delivers up to thirty small food packages of essential supplies each time eg: milk , fruit, meat etc. The food delivery is really a way to regularly connect and build relationships. Through these relationships the Vinnies staff are able to build trust, foster friendships and find out their needs and advocate for more support for these communities.



Beau Takapu getting ready for another visit.

There are several other Vinnies teams rostered to visit other caravan parks, boarding houses and transitional housing facilities throughout Auckland.

These teams with the support of the volunteers can deliver food packages to up 200 homes in one day. Different teams of volunteers roster on to assist with the packing of the care packages.

The feedback from the residents has been overwhelmingly positive. They look forward to Beau and his team mates visits.

One resident commented , “We know the sound of his car. We get so excited and look forward to Beau’s visits... It’s not so much about the food as opposed to the conversations. I don’t get visitors and it’s nice to have someone visit you every fortnight.”

This outreach programme began during COVID19 as a phone service to mainly vulnerable and isolated elderly who were ringing in for support. A coordinated group of volunteers was created to keep in touch with this whanau and deliver supplies of essential food and care packages.

Post COVID19 this service has continued and grown to include several caravan parks, motorhomes and Kainga Ora residential flats for the elderly. As a result there is noticeable change in the residents. There is positive socialisation, the building of trust to enable advocacy and support to occur. There is also the increased participation and enthusiasm to partake in organised group activities.



Volunteers and staff members packing care packages for residents.

The Society of St Vincent de Paul is most grateful to all the generous donors especially the Ministry of Social development for the MSD Food Secure Communities CFRGF grant that enabled this mahi aroha. Thank you for your generosity and life-giving work.

Obituaries

Kevin O'Donnell – Hastings Area Council

A dedicated and very committed Area Council President and member of the Society for many years.

May he rest in peace.

Tony Keenan

12/10/1939 – 23/2/2021

St Patricks' Conference Palmerston North.
Tony was a long serving and committed Vincentian always helping others

Fide de Opere - By Faith and By Works

Mt Stewart Prayer (Tony's Farm)

O Lord
That you may
Wonderfully bless us
And help us with our work.,
Please be with us
In all that we do
And protect us from evil
And disaster.
Please send the Holy Spirit
To show us the way.
Thank You Lord
For everything.
God bless everyone.
Amen

Angela Moeke – Taupo Conference
President

Our condolences to her family, conference members and school community. May she rest in peace.



Give kiwis struggling another choice

COVID-19 disrupted the nation, causing a 400% rise in requests for help. Vinnies continue to respond as a stable support service throughout these uncertain times. There is still work to be done, but we need your help.



“Covid-19 is creating new layers of poverty and need in our community.”

Cardinal John Dew

We need your help.

Our goal is to raise **\$500,000** so we can be there to help the vulnerable.

Can you help us?

Donate directly to our Appeal Account:

BNZ 02 0528 0208598 027

Or via our website: donate.svdp.org.nz

St Vincent de Paul is a registered charity – all donations over \$5 are tax deductible.



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