



MEMBRE DE LA SOCIÉTÉ  
DE SAINTE-VINCENT DE PAUL



SOCIETY OF ST VINCENT DE PAUL

# News in Brief

June 2014 | Issue 2

Welcome to our second instalment of our e-newsletter. We hope you enjoyed reading our first edition and that you'll find this version just as enjoyable. As always we would love to hear your news - no story is too little.

From the 17th to the 25th of May was New Zealand Youth Week. It gave us the opportunity to reflect on all the wonderful work our Young Vinnies do around the country. Youth Week may have past for another year but we know that the work do, like all our conferences, continues day in and year out. Read about the Gisborne and Rotorua conferences where their young people are making a difference to their communities.

## Spot-light on Gisborne

### Young Vinnies raise funds for school's friendship chair:

The Young Vinnies at St Marys Catholic Primary School, Gisborne fundraised for a 'friendship chair' to be used by any of the school's students. The whole school came together for the blessing by Parish Priest, Pa Yvan Sergy.

Mrs Helen Race, a long standing SVdP member, and Phillipa Hubert accompanied Father Pa Yvan Sergy, where Mrs Sharyn Tilley, Vinnie's leader and Director of Religious Study explained the purpose of the chair. It would be used for students if they needed some quiet and peaceful time with a friend, or if they were on their own and needed a friend. Students were urged to 'be a friend' to anyone who was sitting there alone.

Well done, Young Vinnies. What a wonderful initiative to enhance your school.



*St Marys Catholic School students (left), Pa Yvan Sergy performing the blessing (right).*

### Building new relationships with other community organisations:

The opening of a new second-hand business in Gisborne was the start of new working relationship for St Vincent de Paul, which has resulted in surplus stock being donated to them for their work in the community.

Once a week, volunteers from SVdP collect the surplus stock and sort it, and then redistribute it directly to families in need. The working relationship benefits everybody, and ensures that good stock is never wasted in this community.

### On the road:

The SVdP sign-written station wagon, is on the roads of Gisborne every week, picking up surplus stock, delivering food parcels and collecting household goods that have been donated. Thanks to a team of volunteers, large household items such as, beds, cabinets, tables, chairs etc. - things often too large for the householder to be able to move themselves, are collected. Some of the members generously use their own vehicles to bring the items to the SVdP garage, where they are stored until needed. However, most often the goods go directly to those who need them.

When stocks are low, a notice is put in the parish magazine and weekly notices asking for donations. The parish is very supportive and most often every request is met with a donation.

Phillipa Huberts, Conference leader says, "We cannot supply all the requests we get for household furniture - we just don't have enough coming through to us - tables and chairs are in very short supply. Beds would be the most common thing we do have to supply but we cannot keep up with demand. What ever we have we will give out and with God's grace the next load turns up to help the next request."

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## Spot-light on Rotorua

St Marys and St Michael's conferences in Rotorua provide support to those in need with food, clothing, furniture and fire wood. The conferences work closely with community organisations, and the local Catholic secondary college to make sure help gets to the right people at the right time.

### Mobile van supported by local college:

The twice weekly runs for the Vinnies mobile van has lots of support from year 9, 12 and 13 students from John Paul College, as part of their school's social justice project. Students help on each run to give out sandwiches, milo, soup and fruit. The School also holds successful mufti days, raising \$2,200 to support the van's services and will repeat this fundraising event again in term 2. Every week the students also make donations of bread, Milo and chicken noodle soup and there is also a separate collection for the food-bank, which is run by the Vinnies.

### Working closely with other community organisations:

Both conferences also work closely with other community organisations. If, during their work with families or individuals, budgeting services are needed, a referral is then made to Te Roopu a iwi o Te Arawa Maatua, who offer budgeting advice and help with access to benefits.

The St Michael's conference is also contacted by the local health nurses if someone is in need, especially regarding children that need glasses. Families are then helped with the paying for glasses.

Claire Ryan from St Mary's Conference says, "We work with many organisations and if the Society was not here many families would suffer; we are most of the time their last hope. Thank the Lord for Frederic Ozanam."

As well as these services, the two conferences also run two shops, where those who need help can make first contact.

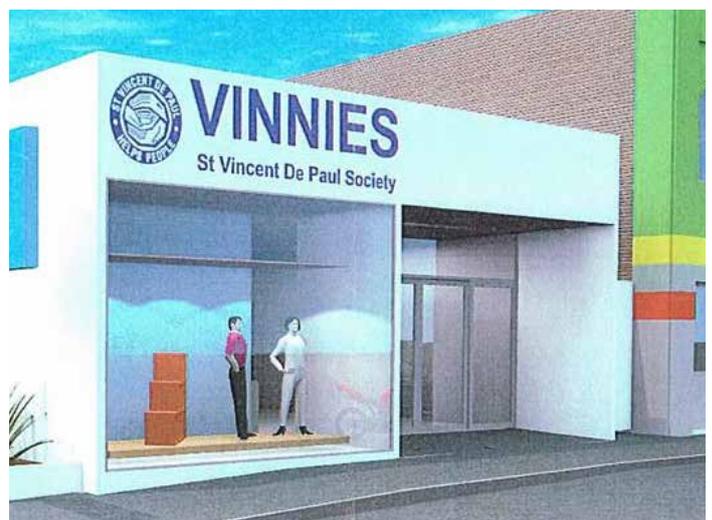
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## Working together to rebuild Timaru Vinnie's Shop

The four South Canterbury Conferences (St Joseph's Temuka, St Joseph's Timaru North, Sacred Heart Timaru, and St Patrick's Waimate) are working together to replace the Society's opportunity shop and welfare centre at 81 Stafford Street, Timaru. Although the building was not damaged in the Canterbury earthquakes, an assessment showed that it only met 18% of the new building standard, and because of the building's age it was unable to be reinforced. As members and supporters were keen to retain the current central city site, the difficult decision was made to demolish and rebuild it.

To start the fundraising rebuild project, a function was held for invited guests who were asked to act as ambassadors. Anne Buckley, Secretary of the Timaru Shop Rebuild Committee says, "we have been encouraged by the generous response of our community. A grant from the Mid and South Canterbury Community Trust helped us on our way and our most recent fundraiser was a highly enjoyable Grand Irish Party, which raised over \$18,000."

The conferences' welfare work is usually funded by income from the opportunity shop, however, while the shop is closed the conferences can continue their work with the generous support of the Tindall Foundation and Perpetual Trust South Canterbury.



Artists depiction of the new Timaru Vinnie's shop.

## The implications of the society being one body

From National Treasurer, Gavin Kennedy

### **Incorporation: what this means for the Society:**

In November 2011, the New Zealand Society adopted a new constitution which for the first time gave formal legal standing to the Society as a whole. Prior to this the Society was unincorporated, which meant its members were financially liable for Society activities. With incorporation the members now have no personal liability for the activities of the Society, which is a blessing.

### **Our mission remains the same:**

One consequence of this is that the Society is now a single legal entity called the "Society of St Vincent de Paul in New Zealand". It is made up of an elected National Council, Area Councils and the grass root Conferences. From the perspective of the mission of the society nothing has changed; our mission is still to tend to the poor, and responsibility for this remains devolved to the Conferences as the operational branches of the Society.

### **Reporting now needs to be on a singular basis:**

As part of the agreement with the government to allow tax deductions for charitable donations, the Charities sector now has significant reporting obligations to the New Zealand public via the Charities Commission. All registered charities are required to lodge a statement of activities and finances each year which enables the public to undertake due diligence on charities they may wish to support. Originally we had nearly 200 Councils and Conferences registered as charities. Discussions with the Commission allow us to currently report on a regional basis (Council by Council, each with their underlying Conferences). However, as we are now a single legal entity we are now obliged to report on a singular basis.

### **Financial reporting now with Xero: how this will work with your conference:**

Whilst this has no effect on the operations of the Society, it does have significant flow-on effect for the Councils and Conferences' financial reporting. Whilst finances remain managed at the Council and Conferences level with complete discretion, as it does now, the Councils and their Conferences must now effectively account as a single entity, with these accounts then being consolidated with National Office and presented to the Charities Commission as a single set of annual accounts. This means we need to move to a common way of recording our finances. Hence, the adoption of the Xero accounting system and a common set of accounts for the majority of Councils and their Conferences. Rather than keeping paper records of receipts and payments at the Conference level, Conference treasurers are now being asked to log into the Xero internet site and to enter their transactions into the "Cloud". Because Xero imports all the transactions from your bank account into the cloud all that is required of Conference treasurers is to log in and tell Xero the purpose of each payment or receipt.

### **Internet banking recommended:**

There is no change in the operation of Conference or Council bank accounts and these will continue to be managed by local signatories. However, we strongly recommend that each Council and Conference adopt internet banking for business to simplify their financial dealings. Because Xero is Cloud-based, live help is available from your Area treasurer, National Office (myself [Gavin Kennedy] or Natasha) or from Crowe Horwath, the National Council Auditors.

### **Need more help?**

For additional information on the roll out of Xero please contact your Area Treasurer.

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## Rest in Peace

### **Lynoor Mary Gibbins**

Lynoor Mary Gibbins, a member of the St Joseph's Conference in Hawera for 38 years passed away on the 30th of March, 2014 after a long illness.

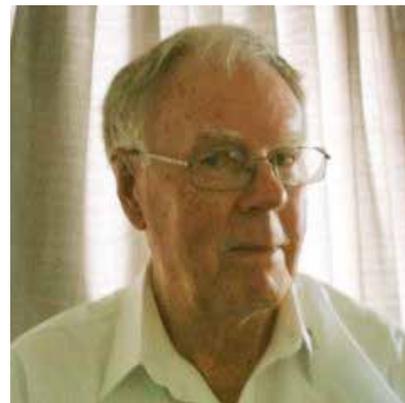
Lynn was one of the "Tuesday Girls" in the shop and was enthusiastic, hard working and had a great rapport with the children who came into the shop.

May Lynn be at peace.

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## Closing message from Bishop Dolan:

Our Catholic tradition instructs us to put the needs of the poor and vulnerable first. In this we are reflecting the parables, the events, the Life - everything we learn from Jesus. We could say that Vincentians have a 'head start': members of a society that has the needs of the poor as its very reason for being. We are called to see everything with and through the eyes of Christ. An election year gives us the opportunity to renew our dedication to this, and to ask our candidates just how their policies will affect the poor.



*Bishop Owen Dolan*

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## 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 Ann-Marie Parker, Communications Officer. Email: jamparker@xtra.co.nz