



YOUNG SVP
Newsletter

East Region

Autumn/Winter
2017



Welcome

Welcome to the fourth edition of the Young SVP East Region Newsletter. This publication is a space for young people who are engaging with the Young SVP Programme to share their work, receive recognition and see the projects their peers are undertaking around the region. These projects highlight the hard work and dedication of young people working towards social justice in Ireland. As you read you will see that this edition has a particular focus on young people getting involved in social justice research and action.


I hope you enjoy reading about the fantastic ideas that the young people in the East Region have come up with. Maybe they will inspire an idea for your group? An SVP launch party, an intergenerational choir, a homework buddies club, poetry competitions, awareness raising, a clothes drive, fundraising & donating activities and much more.

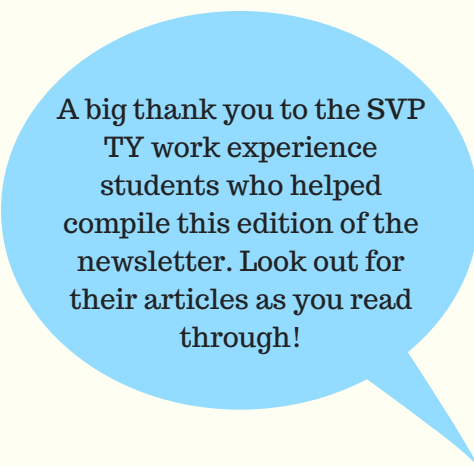
This newsletter is circulated to members and schools & centres in the East Region.

If you would like to find out more about the Young SVP Programme please don't hesitate to get in touch.

Clare Mander, Youth Development Officer- East Region

Contents

- 
- 3-Young SVP-What makes it so important?
 - 4-Reflection: Justice & the Young
 - 5-School Get Togethers 2017
 - 7-Interview with an SVP member- Michael Boyle
 - 8-Twinning
 - 9-Loreto College, Foxrock
 - 10-Rosmini Community School
 - 12- St Mary's College, Arklow
 - 14-The Fr. John Doyle SVP Conference St Vincent's Castleknock College
 - 16-St Mary's Holy Faith Glasnevin
 - 17-Young SVP in the East Region
 - 18-Mansion House Fuel Fund
 - 19-College SVP Activities
 - 20-Taking Part in the Young SVP Programme
 - 21- Christmas Time at SVP
 - 22- Conference Corner: Colaiste Iosagain & Belvedere College
 - 24-Spotlight on Social Justice
 - 26-Young SVP Research & Action Project
 - 27- TY Work Experience in SVP House
 - 28- Reflection: The Good Samaritan
 - 29-Registering with Young SVP



A big thank you to the SVP TY work experience students who helped compile this edition of the newsletter. Look out for their articles as you read through!



YOUNG SVP – WHAT MAKES IT SO IMPORTANT?

Becca Gallagher, National Youth Development Coordinator

I have had the pleasure of working as National Youth Development Coordinator since July 2013. Over the past four and a half years I have seen an incredible amount of passion and enthusiasm from Young SVP members across the country as you all plan and deliver projects and activities that strive to make the world a better place for people living in it. Whether your activities provide support for small groups in your local / school communities, involve raising awareness of issues that many don't know much about or you organise big events that include many different people across society there is one common and significant thread – you are making a difference. Understanding the impact of the work that you do, and the difference that you make, is really important and I hope that all of you involved realise the significance of what you do.

Every young person who gets involved in Young SVP does so voluntarily. This is different from many school / college activities because you always have a choice. Your Young SVP groups, projects and activities exist not because you 'have to' do them – but because you **want** to. For me this is what makes Young SVP so important; it is about **you** and your views, your voice and your actions.

Young SVP is your opportunity to do so much, including; to explore what social justice, poverty, inclusion and equality mean in real terms – and importantly what it means to people when these things do not exist, to identify issues in your own areas, and to act on issues that you decide need to be changed!

With every opportunity there also, of course, comes responsibility. It is your responsibility to make sure you are putting your best into your Young SVP, to make sure that you really explore the issues you are dealing with so that you can design your activities in a way that they will be as effective and purposeful as possible. Find out about past and existing responses to issues, find out what works and what needs to change, work in collaboration with others to find solutions and always ensure that your response is useful, required and purposeful – most importantly be confident that what you do will have a positive impact for everyone. Your responsibility is to the outcomes you hope to achieve through your activities – keep these in mind always.

The world is changing and while many things stay the same our approach to issues of social justice need not. Let's not keep doing the same thing over and over again – let's find new, informed and positive ways to make changes for those in society who need change so that we can all live in an more inclusive, accepting and fairer place. Take what you learn from your Young SVP experience and carry it through everything you do.



Reflection

Justice & the young-Agents of Change, Bearers of Hope

At a recent social justice forum conducted at the Australian Catholic University, a young student posed the question, "What sort of society do we want to live in?" This is a question that goes to the heart of what social justice is all about. While it infers many aspects of present day society are flawed, it also says that we can make a change. With faith, compassion, knowledge and understanding, we can determine what kind of society we want to live in.

Justice has never been about having all of the answers. It is about asking the right questions. This is the impulse that motivated Frederic Ozanam, the principle founder of the Society of St Vincent de Paul. In 1830s Paris, at a time of intense political upheaval, 19 year old Frederic was not concerned with questions of politics and power, his quest was social in nature.

Like many young people, Frederic refused to accept that poverty and suffering was a part of life. He was not discouraged by the scale of the inequality he witnessed nor was he deterred by the cynicism of many elders who were convinced that change was impossible. Instead Frederic drew inspiration from all his colleagues and mentors and added "work to talk".

This passion for change and the belief that a better future is possible remains a central part of the Society of St Vincent de Paul's mission. As agents of change and bearers of hope, young people keep the Society's pursuit of social justice.

Dr Andy Marks

School Get Togethers 2017



This year the East Region of the Society of St Vincent de Paul held two School Get Togethers at the start of the academic year. The Get Togethers were for students and their teachers from schools who were already involved with Young SVP or wanted to get involved. Attendees met students and teachers from other schools, met SVP members, learned about SVP and social justice, learned how to plan and carry out an effective social action and shared ideas.

28th September, Dominican College Sion Hill

Eight schools were represented on the day. Students from St Mary's Holy Faith Glasnevin opened the day by reading a reflection entitled 'Justice & the Young-Agents of Change, Bearers of Hope' and lighting the SVP candle. Liam Casey, East Region President addressed the young people, reminding them of the words of Blessed Frederic Ozanam who said "I tell myself...that the mission of a young person in society today is very serious and very important...I rejoice at being born at an epoch when perhaps I shall have to do much good". This was followed by ice breaker activities facilitated by Becca Gallagher, National Youth Development Coordinator. Students from Mount Anville Secondary School gave a presentation on the Origins and Work of SVP. Students from Dominican College Sion Hill gave a presentation on the care packages they had made for the parents of babies in hospital.

Jennifer Thompson from the SVP Social Justice Team spoke to the students about what it means to work for social justice. Clare Mander, Youth Development Officer for the East Region, gave the students some advice on how to plan a social action. The students then began to think about the volunteering they would like to do this year. Ideas included; befriending older people in nursing homes and paired reading with local primary schools. Ally Conlon (Vice Activities Officer) from UCD spoke about being a young person in a 3rd level Conference. Anna, a student from St Joseph of Cluny, Killiney closed the gathering by reading a reflection on the Good Samaritan.



5th October, Sunshine House



Nine schools attended the Get Together in Sunshine House. Students from Loreto College Swords started the gathering by reading the opening reflection and lighting the SVP candle. This was followed by some activities to help the attendees get to know each other. Students from St Aidan's Whitehall gave a presentation to the other students on the Origins & Work of SVP.

Tricia Kielthy, Acting Head of Social Justice and Policy, spoke to the attendees about social justice issues in Ireland today. Students from Loreto Balbriggan gave a presentation on the work of their Young SVP Conference. The students then began planning their social action ideas, these included an awareness raising campaign about mental health, a party for local older people and fundraising for homeless services. Elizabeth from St Mary's Arklow concluded the day by reading the closing reflection. Mary Ita Niall (North County) thanked everyone who attended and asked the students to remember the words of Margaret Meade who said "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful and committed citizens can change the world; indeed it is the only thing that ever has".

We asked the young people and teachers for some feedback on the Get Togethers and this is what they had to say:

- "I learned what I could do to help SVP"
- "It was very informative and enjoyable. It helped give out SVP committee more ideas for the future"
- "The day was very interesting and informative. This will be a help to our action projects and volunteering work"
- "The day was lovely because I got a lot of information"
- "I really enjoyed today... I enjoyed meeting and talking to new people. I also found out a lot about SVP and enjoyed giving my presentation with my classmates"
- "I really enjoyed the day. I thought the friendship games were very good, as it made everyone much more comfortable with each other"
- "Good, insightful, thought provoking, helpful with planning"
- "I had a very good day because it was fun to get to meet new people that I probably wouldn't meet if I didn't come. I learned a lot of things I didn't know about SVP"
- "Very enjoyable day. Great way for students to interact with other schools. Found the group work very useful, getting them into mixed groups worked really well"
- "Very interesting and informative, it was good that it was very inclusive of everyone and it was a great social event"
- "Very good day. Interactive and inspiring with practical emphasis, leaving the audience inspired to raise awareness among their peers and take action to make a difference"

Our 2018 Regional Youth Day will be held in April. 300 young people from across the East Region will be coming together to share their experiences of volunteering, take part in activities & workshops, listen to speakers and have fun! If your school/group are interested in attending please get in touch to find out about registering with the Young SVP programme.

A big thank you to everyone who made these events possible- students, teachers, SVP members and staff. A special thank you to Dominican College Sion Hill, Sunshine House and North County Area Council for hosting the Get Togethers. Thank you to the schools who attended: Mount Anville Secondary School, Dominican College Sion Hill, Ballinteer Community School, St Joseph of Cluny Killiney, St Mary's Holy Faith Glasnevin, Rosmini Community School, Colaiste Íosagáin, St Paul's College Raheny, St Aidan's CBS Whitehall, Ardgillan Community College, Coláiste Ghlór na Mara, Loreto Balbriggan, Loreto Swords, Balbriggan Community College., St Joseph's CBS Fairview and St Mary's College Arklow.



INTERVIEW WITH AN SVP MEMBER

Why did you decide to join SVP?

Well I actually joined SVP twice. I first joined a local conference when I was living in Arklow back in 1968. I joined because I was aware of the brilliant work that they do. We did a lot of great work there. I eventually left SVP when I moved to Cork with my job. I later moved to Dublin and retired in 2000, when I decided that I wanted to get back to work with SVP, giving back to society. I attended an SVP recruitment event and met a friend who was looking for members for his conference in West Tallaght (St Aidan's) which met on Tuesday mornings. That suited me because I am retired so I decided to join. I've been with that conference for 17 years now.

INTERVIEW WITH SVP MEMBER MICHAEL BOYLE (EAST REGION TWINNING COMMITTEE MEMBER BY ANTHONY GANNON & JOHNATHAN WANG, BELVEDERE COLLEGE

Can you describe the path you took to get to your current position within SVP?

By default! I had no ambitions to be head of anything. However, I was asked to take over as President of my conference and later as Area President in West Tallaght, which I still am, though I continue as an active member in St Aidan's conference.

A few years ago I was asked if I would join a committee which looks after SVP East Region's links with Zambia. 'Twinning' is what SVP calls the links between SVP in different countries.

Can you describe your role in the East Region Twinning Committee?

Through twinning Vincentians share resources and experiences and begin friendships. Twinning reflects the reality that there are no borders to poverty and injustice- this concept of assistance goes back to the foundation of SVP in 1833. I am glad to chair a committee that represents this concept.

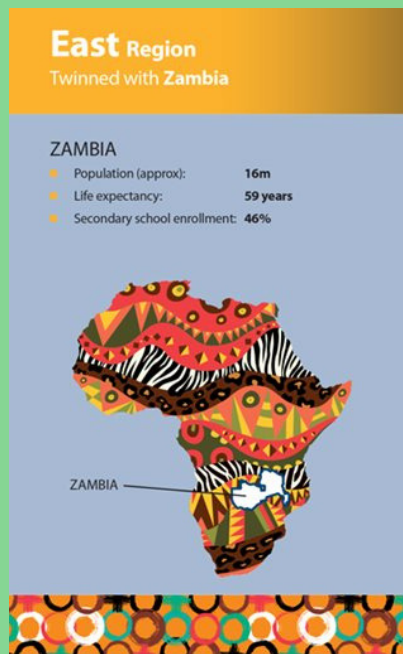
I look after everything that goes on between our Twinning committee and the corresponding committee in Zambia. We have three very important aims. Twinning fosters the establishment of new conference and gives support to existing ones. We facilitate communication between our two Twinning committees, in a spirit of understanding, friendship and solidarity. Finally we help morally and materially to continue to alleviate poverty there and to help with the cost of education.

What does being a member of SVP mean to you?

It means a great deal to me. My most rewarding experience working with SVP is helping children from the families we support to be ready for school and benefit from education, as a good foundation for the rest of their lives.

Is there anything else you would like to add?

Becoming a member of SVP is something that I would encourage all people to do. It is very rewarding and the opportunity to help less fortunate people in our society is one to grab with both hands. I still remember when we were visiting an elderly lady in West Tallaght and on our way out she said to us "You are good people".



Zambia Disaster Appeal

As many of you already know members on SVP in Zambia were tragically killed and injured in a traffic accident in September 2017. 50 families and over 100 children have been impacted by this incident. If you would like to find out how you can support the Zambia Disaster Appeal please get in touch.



TWINNING

Twinning is a direct link between Councils and Conferences in different countries. Through Twinning Vincentians share resources, experiences and mutual friendship. These links reflect the reality that there are no borders to poverty and injustice. The concept of mutual assistance goes back to the foundation of the Society of St Vincent de Paul (SVP).

This is encapsulated in one of the original rules of the Society which states:

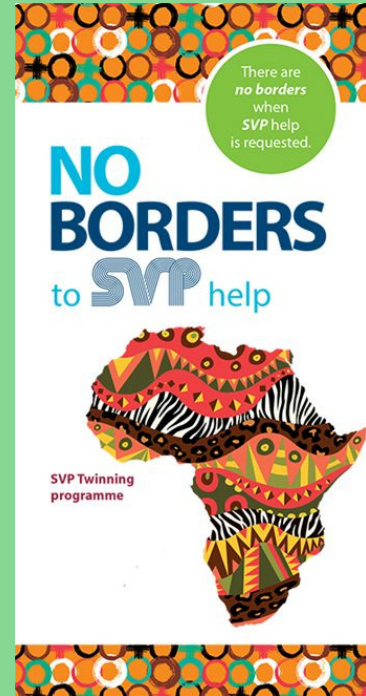
“We should love one another now and ever, far and near, from conference to another, from town to town, from nation to nation.”

In 1954 the Council General of the Society added an additional dimension to the work of SVP when it launched a Twinning Programme as a form of Christian solidarity, which helps members fulfil the universal mission of charity.

Twinning has three aims:

- Promote the establishment of new Councils and Conferences by helping them start and expand the structure of the Society of St Vincent de Paul.
- Facilitate communication between Councils, Regions and Conferences throughout the world in a spirit of understanding, friendship and solidarity.
- Help spiritually, morally and materially to continue to alleviate misery and hunger.

In a spirit of mutual assistance each of the eight Irish Regions is twinned with Society members in an African country as part of the National Twinning Programme.



ZAMBIA

IF YOUR SCHOOL/GROUP WOULD LIKE TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT TWINNING OR WOULD LIKE TO CREATE A LINK WITH A SCHOOL IN ZAMBIA PLEASE GET IN TOUCH!

The East Region (Dublin, Kildare, and Wicklow) is twinned with ZAMBIA and together they have formed a close spiritual connection offering friendship and support to one another. The projects operated by SVP in Zambia and supported by the East Region have the primary goal of alleviating poverty and aiding people to become self-sufficient.

CONFERENCE SUPPORT

The East Region finances the Zambian National Council to enable them to distribute funds to each Central Council and Conferences to assist with family visitation. Malaria prevention which involves the provision of mosquito nets and anti-malarial tablets is supported by donations from the Vincent's Shops in the East Region.

EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT

With the support of the Twinning Programme each year in Zambia, in excess of 200 students are given the financial assistance to allow them to complete their education. This includes help with school fees, books and uniforms.

In addition to this since 2015 a number of community schools are being supported with their running costs, this includes help with funding for teachers' salaries and building maintenance. In all cases this support will enable these children to secure a better future.

BOAT

In 2010 a group of transition year students in a Dublin School with the support of the Regional Twinning Committee purchased a boat for the Chilubi Island Conference. This boat makes access to the mainland for this community more available, particularly in emergency situations. It also helps the local SVP Conference generate funds which supports them with their home visitation.



Loreto College FOProck



Conference President Victoria Hastings Rafferty opening the launch party



In September, we held an information seminar in the concert hall for TY and 5th year students. Clare Mander along with members of our local conference visited these year groups to talk to us about the purpose and meaning of a school SVP conference. Following this seminar, over 20 students signed up to join SVP and we elected our President, Secretary, Treasurers and PROS.

During the month of October, the SVP conference met on a number of occasions during lunch. During this time, we explored the purpose of our SVP conference and what we aimed to achieve this year.



Following this, in November we planned and executed a very successful launch party in the canteen. We made an announcement on the intercom inviting all the staff and students to come along. Our president, Victoria Hastings Rafferty cut the ribbon to officially open the launch. Then we carried out a number of games including pass the parcel, musical chairs and guess the number of sweets in the jar. All of the members wore blue noses so that they were easily identified as members of the conference.

We are currently working towards our annual Christmas hampers for the month of December. Each class has been given a scenario of a family whom may require help from SVP at this time of year. We have asked our class groups to create a hamper to include food, a book and a turkey and ham Voucher. These hampers will be collected by our local conference on Tuesday 19 December



Could your school hold an SVP launch party?



Rosmini Community School

SVP Befriending
Project: Ty
Intergenerational
Choir with Nazareth
House



On Monday 11th December 2017, Transition Year students took part in a Christmas Carol Service with the residents of Nazareth House.

The story of Jesus's birth was brought vividly to life through the readings and reflections that were shared by our students.

A beautiful sacred space was prepared with the scene of the Nativity at the centre. Celebrants were encouraged to bring peace and joy to the people of the world, especially to those who are most vulnerable in society.

Ms Mullen led our students and residents in renditions of festive favourites.

Transition Year students prepared a table of Christmas treats for the residents of Nazareth House and enjoyed good conversation with them over a nice warm cup of tea.



This Befriending Project is part of our Transition Year students' participation in the Young SVP Programme. Our Christmas Carol Celebration in Nazareth House has given our students a wonderful opportunity to experience - first hand - the gift of volunteering in their local community.

We look forward to visiting the residents of Nazareth House in the future for more music, laughter and friendship.

A big welcome to Rosmini Community School who are participating in the Young SVP programme for the first time this year!



SVP Food Appeal



The Ember Team have been busy organising this year's SVP Food Appeal. They spoke to every class group about how they can help people in need in their local community by donating non-perishable festive food items to help families and individuals enjoy an extra-special Christmas meal. Posters were displayed around the school promoting the Appeal. The Ember team collected food items that were placed in boxes in designated classrooms in the school over the past three weeks. Local SVP volunteer James Byrne offered thanks to all the students of Rosmini for donating food items. He informed us that our hampers will be given to those most in need in the parish of Marino. A special thanks to all of our students and their families for their kindness and generosity in supporting this appeal. Merry Christmas and a very happy New Year to you all.



Rosmini Community School

1st year-Ty Homework Buddies Club



The first meeting of a the 1st Year Homework Buddies Club took place on Wednesday 20th September 2017.

A group of Transition Year mentors were trained to the assist 1st year students with their written homework and revision tasks. Each TY mentor was allocated a select number of students to work closely with during the session. Mentors made a checklist of tasks that their 1st year buddies had to complete. They offered instruction, guidance and support to the 1st year students, helping them to complete their homework.

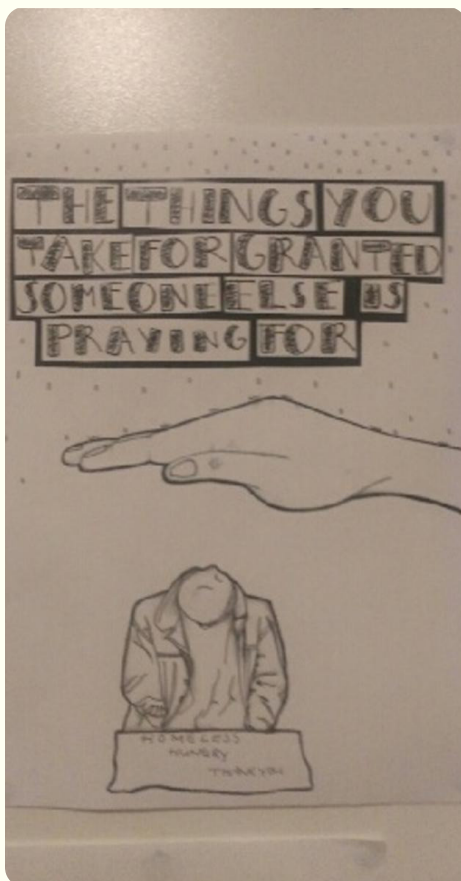
The TY mentors did a fantastic job of assisting the 1st year students who are already looking forward to next week's meeting. May the great work involved in our Saint Vincent de Paul Befriending/Education Project continue.



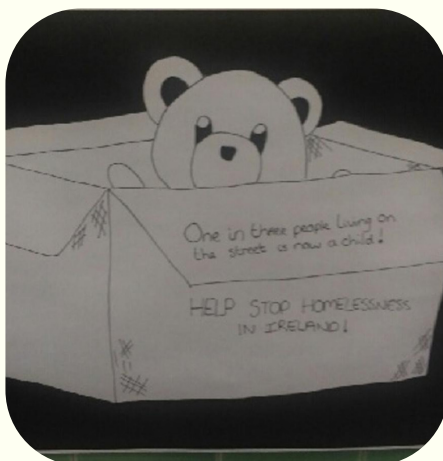
St Mary's College, Arklow



Our schools St Vincent De Paul Society have been busy since September organizing events that can help raise awareness of homelessness within our school. As the conference is a new organization in the school this year the students began by traveling to the Young SVP School Get Together in Balbriggan to learn about how to make their Society a success. Here they planned the main issues that they wanted to focus on throughout the year, they also had guidance from professionals and were given any necessary advice.



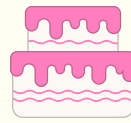
This group of students have kicked off their awareness project with a poster campaign which portray facts about homelessness in our country. The poster are striking and are generating a lot of attention around the school. The conference are also currently running a poetry competition which gives students the chance to showcase their talent while also raising awareness on an important subject. The theme for the poetry competition is 'Things I appreciate' and many students have already submitted entries. The students have been making announcements over the school intercom to alert the school body to their actions so it's safe to say that the entire school knows what our awareness campaign is about!



We organised a poetry competition to raise awareness about homelessness



St Mary's College, Arklow



The group are also planning a number of fundraising events within the school to raise funds for homelessness. A cake sale has taken place and it was a great success. The students baked lovely cakes and made hot chocolate, there was a great turn out and it was a great start to the fundraising campaign. A raffle will take place in the coming weeks with a range of skin care products and other treats to be won. We have had raffle prizes donated by local businesses and some school staff have also donated prizes.



This December the conference are running a food drive giving students and teachers the chance to bring in nonperishable foods that will be handed out to families in need this Christmas. So far the food drive has collected a number of boxes of lovely food and treats and will be accepting collections right up until we break for the Christmas holidays. The box for the food drive is kept safe under the watchful eye of Gregory, our Elf on the Shelf!

A big welcome to St Mary's College Arklow who are participating in the Young SVP programme for the first time this year & have set up a Conference in their school!

The Society of St Vincent is officially up and running with plenty of exciting events to come throughout the year!



The Fr John Doyle SVP Conference Saint Vincent's Castleknock College

This year we have a total of 28 volunteer members of the TY SVP Conference (Fr John Doyle Conference) at Castleknock College.

The Conference meet during lunchtime on Thursday every week. We elected our officers and Social Justice Committee at the beginning of October and our efforts are focused on three main strands:

1. Community Outreach.
2. Fundraising.
3. Social Justice.

Community Outreach
Cherry Orchard Hospital.

The TY SVP Conference has a tradition of sending four student volunteers to visit the Alzheimer's Unit of Cherry Orchard Hospital each Friday afternoon. During our visit there, the volunteers are introduced to the residents and staff who are preparing for Friday Bingo. Helping the patients is a fulfilling task that brings enjoyment both for them and for us. After, with tea and biscuits, we get a chance to hear some of stories they have to tell, and we witness some sad moments of those who are deeply affected by Alzheimer's. The visit to Cherry Orchard is eye opening, and I would love the opportunity to visit the patients again next year.

John Keaney, Vice President TY SVP.



MEETINGS
EVERY
THURSDAY
ROOM 2-26
@ 1.20PM

ALL 4TH YEARS ARE
WELCOME!

<i>President:</i>
Ciarán McCarrick
—
<i>Vice - President:</i>
John Keaney
—
<i>Secretary:</i>
Matthew Norman
—
<i>PRO:</i>
Eoin Kavanagh
—
<i>Treasurer:</i>
Harry Keenan
—
<i>Committee:</i>
Rhys Costello
Adam Tighe



Students from Castleknock College
meeting Dublin 15 Area President Joe
Dolan



The Fr John Doyle SVP Conference

Saint Vincent's Castleknock College



Fundraising

Annual SVP Christmas Tree Sale and SVP Food Appeal

The Annual SVP Christmas Tree Sale took place at Castleknock College on the 9th of December. There was a great turnout with 235 Christmas Trees sold and €4619.30 being donated to the Dublin 15 SVP. The SVP Committee would like to thank everyone who bought a tree and to all of the student SVP volunteers who helped to sell the trees from 10am on the day. It was a huge success once again and Joe Dolan of the Dublin 15 SVP was delighted with the donation of funds.

The Annual SVP Food Appeal took place from Monday 11th to Friday 15th December. The food drive was organised by the TY SVP Conference and was very successful. We managed to fill an entire van with food donations from the families of students and staff at Castleknock College. The food donations were collected on Friday 15th and were taken directly to the SVP Food Bank in Blanchardstown for sorting before being used to make hampers for those most in need in the D15 area. Thanks to everyone who donated so generously.



Social Justice

Homelessness in Ireland


This year the TY Conference is determined to complete an action project on Social Justice in Ireland. A Social Justice Committee was formed in October and following a discussion among members it was decided that Homelessness in Ireland would be the focus of our project.

We have made contact with the Vincentian Partnership for Social Justice and DePaul in order to offer our help as well as draw from their experience. We are looking forward to meetings with members of both groups in January that will provide us with practical advice on how we can further our project in a meaningful and positive way.


SVP in St Mary's Holy Faith Glasnevin



Students from St Mary's Holy Faith Glasnevin at the School Get Together in Dominican College, Sion Hill



This is our first year to take part in the Young SVP programme. Students went to the Young SVP East Region School Get Together in Blackrock and Clare Mander (Youth Development Officer) visited our school to give a talk about the history and work of SVP and how young people can get involved.



Also our TY SVP Committee organised our annual food appeal. Many thanks to all the students and staff who kindly donated to this very worthwhile appeal. The food was distributed in the local area. The spirit of Christmas was well and truly alive in St. Mary's.



TY students look forward to getting more active with SVP after Christmas.

A big welcome to St Mary's Holy Faith Glasnevin who are taking part in the Young SVP programme for the first time this year!



SVP Food Appeal



young SVP in the East Region

A big well done to...

Skerries Community College who organised a fundraising event to support their local Conference

St Joseph's CBS Fairview who are participating in the Young SVP programme and will be planning their social action in the New Year

St Aidan's CBS Whitehall who are participating in the Young SVP programme and are planning a social action to tackle poverty

The Young SVP Conference in Caritas College Ballyfermot, which is now in its 2nd year!

St Joseph's Rush who supported the Food Appeal this year

Donabate Community College who are taking part in the Young SVP programme and will be planning their social action in the New Year

Gaelcolaiste Chill Dara who took part in the Food Appeal; this year

The Conference in Loreto Swords and their TY group who will be planning a social action in the New Year

Blessington Youthreach who supported the Giving Tree Appeal this year

St Joseph's College Lucan who organised a fundraising event to support their local conference

Blakestown Community School who took part in the Food Appeal this year

St Kevin's Dunlavin who took part in the Giving Tree and are planning a befriending project for the New Year

The Conference in Mount Anville Secondary School who supported SVP at Christmas & are planning actions for the New Year

St Joseph of Cluny who supported their local Conference at Christmas time

Presentation College Terenure who are participating in the Young SVP programme and will be planning their social action in the New Year

Ardgillan Community College who organised a fun run to raise money for services for people who are homeless

The Young SVP Conference in Pobalscoil Neasain Baldoyle, which is now in its 2nd year!

Dominican College Sion Hill who are planning an awareness raising campaign about mental health

The Conference in Catholic University School who are working hard planning social actions

Priory Youthreach Tallaght who took part in the Food Appeal this year

The Conference in Gonzaga College who organised carol singing on behalf of SVP

Bremore Educate Together Secondary School who organised a fundraising event to support their local Conference

St Gerard's Bray who supported the Food Appeal this year

Temple Carrig School in Greystones who supported their local Conference at Christmas

A big thank you to all the schools and centres in the East Region who have supported SVP

you are all Social Action Superstars!



MANSION HOUSE FUEL FUND



Students from Lusk Community College and Skerries Community College at the Live Crib

MISSION STATEMENT:

“TO FUNDRAISE, COLLECT AND DISTRIBUTE THE FUNDS FOR THE SUPPLY OF FUEL OR HEATING THROUGH CHARITABLE BODIES IN DUBLIN WITHOUT THE DISTINCTION OF CREED”

The Mansion House Fuel Fund, as we know it today, was set up by Sir John Arnott in 1891. It was originally set up to assist those in need during a particularly hard winter. At the end of that winter the surplus was carried over to the next year and the Mansion House Fuel Fund has continued to aid people in Dublin since. It is one of the oldest charities in Dublin.

The Mansion House Fuel Fund is the Lord Mayor's only personal charity. The Lord Mayor is Chairman of the Fund and is assisted by the Secretary and Treasurer. The committee meets twice a year with the Lord Mayor to determine the level of grants to be allocated to the recognised Charitable Bodies during the winter months.

Dublin City Council's archives show that the Mansion House Fund for Relief of Distress in Ireland can trace its roots back to the 1870's.

Ireland was beset by harvest failure during the 1870's and in 1880 Famine threatened the country. To prevent this, the Mansion House Fund was set up to collect money from Irish Emigrants all over the world. The Mansion House Fuel Fund distributes cash grants through a number of Charitable Societies, without any distinction of creed. It was one of the first truly Ecumenical Charities in the City.

The Irish Farmers Association provide a live Animal Crib on the Mansion House forecourt for the duration of the Advent period. It is thanks to the generosity of the general public that the Mansion House Fuel Fund continues to provide support for the less fortunate during the season of goodwill. Funds are also raised by means of an annual postage appeal & the Lord Mayor's Annual Christmas Concert.

There are no paid staff running the Charity and all donations go those in need. The only costs incurred are postage and administration costs relating to the audit the accounts.

Listed below are some of the Charities whom the Mansion House Fuel Fund assist during the winter months:

- Dublin Simon Community
- Society of St Vincent de Paul
- Abbey Presbyterian Church Hamper Fund
- St. Thomas the Apostle Parish, Jobstown, Tallaght

THE EAST REGION OF THE SOCIETY OF ST VINCENT DE PAUL WOULD LIKE TO THANK THE LORD MAYOR OF DUBLIN MÍCHEÁL MACDONNCHA, THE MANSION HOUSE FUEL FUND AND THE MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC WHO SUPPORT THE FUND FOR THEIR GENEROSITY.

TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT THE FUND
SEE: [HTTP://WWW.DUBLINCITY.IE/MAIN-MENU-YOUR-COUNCIL-LORD-MAYOR-ABOUT-LORD-MAYOR/LORD-MAYORS-CHARITY](http://www.dublincity.ie/main-menu-your-council-lord-mayor-about-lord-mayor/lord-mayors-charity)

Thank you to the students from Lusk Community College, Skerries Community College, Trinity College Dublin and the other SVP members who volunteered as collectors at the Live Crib this year!



College SVP Activities

Siofra Dempsey-College Support Officer

Young SVP works with secondary schools, and with colleges, and the college conferences are sort of similar and sort of different to school conferences and projects. Each conference has a committee that runs the conference, and they decide what events and activities they will run throughout the year. Lots of colleges run lots of different activities – there's almost definitely something for everyone in the work of SVP, and lots of students will use their own talents and interests in their volunteering.

Many colleges run befriending activities, similar to schools – for instance, UCD run lots of youth clubs, working with SVP's Ozanam House, and Trinity run Friends of the Elderly. Befriending is always one of the most popular and most rewarding Young SVP activities, in school and in college, as it gives volunteers and the people they help a chance to meet and get to know each other.

Education activities are also really popular – most colleges run homework clubs with nearby schools, as well as drama and art clubs. Trinity expand their drama clubs into the annual Panto, a huge event held every year where SVP volunteers and the kids they have worked with all year put on a Panto and raise money for Saint Vincent de Paul. The conference at DIT will also be running English language conversation groups with refugees living in Ireland this year, which is a new and really great idea, and helps people to improve their English and make new friends. The work of SVP can extend to so many different areas, and it's all about finding a way to use what you have for good.

Speaking of working in lots of different areas, we're seeing an increase this year in the social justice work being done by college volunteers. Both UCD and Trinity have dedicated social justice clubs, where students can meet to discuss social justice such as the homelessness crisis, racism in Ireland, and the refugee crisis. It is important to put these discussions into action, and students are hoping to begin running campaigns around these issues in the second term.

In terms of fundraising, lots of college conferences engage in direct aid projects. Fundraising is one of the most helpful activities, as the money raised can be used in so many different ways. Colleges run many different types of fundraisers – in November, the DCU conference ran a 24-hour sleep-out to fundraise, and NUI Maynooth are holding a movie marathon that doubles as a food drive at the end of the term!

The most important part of any SVP work is to remember that actions speak louder than words, and that there is always something you can do to help those around you – it's just about finding what works for you!



SVP Activity Leaders from
Trinity College Dublin



TAKING PART IN THE YOUNG SVP PROGRAMME



Getting Started

At the start of the school year you will be invited to attend a school Get Together to meet other students taking part in the programme and learn more about SVP and the opportunities for young people to get involved. You may also arrange for a guest speaker to visit your school to talk about the history and work of SVP and the Young SVP programme. Schools taking part in the programme will then be asked to register.

Learning about Social Justice

At this stage you might decide to set up your Young SVP Conference/group/class project. Then your Youth Development Officer(YDO) will visit your group to facilitate a series of workshops looking at social justice: Poverty & the Cost of Living, Power & Society, Human Rights, Equality, Campaigning and Social Justice & Social Action.

THE AIM OF YOUNG SVP IS TO PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE TO ENGAGE IN SOCIAL ACTION IN THEIR OWN COMMUNITIES, ENCOURAGING PERSONAL AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

What is a Young SVP Conference?

A 'Conference' is the SVP term for a committee of volunteers that meet regularly and plan projects and volunteering to give back to their communities. The members elect their own President and other officers and are supported by a Youth Conference Coordinator (for example a teacher or chaplain in your school) and the YDO.

Young SVP Conference should meet regularly at a set time. Meetings are an opportunity for members to reflect together, to share their experiences and to plan actions.

Your YDO will visit some of your Conference meetings throughout the year to support you in setting up & running your Conference, explore social justice issues, plan social actions and reflect.

Taking Action

As a Conference, group or class you will now be ready to take action. There are four types of project you can choose from: Befriending projects (for example visiting older people in Day Care Centres, hosting coffee mornings in your school, buddy programmes with 1st year students), Education projects (for example homework clubs, paired reading with your local primary school, helping older people with computer skills), Direct Aid projects (for example, fundraising events, food appeals, clothes drives) and Social Justice Research & Action (researching and creating awareness about a social justice issue). Every project should link to the three pillars of the SVP mission statement: Support & Friendship, Promoting Self Sufficiency and Working for Social Justice. You will receive support and guidance from your YDO throughout the project.

Youth Day

At the end of the year representatives from your school will be invited to attend the Young SVP Regional Youth Day. This is an opportunity for you to meet other young volunteers, to share your ideas, hear about what other schools have undertaken, to listen to speakers and take part in workshops and activities. Your YDO will also visit your group to support you to review and reflect on your volunteering experience.





Christmas Time at SVP

Interview with Pat Spain

Q.1 Can you describe your role within SVP?

Here for Christmas I am operating as the project manager for the Christmas appeal. We have 3 appeals going for Christmas. The giving tree, the food appeal and the hospital bag appeal. So, I coordinate those 3 appeals for Christmas, both taking the stock in and the stuff going out. On top of that I'm also a volunteer at night for St. Peters Conference in Phibsborough.

Q.2 What do you do there?

Well, like all conference volunteers we visit families and some single people but mostly families in the Phibsborough area. Each conference has a geographical area and the calls for help come in here to this office to a helpline, and the helpline takes the details of the people and passes these on to the conferences. The conferences then go and visit these families to see what kind of assistance they need and assess the situation

Q.3 Can you explain to us the importance of SVP at Christmas time?

I think that Christmas is the time of the year that families who are on the borderline of poverty are put under great stress. While it's a time for most of us to look forward to and have a good time, there are families that find it extremely stressful. The mothers and fathers just don't know where they're going to get the money from, the extra food that they need, the clothes for the children and also the toys. So we step in to help these families in need which is extremely important.

Q.4 What motivates you to volunteer?

I think that I've been very, very lucky all my life. I'm retired now but I worked abroad in the oil and gas business all my life, and when I came back I thought that I should give something back to society because I've been lucky and not everyone is lucky.

Volunteering for SVP takes me only 1 night per week, and when meet we visit families who need our help. As well as that I'm secretary out there so I record all the stuff and that, keeps me busy for a day! But overall I would say that being able to help these families and seeing how much the help of SVP means to them is what motivates me to volunteer.



Food & Toys in the Christmas Warehouse

Q.5 Have you got any advice for young people on helping out at Christmas?

Yes. We do have number of TY students helping out. And there's some stuff you can find a little bit boring but there's some stuff that's interesting. It has to be done though you know. So we appreciate the volunteers and the young people are the best for the job. Anyone can apply to volunteer so I would encourage all young people to do so. {If your school would like to get involved with Young SVP please email claremander.east@svp.ie}

Q.6 Is there anything else you'd like to add?

It's nice to see the work of SVP within younger people. Our busiest times are during communions, confirmations and back to school they are stressful for families on the edge. But Christmas is special.

Thank you very much Pat that's all our questions. We must skedaddle now!

Interview with Pat Spain carried out by Anthony & Jonathan (Belvedere College & SVP TY Work Experience)



Conference Corner!

In this latest edition of Conference Corner we are delighted to have articles from the newest Young SVP Conference in the East Region in Coláiste Íosagáin and Belvedere College who recently celebrated the centenary of the conference in their school!



Coláiste Íosagáin Young SVP Conference

At the beginning of this school year 2017/18 we, a small group of fourth and fifth years founded a Young SVP conference in our school. We in Coláiste Íosagáin founded this conference with the aim of raising awareness among our fellow students and in the hope of making a difference in our community. One of the first things we did as a group was attend the School Get Together in Sion Hill. Not only did we gain inspiration from the many other schools as to how we could help, we also learned the importance of listening and learning from one another, which would later enable to work together effectively as a group.

Our the past few years homelessness has been an issue that has had a consistent presence in the news, and although this was an issue we were all familiar with none of us knew how we help overcome such an issue. We used this as inspiration to organize our first project. Working with SVP in UCD we organized a clothes drive in our school as we thought this would be especially beneficial as we move into the colder months of the year. This clothes drive proved to be more difficult than we had originally expected as some of our members were out on work experience for two of the four weeks. Despite this initial challenge we managed to collect a considerable amount of clothing and passed it on to SVP in UCD.



As we approach Christmas we are organising a 'giving tree' or a crann fial as we like to call it here in Coláiste Íosagáin. Typically around this season many organise "Kriskindle" throughout the school. But this year we are running a campaign so that many will instead partake in this 'giving tree'. Where students either individually or in small groups, will buy presents which will be passed onto SVP headquarters. This project will not only help those who are less fortunate, but we also hope this will help raise awareness throughout the school.

This is only the beginning of the projects we hope to undertake in this coming year and we hope our youth conference will expand and develop throughout the coming years.

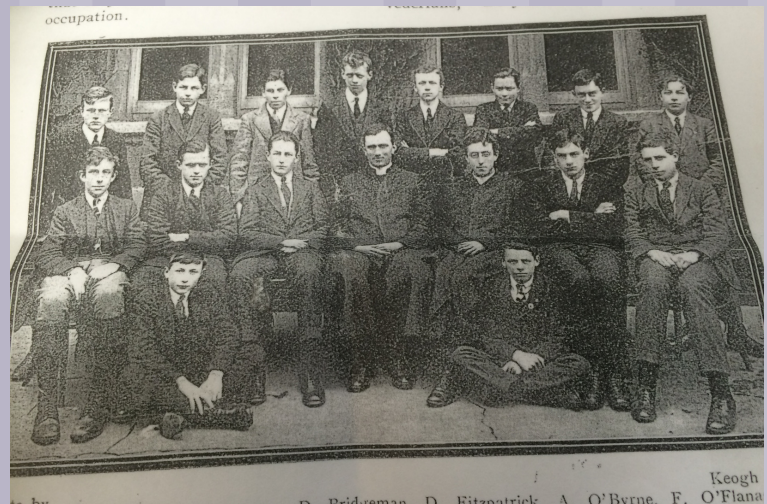


Belvedere College SVP Centenary

by Tom Hegarty

The boys in the VDP had been working towards this for months before it came. It finally came- the centenary. 100 years of the Vincent de Paul in the school and it is still going strong. The day was a momentous occasion and meant so much to members and past members alike. Although spirits were very high leading to the event, I don't think anyone was as excited or proud of the day than Br. Davis. He has devoted so much time and effort throughout the years and now he could look back on all the good years with all the past members.

The mass began on the stroke of 3 as the liturgical music group filling Gardiner Street Church with the song 'By Straight Paths'. We were then greeted with the opening procession read by our School Captain Sam Duff. Six gifts were brought to the altar each representing a different facet of the VDP within the school; a ledger from the meetings, a school jumper and a printed motto of our Society "Nobody gets in to heaven without a reference from the poor".



Founding members of St Aloysius
Conference

The mass went on seamlessly from there with Ms Brennan doing the first reading and various members and teachers reading the prayers of the faithful. Perhaps my favorite part of the mass was hearing the current President Cathal McGuinness sing "You Know My Name". The mass finished with Br. Davis addressing the church and speaking about what the Vincent de Paul is to him and the school. He left us all awestruck with his passionate words and welcomed us to stay around after the mass to reminisce on the past years of the VDP.

The few hundred people that came for the event then funneled in to the side hall to hear SVP's National President Kieran Stafford speak about the great work of our conference for so many years. We all looked on to the past Belvederian articles printed on the boards about the VDP and looked on hopefully for the next 100 years.



Spotlight on Social Justice

Tricia Kielthy- Acting Head of
Social Justice and Policy

Thinking about and doing social justice

Working for social justice is one of three key pillars of SVP's mission and requires us to challenge the structures that create or perpetuate poverty in Ireland today. Support and direct assistance for people experiencing exclusion are important. However, if we do not challenge unjust policies we will not address the root causes of poverty.

How can we better understand poverty in Ireland today?

The issues SVP highlight and the solutions we propose are based on the experience of the people we are helping on the ground, through our membership or through analysis of both our request for help and the types and levels of our expenditure. Data from the Central Statistics Office (CSO) on income and poverty tells us the groups with the greatest risk of poverty and exclusion (children, lone parents, migrants, and the unemployed) and allows us to measure trends in poverty and social inclusion over time. Without this information, we couldn't highlight that over 139,000 children are living in consistent poverty or hold the Government to account on their track record on tackling poverty. SVP also plays a role in highlighting the lived experience behind the numbers – children who are going without basics like secure housing, healthy food and suitable clothing and are excluded from participating in everyday activities that other children and families take for granted.

Developing solutions is not always straightforward as research shows that the causes and consequences of poverty are interconnected and complex: low paid and insecure work; high cost of living; poor quality services; unemployment; low educational attainment; the way the social welfare system works; discrimination and stigmatisation; social isolation and exclusion; and poor health and illness. As a result, SVP has a very broad range of issues to advocate on, including:

- Social welfare and income supports for children and adults, especially one parent families
- Housing and homelessness
- Education – in particular early years, cost of school, and access to and participation in third level
- Debt and financial exclusion
- Energy costs (electricity and heating) and efficiency

Spotlight on Social Justice

How can we make a difference?

At a very practical level working for social justice means ensuring that the decisions made by those in government bring about positive change for the people SVP assist. Using traditional and social media, submissions to Government Departments, meeting with Ministers, their advisors and political parties, and by working jointly with other NGOs such as Focus, The Children's Rights Alliance and Barnardos, we raise awareness of issues of concern and propose solutions.

Campaigning can also achieve change in these areas. In 2012, SVP ran a public campaign to highlight unnecessary school book edition changes which was widely supported from the public. This resulted in a code of conduct from publishers in which they promised less edition changes. The campaign also paved the way to an increase in funding for school book rental schemes in primary schools. The Hidden Homeless campaign, which ran in October 2016, served to highlight the inadequate, unsuitable and overcrowded living conditions many people are forced to accept.

Working for social justice is long term and the desired outcome may not happen immediately. Neither is it easy to judge whether it was your campaigning which secured a new support or service, or if it was due to another's efforts. Some days it can seem our impact is small or insignificant but a question we need to ask is if organisations like SVP weren't speaking out and challenging injustices, what kind of society would we have?

What role can Young SVP play?

“Thinking about and doing” social justice requires patience, knowledge, persistence, and conviction – all characteristics that Young SVP members possess. In particular, you can play an important role speaking out on issues that affect your generation such as youth homelessness, child poverty, education costs, inadequate mental health services and inaccessible third level education. By researching and understanding an issue, planning a campaign with your peers and making your voices heard, there are no limits to what you can achieve.



Young SVP Research & Action Project

There are 4 types of projects your conference or group can take part in with Young SVP: Befriending Projects, Education Projects, Direct Aid and Research & Action.

Through a Research & Action project you will learn how to research and create awareness on a social justice issue- with support from the Youth Development Team and the Social Justice Team here in SVP. You will be able to follow your own interests and decide how your group can take action to change things for the better.

This type of project involves:

- Learning about social justice and social policy in Ireland
- Choosing a cause or an issue you want to research and explore
- Planning and carrying out an action project that addresses your chosen issue

You and your group will receive support and guidelines from our Youth Development Team for each step of the project.

Talk to your teacher and Youth Development Officer about planning and undertaking your project so that it is safe and beneficial for everyone.

Here are some ideas:

- Exploring the causes & impacts of an issue
- Examining possible solutions
- Organising events & activities to raise awareness
- Ensuring accurate & appropriate information is provided about the issue
- Make a video/ film
- Advocacy/ Lobbying projects
- Organising an event in your school
- Design & run a campaign
- Host a debate



TY Work Experience in SVP House

We carried out our Work Experience with the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul in the East Region. We couldn't have had a better experience here with the SVP and we would encourage anybody who wants to volunteer or carry out a work experience placement to apply here.

Although there were many, the main reason we wanted to do our work experience here was because we were eager to help out with such a large charity, and we wanted to help give back to the community.

During our time here we each carried out a lot of different activities, all of which were enjoyable and interesting.

Our first task together was unpacking food donations and making hampers for people who needed them. We found it very rewarding to know these hampers were going to families who needed them at Christmas Time.

Various jobs we were assigned, both together and individually, included; using a top of the range finance software (Agresso) to sort through deliveries for SVP conferences, helping out with office work in the East Region, and a special job we were asked to do was to help write 3 articles for the Young SVP Newsletter. We gained a lot of experience carrying out this task as some of us got the chance to interview two very interesting members involved with the SVP, while others got the chance to reflect and write about them.

Another job we were delighted to do was in the National Office at the top of the building. Here, we had to read through a list of children's ages and pick, from a large range of donations, a toy that would suit them for Christmas. There's no better job than one that makes you feel like Santa Claus!

We have learned a great deal here in the SVP House. The volunteers and staff could not have been more welcoming which made our two weeks here even better. An important thing we learned was that when you volunteer to help people, everything you do is greatly appreciated by someone, somewhere, even though it may not seem like it.

TY work experience at SVP House was for us TY's, a memorable experience that we would recommend to everybody and anybody. The tasks are always rewarding and the staff are the most welcoming people you'll meet. It is very humbling and you get to see how much the work of the Society of St Vincent de Paul actually means to not only to those in need, but to all of society.

Written by –

From Belvedere College S.J: Anthony Gannon, Jonathan Wang, and Darragh Schmidt
From Sandford Park School: Martha Carey



Reflection on the Good

Samaritan

Reflection

The story of the Good Samaritan is one of the many inspiring stories in the Gospel. If you happen to see the tomb of Frederic Ozanam you will find a painting of the story of the Good Samaritan around the background of the tomb. If you have ever heard the story of the Good Samaritan you will know that the Samaritan helped a man who had been attacked by robbers and left for dead. Unlike others, the Samaritan helps the man.

Frederic Ozanam and St Vincent de Paul were both like the Good Samaritan. They did not ignore the disadvantage they saw. Instead they helped the person in need. Frederic Ozanam and the Society's members, volunteers and staff work together to address needs within local communities.

The story of the Good Samaritan is an inspiring story of charity and different paths individuals can take when confronted with disadvantage and need. For all Vincentians this story should guide our daily actions and decisions and not ignore a need when we see it.



Charity is the Samaritan who pours oil on the wounds of the traveller who has been attacked. It is justice's role to prevent the attack.

Blessed Frederic Ozanam

Thank you to the schools and centres who have registered with the Young SVP programme in the East Region this year.

If you would like to register your group please contact Clare at claremander.east@svp.ie

If your school or group is taking part in the Young SVP programme please contact us for information on how to register!

If your conference or group would like to attend the Young SVP East Region Youth Day 2018 please register at your earliest convenience.

- Ballinteer Community School
- Belvedere College
- Catholic University School
- Dominican College Sion Hill
- Gonzaga College SJ
- Loreto College Foxrock
- Mount Anville Secondary School
- Pobalscoil Neasain
- Presentation Community College, Terenure
- Priory Youthreach
- Rosmini Community School
- St Joseph of Cluny SS
- St Mary's College, Arklow
- St Mary's Holy Faith Glasnevin

SVP wants to support, acknowledge and record all the great work that young people are doing with or for SVP. We also want to ensure that all young volunteers are provided with the best possible opportunities to develop within their own experiences. In order to support as to do this please complete this registration form and keep in regular contact with the Youth Development Team.

A big thank you to everyone who has contributed to this publication. If you would like an article included in the next newsletter, please send in descriptions of your projects & activities and photos (with parent/guardian consent).

If you would like more information, resources or to take part in the programme please contact:

Clare Mander
Youth Development Officer
Society of Saint Vincent de Paul
East Region
91/92 Sean McDermott Street
Dublin 1
T: (01) 8198454
M: 0871456096
E: claremander.east@svp.ie



young svp



@YOUNG_SVP

