



Issue 5 • Summer 2025

Learn to listen

Our late Pope Francis said this to our young people:

“I want you to be the centre of attention, because you are in my heart.”

In this spirit, we bring our young people to your attention through this newsletter.

Here they demonstrate the words of St Vincent, ***“Love is full of ideas and never gives up.”***

Pope Francis is still ***“teaching us to walk together, to listen carefully, to learn and to always respond first and foremost with a big heart.”***

The legacy of ***“the People’s Pope”*** is **SEE, THINK, DO.**

Pope Leo XIV. In his early words to the world, reminded us: ***“Be Missionaries of Hope in a troubled world.”***

He told our young people: ***“Do not delay, roll up your sleeves...”***

That is exactly what being a Young Vincentian is all about – not just believing but doing. We are forming a generation of young people who live with courage, compassion, and faith.

Thank you for all that they do with your support.

**Janet, Colette, Bernadette,
Marjorie & Mike**

Young Vincentian Development Officers

A Year of Hope

YSVP Ellesmere Port Catholic High School



To launch a “Year of Hope” Year 10 students designed Luce, the Vatican icon for Jubilee year. A ‘Holy Door’ was made and each student at Ellesmere Port Catholic High made their Jubilee pledge as they walked through the door.

During Lent students collectively walked the distance to Rome around their school field, raising money for CAFOD and enjoying the spring sunshine. Also, the Young Vincentians organised a collection of coats, bags, toiletries and other items, involving the whole school. They sorted donations into a ‘Hope in a Bag’ for people in their community who are homeless and may feel hopeless.

At the end of April, the school’s SVP singing group were on tour again! They were invited to sing for the residents of Hollymere extra care housing. Residents enjoyed a wonderful afternoon of Irish songs. Following the singing Young Vincentians joined residents in the garden for a chat and refreshments – a lovely opportunity to share. These young people have lots of plans to celebrate the Jubilee, including joining the Jubilee pilgrimage to Lourdes in July.





Sacred Heart Wirral: Local “Team of the Year”

Recently, the Wirral Globe newspaper announced their Education Award winners for 2025. Sacred Heart’s Mini Vinnies were nominated for the Team of the Year award and won! A surprise assembly for the Mini Vinnies and their adults was held where the reporters and photographers presented the children with their special award.

Mini Vinnies at Sacred Heart are leading the way in putting their faith into action in their Moreton community. One parishioner commented:

“Many thanks for supporting the parish work for homeless families and others in need. The toiletries, food, and PJs make such a difference to the families that we support. It means a lot to the children when they receive the cards and presents knowing that other children care about them.”

And, in their school community:

St Patrick’s Day: To mark St Patrick’s Day, especially for an Irish member of staff, the Mini Vinnies created wreaths made from shamrocks for the staff member’s doors. They also gave them a rainbow gift with an Irish prayer attached.

Eid Cards: The Mini Vinnies created cards for children in their school family who celebrated Eid at the end of March to wish those children and their families a wonderful celebration.

Lent Challenge: During Lent, the Mini Vinnies created challenge posters for each class with activities that they could carry out during the season to be even better versions of themselves. At the end of term, the Mini Vinnies collected the sheets and chose the class who had carried



out the most acts of kindness. They were awarded a special chocolate treat!

Looking for the cross:

Throughout Lent, the Mini Vinnies looked for the Cross in their daily activities. It helped them to focus on seeing Jesus in all that they do.

Easter cards: On the last day of term, the Mini Vinnies handed out small cards to adults on the playground which contained lyrics and a QR link to a beautiful song by Phil Wickham and Brandon Lake, ‘Love of God’. The song speaks of what Jesus did for us. The group hoped this would be a reminder of the meaning of Easter.





St John Plessington YSVP make links

The Young Vincentians at St John Plessington Catholic College made a remarkable discovery this year. Located within walking distance of their school stands the Convent of the Holy Family, a residence for the sisters of the Holy Family of Bordeaux.

Many of the sisters living in the convent are retired and they have led amazing lives of service all over the world.

The Young Vincentians decided that the sisters may have a need to learn about how young people today are experiencing school. They considered the sisters might also enjoy a visit. They decided to build links with the sisters and proceeded to organise several visits.

Pupils share their experiences of school with the sisters, many of whom were educators during their ministry. The Vincentians learn about the lives the sisters have led, and cups of tea and coffee are shared. At Christmas, the Vincentians brought Christmas decorations made by pupils in the art department. Now they are planning a tea party for the sisters in their garden later in the summer. True friendship has blossomed.



“The smallest actions can become the greatest of things; Start by doing what’s necessary; then do what’s possible; and suddenly you are doing the impossible.”

St Francis of Assisi

Learning, doing and supporting with SS Peter & Paul’s Wirral

2025 has been a very busy year for the Mini Vinnies at SS Peter and Paul’s.

They learned First Aid and important lifesaving skills from a member of Merseyside Police. Also, they have supported a local uniform recycling scheme (FUSP), by sorting and bagging donations. They also provided a “Spring Clean” service for their Nursery and Reception class outdoor play areas and carried out a litter pick in their local area.

Taking part in a charity car wash at their local fire station raised over £300! This was donated to the Wirral Support Centre to buy resources for their EAL classes. They enjoyed a visit from an adult SVP member who thanked them and explained how their donation would be used.



Mini Vinnies show faith, service, and community at St Hugh's Timperley!



Kindness messages for Jubilee Year: Mini Vinnies responded to the call for hope during our Jubilee Year by writing heartfelt messages of kindness to residents in their local nursing home. Many other children volunteered to join this mission. The children personally delivered these lovely letters, which brought great joy to the residents!

Meeting their local MP: Mini Vinnies were excited to meet Conor Rand, their recently elected MP. They prepared thoughtful interview questions and discussed the importance of "opening the door to serve one another." Mr Rand shared stories about his visits to Westminster and the Houses of Parliament, as well as his plans to visit all local schools. The children asked him about his initiatives to support people in their community, and he spoke in depth about addressing food poverty.



Big Lent Walk: On the last Wednesday of the Spring term, Key Stage One and Two children walked to church to take part in the Big Lenten Walk. Meanwhile, Reception and Nursery children completed laps around the school field to participate. At church, the children prayed for those less fortunate and for the victims and first responders of the earthquake in Myanmar and Thailand. Part of the funds raised were donated to CAFOD's appeal for the earthquake victims.

Lenten stalls: There is always great excitement during Lent as children set up stalls to raise money for charity, and classmates enjoy participating in fun games. The stalls

featured crafts, baked treats, lucky dips, "guess the name" games, and much more. Mini Vinnies chose this year's charities: CAFOD, Caritas, and Children with Cancer UK.

Meeting St Hugh's SVP: The Mini Vinnies enjoyed a visit to their church hall, where they met with both the adult SVP and parishioners. SVP members spoke about the local food bank and asked Year Three Mini Vinnies about their upcoming First Holy Communion. The children chatted about their fundraising efforts through the Lenten stalls and the Big Lent Walk. They handed out handmade Easter cards and were delighted to receive chocolate eggs in return!

An interview with Mrs White: TA, Mrs White, was invited to a Garden Party at Buckingham Palace to acknowledge her work in the community. Mini Vinnies were excited to find out about Mrs White's trip and about her charitable work. They asked lots of questions, and Mrs White described meeting lots of people who also work in education and for charity. Mrs White commented 'It was a beautiful setting and there was delicious food, and it was a real privilege to be invited.'



What could we do? Our Uniform Mission: Mini Vinnies have since reflected on their meeting with Mrs White and asked whether they could take inspiration from her example. They decided to support their school by sorting and returning lost property. They donated unclaimed uniform to the PTA pre-loved uniform shop and to Mrs White's charities, which send clothing to children in Africa.

Fr Pat's Golden Jubilee: Mini Vinnies were honoured to take part in Father Pat's Golden Jubilee celebrations. Fr Pat has served as Parish Priest for eight years and has been a priest for an incredible 50 years. What an achievement! The Mini Vinnies interviewed him about his life and vocation. Father Pat was very impressed with their insightful questions.



As they look ahead to the end of the school year, these Mini Vinnies are preparing final messages and prayers to encourage and inspire the next group of Mini Vinnies.



‘Aspiring to be more, not to have more’ – Aquinas Youth SVP

Aquinas Youth SVP have had an amazing year. They continue to champion causes of social justice across the college through a sacrifice of their time, commitment, and acts of benevolence.

Throughout the Lenten season the group collaborated with the CAFOD young leaders' group to lead a multifaceted campaign to support those in need themed 'Be more.' One aspect consisted of raising awareness of the issues of poverty affecting young people in third-world countries, particularly in the Congo where young people often become involved in a life of crime due to lack of funds to access education or training. They raised awareness through assemblies, tutorials and RE lessons

The second phase of their campaign consisted of fund raising through 'Sponsored Silence.' Students, sponsored by their peers, family and friends volunteered to fast from talking or using a mobile phone for a few hours on a chosen day during the time of Lent. They collectively raised funds which will be used to help train young people in the Congo and help them set up small businesses so they can escape a life of crime and support themselves and their family.

The YSVP group began the summer term with a celebration to wish the Upper 6th members good luck as they leave college to begin their exam season. The Lower 6th members are now focusing on supporting local causes and currently planning their next fund-raising event for MacMillan Cancer support.



St Benedict's Handforth Mini Vinnies lead the way!

During Lent Mini Vinnies took the lead on whole school fundraising.

This year they decided to support two charities: a national charity, Cancer Research UK, and a local charity, Hope Central who offer a range of services to help relieve poverty. The school and the SVP group are long-term supporters of Hope Central's food bank.

The Mini Vinnies spoke to the whole school about each charity and encouraged them to think up a fun way of raising money. A wide range of activities were chosen; reception children did a scooterthon, year 1 a sponsored walk, year 2 a danceathon, year 3 arranged their hair in a crazy style and then did an obstacle course, year 4 showed their environmental awareness on their litter pick, year 5 tackled a fitness challenge and year 6 thoroughly enjoyed penalty shoot-outs. An impressive £655 was raised.

And, to finish the year they have been busy making bracelets to sell at the summer fair! They clearly like to be active and work together.



Enterprising Mini Vinnies at Our Lady of Pity Wirral

Our Lady of Pity Mini Vinnies have been exceedingly busy throughout the year! From Harvest, to entertaining a local nursing home with Christmas Cheer, to raising money for Claire House (the children raised £120), to raising awareness throughout the school community about the importance of Fair Trade, these wonderful Mini Vinnies eventually set-up their own shop and raised £420!

They took their stall to the Liverpool Anglican Cathedral, taking part in an annual NetZero meeting of Liverpool parishes. Many people were so impressed with the confidence of these Young Vincentians and the knowledge they were able to share about the importance of Fair Trade.

They are currently raising awareness throughout the school via PowerPoints for each classroom about the charity Mary's Meals and have a guest speaker coming into school this half term before launching a fundraising event to end the school year.



St Mary's Crewe launch Jubilee Year Pilgrims of Hope!

Mini Vinnies at St Mary's Crewe helped launch the Jubilee Year. Children from EYFS to Year 6 took part in launch day assemblies and completed Jubilee activities centred around the themes of pilgrimage, hope and charity.

Using SVP resources, they explored the theme of the Holy Doors and their importance in marking the beginning of the Jubilee Year. They reflected on the many things that we should be thankful for and the hope that we are able to give to others. These Mini Vinnies shared the message of Pilgrims of Hope!



Action makes a difference at St Saviour's Ellesmere Port

Mini Vinnies wanted the children in their school to understand the real meaning of "giving alms." To fundraise for the Good Shepherd Appeal and support Caritas Shrewsbury, they asked the children at St Saviour's to complete chores at home, and in return their parents would give them money for their fundraiser.

Mini Vinnies also led by example and raised extra money by washing staff cars.

Mini Vinnies have been busy creating a beautiful prayer space devoted to Our Lady using a statue donated for their Prayer Garden. They spent their own time planting flowers and encouraged children to spend some time praying to Mary and remembering our beloved Pope Francis.



This was so popular the Mini Vinnies needed to create a rota and offered to give up some of their break times to support others during their prayer time, especially the younger children. As a result, they have shown other children how to pray the Rosary and how to have some quiet time with God, sharing their faith with each other!



Following Pope Francis's death, the Mini Vinnies attended the parish Mass for the repose of the soul of Pope Francis.

They enjoyed taking time to pray and to listen to the Scriptures and asked for the possibility of repeating this. As a result, some members of staff are taking them to Mass twice every half term.

Fr Edmund, parish priest, has welcomed the children every time they attended Mass and provided them with information about the Gospels and the history of the Church which they then have shared during Gospel Assemblies with the rest of the school.



St Alban's Wallasey show kindness in the community

St Alban's Mini Vinnies are full of energy! As well as managing the stock in the school's foodbank, they have raised £148 through their annual Crazy Hair Day, supporting their chosen charities, Autism Together and Stick 'n' Step.

They also raised £172.87 through a cake sale which was donated to the local SVP for their Summer Camp for children. A second donation to the Camp will be raised from their annual Scooter Dash. Thank you, Mini Vinnies, for your kindness.



St Vincent's gather the Knutsford SVP community

To celebrate the birthdays of St Vincent de Paul on 24th April 1581, and Blessed Frédéric Ozanam on 23rd April 1813, the Mini Vinnies of St Vincent de Paul Catholic Primary School gathered their local SVP family to honour the legacy of both men and to look to the future filled with hope.

On Sunday 27th April, the Mini Vinnies took a lead part in the Parish Mass and arranged a social gathering in the Parish Centre afterwards. The children provided biscuits and cakes and helped to serve the refreshments to the parishioners. They placed little teapots of conversation starters on the tables and handed out special cards for prayer nominations. These were placed on their school prayer table.

As well as raising money for charity, everyone had a wonderful time and made connections with people in their community. The adult members of the SVP were most impressed with the level of enthusiasm and responsibility and there was lots of positive feedback from the parish community. There was certainly plenty of chatter that day!



Easter kindness at St Luke's Shropshire

Bernadette, YVDO for Shropshire met 29 creative and talented Mini Vinnies who were busily making Easter cards for patients in their local hospital.

Also, a parishioner had kindly made each Mini Vinnie a Palm Sunday box. This contained a leaf, string, a wooden cross and a small wooden figure representing Jesus to illustrate the event. Such a lovely example of our Mini Vinnies known by and valued by their parish.

Making an impact at St Benedict's Warrington



Mini Vinnies have been busy this year! They raised money for Children in Need, launched a whole school Kindness Award, and made and delivered Christmas cards to a local care home.

They also started a whole school recycling project and sold raffle tickets to raise money for CAFOD.

Mini Vinnies at St Vincent's Altrincham are turning concern into action!



These Mini Vinnies, whilst turning their concern into action have been very busy promoting and selling a CD featuring recordings of every year group in the school to raise money for Francis House Children's Hospice.

As well as the CD, the children sold over £1,500 worth of Easter chicks for this worthy charity which brings comfort to the lives of young children and their families.



They also took part in the **Big Lent Walk** in support of St Ann's Hospice, a local establishment which is very dear to the hearts of everyone at St Vincent's. The Mini Vinnies promoted the event relentlessly and the school managed to raise almost £5,000 for this incredible charity.



Spreading kindness: As part of kindness week, the children helped their classmates to make a 'chain of kindness' and the whole school participated in an Easter Card campaign to reach out to many local residents, Nursing homes and their befriending charity – Cyril Flint – which supports the lonely and isolated in their community.

As part of their links with the local parish and community, the Mini Vinnies are reading stories and listening to stories from the residents of a local Nursing home and entertaining the beneficiaries at the Parish SVP Friday club with songs, dancing, and jokes!

St Winefride's Mini Vinnies are Little Stars!



Mini Vinnies at St Winefride's Shrewsbury support the "Little Stars" Charity in Shropshire. Little Stars is a charity that provides items such as nappies, cots and second-hand children's clothes for vulnerable families.

The Little Stars team supports vulnerable families all over Shropshire – ranging from baby packs to ensure they have hospital essentials for when the time is right, to pre-loved baby and children's clothing, to essential equipment and pre-loved school uniforms and new presents to ensure every child has something to open at Christmas.

These Mini Vinnies, with their VC and teacher volunteered to join the Little Stars team for a day, helping to sort and hang pre-loved baby clothes, and sort toys. Thank you for your kindness. It makes a big difference!



Every penny counts at St Mary of the Angels Ellesmere Port

During Lent, Mini Vinnies at St Mary of the Angels planned their project "Pennies into Pounds." By collecting 1p and 2p coins they raised over £100.

Working with their local SVP group the children decided to sponsor chickens and goats through CAFOD World Gifts.

A beautiful Holy Door has also been created to recognise the Jubilee Year.



Ambassadors of Hope at St Augustine's Latchford, Warrington

On 9th June, at St Augustine's Latchford, RE ambassadors welcomed the Jubilee icon of the Visitation, as the first school on its pilgrimage.

Bishop Mark has chosen the depiction of the Visitation for schools to mark this Jubilee Year of Hope. This icon will make a pilgrimage journey from school to school as a beautiful symbol of hope for us as a Diocesan family of schools to meditate upon.

St Alban's Macclesfield skip for CAFOD

St Alban's Macclesfield Mini Vinnies held a Big Skip for CAFOD in May, raising £120!

Here is their Thank You poster. Well done to everyone.



Hopping to help at St Raphael's Tameside!

During their Easter celebrations, Mini Vinnies at St Raphael's Catholic Primary School organised a cake sale in aid of Mary's Meals, and a bunny hop event in aid of Willow Wood Hospice.

A big thank you to everyone who took part!



St Vincent's Support Centre, Birkenhead – can you help?

The Centre offers services – a Community Café; Clothes Bank; Digital Support; Befriending chats; free activities such as their Vinnie's Pantry, Chess Club and Well-being Wednesday, and a Community Garden and Allotment, supported by over 30 of their beneficiaries.

EAL lessons are offered several times a week. Textbooks and dictionaries are expensive and needed urgently if lessons are to continue. If you feel that your MVs or YSVP could raise funds to buy more books, a donation would be gratefully received. Please ring Mark Casey, St Vincent's Conference President on **0151 673 1313** or **07748 913445** for more details or search svp.org.uk – Support Centres. Thank you.



Bitesize news

St Clement's Runcorn Mini Vinnies ask for your prayers

Lucas, a much-loved former pupil, and Mini Vinnie at St Clement's is going through an incredibly challenging time. Recently they heard the devastating news that their wonderful Lucas has Leukaemia. He will undergo years of intense treatment and despite everything he is going through, he still lights up their lives with his gorgeous, beaming smile.

Mini Vinnies wanted to raise as much money as possible to support Lucas' family. They decided to make hanging decorations to sell after school and will be holding a sponsored sleepover in July.

Any money raised will alleviate travel costs and help pay towards the essential adjustments the family will need to make in their home.



Lucas' story can be found at justgiving.com/crowdfunding/lucasgoodier.

Please keep Lucas and his family in your prayers.

To donate
please scan the
QR code or visit
the link above.



Comments from our readers

Thank you to all our Young Vincentians & Vincentian Coordinators

"EXCELLENT!"

"IT IS EVANGELISING AT ITS BEST! Whole school communities and beyond become involved."

"This wonderful newsletter did indeed give me much hope."

"The young people are so enterprising and caring."

"Thanks again for the fantastic opportunity these children are getting; giving back to the community in kindness and goodwill. I'm delighted to be a part of the SVP Mini Vinnies."



Young Vincentian News



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