

Ozanam



Society of St Vincent
de Paul, Scotland

News



**" TO SERVE THE
POOR IS TO SERVE
JESUS "**

- ST VINCENT DE PAUL



CELEBRATING 400 YEARS OF THE VINCENTIAN CHARISM WORLDWIDE



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James honoured by the Pope!

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GET INVOLVED! We want to know what your conference is up to. If you have a story, share it. The *Ozanam News* relies on your contributions. Send articles and images (jpg or png format only, no PDFs) to communication@ssvpscotland.com. Put the name of your conference in the subject

bar and your full contact details. Please provide full caption details for photos. We do not accept paper submissions. Articles should be written by email or attached as a Word document.

If you need help please contact the SSVP head office on 0141 226 8833.

Publishing Policy

1. The objective is to publish a new *Ozanam News*, which will be issued three times per year, May, September and November. To facilitate this, a publications committee has been formed and a member of the National Council has been made responsible for its operation. The publications committee will normally meet two months before going to the printer. As at present, the actual putting together of the magazine will be the responsibility of the National Office staff, who will select the printer and liaise and coordinate with all preproduction functions. 2. In accordance with National Council requirements, the intention will be not to feature 'editorial' pieces. Any material deemed to detract from the Society's broader aims will be approved by the National Council prior to publication. Hopefully these arrangements will help the new *Ozanam News* develop into a more humorous, educational and spiritual publication which will concentrate on bringing the Society, its Members and Associates closer together. With this Togetherness in mind, National Council Agenda business could well become a regular feature in the magazine. In the main, letters for publication will normally be from twinning parties - regarded as reports. Other letters will be accepted for publication with an added footnote or returned for discussion by the respective council and/or president if thought to be more appropriate.

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From a small mustard seed all the way to Scotland

Reflection by Jim McKendrick,
SSVP National President

THIS year, the Vincentian Family worldwide celebrates the 400th Anniversary of Vincentian spirituality and our charism.

For the feast of St Vincent de Paul, Pope Francis wrote to the Vincentian Family: *"On the occasion of the fourth centenary of the charism that gave birth to your Family, I would like to extend my words of gratitude and encouragement and to emphasise the value and relevance of St Vincent de Paul today. This "little mustard seed" sown in 1617... became a great tree (cf. Mk 4:31-32), your Family. Everything, however, began with this little mustard seed."*

The Society of St Vincent de Paul came to Scotland twelve years after the establishment of the first Conference in Paris in 1833.

This was at the instigation of Bishop James Gillis, who saw for himself the good work it was doing in France. On 25 May 1845, the first Scottish Conference met in **Edinburgh** in the rooms of the Guild of St Joseph. There were eleven members and their annual income in the first year was £143, the brothers

themselves giving £13 in a secret collection.

Their main work was visiting the poor, both Catholics and Protestants, in homes and hospital.

They attended the funerals of the poor and followed their corteges to the graveside, which greatly impressed Catholics and Protestants alike.

The Society was also heavily involved in teaching the catechism and education. For instance, in 1870 it paid £172 (5s-9d) to maintain 690 children in school. By 1900, there were 13 Conferences here, and by the end of the Second World War, 27. Today there are 60 and the work includes a furniture project and the provision of caravan holidays.

In 1847, a member of the Edinburgh Conference, a solicitor, came to Glasgow to work. In August 1848, along with Father William Gordon, he founded the first **Glasgow** Conference at St Andrew's Cathedral parish.

Funds were desperately required to help the poor in the city and means were devised to bring them in. One interesting example is charity sermons, preached on behalf of the Society by the ever helpful clergy.

In 1869, Archbishop Eyre preached eight sermons, bringing in £190 (15s-4d). Today there are 65 in the Glasgow Archdiocese.

A similar pattern of growth occurred in **Motherwell**. The first conference was St Margaret's Airdrie (1854) and today there are 62. The first Conferences in **Paisley** were St Mirin's Cathedral and St Mary's Greenock (1853). Today

"In the Galloway Diocese, early records show regular expenditure on the provision of clogs for children."

there are 32. The first Conference in **Galloway** was at St Andrew's, Dumfries, on 2 February 1862. Early records show that in 1878, the sum of £34 (4s-6d) was given to poor families due to lack of employment and the harsh winter. In 1893, there was regular expenditure on the provision of clogs for children!

The first conference

in **Dunkeld** was St John the Baptist, Perth (1861) and in **Aberdeen**, St Mary's Cathedral (1914). One illustration of the growth in Scotland is that in the centenary year of 1933 there was a six day visit to Paris for the centenary celebrations. The inclusive cost of travel, accommodation and all meals was £15 (7s -6d).

Today, the original eleven members of the first conference have become 1,839 members in 271 Conferences; carrying out almost 49,000 home visits and 14,000 hospital visits; assisting 5,200 families financially; providing furniture to over 2,300 families and transporting 36,000 people to Mass.

Worldwide, the growth of the Society continued from just seven founding members in 1833 to 2,500 Conferences/50,000 members worldwide by 1860; in the centenary Year of 1933 there were 12,000 Conferences/200,000 members. Now there are over 40,000 Conferences/800,000 members.

The dream of Frédéric Ozanam was fulfilled: "I would like to embrace the world in a network of charity."

“ Conference FEEDBACK from our members

“Great spirit.
A real sense
of Vincentian
family.”

“A day to
inspire prayer
and action and
to share with our
conferences.
Thank-you for a
day of grace and
blessings.”

“A wonderful
day – my first
AGM, and I will
be back.”

“Thank-you for
a wonderful
day. It was
very inspiring
and wonderful
to be part of
the Vincentian
family.”

“This was my
first national
meeting and I
felt welcomed
and involved
from entering
the building.”



Welcoming the stranger

SSVP members ‘energised’ by national meeting in Clydebank

VINCENTIANS from across Scotland celebrated their dedicated efforts to ‘welcome the stranger’ at the SSVP national annual meeting.

Bishop William Nolan celebrated Holy Mass and spoke about the theme, referencing Pope Francis when he spoke of ‘smelling the sheep’, reminding members that when they welcome the stranger, they welcome Christ.

Keynote speaker Sr Maria Robb, from the Daughters of Charity of St Vincent de Paul, challenged members saying that the God who called St Vincent and Society

founder Frederic Ozanam, continues to call each of us today.

Other guests who spoke included Margo Uprichard from the Space Charity in Glasgow, Kyle and Maura from SSVP youth and twinning officer Ian Tierney.

National vice president Christine Gray, who chaired the event, said she was “delighted” with how the day went.

The SSVP’s Jacqueline Laird added: “There was a real sense that members left feeling nourished, enriched and energised by the day. It was a lovely celebration for the whole Vincentian family.”





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Need to know:

Staying warm this winter

With the temperature dropping, let's think of those we visit who may need a little practical assistance during the cold months. Here's some info about what help they can get.



Warm home discount

Some of the people we visit may be eligible for £140 off their electricity bill through the *Warm Home Discount Scheme*. The money is a one-off discount on electricity bills, available between September and March. Help someone check if they qualify on the UK Government website.

GOOGLE 'WARM HOME DISCOUNT SCHEME!'

Cold weather payments

A *Cold Weather Payment* is for those receiving certain benefits. They get £25 if the average temperature in their area is recorded as, or forecast to be, zero degrees celsius or below for seven consecutive days.

NO-ONE APPLIES FOR THIS - IT'S PAID AUTOMATICALLY TO THOSE ON BENEFITS



Priority services register

This is a free priority service if you are registered disabled, chronically sick, have sight or hearing difficulties or are over a certain age. To register, contact your gas and/or electricity supplier and ask about their Priority Services Register. Those on it get priority help in an emergency (eg power cut).



What else can we do?

- ✓ Provide warm clothing for those we visit who may be vulnerable, particularly the elderly - eg socks, hats, thermals.
- ✓ Offer to cook a hot meal for them - even if it's simply soup.
- ✓ Put some money on their gas/electricity meter.
- ✓ Be prepared to offer spiritual support and prayers.



High tea for senior citizens

A HIGH Tea for seniors was held at the Station Hotel in Aberdeen. Elizabeth Herlihy, Diocesan President, said: "It was enjoyed by all who attended."

St Gabriel's say farewell

ST Gabriel's Conference in Merrylee has commemorated the long service of two retirees. David Hobson and David O'Hagan had between them a total of almost 80 years' service. A party was held in the



David Hobson, left, and David O'Hagan.

church hall where Fr Woodford was joined by conference members, family

and friends, to thank them and celebrate their service to others over the years.

Calling you to the poor

Fr Frank Keevins CP



I'M reading a book at the moment called "Irish" by John Burrowes.

It tells the story of the Irish in Glasgow and how they changed the face of this city forever. Even for myself, coming from an Irish immigrant family in the wake of the Great Famine, I was shocked at the description of poverty when immigrants flooded into this city. The area known as District 14 - bordered by Stockwell Street, Trongate, Saltmarket and the Briggait - was the most deprived area in Europe. It was into this deprivation that the Society of St Vincent de Paul came to Scotland.

The main objective of Glasgow Celtic, when it was founded in 1888, was to supply the east end conferences of the SSVP with funds for the maintenance of the dinner tables for needy children.

If I fast forward to my father's death in 1960, shortly after he had been made redundant from the Clyde, when my mother was struggling to care for three young children, and working herself to the bone, I remember the role that the SSVP man played in the lives of our family in Partick. Diarmuid Martin, the Archbishop of Dublin, said "*The VDP man was seen as a lifeline. He was*

known, but was discreet. Everyone knew where to find him when needed. He brought financial help, but never humiliation...He respected the world of the poor. He had his meetings, but he was hands on too. He helped the young and he rejoiced when they got on well. He was beside the lonely

“ When my mother was struggling to care for three children, I remember the role of the SSVP man in our lives.

and elderly and he cried at their funerals”.

The great charism of the SSVP is that person-to-person encounter with poverty. People put their money in the SSVP boxes at the end of Mass because they believe members are out there, close to people, giving not just material help, but respect, dignity, friendship and love. God sought the young St Vincent out, and took over his heart completely, and led him

to places where he had never thought of going, and never wanted to go, until love of the poor, and ministry to the poor in Christ's name, took over his life. Is it too much to say that this is what happened to you too?

As scripture says, those whom God has chosen those who are as nothing, to show up those who have everything, members of Christ who himself is your wisdom, your virtue, your holiness and your freedom.

Not everyone could do what you do; and maybe you never thought of doing it yourself until God sought you out; but society and the church owe a debt of gratitude to you, for the witness of disinterested, self-giving love that you show day after day, as you follow the teaching and example of Christ and imitate his love for the poor in your lives.

May the Lord keep on blessing you with the grace and courage you need to continue this good work.

● *This is an abridged version of Fr Keevins' homily at the annual Mass to pray for the canonisation of Blessed Frédéric Ozanam, at St Mungo's, Townhead, Glasgow.*



Ozanam Club quids in thanks to golfers

THE Viewpark Ozanam Club in Paisley received a funding boost thanks to the generosity of Bellshill Golf Club. Tom McLaughlin, the golf club's president, presented a cheque for £2,200, raised at a recent charity golf tournament.

The Ozanam Club is a special works conference of the SSVP and is run by a dedicated group of volunteers and is a social club for adults and children with disabilities.



Flying the flag in Rome

Scottish Vincentians join members from across the world for symposium.

From left, Margaret Malcolm, Sean Murphy, Fr Jim Walls, Matt Meade, Temitope Adesete and Kirsty Menzies.

SCOTTISH Vincentians joined thousands of fellow members from across the world in Rome for a special anniversary.

Over 90 countries were represented at the International Symposium of the Vincentian Family.

It commemorated the 400th anniversary of the charism of St Vincent de Paul on the theme of 'Welcome the Stranger'.

Mary McGinley, a member at St Joseph's in Helensburgh said: "It helped renew our Vincentian spirituality - because we got to meet so many members from other

parts of the world, heard their stories and discussed what we can do better."

Matt Meade, a member at Ss John & Columba, Rosyth, added: "The symposium put into perspective just how big the SSVP is across the world - we met people from Peru, Botswana, the US and Australia - all sharing a common goal to help the poor practically and spiritually.

There was a great sense of shared joy at all the events we attended."

Pope Francis praised Vincentians at a session at St Peter's Square,

telling them: "We thank you for your person, your gift to the church and to the world, and to the



poor," He also emphasised the need for Vincentians to make prayer the centre of their life, saying that St Vincent himself encouraged those he worked with to "cultivate the interior life, and to dedicate themselves to prayer, which purifies and opens the heart."

“Dedicate yourselves to prayer, which purifies and opens the heart.”



My Eternal City Experience

By Sean Murphy

I WAS unsure about what to expect from the 400th anniversary symposium of the Vincentian Charism.

But I was certainly excited about the chance to meet Vincentians from all over the world and find out what role they play within the Vincentian family.

The first day in Rome was spent wandering around the many attractions the magnificent city has to offer – and I *mean* magnificent!

I was amazed by the size and grandeur of many buildings around the city (my favourite being St Peter's Basilica). After registering for the symposium I met up with Matt Meade – a fellow Scottish Vincentian – and we discussed our involvement in the SSVP over a beer and pizza.

On Friday morning we had to leg it down a platform at Termini Station to catch the train to our first event... but watched in dismay as it departed without us. Happily, we spotted some Spanish

Vincentians boarding on a nearby platform so hopped aboard with them - *Hola!* The venue was on the outskirts of Rome and speakers focused

SELFIE IN THE HUGE BASILICA OF ST PAUL OUTSIDE THE WALLS



on the theme *Welcoming the Stranger*.

This included welcoming refugees, ways in which we can approach people on the street, and eye-opening testimonies

were shared with us from a very inspiring and charismatic American nun. We met a group of ladies from Helensburgh (*right*) who invited us out to dinner with them that night.

There was a real sense of Vincentian togetherness and they were a fine example of this.

On Saturday, we decided to be a bit more organised and met up

early for the short walk to St Peter's Square.

I was delighted to be part of an audience with Pope Francis. To see him in person is a moment that will live with me forever.

That evening, we all attended a prayer vigil in the Basilica of St Paul Outside the Walls – an absolutely huge church. The relic of the heart of St Vincent was paraded down the altar. It was here that we attended the final Mass on Sunday.

To see fellow Vincentians singing and dancing was special indeed.

On that note, the whole four-day event was something that

I am very glad to have been involved in, and it helped strengthen my Vincentian spirit.

I can now carry this experience with me at home and continue my work within the Society of St Vincent de Paul.



WAITING IN QUEUE FOR ST PETER'S SQUARE



MEETING FELLOW SCOTTISH PILGRIMS

Helensburgh twins hit the road to **Italia**

TWIN sisters Mary and Kathleen McGinley hit the road to make it to the Vincentian Family Conference in Rome.

They set off in their camper van from Helensburgh for an epic two week journey.

Mary (*left of picture*) said: "We travelled 1,327 miles to be here. Kathleen and I have been Vincentians at St Joseph's, Helensburgh, for thirty years and



it's been a big part of our life. So we thought it would be inspiring to come to Rome".

They were joined in the city by fellow SSVP member Mary Durkin, along with Janice Brabender, both of Helensburgh.

Mary added: "When we saw the publicity about the 400th anniversary we all thought we'd love to be part of that."

● Watch a video of the Helensburgh ladies in Rome on the SSVP Facebook page.

Queensferry trip



ST Theresa's conference in East Calder entertained its senior citizens with a day out to Harry Ramsden's in South Queensferry for fish and chips. Everyone had an enjoyable day with an excellent view of the three bridges.

Autumn Festival

AN SSVP 'Autumn Festival' was held at the Holy Rosary Residence in Greenock for conference members in the Paisley Diocese. The first edition of the Autumn Festival newsletter was distributed, containing the latest news and updates for members. All members within the diocese will receive a copy along with the 2016/17 SSVP Scotland Annual Report.

Mass for hospice

BISHOP John Keenan will celebrate a Mass at St Mirin's Cathedral, Paisley to mark the 35th anniversary of St Vincent's Hospice Special Works Conference and the 30th anniversary of the opening of the Hospice. All SSVP members are warmly invited to attend the Mass on 6th February at 7pm.

Nunraw Abbey visit

ST Columba's Conference in Edinburgh treated senior citizens with a visit to Sancta Maria Abbey at Nunraw. Member John Irvine said: "Thanks to the monks for their warm welcome and Patricia McDonnell and Philip White for organising an enjoyable day."



From left: Fr Kevin Dow, James Morris, Canon John McAllister and Deacon Damian Murray.

Papal honour for James

A FORMER SSVP man has received a special honour from Pope Francis.

James Morris was presented with the Benemerenti Medal for his decades of service at the town's St Peter in Chains Church.

It included many years as treasurer of the parish's conference.

The medal is one of the highest orders that can be accorded by the Catholic Church and recognises distinguished service. Father Kevin Dow presented the medal to James after Mass, which was attended

by many well-wishers. He said:

"James is known to generations of parishioners at St Peter in Chains and is very well liked and respected for all he does quietly behind the scenes. He is a humble, hardworking man who has devoted his adult life to supporting the parish and making sure things run smoothly. Canon John McAllister, now retired, attended to personally thank James. He said: "I can think of no-one who better deserves this medal - I am delighted for him."



Glasgow Flag Day success

PUPILS from St Ninian's High School in Kirkintilloch took part in a successful SSVP flag day for the Glasgow Archdiocese (*main pic*) Door-to-door, street and stadium collections raised £6,851. Nineteen SSVP conferences took part. Convener Jim O'Hagan said: "This was an opportunity to raise additional funds for the poor we serve and raise awareness of the SSVP." *Far left*, a member of St Paul's, Shettleston. *Left*, members/helpers from St Joseph's, Tollcross. Both pics outside Celtic Park.

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Twinning report

By Ian Tierney
National Twinning officer



- Brother Cyriac Matthew, the national twinning officer of India is requesting five new twins for conferences. If a conference wants to accept another twin (or they do not have an Indian twin) please contact me at twinning@ssvpscotland.com
- It was gratifying to receive from the Indian project officer Brother Baby Thekkam that ten of the projects we provided funding for have now been completed. This includes computer projects, fish vending, house renovation/repairs, a goat bank, petty businesses and self-help. The funding comes from our project fund relying entirely on the generosity of our Scottish conferences.
- For the first time in several years the money we received for funding projects was less than the cost of the projects we funded. So if any of our conferences can help provide funding for these projects the benefits enjoyed by the needy and adopted families will be much appreciated.
- I recently received an email from St Thomas Conference in Thiruvazhy and from Vasai Central Council and Valenkanni Mata Conference, Merdes, thanking us for our donations. If the duration of any twinning with an Indian conference exceeds 15 years please contact me and I will arrange for a new twin to be allocated to you. If you have not heard from your twin for a long period of time let me know and I will contact the Central Council of that area who will investigate.



Mini Vinnies are big help

MINI Vinnies helped organise the annual Mass for the sick of the parish at St Michael's in Dumbarton. After the Mass a buffet was held for all who attended. The children are pupils at St Michael's Primary.

'Uplifting' visit to Carfin

PARISHIONERS from St Joseph's and St Margaret's enjoyed a visit to Carfin. Morrison's supermarket partly funded a packed lunch and there was a fun raffle on the bus. One parishioner said: "The whole day has been brilliant and uplifting."

Augustine's anniversary

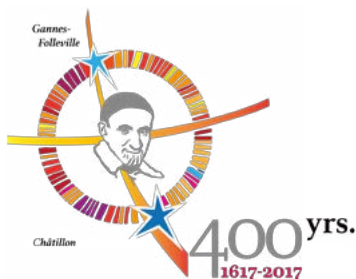


ST Augustine's conference in Coatbridge has marked its 125th anniversary. Mass was celebrated by Bishop Toal, Fr Michael Kane and Fr John Convery.

May they rest in peace | obituaries

- **James McLachlan**, former president, St Peter's, Dumbarton.
- **Dolores Grant**, president, St Fergus, Paisley.
- **May Reilly**, former member, Immaculate Heart of Mary, Balornock.
- **Tommy Reilly**, former member, St Dominic's Bishopbriggs.
- **John McStay**, former member, St Mary's, Larkhall.
- **James Parker**, former member, St Ninian's, Hamilton.
- **Chris McCorry**, former member, St Mary's, Larkhall.
- **John Steward**, former member, St Cuthbert's, Edinburgh.
- **Tom Mooney**, former member, OL & St John's, Blackwood.





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**St Vincent de Paul
(1581-1660)**



**Blessed Frédéric Ozanam
(1813-1853)**

*Founder of the Society
of St Vincent de Paul*