How to start a Youth SSVP Group

In secondary schools and parishes

Society of
St.Vincent de Paul
Scotland

Foreword

The aim of this guide is to provide guidance and assistance to teachers, SSVP members and priests on setting up a youth SSVP group in a school or parish. Youth SSVP members are usually 14-17 years old.

SSVP Mission Statement

"As members of the Society of St Vincent de Paul, we seek to identify and combat all forms of poverty, by promoting social justice and actively working with those in need, acknowledging that, by freely giving of ourselves, we become more aware of the power of love in all our relationships"

The SSVP is a worldwide Christian community founded in Paris in 1833, by a group of young Catholics and one older person who provided them with support and guidance.

Is Youth SSVP appropriate for your school or parish?

Establishing a Youth SSVP conference provides our young people with many opportunities for learning and growing in faith, as well as personally and socially. Youth SSVP members work together with other young people to address needs in their area. Just like a 'senior' SSVP Conference, these needs are addressed in what is considered a most appropriate way.

Youth SSVP conferences promote the development and formation of their members. As well as connecting them to the Catholic Church and their faith, it is a cross-curricular activity which enables young people to achieve outcomes of the *Curriculum for Excellence*. Being a Youth SSVP member assists young people in outcomes in curricular areas such as;

- Health & Well-being
- Religious Education
- Social studies

Many Youth SSVP members who are in S6 and working towards the Caritas Award also find that their SSVP work is an excellent and fulfilling way to achieve the aims required to qualify for the award.

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What is Youth SSVP?

Youth SSVP groups operate in secondary schools or parishes. They are groups of young people, usually between 14 and 17 years of age, who get together to help people in need within their school and local community. These groups sometimes follow on from 'Mini Vinnies', which are SSVP groups in primary schools.
The work done in such groups develops young people's knowledge of the world around them and how they can help people in need. It also helps them to grow spiritually and deepen their faith.

What does a Youth SSVP group do?

The purpose of Youth SSVP groups is to do good works in the community, but it is also about young people meeting to talk, share ideas and concerns, have fun and support each other. The SSVP model of **faith in action** is a great way to get young people thinking and talking about their spirituality. Connecting their beliefs and values with service activities and issues in their community helps to make their faith real, meaningful and relevant.

Trinity High School, Cambuslang SSVP group visiting the 'Ozanam Centre, Glasgow

The actions of a Youth SSVP group generally involve three components:

'See' - Education and awareness. Becoming aware that, in spite of some of a community's social ills, there are always ways to make it a bit better.

'Think' - Formation. This is a chance for Youth SSVP members to participate in spiritual activities, personal development and discussions, and to develop an understanding of the real world.

'Do' - Community service and fundraising. 'Doing' means actively supporting the SSVP in its good works, and for the young people to address the issues that they have seen, thought about or discussed and act on them.

See…

An Introduction to Social Justice

A Youth SSVP group is an ideal way for young people to become aware of issues such as poverty and social justice. It is therefore important that this is introduced with care and empathy. Youth SSVP group advisers should consider communicating social ills in ways to which young people can easily relate. Images and stories are often helpful ways of communicating a problem.

What are Poverty and Social Exclusion?

Nelson Mandela once said of poverty;

"Like slavery and apartheid, poverty is not natural. It is man-made and it can be overcome and eradicated by the actions of human beings. And overcoming poverty is not a gesture of charity. It is an act of justice. It is the protection of a fundamental human right, the right to dignity and a decent life. While poverty persists, there is no true freedom."

Participants at SSVP National Youth Day. The theme of 'Welcome the Stranger' enabled discussion of issues surrounding refugees.

Poverty is often defined in two ways:

1. **Absolute poverty**- when people do not have the basic necessities of life, namely food, shelter and clothing.
2. **Relative poverty-** when there is inequality in a community. It is often measured using a 'poverty line'. Relative poverty is a concept most frequently used in developed countries like Scotland to define poverty.

Social exclusion occurs when members of the community cannot participate in key activities for whatever reason. This may mean they have restricted access to the economic resources and/ or services they require or they are effectively disengaged from many of the activities which other community members take for granted. Examples might include an inability to see a dentist or not being able to take the kids on holiday.

Why is it important to learn about Poverty and Social Exclusion?

It is important that people are made aware of the injustices in the world. Children who grow up with an awareness of other people's suffering and the reasons why will grow into more compassionate, giving adults. They also have greater understanding of the blessings in their own lives.

Think…

Forming a Youth SSVP group

Establishing a Youth SSVP group gives young people the opportunity to participate in spiritual activities, personal development and discussions, and to develop a real understanding of the world.
Taking time to think as part of faith formation allows Youth SSVP members to develop their understanding of social justice issues in a personal way through reflection, discussion, expression and prayer.

How to start a group

The first step is to introduce the young people in your school (usually S3 upwards, but they can be younger depending on your situation) to the idea of Youth SSVP and find out if any of them are interested in forming a group.
You may want to bring in a guest to speak at year group assemblies to raise awareness. SSVP National Youth Development is able to help with this. *

You will need to find a teacher or teachers who are willing to help coordinate the group. Then arrange a time, date and room for the first meeting. The meetings are important. They set Youth SSVP apart from other volunteering activities and give the young people a chance to pray together and learn about their faith.
If you have a school bulletin, daily notices or a class notice board, advertise the meeting there as well to ensure that the young people know the details.

*It is good to invite a representative from SSVP to join you at the first meeting. It could be someone from your local Conference or the National Office.

The first meeting

1. Open the meeting with a prayer and reflection.
2. Allow the representative from SSVP to address the group briefly.
3. Decide as a group when, where and how often you will hold meetings (usually weekly, fortnightly at a minimum).
4. Discuss what activities and projects the group could undertake or investigate.
5. Discuss what roles are needed in the group and what is required of people in those roles.
6. Close the meeting with a prayer and details of the next meeting.

Regular meetings

When your Youth SSVP group is established, your meetings can follow a similar format to the first meeting, although you don't need to invite an SSVP member to every
meeting. You may, however, invite guest speakers to address the group from time to time, perhaps once a term. A guest speaker might talk about a particular issue, which could influence the group's activities for the following term and inspire them to persevere in their efforts to shape a more just society.

Roles

Everyone in the group has a vital role to play. You might decide to have particular leadership roles within your group. These could include:

- **President** – works closely with the coordinating staff member to look after the group, normally chairs the meetings and helps to allocate work to different members of the group;
- **Vice President** – is supportive of the president, and may take on the leadership of meetings or activities when the president is absent;
- **Secretary** – takes notes of the meetings and keeps a record of projects and activities undertaken by the group;
- **Treasurer** – keeps track of money raised by the group;

The president should ensure that work is divided fairly amongst the group.

The Group Adviser

Any staff member within the school can take on the role of coordinating the Youth SSVP group – it does not necessarily have to be a teacher. What is important is that the person is willing to commit some of their time to attend Youth SSVP meetings, events and fundraisers that the group organises. In a Youth SSVP group, ideally it should be the young people who identify the needs in their community, come up with ideas of how to help and make decisions about fundraisers and service activities. The role of the staff member is to guide these discussions and assist the pupils to put their passion and ideas into action by keeping discussions within the realm of possibility. The teacher will need to help the group by looking into the feasibility of projects according to school rules and duty of care requirements.

Learning about the SSVP

It is important for a Youth SSVP group to learn about the history and works of the St Vincent de Paul Society, both locally and on an international level. A local Conference member could talk to the group about when and where the Conference meets, what the needs are in their Diocese and ways in which the Conference helps local people.

Events

Over the years, Youth SSVP have organised various events to bring together our younger members. From our National Youth Day in 2016 to Camp Frederic (2011-2015), younger SSVP members have enjoyed having the opportunity to spend time with one another in fun, prayer and learning.

Having Fun

As well as helping young people to develop leadership skills, learn about issues in their community and discover their ability to make a difference in the world, Youth SSVP can be a great way for young people to make new friends.
Besides providing time in meetings for group members to talk and get to know each other better, it is good to have some social activities within your Youth SSVP group. A shared lunch or morning tea at the start or end of each term is a good way to celebrate the good works the group has done and to give the children a good opportunity to get to know each other better, which will help them to work well as a team. Some groups have also invited local SSVP members in to have a shared coffee morning or lunch, which has proven to be of great benefit. This fun and social element of Youth SSVP makes it more enjoyable and interesting for the young people involved. It can also help them to establish friendships and support networks that will be of great benefit to them as they leave school and perhaps get involved in a Youth SSVP group at their parish.

Contact people

It is important that others are aware of the fact that you are setting up a new group. They will be able to support and guide you through the process. Speak to the parish priest and SSVP conference to let them know what you would like to do. Also contact the SSVP national office, let them know that you are setting up a group and they can give you contact details of local SSVP parish conferences.

Do…

Service in the community

A Youth SSVP provides an opportunity for young people to put all their learning (seeing) and formation (thinking) into action. It is important for members of Youth SSVP groups to understand that they can make a difference in this world. To this end, 'doing' means undertaking achievable projects that will make a difference in the lives of the poor, isolated or marginalised in their local area.
It is important to understand that simply by setting up a Youth SSVP group, the members are doing something tangible:

- They pray - at each meeting
- They learn – about the world around them and the SSVP
- They develop - into more socially aware and responsible adults

Sometimes it is easier to teach children a lesson when the good works and its effects are tangible. Measurable good works include:

- Visiting a local nursing home and doing the garden, chatting to residents, playing board games, singing, etc.
- Holding appeals - food, clothing, toiletries, Easter eggs, winter woollies, gifts
- Fundraising for a local SSVP Conference or a particular service such as the Ozanam Centre
- Hosting a morning tea in the school for residents of a local nursing home
- Having a film afternoon for local older people
- Moving on into S5 and 6, group members can help out at soup kitchens or food banks as appropriate.

If the children KNOW that they can effect real change, then it is all worth it, even if they have an effect on just one person's life.

Raising funds

While the main aim of Youth SSVP groups is not to fundraise, there may be occasions when they need some funds. This might be because they have a particular project in mind that they want to organise. Please bear in mind that the SSVP is not a fundraising group for other charities.
It is up to the group to decide how they want to raise funds, if the need arises. With any fundraiser, it is important to let people know how the funds will be used. This also raises awareness of the cause and of the Youth SSVP group.

Some fundraising Ideas:

- Raffles
- Guessing competitions
- Non uniform days
- Cake stalls
- Fun runs
- Bag packing

*These are only ideas. The best fundraisers are the ones that are creative and capture people's imagination.

Supporting the school community

You could also raise money to help struggling families within the school. Even though the group would not know exactly who is being helped through such a program (confidentiality is a fundamental requirement of all SSVP works) they would know that they are giving vital support to a family within their immediate community. This money could help with school trips, uniforms, stationery, etc.

Raising Awareness

Raising awareness of social justice issues is a very important part of the work of the SSVP, and Youth SSVP can play a key role in this.
There are lots of ways for your Youth SSVP group to stand up and speak out in your school community. A good way to start is through education. Teach others about the injustices in our communities. Once people know and care about an issue, they are more likely to stand up and speak out against it.

Here are some examples;

- School assemblies- educate them on the things that are happening and why they are considered to be unjust
- Create stalls, displays or events that draw attention to the issues
- Make announcements over the school loudspeaker system
- Organise a week dedicated to an issue, with something happening each day (Monday- assembly, Tuesday-fundraiser, Wednesday- art show etc.)
- Be creative!

Advocacy

Once you have people caring about an issue the next step is to go and do something about it! Be advocates for social justice and take action against injustice. Examples of this are;

- Write letters- local councillors, government ministers, business leaders etc.
- Let your community know- deliver leaflets, hold stalls etc.

"No work of charity is foreign to the Society of St Vincent De Paul."

SSVP members are involved in a diverse range of activities characterised by:

Any form of personal help

This includes help which alleviates suffering or deprivation and promotes human dignity and personal integrity in all their dimensions.

To *anyone* in need

The SSVP serves those in need regardless of creed, ethnic or social background, health, gender or political opinions.

Seeking out the poor

Vincentians (SSVP members) strive to seek out and find those in need, the forgotten and the victims of exclusion or adversity.

Adapting to a changing world

Faithful to the spirit of its founders, the Society constantly strives for renewal, adapting to the changing world conditions. It seeks to be ever aware of the changes that occur in human society and the new types of poverty that may be identified or anticipated. It gives priority to the poorest of the poor and to those who are most rejected by society.

Typical SSVP work

Origins and history of the Society of St Vincent de Paul

The Saint behind the Society: St Vincent de Paul
St Vincent de Paul 1581-1660

"Always be quite simple and sincere and ask God to grant me those two virtues"

Having been placed under the patronage of St. Vincent de Paul by the founding members, the Society is inspired by his spirituality, manifest in his attitudes, his thoughts, his example and his words.

Vincent was born in Pouy, in the Landes region of France, in a little village now called Berceau de St Vincent (St Vincent's Cradle). The third of six children of hardworking parents he spent his younger years on the family farm tending the sheep. It was here that he acquired his love of quiet and recollection.

His intelligence won the admiration of the parish priest and prompted his father to send him off to college, where he was an ardent student and soon answered the calling of the priesthood. He then went to Toulouse for his studies and was ordained in 1600, when he was just twenty years old. In 1610, after the assassination of Henry IV, he was granted the benefice of an abbey in the diocese of Saintes and could have made for himself an excellent career in the Church.

However, after a serious spiritual crisis, he abdicated his rights over the abbey and decided to devote the rest of his life in the church to the service of the poor. (What is the relevance of the underlined above?)

In September, 1613, Vincent became the chaplain to the influential family of Philip Emmanuel de Gondi, landowner of large properties in the north of France. He exercised a great influence on the family, and his travels with them showed him the needs of a people starved spiritually and physically and served by an uneducated clergy. It was then that he realised that the evangelisation of rural France was a vital need, and this missionary passion remained with him for the rest of his life.

After a while he felt his service with the de Gondi family too much of a luxury and so once again became a parish priest, this time in the parish of Chaillon-les-Dombes, a

village morally abandoned, with a deserted church, disinherited poor and a Protestant richer class. Together with a curate, his care of the parish made it flourish and it was here that he founded a Society of Charity to serve the poor.

But the de Gondi family missed him and he was persuaded to return unwillingly to Paris to their service. At this point de Gondi appointed him as chaplain to the galley slave, and with his customary energy he began to improve their appalling physical and moral condition. He insisted on the value of witness throughout all his works.

1625 was a vital year to him, for during it he founded the Congregation of the Mission (the Lazarists or Vincentians), and began a partnership of charity with Louise de Marillac. Together they set up the "Dames de la Charite", at first with a group of well-bred ladies: under Louise de Marillac they soon became Vincent's hands for work and his witnesses in the love of Christ. In 1633, to ensure their permanence, they were officially consecrated as the Daughters of Charity, vowing their entire lives to those who suffered. Up to his eightieth year Vincent remained active and the work continued to expand. He died in September 1660, worn out from a life of unbelievable activity of mind and body. In 1729 he was beatified and his canonisation followed in 1737.

In 1833 Frederic Ozanam (see 7.3 & 7.4) was to place the Society he had founded under the patronage of St Vincent de Paul, and in 1885 Pope Leo XIII proclaimed St Vincent the patron of all works of charity. His feast is now celebrated on September 27th, the anniversary of his death. St Vincent de Paul played what can only be described as a providential role in the history of France and, through his works, in the history of the world.

The Woman behind the Saint: St Louise de Marillac

1591-1660

Louise did not know her mother and was raised by her father. From the time she was a small child she was taken to the Dominican sisters, who gave her a good education. Later, she went on to further education at a residence for young girls in Paris. Her education was much better than that of most children her age and Louise became one of the best-educated women of her time.

Louise had a desire to join a religious order, but her family wanted her to marry. She married Antoine Le Gras, Secretary to the French Queen Mother, in 1611. According to Louise, Antoine was a good and pious man but suffered from ill health and Louise spent much of her married life nursing him. Throughout their marriage, Louise travelled a lot and socialised with the royalty and aristocracy of France. Louise and Antoine had a son, Michael, and they lived together happily for many years until Antoine died in 1625.

After her husband died, Louise met and became friends with Vincent de Paul. Despite the fact that she had come from a background of wealth and knew many rich people, she was just as comfortable around poor people. Louise dedicated her time to helping abandoned children on the streets. She also visited sick men in the prison hospital (which was a horrible place) and established a house near the hospital where, each day, many women would cook food that visitors then took to the prisoners.
Throughout France, women set up centres to serve the poor. Louise pushed for every village to have its own clinic, school, nurse and teacher. With Vincent, Louise started the Daughters of Charity in 1633. The Daughters of Charity were a revolutionary order of sisters, because they actually left the convents to work on the streets and in the homes of the poor. They helped abandoned children, people who were poor and sick, wounded soldiers, slaves, people who were mentally ill and the elderly. Today, there are over 20,000 Daughters of Charity, and they continue to help people in need.

Louise is the patron saint of sick people, widows and orphans, and in 1960, Pope John XXIII proclaimed her the Patroness of Social Workers.

The beginnings of the Society of St Vincent de Paul

Frederic Ozanam, a devoted Catholic, was in the minority at Sorbonne University, where he studied law because of the strong anti-Christian sentiment within the University where many Catholic students would not openly admit to their faith. A professor named Jouffrey argued that Christianity was irrational and that it was the enemy of scientific inquiry and human liberty. Frederic wrote two letters to him to disprove the professor's arguments. He wrote a third letter, which was signed by nine other students. Jouffrey was forced to read the letter in public and promise never again to attack the religious beliefs of students.

Following this incident, Frederic was seen as a natural leader of the Catholic students at the University. He was driven by a deep desire to find a way to help build the faith of his peers. One day, Frederic was challenged by a group of Socialist students who went by the name of Saint Simonians.

The students argued that:

> ***"Christianity is now outworn and defunct. It may have been useful in the past, but what use is it today? Show us your works, and then we might believe!"***

These claims troubled Frederic greatly and drove him to start a 'Conference of Charity' with a few friends.
The group consisted of:

Frederic Ozanam, aged 19
Joseph Emmanuel Bailly, 42
Francoise Lallier, 20
Paul Lemanche, 23
Felix Clave, 22
Auguste Le Tallandier, 22
Jules Devaux, 22

Under the guidance of Bailly, who was the founder of an influential Catholic newspaper, the students met weekly – starting in May 1833 – and committed themselves to helping the poor people of Paris.

Inspired and assisted by Sister Rosalie Rendu (see 7.5), a Daughter of Charity, the students visited poor people in their homes, bringing food and other necessities.

Frederic had a strong belief that this method of serving the poor was much better than what he called “ostentatious philanthropy” (the bold, flashy giving of money without paying much attention to the people who were actually in need of the help).

The Conference adopted the name “The Society of St Vincent de Paul” because they were inspired by Saint Vincent, who had devoted himself to helping the poor people of France about 200 years earlier. Sister Rosalie taught Frederic and his friends to see the face of God in the poor people whom they visited. In this way, the Conference members recognised the importance of providing company and friendship as well as material assistance to people in need – those they visited were not just physically poor, but emotionally and spiritually poor as well.

Frederic came to realise that, in serving the poor, charity was not enough, and he began calling for social reform and justice for the working classes. The Society of St Vincent de Paul began to focus not just on helping people through their immediate poverty, but also on the changing laws and structures that continued to create poverty and disadvantage.

Frederic said:

> ***“You must not be content with tiding the poor over the poverty crisis: you must study their condition and the injustices which brought about such poverty, with the aim of a long term improvement.”***

As the student members of the Conference completed their studies, they started up Conferences in other provinces of France. Within two years of the first Conference meeting, there were over 100 members of the Society. Soon, the Society spread beyond the borders of France, and there was a Conference in Rome, Italy, by 1842. The SSVP started in Scotland in 1845 in St Patrick's Church, Cowgate, Edinburgh.

By the time of Frederic’s death in 1853, the Society was thriving in France and had spread throughout the world, fulfilling Frederic’s desire to “embrace the whole world in a network of charity”. Today, the Society of St Vincent de Paul is present in 150 countries, with 49,500 Conferences and over 950,000 members.

The Man behind the Society: Blessed Frederic Ozanam

1813 -1853

Frederic's family was an upper middle class Catholic family – his father was a doctor and his mother was an heiress. He was the fifth born of 14 children, but he was one of only four to survive early childhood, with 10 of his siblings dying from disease at a young age.

Frederic was a very intelligent young man and decided to study Law at Sorbonne University. People at Sorbonne were very anti-Christian, and there were not many

other Catholic students. Many students – and even teachers – at the university attacked the religious beliefs of Frederic and his fellow Christians, claiming that the Church had become irrelevant and was not doing anything to help the many poor and suffering people of France. Frederic, who was seen as a natural leader of his fellow Catholic students, decided to take action, and he started a Conference of Charity with a few other students.

Guided by a middle-aged journalist named Emmanuel Bailly, the Conference members were driven by a deep desire to build their faith, and they decided to go out and become servants of the poor, just as Jesus Christ had done. The group followed the example of St Vincent – the French saint who had done so much work to help the poor 200 years earlier – and named their Conference 'the Society of St Vincent de Paul'. The group was also inspired by a young Daughter of Charity, Rosalie Rendu, and the young men worked closely with her to help the poor people of Paris.

As well as becoming a lawyer, Frederic was also a teacher and a scholar. He wrote many essays and journal articles on a whole range of subjects, and was appointed Lecturer in Foreign Literature at the University of Lyon. Much of Frederic's work was based on his passion for social justice, and he argued for better social conditions, higher moral standards and the restoration of the Catholic faith in France.

On 23rd. June 1841, Frederic married a woman named Amelie Soulacroix, who in 1845 gave birth to their daughter Marie. Frederic was a sick man his whole life, and was forced to resign from his job in 1852. He died in September 1853, at the age of 40.

Woman with Experience: Blessed Rosalie Rendu

1786 -1856

Jeanne Marie Rendu (later called Sister Rosalie Rendu) was the eldest of four girls in her family. Her parents were simple-living but well respected people who lived in the mountains. When Jeanne was only three years old, the French Revolution broke out in France. At this time, many faithful priests were forced to flee because people wanted to hurt them, and the Rendu family home became a refuge for many of these priests.

Following the death of her father and baby sister, Jeanne helped her mother to look after the family. Jeanne's mother sent her to a boarding school so she could get a good education. During her two years there, Jeanne would walk around the town, and one day she discovered a hospital where the Daughters of Charity cared for the sick. Her mother gave her permission to spend some time at the hospital, and Jeanne soon felt called by God to become a Daughter of Charity.

When she was nearly 17 years old, Jeanne entered the Motherhouse of the Daughters of Charity and received the name Rosalie. She took vows to serve God and the poor, and spent over 50 years living out those vows. She opened a free clinic, a pharmacy, a school, an orphanage, a childcare centre, a home for the elderly and a youth club for young workers. She became known as the "good mother of all", and helped Frederic Ozanam and his friends to do good works, which is how the St Vincent de Paul Society started.

As well as assisting the poor in the streets and in their homes, Sister Rosalie showed great courage and leadership during the bloody uprisings that took place in France in 1830 and 1848. During the battles, Sister Rosalie would climb up on the barricades – risking her life – to help wounded soldiers, regardless of on which side they were fighting.

Although her health was always fragile, Sister Rosalie preferred to keep serving the poor and managed to overcome her fatigue and illness. Eventually, however, the huge workload – combined with her age and increased frailty – broke her resistance, and she became progressively blind during the last two years of her life.

Youth SSVP Meeting Planner

Date of meeting: _____

- Names of people at the meeting

_____

_____

_____

_____

- Youth SSVP Opening Prayers
- Reflection(take a note of this)
- What has been happening with the group? Write down any news from other groups or teachers

_____

_____

_____

_____

Plans – what is planned next? If no plans, discuss ideas

_____

_____

_____

_____

Closing Prayers

Society of St.Vincent de Paul Scotland

OPENING PRAYERS

(Guidance for those leading prayers are given in brackets throughout)

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Leader: Come Holy Spirit, penetrate into our hearts and kindle within us the fire of Your love. Send forth Your Spirit and new life will be created

Group: and the whole face of the earth will be renewed.

Our Father… Hail Mary…

Vincentian Family Prayer

(Group should say these prayers together)

Lord Jesus, you who decided to become poor, give us eyes and a heart directed towards the poor. Help us to recognise You in them, in their hunger, their loneliness, and their misfortune. Ignite unity, simplicity, humility and the fire of love that burned in St Vncent de Paul in our SSVP family. Strengthen us, so that we will remember you and serve you by serving the poor. May we one day be united with you in Your kingdom. Amen

Prayer for a Fruitful Meeting

Let us remember the words of our Lord Jesus Christ: "When two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them" *(Short Silence).*

Lord Jesus, help us through meeting together to deepen our Vincentian friendship and answer the call every Christian receives; to seek and find those who are forgotten, to bring your love to the suffering or deprived. Help us to be generous with our time, our possessions and ourselves, so that we may grow perfect in Your love and learn to share Your sacrifice for others in the Holy Eucharist.

Leader: St Joseph, Patron of Families **Group :** Pray for us

Leader: St Vincent de Paul **Group :** Pray for us

Leader: (School patron saint) **Group** : Prayer for us

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

CLOSING PRAYERS

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Prayer for success in our work

We thank You Lord, for the many blessings we receive from those we work with and help. Help us to love and respect them, to understand their deeper needs and share their burdens and joys as true friends.

For the Pope and all members of the Vincentian Family

Grant the courage, peace and confidence You alone can give, to our Holy father the Pope and to those we work with, to all who help us in the work, to our overseas brothers and sisters, to any members of the SSVP and their families who may be troubled or in need.

Leader: Lord hear us. **Group:** Lord graciously hear us.

For Unity

May we accept afresh our calling to make visible our unity in Christ with all other Christians by working together with them in the service of those in need.

Leader: Lord hear us. **Group:** Lord graciously hear us.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

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