

Christmas 2016

Ozenam

News



Society of St Vincent
de Paul, Scotland



SPACE PROJECT

Help and hope
for Roma people
in Glasgow

TEARS OF HAPPINESS

Furniture
project delivers

SMILE!

Conference
picture special



Cover image: St Vincent de Paul.

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Smiles at annual national conference

Picture special, p8-9

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**. Simply put the name of your conference

in the subject bar and your full contact details. Please provide full caption details for photos. Please note, we do not accept paper submissions. Articles should be written by email or attached as a Word document. If you need help or have a query please contact editor Matt Meade on 07985 592920.

The national office has launched a new website to raise awareness of the Society and to offer helpful resource to members. Visit the Members' section, to find practical and spiritual resources, such as reflections to use at meetings, at **www.ssvpscotland.com**

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.

I am sending you two young men...

How a letter from a French Catholic newspaper editor to a nun proved pivotal to the foundation of the Society of St Vincent de Paul...



By National President, Jim McKendrick

ON the first day of August 1617, Vincent de Paul was installed as Parish Priest in the poor, rural parish of Châtillon and left his "dignified life" as chaplain to the de Gondi family and tutor to their children.

Less than three weeks later, as he was vesting for Mass, he was told about a family who lived in an isolated house in the parish, who were all sick, and therefore unable to help each other.

"It moved me to the depths of my heart. I did not fail to speak feelingly about them during the sermon, and God, touching the hearts of those who were listening, caused them all to be moved to compassion for the poor afflicted people."

We know that his compassion led to immediate action, because many people (particularly ladies) went to the assistance of the family that

same day. Vincent came quickly to understand that the love of God compelled him to love the poor deeply and to serve them for the rest of his life.

Realising from the outset the enormity of this task, Vincent called a meeting of those charitable ladies to determine the best way to help the poor and the sick of the parish.

They agreed to form The Confraternity of Charity. Its motto was either "Blessed are the merciful, as my Father is merciful" or "For I was hungry and you gave me to eat."

By providence, Vincent moved to a poor, rural parish. He became acutely aware of the plight of the poor and was moved by compassion to seek to serve them.

Next year, 2017, the whole Vincentian Family will celebrate

At a meeting of the Conference, a remark by Jean Broet was overheard by Frederic and his friends: "Where are the works that prove your faith?"

the 400th anniversary of the birth of our charism. It was by Divine Providence that the charism – service in the manner of Jesus Christ and service to the person of Jesus Christ in those who are poor – was nurtured by members of the Confraternities of Charity (Vincent founded more than 80 in all).

It was also assisted by the Priests of the Congregation of the Mission, the Daughters of Charity and by the members of the Society of St Vincent de Paul, in 1833.

JUST as a series of coincidences (or was it Divine Providence?) brought Vincent de Paul to a poor parish, so a similar scenario was at work in the founding of our Society.

In 1831 Frederic Ozanam had come to Paris to study at the Sorbonne. By chance he happened to meet Emmanuel Bailly, a former professor who was now owner and editor of a prominent Paris newspaper, *La Tribune Catholique*.

Bailly encouraged and supported Frederic in his early writing career and published his first efforts.

At Bailly's house, Frederic met and befriended some of the young students who were lodging in two houses owned by Bailly which

Continued...

(...cont)

provided a safe environment and a Catholic ethos.

In 1832, Frederic along with five friends, started the Conference of History.

At a meeting of the Conference, a remark by Jean Broet was overheard by Frederic and his friends: "Where are the works that prove your faith?"

Frederic felt urged to respond and on 23rd April 1833, in Bailly's office at La Tribune, the first meeting of the Conference of Charity was held.

Later, Ozanam would write to him: "You have so accustomed us to look upon you as the rallying point, the adviser and friend of young Christian youth."

Bailly, as a young man just happened to have been a seminarian of the Congregation of the Mission at Amiens (where his uncle had been the Superior and happened to have retained his devotion to St Vincent). He had also named his first son Vincent de Paul Bailly. It is not surprising that he directed these young men towards the service of the poor!

Bailly and his wife, Marie, happened to be friendly with a Daughter of Charity, Sister Rosalie Rendu. She worked with the poor in the poorest district of Paris, the Mouffetard, a short distance from the Sorbonne.

A chance remark about young men being needed to visit the families of poor workers led Emmanuel Bailly to take pivotal action. He wrote to Sister Rosalie: "I am sending you two young men, M. Ozanam and M. Taillandier..."

Sister Rosalie was very assiduous in her role of mentor. She selected with care the poor families for Ozanam and Taillandier to visit. She provided them with firewood

and vouchers for food and clothing. They also donated from the funds contributed by members at the weekly conference meetings (the birth of the secret collection).

Most importantly, she shared with them her deep conviction of how the poor should be served. In due course, the other members

Sister Rosalie selected with care the poor families for Ozanam and Taillandier to visit ... and shared her deep conviction of how the poor should be served.

also participated in visits to struggling families.

From Sr Rosalie and the other Daughters of Charity, the young men learned Vincentian values and the spirit and ethos of service of those in need.

Rosalie taught them that "love is your first gift to the poor". In 1834, a proposal to place the Conference of Charity under the patronage of St Vincent de Paul was accepted, and our society was born. Like Vincent in Châtillon, the hearts of these young men were touched – and the Vincentian charism was reawakened and transmitted to our society, which now has over 800,000 members worldwide in 155 countries.

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

Harvest time for Mini Vinnies



PUPILS at St Margaret's Primary School in Galashiels were delighted to kick-off their Mini Vinnies group with a harvest festival collection.



Working with local SSVP member Dr John Tucker, they organised the appeal, which was distributed to the people that the Conference of Our Lady & St Andrew's provide assistance to.

Clare Carr Cullen, the SSVP's National Youth Development Officer, said: "The project was well supported by the whole school community, and they are looking to their next venture, visiting older people in sheltered housing accommodation."

Mini Vinnies groups are starting in schools, thanks to the assistance of SSVP members. If you would be interested in finding out more, please contact Clare on 0141 226 8833 or email youth@ssvpscotland.com

Kids are clued-up on running a conference

SCHOOLS from across the country have attended the Voice of the Poor conference - a two day, residential course.

The aim is to prepare third-year pupils who are joining a Youth SSVP group at school.

Clare Carr Cullen, National Youth Development Officer, said: "By the end of the two days at the Conforti Institute, we wanted them to leave with the confidence and motivation to help their communities in the name Christ, through St Vincent de Paul. Thanks to all at the Conforti Institute and Fr Paddy Duffy, to the Poverty Alliance for lending us their knowledge and expertise and to the teachers who give us so much of their time to bring their groups to the Voice of the Poor and in supporting the groups throughout the year."



ROOM FOR ROMA

The poverty facing the Roma population in Glasgow can be brutal. The Space charity in Govanhill assists them and is inspired by the Vincentian values of helping the poorest. Vincent Toal met project manager Margo Uprichard to find out more.

WHEREVER they go, the Roma are often despised and looked upon with suspicion.

“Among young Roma women especially, their levels of aspiration are shockingly low,” says Margo Uprichard, Project manager of The Space charity in Govanhill.

“I’ve never encountered such low self-esteem and self-worth.

“So we work with them and get them to realise how valuable they are so they can aspire towards skills which will improve their life chances and enhance their family’s wellbeing.”

Many Vincentians in Scotland will be familiar with Margo, a former industrial microbiologist.

She has spoken at previous SSVP national conferences and has a talent for laying bare the cruel poverty suffered by many.

“We are guided by the values of St Vincent de Paul of being led by those we serve,” she says.

“The poor are our masters and the volume of need among the Roma population is immense, so we have to respond.”

Funding to expand the



Ties: Margo, right, Liz Anne O'Hare & Sr Agnes at the annual conference.

I’ve never encountered such low self-esteem and self worth. So we get them to realise just how valuable they really are.

project and renovate new premises came through the Daughters of Charity.

They also contribute to The Space’s outreach work in the person of Sr Agnes McGarvie.

She said: “There is no doubt that in Govanhill we have some of greatest need anywhere in the city.

“Conditions are unbelievably tough, but they are better than where people have come from, which tells you a great

deal.”

The Space offer three streams of support – a community drop-in, integration service, and building better futures. Three days a week people can come in for a chat, access basic needs and be in a place where “they know they are welcome and not judged”.

It has a fully-fitted kitchen where clients can develop cooking skills, nutrition and hygiene.

The integration work enables families to access services like education, housing, and debt management.

The Space has taken on additional staff to assist at the drop-in facility and visit families at home.

Other facilities include a communal area with space for playing, computer bay, private rooms for personal conversations and an extended staff area. Strong links have been forged with local churches who share expertise in literacy, craftwork, budget support and more.

“Building better futures is where the greatest impact can be achieved but which takes most time,” said Margo.

“It reflects our aim to enable families to be all they can be and live a flourishing life.

“The obstacles are immense. As well as the obvious physical poverty, there is a deeper poverty rooted in alienation, isolation and rejection.

“You cannot take someone on a journey of self-discovery until they have a sense of their own value, dignity and worth, so this is where our greatest work lies.”

“The poor are our masters and the volume of need among the Roma population is immense.**”**

Support: A demonstration for the Roma people. The majority of its Glasgow population reside in Govanhill.



The work of the Society of St Vincent de Paul is in tune with the Year of Mercy.



Smiles: The Rendu Group performed a humorous skit to demonstrate its work for the deaf.



A cracking conference

Archbishop Philip Tartaglia was delighted to attend the SSVP annual conference...and celebrate Mass at the home of his favourite football team! By Matt Meade.

THE Archbishop of Glasgow has spoken of his 'excitement' at being able to say Mass at the home of his boyhood heroes.

Philip Tartaglia was the special guest at Celtic Park for the annual national conference of the St Vincent de Paul Society.

He told the *Ozanam News*: "I think the work of the Society of St Vincent de Paul is very important for parishes. In a particular way, it tunes in with the Year of Mercy.

"They really focus on the charitable work that needs done in parishes and make a special effort to reach out to those who are poor and needy.

"It's a real lay association of the



Onside: (From left) SSVP National President Jim McKendrick, Archbishop Tartaglia and Brian O'Reilly.

faithful and the bishops very much appreciated it."

Asked about saying Mass in the club's Kerrydale Suite, he smiled: "It was unusual and quite exciting - I was delighted to be here for the annual conference."

Hundreds of SSVP members from across the country enjoyed showcase presentations from the Ozanam Club, The Space Project, the successful Paisley Diocese Recruitment initiative and the Rendu Group, which promotes sign language for

the deaf Catholic community in Scotland. The key note address was delivered by Brian O'Reilly, a former international vice president of the society. He told members: "Many of those we help live in a period of uncertainty and despair. Life can be a constant struggle to live with dignity.

"The Good News of Jesus is 'you belong'. We have to communicate that good news. St Vincent said: 'Go to the poor: you will find God'. We must be a witness of the good news of justice, compassion and mercy."



Images: Canave Photography.



A great day out at Broughty Ferry

THE conference at St Columba's in Edinburgh enjoyed its annual outing for senior parishioners.

A parish spokesperson said: "This year we went to Dundee for the particular reason that the Bishop of Dunkeld, Stephen

Robson, had made many friends while a student at Edinburgh, as well as after becoming a priest in 1979 at Stirling and elsewhere.

"Many of these old friends were in our party, so there was a joyful reunion between them and him. We started the visit

with Mass in Dundee, celebrated by the Bishop in the lovely St Joseph's Chapel of the St Ninian's Pastoral Centre.

"He was assisted at the altar by Sister Kosi of the order of The Immaculate Heart of Mary. We then drove to Broughty Ferry

for lunch with the Bishop before heading home.

It was a lovely day and we admired the bridges over the Forth, including the new bridge under construction. Thanks to Caroline McInnes and Patricia Macdonnell for organising the day."

Fun and games!

ST Mary's Conference, Larkhall, hosted a Family Games Night at the nearby school hall.

A conference spokesperson said: "The event was very well attended and enjoyed by children, parents and grandparents alike. It was a great opportunity for all ages to come together and enjoy an evening as a parish family."



Bus banter on annual Carfin pilgrimage

ST Joseph's in Burntisland enjoyed its annual pilgrimage to Carfin. Mary Lynch, Burntisland and Fife Group President, said: "Everyone enjoyed the free raffle, packed lunch, chocolates and banter on the bus."



Christmas tree keeps on giving

ST Paul's, Whiteinch, organised a 'Giving Tree'. The Advent Appeal is taking place from 27th November to 18th December. It works by parishioners taking a leaf from the tree and donating the gift that is suggested on the label.

Conor McErlean, conference treasurer, said: "The gifts helped needy families in the Parish and the homeless, via the Ozanam Centre."

Bi-Centenary celebration

A MASS was held in St Keiran's, Campbeltown, for its Bi-centenary Celebration.

Conference member Cathy Irvine said: "There was a good sense of community and coming together of several Christian denominations and clergy.

"After the Mass a wonderful buffet was held and everyone was made very welcome."



Food donations

THE SSVP congregation and Knights of St Columba in St Bernadette's parish, Tullibody, collected food donations for the Year of Mercy.

They came together with other churches and made a commitment to donate food to The Gate foodbank, a local charity run from Ludgate Church. Parishioners have donated a quarter tonne of groceries since March 2016.

A conference spokesperson said: "We have decided to continue with our connection to The Gate. We would like to extend our thanks to the generosity of the people of St. Bernadette's in making this possible."

Prayer answered

ST Joseph's Conference in Stepps has welcomed new members.

A conference spokesperson said: "After years of declining number of members we have turned a major corner. Thanks to our parish priest, Fr O'Brien, a focus on parish life and activity generated an increase from just two to six members.

This new vigour will benefit the parish and the people we visit."

Dedicated service

FATHER Basil Clark celebrated mass in honour of two long serving members of Our Lady of Loretto, Musselburgh SSVP. Hugh Rodgers has served 30 years as a member and president. John Carwell has served over 50 years also as a member and president. John was also a previous president of the Lothians Group Council for many years.

Kids' questions

ST Mary's Bo'ness Conference president William Ballantine visited primaries 6 and 7 at St Mary's school, to give a talk on the work of the society, both at home and abroad. This was followed by a lively question-and-answer session.



Sunshine: Members and parishioners from St John Cantius & St Nicholas SSVP, Broxburn, enjoyed an outing to Pitlochry.

Bill and Nancy mark retirement

THE Conference of Our Lady of Lourdes, Larbert, marked the retirement of two long serving members. Bill and Nancy Wood have over 70 years' service with the SSVP. Bill has over 50 years' service and was Stirlingshire Group Council President for two terms in the 1980s. A conference spokesperson said: "We will miss their dedicated service and valuable experience. Thank you Bill and Nancy on behalf of all those you have helped over the years."



Pat's dedicated service

PAT Nicholas has retired from the SSVP at St Paul's and St Mary's, Leslie and Glenrothes, after serving for twenty five years.

Conference President Margaret Neish (*left*) presented Pat (*centre*) with a bouquet of flowers and thanked her for the dedication given over her years.

A conference spokesperson said: "It is safe to say that she will be sadly missed by the people she helped and her fellow members. We all wish Pat a happy retirement."



Image: Robert Wilson

Celebrate: Fr Harry McKay, of St Joseph's Church in Cumbernauld, celebrated his 50th anniversary of ordination to the priesthood. Conference President John Connor said: "He was joined by family, friends, Archbishop Tartaglia, Archbishop Emeritus Mario Conti and priests from the deanery, who came to share the occasion."

Members' praise for brilliant Kitty

KITTY Dykes, 90, has retired from the SSVP after 23 years' committed service to St John and St Mary Magdalene Edinburgh East Conference. She was the first ever female member of the Conference in 1993.

A conference spokesperson: "Her energy and new ideas soon sorted out the men, whom she rapidly won around with her warm, caring personality and well-honed wit.

"She has been an invaluable member, visiting quite often three or four parishioners per week, usually on foot.

"She was a Eucharistic minister and essentially ran that service for many years under the auspices of our recently departed Canon Rae.

She even undertook a visit to our sister Parish in Legho, Tanzania, in her senior years! Her under-the-radar hard work and warm gentle personality will be greatly missed by our conference.

"We wish Kitty good health, love and joy for herself and her family in retirement."

'A great spiritual and social event'



Together: Archbishop Leo Cushley is joined by priests, altar servers and Diocesan President Richard Steinbach (*back row, third from left*).

THE St Andrews & Edinburgh SSVP Archdiocesan Mass was this year held at St Alexander's, Denny.

Diocesan President Richard Steinbach said: "There was a great turnout, with around one hundred members attending.

"We also had seven Priests, one Deacon, and Archbishop Leo Cushley as the main Celebrant. A big thank you to Canon Pat Boylan,

for allowing us to hold it in his Church, Laura Johnston, Stirling Group Council President and Agnes Beverage, St Alexander's Conference President for their help with the preparations. Thanks also to the ladies of the Parish, who delivered a wonderful buffet after Mass.

"This was a great Spiritual, as well as a social occasion."



Ready to roll: Sam Gill and David Hunter beside the Fife Furniture project van.

FAITH & FURNITURE

The SSVP's furniture projects are a lifeline for people unable to afford the items that we all take for granted. Now they want more volunteers to ensure this key part of our society thrives. By Matt Meade.

IMAGINE having no fridge, washing machine or furniture in your home.

That's the reality facing many people who live in dire poverty across Scotland.

SSVP furniture projects get to the heart of the society's work, serving those in need with practical assistance.

In Fife, the project is run by members David Hunter and Moira McCrae.

Moira's two garages in Kingseat are crammed to the rafters (literally) with



Helping hands: Helen Kelly, Mae Carr, Rita Fannan, Maureen Devine and Mary Soares from St Bernadette's SSVP Motherwell.

donations - beds, chairs, tables, desk, fridges, toys, clothes and all manner of electrical appliances.

She regularly receives calls from people in desperate need of the items that most of us take for granted.

Recently, one man who had fallen on hard times was reduced to tears of joy as David and fellow volunteer Sam Gill filled his small ground-floor flat with furniture and white goods, all for free. His rented home had been bereft of the most basic

items and this was a huge boost for him to help get him back on track.

All electrical items donated to the furniture project go through standard safety checks and all furniture distributed is in good condition.

More volunteers are needed to ensure furniture projects continue to be a success. Pat Carr, of the Wishaw Diocese said: "Any amount of time you

can give would be most appreciated. The furniture project is an incredibly busy one and provides people with necessities for their homes on a daily basis.

"But it desperately needs more people to ensure that it can keep up with the demand.

"We would appreciate any time that you can give to helping to run this valuable project, so please get in touch."

● To find out where your nearest furniture project is based, contact the SSVP national office.

To volunteer in Fife contact Moira McCrae on, 07939 223680. For

Wishaw, contact Pat Carr on 07954310670.



Volunteer: Sam collects a donation in Fife.

May they rest in peace

Jimmy McAuley, founder member, former treasurer, St Anthony's, Rumford.

Betty Divers, former member, St Paul's, Whiteinch.

Joe Oliver, former member, St Flannan's, Kirkintilloch.

Gerard Coogans, former member, St Bridget's, Baillieston.

Jim Fitzpatrick, former member, St Columbkille's, Rutherglen.

Christine Barrett, former member, St Columbkille's, Rutherglen.

Edward O'Kane, active member, St John's Cumnock.

John Donnelly, former member, St Palladius', Dalry.

Joyce Gallacher, member, St Jude's, Barlanark.

Eddie Cullen, former member, St Mungo's, Townhead.

Anne McCaffrey, member, St Mary's, Irvine.

Bernard Carroll, former president, Sacred Heart, Salsburgh.

Gerry Hamilton, active member, St Dominic's, Bishopbriggs.

John Cunningham, treasurer, St Bernard's, Coatbridge.

Nancy Taylor, former secretary, St Cadoc's Newton Mearns.

Pat Haggerty, active member, St Mary's, Saltcoats.

Daniel McGroarty, former member, St Mary's, Caldercruix.

Richard Dormer, active member, St Patrick's, Shotts.



John Hughes joined St Augustine's SSVP conference, Coatbridge, in 1992 and was an active member until his death in March. Conference president Charles Cassidy said: "He was a true Vincentian and a dear friend to many. He will be missed."

Taylor Panton, past member, St Edward's, Airdrie.

Thomas Tighe, former member, St James', Kirkshaws.

Rona MacEwan, active member, St Leonard's, East Kilbride.

Gerry Cougans, former member, St Mary's, Hamilton.

Frank McCaughey, former member, St Mark's, Rutherglen.

Martin Quinn, former president, St Mark's Rutherglen.

Robert Wilson, former member, St Catherine Laboure, Balornock.

Jim Harte, former president, St Joseph's, Tollcross.

Agnes Starrs, active member, St Joseph's, Bonnybridge.

Dick Reilly, former Motherwell president & former president, St James', Coatbridge.

Cecilia McDaid, secretary, Holy Family & St Ninian's, Kirkintilloch.

Margaret Cassidy, former vice president, St John the Baptist, Uddingston.

George Docherty, former member, St Bernadette's, Carntyne.

Hugh Cushnahan, former member, St John the Baptist, Port Glasgow.

John McDermott, former member, St Andrew's Cathedral, Dundee.

Eugene Fernandez, former member, St Albert's, Pollokshields.

Fiona McNeill, active member, St Albert's, Pollokshields.

Andrew Donnelly, former treasurer, Immaculate Conception, Dundee.

Hugh McShane, former president, St Mary's, Paisley.

Billy Johnstone, former member, St Patrick's, Shieldmuir.

Len Astell, treasurer, Our Lady Of Lourdes, East Kilbride.

George Kelly, former member, Our Lady of Lourdes, East Kilbride.

Malcolm Docherty, former member, Our Lady of Lourdes, East Kilbride.

Mary McCann, former member, St Martin's, Renton.

Evelyn Boyle, former member, St Teresa's, Newarthill.

Irene Reynolds, former member, SS Leonard & Fergus, Dundee.

Daniel Hart, former secretary, St Ninian's, Inverness.

Vera Faiz, former treasurer, Holy Name, Mansewood.



Have a happy and holy Christmas



Jacqueline Laird.

"It is my privilege to have been appointed to serve you as Office Manager at the national office. I join an experienced office team: Elaine Gorman, Margaret Thomson and Jim Gibson (administration) and Clare Carr Cullen (youth development). I am getting to know conference members through telephone and email communication and it was particularly good to meet some personally at the annual meeting. I look forward to getting to know many more of you in the coming months. The office team wish you and yours a very Happy Christmas and many blessings in the year ahead."

Jacqueline Laird, National Office Manager

National Office – Christmas closure

The office closes at 1pm on Friday 23rd December and re-opens on Wednesday 4th January.



Staff: Margaret, Jim and Elaine Gorman prepare a mailing.