

VINCENTIAN NEWS



Society of St Vincent de Paul

Spring 2018 Volume 4 Number 15



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Frederic Ozanam - his Christian and Catholic identity

As a young student freshly arrived in Paris, a Paris which was largely atheistic and aggressively anti-Catholic, Frederic Ozanam felt the need to associate with other Catholic students like himself. This was to preserve their faith and to promote it among other students in the university setting. This was no easy undertaking. "Happy I shall be if a few friends come and rally round me. Then we should unite our efforts and create a work together, others would join us and perchance, the day would come when all mankind would be gathered together beneath the same protecting shade. Catholicism, in all its eternal youth and strength, would rise suddenly on the world and, placing itself at the head of the age, lead it on to civilisation and happiness." (O'Meara,15).

He soon had a small group of dedicated Christians who arranged weekly debates on religious topics. These were well attended by others who opposed their views. It was when challenged that they talked Christianity well but what did they do as Christians that they decided to help the poor. He was later to write:- "(They said) You have a right to speak of the past. In bygone days Christianity did indeed work wonders, but today Christianity is dead, and you who boast of being Catholics what do you do? What works can you show which prove your faith, and can claim to make us respect and acknowledge it... Then it was we said to one another, 'Let us to the front! Let our deeds be in accordance with your faith.'...What could we do to prove ourselves true Catholics except that which pleases God the most? Succour our neighbour as Jesus Christ did, and place our faith under the safeguard of charity." (O'Meara,65)

In later life he was also to write: -"Dear friend should I be, as I now am, in my thirty seventh year, worn out prematurely with cruel infirmities, if I had not been actuated by the desire, by the hope, by the delusion if you will, of serving Christianity? Was there really no peril in bringing forward the religious question, in reinstating one by one, the institutions of Catholicism, when, a mere assistant professor...If I have some success as a professor and a lecturer, it is to courage, and to work, and not to base concessions that I owe it." (O'Meara,253)

All through Blessed Ozanam's correspondence runs a deep religious commitment which influenced not only the Society of St. Vincent de Paul but his academic and legal careers, not to mention his personal life with his family and friends.

In the Sermon on the Mount after the Beatitudes Jesus warns his disciples: -

"You are the **salt of the earth**; but if **salt** has lost its taste, how shall its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything except to be thrown out and trodden under foot by men. 14 "You are the **light** of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hid. 15 Nor do men light a lamp and put it under a bushel, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. 16 Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven." (Mtt. 5: 13-16). It falls to every Christian to be a source of saltiness in his or her world. The saltiness in question is a commitment to living out the beatitudes in and for society. This applies especially, when, as in the time of Ozanam society was often filled by a deep opposition to Gospel values.

It is here that another saying of Jesus needs to be remembered:

And again, he said, "To what shall I compare the kingdom of God? It is like leaven which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal, till it was all leavened." (Luke 13:20-22).

The Society of St Vincent de Paul is such a leaven.

The quotations are from Frederic Ozanam, Professor at the Sorbonne, by Kathleen O'Meara, Bibliolife.

Welcome by Brendan O'Neill, Regional President



Dear Vincentian brothers and sisters

As we move further forward together into the year I am conscious of the number of events which seem to be hurtling towards us and I am feeling no small amount of panic as they get closer.

Some examples of these are:

- The visit of our International President General on 26 June. Renato Lima de Olivera will come to the Region in an unprecedented visit. I feel we are honoured to be selected to meet him and would encourage as many members as possible to take the opportunity to meet with Renato. I will forward his itinerary as soon as it is finalised.
- On 15 September we have the National Council of Ireland meeting in Port Arlington. This is a meeting for Area Presidents to attend and I am hoping that we can have a full turnout for it.
- On 22 September we will hold our Annual Members' Day. This event was a resounding success last year and the feedback from those who attended was excellent. The theme for this year's meeting is Back to Basics. We will have guest speakers again and you will have an opportunity to have some discussion around some of the more topical events. The day will be held again in the Hilton Hotel, Templepatrick as we felt that the venue and the execution of the day by the hotel was excellent. Planning for this event has already begun.
- The Gala Ball will be returning again this year. We are planning a masquerade ball on 27 October, once again in

the Hilton, Templepatrick. This is a primarily a Society fundraising event but it is equally an opportunity for our members to meet together and socialise, something which does not happen too often. In the past our members have not really supported the event by attending, so I would encourage you to come along and join us for some fun while at the same time aiding our effort to raise funds for the Region.

- Pauline and her team have already started to plan for this year's Family Appeal. A number of meetings have already been held and I am delighted that Translink will once again take part in the 'Stuff a Bus' campaign. This was resounding success last year and we are looking forward to an even better result this year. U105 were also heavily involved with the Family Appeal last year and we are hopeful they will be on board again in 2018.

So that is a flavour of only some of what is happening across the Region in the months ahead and while it is important, central to all of this is our core work of trying to eradicate poverty. This is what we do and it is what we are best at. I ask that you continue to strive to help those in need and that you make the Holy Spirit central to that work. In his Apostolic Exhortation, *Evangelii Gaudium*, Pope Francis states that God's heart has a special place for the poor, so much so that he himself became poor. The Saviour was born in a manger in the midst of animals and when he was presented in the Temple, the offering was two turtle doves, an offering which was made by those who could not afford a lamb. When he began to preach the dispossessed flocked to hear Him and He said, "the Spirit of the Lord is upon me, He sent me to preach the Good News to the poor".

May the Holy Spirit be upon us all as we go about our daily work of taking care of our less fortunate brothers and sisters.

God bless.

Brendan

Good News Appeal

We would love to share some good news stories of how SVP has helped turn lives around.

We are appealing for uplifting stories from across our Conference areas – have you personally been supported and helped through a difficult time by SVP or perhaps you know someone who might be willing to share their story of the difference SVP has made to their lives either today or in past years?

If so, please get in touch. Every Vincentian gives so much and to hear positive stories about the difference our organisation's support can make would mean a lot to our members and volunteers. Thank you in advance.

Your news in Vincentian News!

Do you have an event or a story that you would like to see featured in a future issue of Vincentian News? If so, we'd love to hear from you. Just email the details of your event and a picture if you have one to karen@dcppr.co.uk.



Data Protection
Officer (DPO)



Compliance



25 May 2018



Data Breaches



Personal Data

GDPR – what you need to know

What is this regulation?

More stringent data protection regulation for any organisation recording personal data which came into force on 25 May 2018.

Seven main principles and accountabilities contained with the GDPR legislation:

- Lawfulness, fairness and transparency;
- Purpose limitation;
- Data minimisation;
- Accuracy;
- Retention;
- Integrity and confidentiality;
- Accountability.

What constitutes data?

- Personal

Name, address, date of birth, gender, status, reason for requesting for assistance;

- Personal sensitive

Name, address, date of birth, gender, status, reason for requesting for assistance plus any health related issue/declaration

Personal sensitive data must be treated in a more protected way and we must be able to assure our clients that this is held confidentially.

What this means for data subjects (everyone, clients, members of the public)

- gives everyone control over their personal data and what information an organisation holds on them;
- the data subject (client) must give their clear consent to the organisation as silence does not constitute permission;
- parental consent must be given for anyone under the age of 16 years;
- a person has the right to be forgotten and can demand any data to be removed and no longer held by an

organisation. This must be carried out within 30 days following a request;

- all language relating to holding data must be given in a user friendly, clear and concise way so that everyone can understand it.

Key issues for consideration

Identify personal data you receive and hold. Examine it under the following questions:

- Why are you holding it?
- How did you obtain it?
- Did you get the individual's consent?
- Did you tell them you are holding their personal data?
- Why was it originally gathered?
- How long will you retain it?
- How secure is it, both in terms of encryption and accessibility?
- Do you ever share it with third parties and on what basis might you do so?
- Where are you storing it?

Any breach on how data is being used or stored will result in the organisation being subjected to enforced fines as deemed appropriate by the Information Commissioner's Office.

Next steps

- further updates and access to basic on line training for all members and staff;
- new data protection policy;
- new policy on retention of records.

Please note: we are awaiting a standard message from National Office that must be recorded on all helplines. This will cover what information clients need to hear when they ring the Society and will comply with the new regulations.

Data Champions within the Northern Region

Member Champion – Michael Sands
Email: nirc.governance@svpni.co.uk

Staff Champion – Pauline Brown
Email: pauline.brown@svpni.co.uk

Safeguarding within the Northern Region

The Society is committed to creating a safe, healthy and inclusive environment for all, particularly, the children, young people and vulnerable adults whom we assist. We are committed at all times to ensuring their safety and welfare generally.

We will endeavour to safeguard children, young people and vulnerable adults by:

- reporting concerns
- recognising risks posed to children, young people and vulnerable adults
- following carefully the procedures laid down should you be concerned about anyone you visit or come into contact with.

We now have two new Designated Liaison Persons (DLPs) for Safeguarding within the Region.

Mary Waide – Keeping Adults Safe.

Tel: 07845 877393

and

Ciara McLean – Protection of Vulnerable Children and Young People.

Tel: 07816 028577

If the dedicated DLP is not available you can:

- Contact the other DLP or
- Contact a member of staff who supports the DLP in their work.

Pauline Brown – Special Works (028 9075 0150)

Maria Fyfe – Adults at risk (028 9075 0151)

Joann Barr – Children at risk (028 7137 7311)

Please note that all safeguarding concerns must be raised with the DLP and a report forwarded to Regional Office. The full policy is available from Regional Office and is on the SVP website should you require any further information.

Access NI

As all Members will be aware there has been an update to the Northern Region's Vetting Policy which now stipulates that:

- Every Member of the Society must be re-vetted every three years.
- All members who have not been vetted previously must undergo retrospective vetting.

Members will undergo an **“ENHANCED ACCESS NI CHECK”**

In the last year, 429 Members have gone through the vetting process and this is a fantastic achievement, but we still have a long way to go.

The Membership Support Officer (MSO) for your area will continue to contact Conference Presidents and Area Presidents to ensure that every Member who needs vetting has the opportunity and support to do so.

Members can apply for an Access NI by completing a paper version or alternatively it can be done online.

It is important that an **ID VALIDATION** is completed regardless if you complete a paper copy or if you do it online.

Please note that an Access NI cannot be processed without an ID Validation.

How do I complete the ID Validation?

Every Member must complete the ID Validation Form along with their Conference President.

The ID Validation Form has recently changed and you will receive a copy of the new form along with your Access NI paperwork.

To complete the ID Validation, you must:

- Bring Original ID documents (Passport/Driving Licence/Utility Bill)** to your Conference President for inspection.
- A copy of the ID documents (Passport/Driving Licence/Utility Bill)** must **also** be provided. These will be held on the CRM and for a period of 90 days.
- Your Conference President will complete the ID Validation Form and it will be sent along with the copies of your ID documents to your MSO to allow the Access NI to be processed.

**** A full list of acceptable ID Documents is available on request****

Don't forget that you must do the ID Validation regardless if you do the Access NI online or on paper.

For more information on the new ID Validation process and Access NI in general contact your relevant MSO.

Maria Fyfe – 028 9075 0151

Joann Barr – 028 7137 7311

CRM training update - Mairead McGouran

I thought it would be useful to give everyone an update on how things are going with the CRM training. To date I have delivered 11 training sessions in locations including Belfast (3), Derry (2), Clare Lodge (2) and once each at Cookstown, Armagh, Ballymena and Strabane. The training has been held in the morning, afternoon and evening during the working week and twice on a Saturday and a total of 68 people have been trained from 40 Conferences. Four more training sessions have been scheduled for June.

While dates have not been arranged for the rest of the summer months, I hope to be able to provide more evening and weekend sessions. However, as I live in Ballycastle, the location of future evening sessions needs to be within an hour's drive of my home. Training session details are issued regularly by Maria and Joann.

Training sessions last three hours and each participant must bring either a laptop or a tablet as the session is hands-on for all participants. We use a specially designed test environment that is unique to the Northern Region and it can be used for practising updates to CRM before adding the data to the live environment. The only stipulation I have is that it is not used while I am giving a training session.

Feedback has been very favourable with participants gaining confidence in updating the CRM and as a result of the training sessions, I have been able to update my knowledge of CRM as well as my presentation and supporting handouts. The training has been very much a two-way process.

Over the coming months, I hope to see more Conferences updating the CRM.

Vincent's Fashion Show

Fashion fever hits Cookstown

The Glenavon House Hotel in Cookstown was fashionably taken over on the evening of 24 May by Vincent's for our first major fashion show of the summer season.

The spectacular event, which was compered by local celebrity, Julian Simmons, saw models wearing a variety of bespoke outfits from eight Vincent's shops - Ballymena, Cookstown, Lurgan, Keady, Kilrea, Ormeau Road, Portadown and Strabane.

Jovial host Julian narrated the show with his usual much-loved 'banter' as local models, the majority of who were SVP volunteers, expertly manoeuvred the catwalk.

A big thank you to everyone who supported the event including Julian Simmons, the Glenavon House Hotel, Cookstown Textile Recyclers, Community Recycling Initiative and Gordons Chemists.



Anna, Ballymena.



Models from the recent SVP fashion show which took place at the Glenavon House Hotel in Cookstown are pictured with the event's host and television personality, Julian Simmons.



Bride and father of the bride.



Clare B.



Dermot.



Marie, Strabane.



Fashion host Julian in full swing.



Sean.



Models from the recent SVP fashion show which took place at the Glenavon House Hotel in Cookstown are pictured with the event's host and television personality, Julian Simmons. Also pictured are Dermot McGilloway (2nd left), SVP National Retail Development Manager; Archie Kinney (3rd left), Chair of the SVP Regional Shops' Committee and Brendan O'Neill (right), Regional President of SVP.



Maggie, Lurgan.

Fresh look for Vincent's Portadown

Vincent's shop in Portadown reopened on Tuesday 15 May following a massive refurbishment of its clothing unit.

Situated in the Mayfair Centre on the Garvaghy Road, Vincent's has been a familiar presence in the local area for nearly 20 years and currently operates two retail units from the Centre, one specialising in clothes and accessories and the other in furniture and household items.

Anne Crossan, regional retail services manager for SVP, explains: "The volunteers and staff of Vincent's Portadown have worked tirelessly on the refurbishment and have turned what was quite a dark shop into a bright and airy retail space that best displays our wonderful assortment of good quality clothes and accessories. In addition to the fantastic changes to our clothing unit, our volunteers are also working on a new room on the premises that will be exclusively for the use of brides and mothers of the bride, as well as displaying a great range of the increasing popular formal wear. Although not completely finished, this private room will be opening soon and we will be setting up a 'viewing by appointment' arrangement within the shop.

Run by staff and volunteers, our Portadown shop has always been very well supported by the local community and we are so pleased to have completed the refurbishment which we are confident will offer our customers a more enjoyable shopping experience. Feedback on the new shop has been extremely positive and we are looking forward to seeing many familiar and also new faces popping in over the coming weeks. The shops currently open Monday to Friday 9.30am to 4.30pm and 10am to 1pm on Saturdays.

We are so very grateful to all of our wonderful volunteers across SVP, who help their communities in so many different ways. I can honestly say that each of our Vincent's is at the heart of its local community and our volunteers play an important part in helping to make this the case. We never cease to be overwhelmed by the generosity of people who donate their pre-loved garments and bric-a-brac to us – we are eternally thankful."

If you are interested in supporting SVP by volunteering in a Vincent's shop, please get in touch on 028 9035 1561 or email info@svpni.co.uk.

Twice as nice!



Kircubbin has recently celebrated the opening its second Vincent's in the County Down village.

'Vincent's Living' opened its doors on the 23 April and is exceeding all targets going into its second month of trading. All home goods, DVDs etc were previously displayed on two wall bays in the existing shop but with the opening of Vincent's Living, we can now offer a fantastic range to our customers which also includes small items of furniture. The existing shop has also benefitted from larger men's and kid's departments.

The official opening of the new store was performed by Father Neeson and Rev Withers and attended by the Mayor of Ards and North Down Borough Council, Councillor Robert Adair, SVP members and our loyal customers.

Everyone loves their new addition to the village!





Newry has a spring in its step

Vincent's in Mill Street, Newry, hosted a customer appreciation event in April which focused on all things sport and the great outdoors and it was supported in the celebrations by members of Newry City Football Club.

The shop recently underwent a major refurbishment and was re-opened on in February this year with customers, staff and volunteers all loving the new look shop! They have planned to hold more of these events throughout the year, tailoring the theme to seasons or world events – and are running a football promotion for the World Cup!



New Manager, Enniskillen

We'd like to welcome Siobhan Ferguson, the newest member of the Vincent's retail team.

Siobhan has taken over the helm of the Enniskillen Vincent's and comes with a wealth of knowledge and experience.

She has spent the last 10 years working in the Hospice Shop in Enniskillen so is a well-known face to the locals.

The members and volunteers in Enniskillen have welcomed her with open arms and are very much looking forward to working with her for years to come.

Reminder: Vincent's Retail Awards

This exclusive event will be taking place in Croke Park on 28 June from 3pm – 8pm.

We will be celebrating the success of the shops within each region with a variety of awards including 'Volunteer of the Year' and the hotly contested Window Display Competition.

All shop staff, volunteers and members are very welcome.

**Please contact Anne Crossan for details to register.
Telephone: 028 9075 0153**

Area Gathering update - Fermanagh

On Thursday 19 April 2018 we had our second Regional Area Gathering in the Westville Hotel, Enniskillen. It was a great night enjoyed by all, with members from each Conference in the Fermanagh Area Council attending and meeting other members in the Area, sharing experiences and learning from each other.

The night was facilitated by Mary Davis, one of the National Member Support Development Officers. She divided the members into groups and gave each group a case study which incorporated a topic relevant to their Area. Each group had time to discuss their own case study and then each case study was discussed with all members in attendance.

Our first Area Gathering was held in Derry in the Maldron Hotel in November 2017 and Brendan Hennessey was the facilitator on this occasion. This was also a great night with great comments from all the members.

The feedback from both nights was positive, with comments such as "an excellent evening", "we learned a lot about other Conferences", "enjoyable and interesting night" and "would love to have this event annually".

On both nights we were very lucky to have Siobhan Peoples, the manager of the Citizens' Advice Bureau in Enniskillen, there to help with questions regarding benefits and the introduction of the new Universal Credit. A member of the Blessed Virgin Conference in Enniskillen, Siobhan was invaluable on both nights and was able to answer all questions from the members. Many thanks to Siobhan.

A further two Area Gatherings are planned for June in Coleraine and Omagh. So look out for one in your Area and pencil it into the diary – it's a very enjoyable event.



A group of cyclists from the Carryduff and Four Winds area called 'the Duffers' organised a charity cycle event just before Christmas where they all dressed up as Santa and in the process raised £230 which they donated to Immaculate Heart of Mary Drumbo Carryduff Conference. They are pictured here presenting the cheque to Michaela Harkin, Conference Secretary and Area Secretary for South and East Belfast Area Council.



Ann Irwin, Treasurer, St John's Conference, Coleraine, is pictured with the Mayor of Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council, Councillor Joan Baird; Collette Martin, President & Sean McGillan, Vice President, following a Civic Reception to recognise Ann's administration of the Oil Stamps Scheme.



Senior citizens from in and around the Banbridge area enjoyed the annual Christmas Senior Dinner organised by Banbridge SVP. A firm fixture in the seasonal calendar, the event has been running for more than 60 years and during that time guests have been entertained by a host of famous names including the late James Young, Nathan Carter and many other local artists including Irish dancers, folk groups and our very own international star, Gene Fitzpatrick.



Coleraine SVP Conference Presidents Sean O'Hare and Sean McGillan, presenting a certificate of appreciation to the Banshees Dance Group for raising £1910 over the last three years with their Annual Ceili.

Blessed Frederic Ozanam Relic

Betty Devlin from Saint Patrick's Conference Armagh, presents Brendan O'Neill, Northern Regional President, with a framed prayer relic of Blessed Frederic Ozanam (dated 1912).

Betty's father, the late Jack McKenna, was a dedicated member of the Society from the 1930s until his demise in the late 1980s. This little prayer remained hidden in Jack's missal and subsequently came to light during a spring clean of Betty's sister's attic. The relic was passed to Betty because of her involvement with SVP and she decided that rather than returning the relic to the missal, where it may eventually be lost, that it should be made available for all SVP Conference members.

The relic has been placed in the safe keeping of Regional Office where it will be readily accessed for members whose Conferences wish to avail of this for yearly retreats or personal blessing.



Clare Lodge going from strength to strength!

What a busy year so far! We can't believe it's almost summer and we are delighted to say that our bookings are going from strength to strength!

Once again, we are almost full for the summer season and we urge anyone thinking of booking with us during June, July and August to make contact ASAP to check for availability.

Open Day 2018

We held our Open Day on Thursday 27 February and despite the weather warnings for snow, the day was very well attended - a big thank you to all who came along!

We were very excited about the many contacts made with a number of community and voluntary organisations prior to and during our Open Day. We are keen to build on these partnerships and have taken several bookings already from some of these groups, with many others off to seek funding to come and stay with us!

Return trade is booming

It is fantastic and a testament to the great work of the members to see so many individuals and groups returning each year and indeed booking multiple stays with us.

Although not an exhaustive list, here are some of the groups which have used our facilities at Clare Lodge over the past few years, several of whom have 2nd and 3rd bookings with us in 2018:

- Patrician Youth Groups Downpatrick, Portlaoise and Scotland
- Search Youth Group
- The Glens Youth Club
- Living Youth Group
- Caring Breaks NI
- Age Concern
- Harvest Moon
- Rainbow Club

- Gateway Clubs Belfast and Cookstown
- U3A East Antrim and Derry
- The Happy Go Lucky Club.

We have also had a BIG increase in the number of NHS Trusts and local councils using our facilities and coming back again and again.

A number of SVP members are also choosing to book with us rather than the local hotels when attending weddings and events in the surrounding area.

We are thrilled at the uptake so far in 2018 from the Society and different community and voluntary organisations for one off events including:

- Day trips
- Bespoke pamper days for carers
- Co-facilitate group training with Parent Action NI

A special thanks

We would like to give a special thanks to East Down and Armagh and Craigavon for presenting Clare Lodge with an Oratory Set for the provision of retreats. This allows visiting clergy to celebrate Mass and carry out retreats in Clare Lodge.

Our thanks also goes to the many Conferences who stay with us on a regular basis. We are overwhelmed by the support and look forward to this continuing to grow.

For more information contact:

Clare Lodge Centre
3 Castle Place
Newcastle
County Down BT33 0AB
Tel: 028 4372 2849
(0044 if dialling from outside Northern Ireland)
Email: clare.lodge@svpni.co.uk



Family Appeal presentation

SVP and the Salvation Army recently made a presentation at the BT annual celebration event to staff who volunteered at our Family Appeal in 2017.

Grainne Browne (middle), the charity champion for BT, is pictured with SVP Regional Manager, Pauline Brown and Paul Wright from the Salvation Army.



SVP support for CiNI

Ellen Finlay, Policy Officer and Pauline Leeson, Chief Executive Officer from Children in Northern Ireland are pictured with Northern Regional President, Brendan O'Neill and Regional Manager, Pauline Brown. SVP is sponsoring 10 children and young people to attend the #PortadownGetsActive summer programme.



Loreto College Coleraine Youth Conference received a Certificate of Appreciation from Ann Irwin and Sean McGillan both of St John's Conference, for their fundraising efforts in 2017.

SAVE THE DATE

ANNUAL YOUTH DAY

Theme: Out of the Shadows

27

0

9

18

THURS

Girdwood Community Hub, Belfast

10:00 - 14:30

SAVE
the
DATE

Vincent's Retail Awards –

Thursday 28 June in Croke Park.

Annual Members' Day – Saturday

22 September in the Hilton Hotel, Templepatrick – booking form to follow.

Annual Youth Day – Thursday 27 September in

Girdwood Community Hub, Belfast

Masquerade Ball – Saturday 27 October in the Hilton

Hotel, Templepatrick – tickets £45 per member – further information to follow.



'Healthy' volunteering for students

Congratulations to the Young SVP students in Dominican College, Portstewart, who recently joined forces with the Pope John Paul II Awards to host a joint stall promoting the positive effects of volunteering, at the annual Dominican College Health Fair. Promoting overall health and well-being among students, the Fair boosts a variety of stalls with different organisations interacting with students.

The joint stall proved to be one of the most popular - with prizes for memorising three facts about Young SVP, as well as "pot-luck" goodies such as t-shirts, keyrings, pens and sweets being given away. Well done to everyone involved.

Finance Matters

FINANCIAL RETURNS:

I am pleased to announce that every Annual Financial Return for 2017 (230) has been received at Regional Office and a big "Thank You" goes out to everyone who has helped make this happen. This is a great achievement and continues to improve every year. Without your statistics we would not be able to advocate for social justice on behalf of those we support.

AGRESSO ROLL-OUT:

We now have 166 out of a possible 200* activities in the region actively using the online financial system "Agresso". This represents an 83% 'take-up' and I hope the remaining 34 activities (28 Conferences and 6 Shops) will be encouraged to join soon. Please contact me at the Regional Office on 02890-750156 to make an 'Expression of Interest' and to agree on training workshop dates to get you onto the system.

**(only a possible 200 out of our 230 activities can use "Agresso" due to their size and other factors)*

QUARTERLY BANK BALANCES:

Every activity is now required to provide the balances for every bank account they hold at the end of March, June, September and December to the Regional Office. So long as you are up to date on Agresso, these figures will be captured via the online system. With over 270 active bank accounts in our region, this is a mammoth administrative task and I ask for your full co-operation with this matter.

We currently require your bank account balance(s) for **31 March 2018**. If you are not using or are not up to date on Agresso, please email your end of March 2018 bank balance(s) by direct return to this email or contact me on 028 9075 0156 with the details.

TREASURER TRAINING WORKSHOPS:

During the summer months we hope to embark on the first of many **Treasurer Training Workshops** throughout the region. The purpose of these events is to:

- Give attendees a fuller understanding and appreciation of the Treasurer's **Role and Scope**
- Reinforce the importance of regular **Refresher Workshops** and the need for Succession Planning
- Provide a Forum to discuss **Legislative Changes** and their impact on the Society
- Help introduce ideas and concepts; raise issues of concern and share **Common Challenges**
- Provide an opportunity to meet other Treasurers and gain valuable insights from the experience of **Peers**
- Encourage Treasurers to embrace and get the most out of the **Agresso** system

More information and dates to follow shortly. Please contact me below if you are interested.

Many thanks

Ciarán Liggett – 028 9075 0156/ciaran.liggett@svpni.co.uk

Reflection....

Dear Vincentian family:

May the Lord protect and fortify us all as we continue to do His work.

Recently I was reflecting about how God works in my life, how He is truly present in it and is constantly alerting, guiding and shepherding me as I try to get closer to Him. It seems to me that He does this in a variety of ways and would most certainly be more alive and present if I was able to hear more clearly, to listen more intently with my heart. We only need to extend the invitation more often and to listen for His small voice as He beckons us ever closer.

For me the Spirit is very much alive and active, speaking to me very clearly through the people I meet every day, through the people I work with, my family and friends. That awareness is very comforting because it gives me the sense that I am protected as He leads me through my journey back to Him. He has also given me an Angel to guard me, to guide me, always speaking in my conscience, asking me "are you really comfortable doing that, or speaking and acting like that?" I believe that I am truly blessed and that God is never absent in the toil of everyday living, always present in the difficulties that I face daily and also in the daily joys of loving relationships.

Recently, at a time when I was experiencing some difficulty, I was thanking someone for their support and they said: "I do it because I care, not because I have to". Those words were the words of someone who saw that I was struggling and needed a helping hand. Those words actually changed a decision I was about to make and I believe that the person involved was sent to me to influence my decision. So God works in mysterious ways and at times through the most unexpected avenues, we just need to listen.

Brendan

IN MEMORIAM



Gerry Dorrian

Gerry Dorrian will be fondly remembered by many in the Society. He was a former president of St Colmcilles, Holywood and an Area President and served the Society for nearly 30 years. Over the last year he had to take a back seat from the Society following a heart attack and subsequently suffering from resulting breathing complications. It was during that time that he received his rather overdue Silver Medal for 25 years' service. He passed away on the 28th March from his illness as a very young 73 year old.

Gerry was a true gentleman. He dedicated a great deal of his spare time to SVP and other causes that were very close to his heart. He worked in the civil service for many years and within SVP he regularly used his skills to help those who were denied entitlement to certain benefits, running appeals and rarely giving up. He was always the character at our outings and Christmas dinners and entertained us with his witty monologues. A keen golfer and football supporter, he

managed a trip to the Camp-Nou in Barcelona last year to see his favourite team play. Alongside all this he found time to become a Eucharistic Minister in his later years.

Gerry's smile and easy way were a real gift in helping people and we all miss him greatly. Our clients and our regular contributors often remark on how much they miss Gerry's warmth and gentleness, and many times we ask ourselves still..."What would Gerry do?"

He is survived by his wife Rosie and their three children - Kathryn, Sinead and Paul - and he was so happy and proud to see his two daughters married last year. His incredible popularity was clear when we saw the scale of the funeral that was attended by so many people whose lives had been touched by him and included many who attended from his hometown of Portaferry. SVP honoured Gerry with his coffin draped with the SVP funeral pall. He leaves behind brothers Jack, Tom, Seamus and a sister Margaret. All of us at SVP Holywood extend our deepest sympathy to Rosie and the whole family. Whilst Gerry was ill he'd prepared for his own funeral and one of the readings he chose shows the measure of the man. It's a fitting epitaph to remember him by and to remind ourselves about why we do what we do and we would like to quote some of it here.

From The Letter of St James (2:14-19 24):

How does it help my Brothers, when someone who has never done a single good act claims to have faith? Will that faith bring salvation? If one of the brothers or one of the sisters is in need of clothes and has not enough food to live on and one of you says to them "I wish you well; keep yourself warm and eat plenty", without giving them these bare necessities of life, then what good is that?

In the same way faith, if good deeds do not go with it, is quite dead.

But someone may say: "So you have faith and I have good deeds, Show me this faith of yours without deeds, Then it is with my deeds that I will show you my faith. You believe in the one God - That is credible enough but even the demons have the same belief, and they tremble with fear. You see now that it is by deeds and not only by believing that someone is justified.

Thanks Gerry, even as you left us, you left us with something to think about.

Rest in peace

IN MEMORIAM

Harry McEvoy

The Immaculate Heart of Mary Conference, Drumbo and Carryduff (South and East Belfast Area), was saddened by the death of one of our founder members, Harry McEvoy.

Harry was a true Vincentian and held the post of Conference President many times.

Harry always answered the call when asked by St Vincent de Paul and was a regular visitor to Knockbracken Healthcare Centre (Purdysburn Hospital) where he made many friends.



Harry was born in Drumaness, County Down, in 1930 and was educated at St Colman's College, Newry and St Columban's College, Dalgan Park, Navan. He continued his education at St Joseph's Teacher Training College, after which he returned to his native Drumaness.

He was appointed Principal of the primary school and remained there until his retirement in 1990.

Harry was also a founder member of St Vincent de Paul in Drumaness, where he was the first President.

After moving to Carryduff, he played a key role in setting up the working group which established St Joseph's Primary School in the area.

Harry had a great love of Irish culture and language and was a founder member of Carryduff GAA Club. He was also Chairman of Down GAA County Board, Chairman of the East Down GAA Board, and represented Down at Ulster Council. One of Harry's greatest loves was Scór, to which he devoted much time and energy.

We extend our sincere sympathy to his wife Gretta, his sons and daughters and his extended family.

May his gentle soul rest in peace.

Marie Malone

Marie Malone, a much respected member of St Bernard's Conference, Glengormley, died in hospital on 5 February 2018 after a short illness.

A teacher by profession, Marie joined St Bernard's Conference when she retired and was a member for more than 20 years, holding the position of President for 15 of those years. She was a dedicated and diligent member until she resigned due to declining health but continued to keep a keen interest in Conference affairs.

She will be greatly missed by all who knew her, especially her family and friends and we tender our sympathies to her brother and his wife, nieces and nephews.