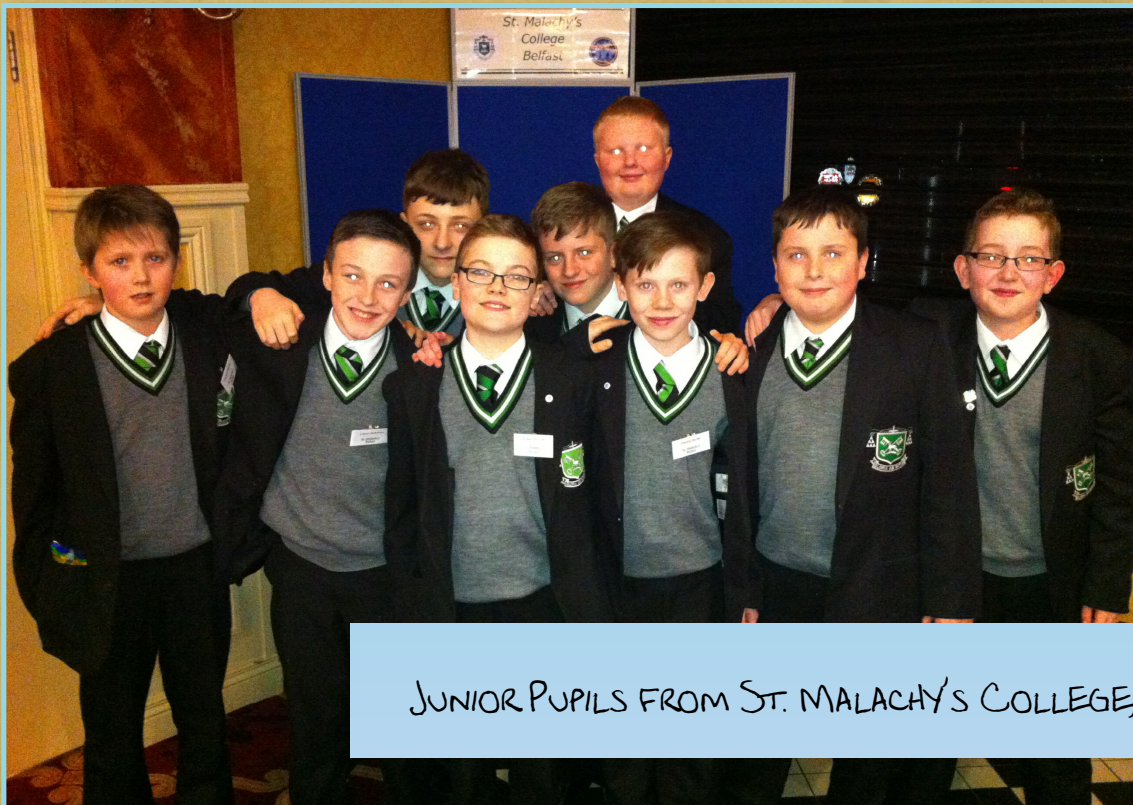


SVP Youth Newsletter

ANNUAL YOUTH DAY 2014



JUNIOR PUPILS FROM ST. MALACHY'S COLLEGE, BELFAST

In this Issue:

- MEET OUR REGIONAL YOUTH COUNCIL
- ANNUAL YOUTH DAY 2014
- CHRISTMAS TIME PROJECTS!



Claire Morgan - Youth Development Officer

Hello All!

Welcome to our new newsletter! I have met quite a few schools now, but not all, so let me introduce myself! I have been in the job now about seven months and I am a former teacher. I taught Politics, History and Citizenship in Regent House School, Newtownards. Since starting with SVP, we have went from 17 to 40 schools registered to our new Youth Programme. We have many schools across Northern Ireland which are avid supporters of SVP and the work that has been done has been amazing - so we would like to take this opportunity to say THANK YOU!

Our new programme's mission is to give as many young people a sense of social justice and of giving back something to their communities as young Christians today. We hope to give each young person the opportunity to develop spiritually and from a social justice perspective too. We are trying to do this through setting up youth conferences across Northern Ireland, which gives the young person ownership of their projects and personal development.

We have just had our Annual Youth Day recently in the Glenavon Hotel, Cookstown and overall it seems to have been received very well. I hope to build on this by visiting schools and giving talks/workshops. We are also hoping to write education packs for KS3 RE and Citizenship - so watch this space!



In this issue:

Page 1	Cover
Page 2	Editorial
Page 3	Fr. Raymond McCullagh
Pages 4-5	Christmas Time!
Page 6	Belfast Street Collection
Pages 7-9	Meet the Youth Council
Pages 10-12	Annual Youth Day
Pages 13-14	SVP's Youth Programme
Pages 15-16	Future Projects

Contact Claire Morgan on:

Claire.Morgan@svpni.co.uk

028 90 750 159

07738837873

Check out our Facebook page on SVP Youth NI or our Twitter page @SVPNIYouth



Francis - A Pope for the Poor

By Father Raymond McCullagh

Just over a year ago the Catholic Church witnessed an historic moment with the election of Jorge Mario Bergoglio as the 266th Pope. He was to be a Pope of firsts – the first to come from the Americas, the first Jesuit and the first to take the name Francis. This choice was to be highly significant. One of his brother Cardinals said to him after being elected: “Don’t forget the poor.” And he hasn’t. Following the example of the great Francis from Assisi our Holy Father has challenged Catholics to put their faith into action through lives of service. His call to be “a poor church for the poor” has resonated in our hearts. His simple lifestyle and personal witness portray a man deeply committed to social justice and the building of God’s Kingdom.

In his book *Pope Francis – Untying the Knots*, Paul Vallely charts the remarkable journey of this Bishop of the slums - a journey of conversion and extraordinary transformation that saw a conservative authoritarian become a humble friend of the poor. Now we have a Pope who is not afraid to admit his mistakes. His declaration: “I am a sinner” is reminiscent of St Patrick’s Confessions and reveals a man of faith dependant on God’s mercy. He may not have changed Church teaching but he has made sure that understanding and mercy are to the forefront of its vocabulary: When asked about gay people coming back from World Youth Day in Rio he simply replied: “Who am I to judge?”

During his Inaugural Mass in St. Peter’s, Pope Francis stated: “*Authentic power is found through service.*” He follows in the footsteps of not just St. Francis but also St. Vincent de Paul by encouraging us to imitate Jesus, “*who became poor for our sake to make us rich out of this poverty*” (2 Corinthians 8:9). May Francis continue to inspire the Church as a Pope for the poor.





CHRISTMAS TIME

WITH SVP YOUTH



Christian Brother's School, Omagh held a coffee morning for all SVP Volunteers as a small thank you for all their hard work! Well done boys!



CBS, Omagh's GCSE Hospitality pupils took part in a baking extravaganza to provide hot and cold tasty treats! Well done again!



Our Lady of Lourdes, Ballymoney, a new conference, did their first food Hamper appeal this year - great bunch! Well done!



Sacred Heart Grammar School Newry with teacher Laura Curtis and Area President, Micheal Murphy. School collected over 30 hampers!



Meet Donnacha Campbell - a budding nature photographer! For 3 years, he made a calender and donated over £1000 to SVP - Well done!



Meet the pupils from St. Ita's Primary School, Carryduff - The whole school organised many food hampers! Thanks and well done!



St. Pius X College Magherafelt

Sixth Form pupils at St. Pius X College, Magherafelt, studying for a Certificate in Personal Effectiveness, organised a whole school Christmas Hamper collection. The hampers were presented to Joan Ludlow and Francis Gallagher on behalf of SVP, for distribution through the Magherafelt community during the festive season.

The students wish to express their gratitude to everyone who supported this worthy cause,

Included in the photograph are some members of the CoPE class, Mr J Mulholland (Class Teacher) and Ms J Bartley (Principal).

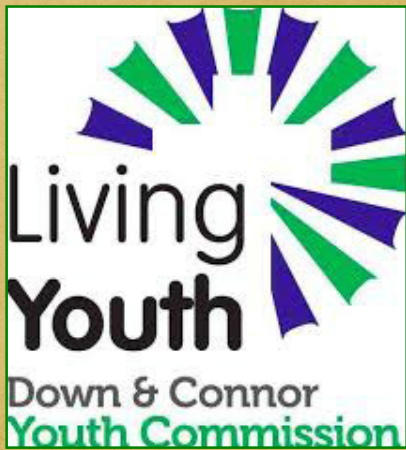


St. Malachy's HS Castlewellan

Another BIG well done to St. Malachy's High School, Castlewellan who donated 116 food hampers to the local conference in the Kilmegan Parish Area!

Included in the photograph are PJ McClean from St. Malachy's Parish Conference, Kilcoo, Miss Janine Branagan (Class Teacher) and Mrs McCombe (School Principal).





Girls from Dominican College, Fortwilliam



Living Youth Choir, braving the cold!



Girls from St. Genevieve's HS, Belfast



Pauline Dowd from Living Youth with Santas!

Annual Street Collection 2014



Cathy, Margaret and Jamie from SVP Regional Office

The Annual Belfast Street Collection took place on Sunday 22nd December and Living Youth were very kind, once again, to allow us to use their building in Church Lane as our headquarters for the day.

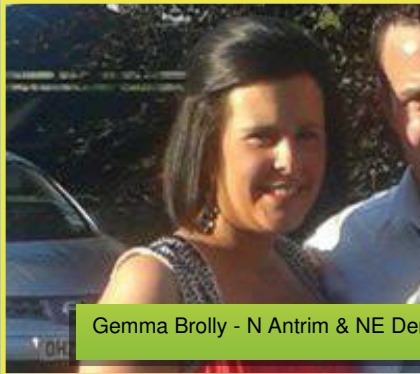
Firstly, I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the youth volunteers from the Belfast Schools/Organisations which took part in the day such as St. Louise's Comprehensive College, Dominican College, Aquinas Grammar School, St. Genevieve's High School, Rathmore Grammar, Search and Living Youth. I would also like to thank Pauline Dowd, John Dowd, Conor McCarthy and Declan Byrne from Living Youth.

The day started by staff making tea, coffee, soup and sandwiches for all our trusty volunteers as it was a very cold winter's day. Outside the building, Living Youth had a Living Crib filled with beautiful animals and a fantastic choir led by John Dowd. On the street we had a clown on stilts, Pauline, Conor and Declan (who were dressed as the happiest Santas I have ever seen!) drumming up support! Living Youth really made the day extra special as they created a very joyous atmosphere for all our volunteers and donors. The total collected on the day was **£4601.16!** So thank you once again to all our volunteers and donors on the day!

MEET THE SVP REGIONAL YOUTH COUNCIL

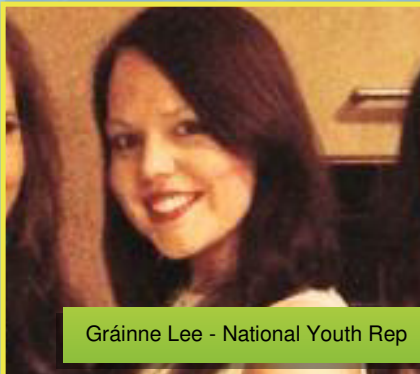
In the Northern Region, we have been very lucky to have a Youth section in SVP and despite at times, there not being a Youth Officer, we have always had a Regional Youth Council. Northern Ireland is one of the largest regions in Ireland for Youth Development and we are currently trying to develop this more and more.

We have 19 areas across Northern Ireland and we currently have 12 representatives sitting on the Council. Each Youth Rep represents each area and they also sit on their Area Council and this is rather important as it shows our youth members that they have voice within the Society! So without further ado, let me introduce the youth reps...



Gemma Brolly - N Antrim & NE Derry Rep

Hi all! My name is Gemma Brolly and I represent N Antrim and NE Derry. I am also the Regional Youth President and I have been a member of SVP for almost 7 years now. I am originally from Rasharkin, Co. Antrim and now live in Ballerin, Co. Derry, however I will always be a saffron girl at heart! I am married with two little girls and I work as a Primary School Teacher through the medium of Irish in St. Brigid's P.S/Bunscoil Naomh Brid, Maghera, which I suppose is my source of passion and inspiration to assist in Youth SVP. Bringing young people up in a world which can be so challenging, I feel the best way to empower the upcoming generations is to help them develop and practice string faith.



Gráinne Lee - National Youth Rep

My name is Gráinne Lee and I am a 22 year old Human Rights Law student from Mullaghbrack (which is basically Armagh for anyone who lives further than a 5 mile radius!). I joined SVP when I started QUB 4 years ago and have since served as both Secretary and President before joining the Youth Council. Joining SVP at Queen's has made my time at University so much more enjoyable. I have made friends for life through signing up and I feel the work we do has made a positive impact in the local community. Aside from SVP, I am a avid follower of the Armagh footballers and a massive fan of the West Wing. I look forward to developing youth participation in the Society throughout the whole of Ireland and showing the positive effect that young people can have in their local areas.



Mary Barrett - Strabane Youth Rep

My name is Mary Barrett and I have been involved in my local conference since 2005 working in the Strabane area. I have also been involved with the students at Holy Cross College, Strabane since 2007 fostering and promoting links with the work of SVP. I enjoy the challenge of the work within the Society which we are able to undertake through the generosity of others. My other interests include Drama, Music, walking and reading. I am a member of my parish church choir and the Derry Diocesan choir at Lourdes. I am also involved in other groups at parish level.



Ciaran McDonnell - Mid-Antrim Rep

Hi my name is Ciaran McDonnell and I joined SVP in 2001 at local conference level, nominated for the Youth Council in 2006 and elected local conference President in 2010. I have always had an awareness of the work of SVP and was attracted to the organisation by its focus on visitation work. I enjoy conversing with people and my involvement at parish level has afforded me the privilege of meeting and assisting people from all walks of life. I became involved with the Youth as I want to be part of the future of this great Society going forward into the 21st Century. A Geography Teacher by trade in Magherafelt, in my spare time I enjoy spending time with my wife and young family and I am partial to anything GAA!



Liam Shaw - Mid-Ulster Rep

My name is Liam Shaw. I belong to the Greenlough Conference (near Portglenone) and am currently the youth rep for Mid-Ulster. I have been active in SVP for the last 18 years. I was delighted to join as I knew of the great work the Society does and wanted to give something back to the local community. I have been active with Youth SVP for many years and enjoy helping the Society to become known to a younger audience as well as helping it to endure into the future.



Maria McGilly - Armagh & Craigavon Rep

Hello, my name is Maria McGilly. I have always taken part in cross-community projects, worked with organisations and discrete groups which involved working at grass roots level with most vulnerable who have been marginalized within Society and especially in areas of social deprivation in a post-conflict society. Being a member of a local conference provided me with the hands-on experience of the work of the SVP within the local community. I am committed person with a vast experience of working with young people and I want my role as a Youth Rep for the Armagh & Craigavon area to be a supportive one to our young members, prepare them for the challenges ahead, especially in our current economic downturn, and assist them on their journey to being lifetime Vincentians.



Catrina McCallion - S&E Belfast Rep

My name is Catrine McCallion, a 20 year old student from Limavady. I am currently a 3rd Year Pharmacy student at QUB, while also being the President of QUB SVP. I a massive home-bird and I will be found there every weekend! I love shopping, reading and going for walks. Throughout my time in secondary school, I was heavily involved in various volunteering activities such as being a cub leader and being on the local youth council. When I arrived at QUB, I wanted to continue volunteering and SVP was the one for me! I have had the chance to visit the elderly, help out at the homeless shelter and I have enjoyed this thoroughly over the years.



Shay O'Neill - North Derry Rep

Hi my name is Shay O'Neill and I am a member of St. Patrick's Conference in Dungiven, Co. Derry. I am currently the Youth Rep for North Derry and have been for the past 2 years. I first got into SVP by volunteering to help in a project the youth group worked on with a charity group called Tuesday's Child. After becoming a member I quickly fell in love with the organisation and have been a member now for 5 years. I feel the small acts of kindness we as an organisation carry out, help people in bigger ways than many of us can imagine and this is why I love being a member of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul.



John O'Hare - West Down Rep

My name is John O'Hare and I am the Youth Rep for West Down. A native of Newry and now living in Dromore. I am also a member of the St. Colman's Conference, Dromore. Furthermore, I work as a Economic Development Officer for the Ards Borough Council.

I have been a member of SVP for a long time and I think the Society does a tremendous amount of work for the local community. I have been in the Youth Council for a few years now and I would like to be able to support them as the Youth have done a fantastic amount of work over the years!



Fr. Ray McCullagh - Spiritual Advisor

Hi Folks! My name is Raymond McCullagh and I am the new Spiritual Advisor for the SVP Regional Youth Council. I am also the Chaplain for the University of Ulster, Coleraine and I have been working in the University for over 10 years now. I am also involved with other youth initiatives and charities such as Youth Link, Living Youth and Habitat for Humanity.

I am a native of North Belfast originally and I previously worked in St. Theresa's Parish on the Glen Road in the west of the city, before moving to the University. My hobbies include football, music and amateur dramatics and I am a fanatical Liverpool supporter with high expectations for the season! However, out of Christian charity, I do speak to supporters of other teams even Man Utd! (only joking!!)



John McDonald - Regional Office

Hi my name is John McDonald and I have worked here at the Society's Northern Regional Office for what seems like forever! I am Officer Supervisor here but I have always had a keen interest in promoting the youth within the Society after all, you are the future and life-blood of Ireland's biggest charity! Hobbies and pastimes?...oh, the usual, watching and playing most sports (Aston Villa fan, so suffering and myself are true friends), cinema, socialising and music, especially where Nile Rogers is concerned!

Annual Youth Day 2014

By Becca Gallagher
SVP National Youth Coordinator

Thursday 27th February saw almost 300 Young SVP students from all across Northern Ireland come together to celebrate and acknowledge the work they have accomplished and the projects they have engaged in over the past year. I was honoured to be invited and privileged to have the opportunity to join this celebration. A huge amount of preparation and work went into the organisation of event and Claire Morgan, Youth Development Officer in the Northern Region is to be commended on putting together a truly special event that captured the very essence of what it is to be involved in the Young SVP Programme and the overall Society of St. Vincent de Paul. All 43 schools/groups registered to the new programme in the Northern Region were extended an invitation to attend the Annual Youth Day in the Glenavon Hotel, Cookstown. On the day members from 15 schools/groups attended, along with their teachers/leaders. Also in attendance were a number of SVP members, SVP Staff and other groups such as *Living Youth*, *Corrymeela*, *Youth Link* and *Youth Action NI*. The groups prepared individual displays highlighting the work they have engaged in, the projects they have undertaken and impacts of their engagement in the Young SVP Programme (see a small sample of these in the photos included).

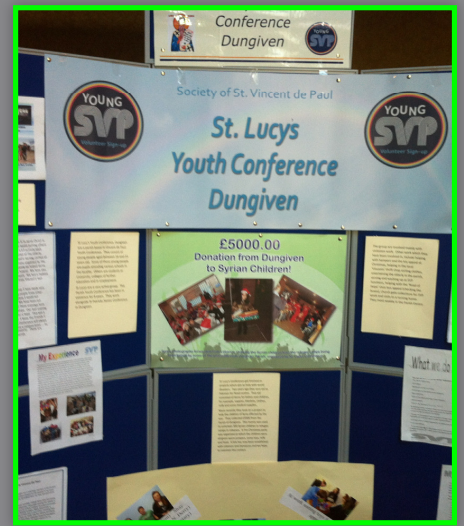


Sacred Heart Grammar, Newry Girls

Throughout the day, students and young people had the opportunity to walk around and see what other groups have been doing and talk about their projects. Each group was also interviewed and filmed providing highlights of their actions and engagement with Young SVP.

Once the displays were set up the whole group were invited to engage in some ice breakers with Corrymeela; these games saw 289 students engaged in fun games and activities all in a relatively small space! These games set and captured both the atmosphere and the tone for the rest of the day, which some may have described it as mayhem, but I saw the following coming through; teamwork, celebration, engagement and enjoyment!





“An overall enjoyable day! Pupils loved the activities. Very well organised and ran smoothly” Aine Hartley (Teacher)

“I am inspired with all great ideas from other schools. It was lovely to remind us all that the work we do makes a difference!” Roisin Sheilds (Teacher)



Gráinne Lee, a former member of QUB SVP Conference and currently the Northern Representative on the National Youth Committee, made a short presentation to the full group her experience within Queen’s University Conference and provided information about ways for young people to continue their engagement with SVP after their school Conference experience.

This was all very well received as was the next part of the day - lunch! A fabulous lunch was served up by the staff of the Glenavon Hotel, which went down a treat (judging by the empty plates!!) Immediately after lunch each group engaged in one of 6 workshops. The topics were as follows: Jesus & the Poor, Effective Citizenship, Poverty in Northern Ireland, Social Exclusion, Human Rights and Make Your Own Campaign. Workshops were facilitated by SVP members who had kindly given up their time to attend and help out on the day, support that I know was greatly appreciated! The young people engaged with these interactive workshops where they were provided the opportunity to explore the meaning, relevance and impact of their work within SVP and within society more generally.

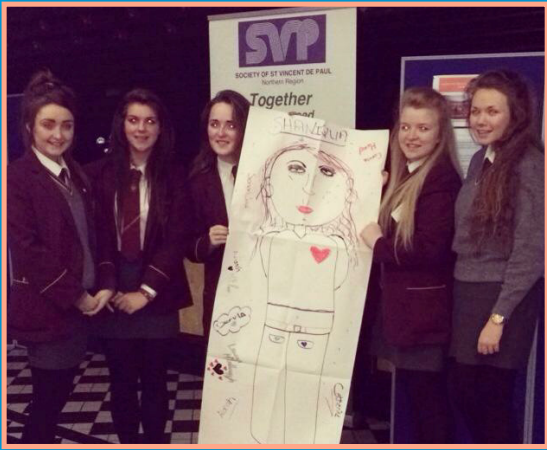
After this exploration and engagement there was even further activity; three

inspiring and motivating presentations were made:

- **Fr. Ray McCullagh** - SVP Youth Chaplain: Speech on the importance of working within your local parish/community
- **Wayne Denner** - Beat the Cyber Bully: Speech on social advocacy through social media
- **Mairead Eastwood** - Mid-Ulster Area President: Speech to thank all young people for attending on behalf of the Regional Council.

Claire brought the day to a close by thanking everyone for their attendance and their engagement on the day, wished everyone a safe trip home and said she is looking forward to seeing more of everyone in the coming months!

Speaking to Claire after the event, she asked me to extend the following message on her behalf: *“I would like to thank all pupils, teachers/leaders for all their efforts on the day and throughout the year. I would also like to thank the Regional Council, in particular Aidan Crawford, Cormac Wilson and Mairead Eastwood for their support in the run up and on the day. Also, to the members who helped to facilitate the workshops and gave advice beforehand. Finally, a BIG thank you to Regional and National staff such as John, Jamie, Cathy, Deirdre and Becca. Also to Gráinne Lee for all your help beforehand and on the day!”*



Annual Youth Day 2014



SVP'S NEW YOUTH PROGRAMME

BY CLAIRE MORGAN



WHAT DOES THE NEW PROGRAMME ENTAIL?

More focus on projects which relate to the curriculum and social justice and spirituality.

WHAT TYPE OF PROJECTS?

We have 4 main types of projects which focus on Befriending, Education, Social Justice Research and Direct Aid

DO YOU HAVE RESOURCES TO SUPPORT ALL PROJECTS?

Yes! All projects can be supported by a Teacher/Leader or if it suits, I can come out to your group and facilitate a workshop.

MORE INFORMATION....

AS WE HAVE NOW LAUNCHED OUR NEW YOUTH PROGRAMME, I FEEL IT IS IMPORTANT TO TELL YOU ALL ABOUT IT! WE HAVE MANY DIFFERENT PROGRAMMES CURRENTLY TAKING PLACE OR WILL BE TAKING PLACE IN THE FUTURE AND I AM HERE TO SUPPORT YOU ALL AS MUCH OR AS LITTLE AS YOU WISH. AS A FORMER TEACHER, I UNDERSTAND THE CHALLENGES TEACHERS FACE TODAY, SO IT IS IMPORTANT TO LET YOU KNOW THAT I CAN TAKE WORKSHOPS, PROGRAMMES OR TALKS TO YOUR CONFERENCE OR SCHOOL/YOUTH GROUP. THE YOUTH PROGRAMME AIMS TO

DEVELOP YOUNG PEOPLE WITHIN THE REALMS OF THEIR FAITH AND SOCIAL JUSTICE. SO LET ME TELL YOU A BIT ABOUT WHAT WE HAVE TO OFFER. THE YOUTH PROGRAMME FOCUSES AROUND FOUR DIFFERENT TYPES OF PROJECTS:

BEFRIENDING

EDUCATION

SOCIAL JUSTICE
RESEARCH

DIRECT AID

SO, WHAT CAN EACH SVP YOUTH PROJECT ENTAIL?

BEFRIENDING PROJECTS: VISITATION TO ELDERLY HOME, PEER MENTOR SCHEME FOR SENIOR PUPILS TO BEFRIEND JUNIOR PUPILS, FRIENDSHIP PROJECT WITH A LOCAL SPECIAL NEEDS SCHOOL ETC

EDUCATION: PEER ASSISTED READING GROUPS, HELP LOCAL FEEDER PRIMARY SCHOOL WITH READING CLASSES, ART PROJECTS ETC, 'LOG ON TO LEARN' PROJECT INVOLVING TEACHING SENIOR CITIZENS ABOUT COMPUTERS/INTERNET.

SOCIAL JUSTICE RESEARCH: TAKE AN AREA FROM SVP SUCH AS POVERTY OR SOCIAL EXCLUSION AND RESEARCH AND INFORM SCHOOL ABOUT FINDINGS FINDING THROUGH SCHOOL ASSEMBLY, A PETITION, INVITE MLAs FROM STORMONT AND GIVE THEM A 'GRILLING' ON THE ISSUE YOU HAVE RESEARCHED, WRITE-UP IN SCHOOL PAPER OR WEBSITE. YOU CAN ALSO COLLABORATE WITH ANOTHER ORGANISATION SUCH AS THE SIMON COMMUNITY FOR A HOMELESSNESS PROJECT OR CORRYMEELA FOR A PEACE BUILDING PROJECT ON SECTARIANISM FOR EXAMPLE.

DIRECT AID PROJECTS: THESE ARE USUALLY DONE SEASONALLY (CHRISTMAS), BUT THAT DOESN'T MEAN YOU CANNOT DO THEM ALL YEAR ROUND. IN TERMS OF FUNDRAISING, MANY GROUPS TEND TO DO THE HAMPER AND TOY APPEALS, BUT WE HAVE HEARD OF SOME AMAZING FUN IDEAS THROUGHOUT THE YEARS SUCH AS A TECHNOLOGY FAST (NO SOCIAL MEDIA/PHONES FOR 24 HOURS!!), TEACHER X FACTOR, FASHION SHOWS, BAZAARS, CAKE SALES ETC.

WE CAN ALSO RUN **WORKSHOPS** WHICH CAN GIVE YOUR GROUP A STARTING POINT OR FOOD FOR THOUGHT ON MANY DIFFERENT TOPICS SUCH AS POVERTY, MARGINIZATION OF PARTICULAR GROUPS E.G. THE YOUTH, ELDERLY ETC OR ON FAITH. WE ALSO GO OUT TO SCHOOLS TO DO AN INTRODUCTORY **TALK** ON SVP AND THE YOUTH AND TO ALSO SET UP A CONFERENCE.

FINALLY WE HAVE PLENTY OF LITERATURE HERE ALSO, IF YOU NEED ANYTHING FOR YOUR MEETINGS OR CLASSES. AS PREVIOUSLY STATED, I AM HERE TO SUPPORT AS MUCH OR AS LITTLE AS EACH GROUP NEEDS AND I LOOK FORWARD TO MAYBE SEEING YOU ALL OVER THE NEXT YEAR!

BEST WISHES AND GOD BLESS FOR THE REST OF THE SCHOOL YEAR,

CLAIRE

Future Projects

WHAT TO WATCH FOR IN THE COMING YEAR...

01 CAMP VINCENT

Historically, SVP Youth have always had a residential camp in Corrymeela, Ballycastle. This year, we hope to run the camp again but to have it in a few locations, so all members across Northern Ireland have a chance to become involved. I will be contacting all schools/groups in the coming weeks about this!



02 CROSS-COMMUNITY PROJECT WITH YOUTH LINK

Youth Link are a fantastic inter-faith organisation who provide many accredited courses in many areas such as youth ministry skills and good relations. We are beginning a pilot project with two schools from different communities in Co. Down in June this year and hopefully we will be able to run this from September 2014.



03 EDUCATION PACKS

Our new Youth Programme has more of an educational focus this time round and we hope to develop this by providing two educational packs to begin with for Key Stage Three. The first will be on Religious Education and the other focusing on Citizenship Education, so watch this space!





NOW THAT WE HAVE RE-LAUNCHED OUR NEW NEWSLETTER, WE WOULD LOVE TO HEAR ABOUT ALL YOUR SCHOOL OR GROUP HAS BEEN UP TO OVER THE NEXT FEW MONTHS. SO WITH THAT IN MIND, PLEASE EMAIL YOUR STORIES AND PICTURES INTO US AT THE REGIONAL OFFICE:

CLAIRE.MORGAN@SVPNI.CO.UK (LOWERCASE)

OR RING ME ON 028 90 750 159 OR 07738837873

WE WILL HAVE OUR NEXT ISSUE OUT BEFORE THE END OF THE SCHOOL YEAR...SO WATCH THIS SPACE, AS YOUR GROUP OR SCHOOL COULD BE IN THE NEWSLETTER

What to look out for in the next issue...

ALSO LOOK OUT FOR STORIES AND PHOTOS ON:

- THE PRAMERICA IRELAND SPIRIT IN THE COMMUNITY AWARDS
- CAMP VINCENT
- LIVING YOUTH'S PALM SUNDAY GATHERING
- YOUTH LINK CROSS-COMMUNITY PROJECT
- SCHOOL PROJECTS

FINALLY, CHECK OUT OUR FACEBOOK AND TWITTER

PAGES ON:



LIKE US AT SVP YOUTH NI



@SVPNIYOUTH

OR ANY FURTHER INFORMATION ON SVP CAN BE FOUND ON OUR WEBSITE: WWW.SVP.IE

REGIONAL OFFICE DETAILS:

SOCIETY OF ST. VINCENT DE PAUL,

REGIONAL OFFICE,

196-200 ANTRIM ROAD,

BELFAST,

BT15 2AJ

EMAIL: INFO@SVPNI.CO.UK

TEL: 028 90 35 561