



Our Lady & St. Joseph – Aire Valley Newsletter



A warm welcome to all our parishioners, friends and beneficiaries of the St Vincent de Paul Society and thank you for your support which is very much appreciated. We hope you learn something you didn't know before about the work of the SVP in the parish.

VISITING

The core work of the Society is to befriend and visit anyone who might want this. Many of our beneficiaries are elderly people, some are housebound, some are lonely, often living on their own but who enjoy some company on occasions and like an informal chat. We enjoy our visits and get as much from them as the people we visit do. We often have a good laugh. A usual visit might last about an hour and we can talk about absolutely anything!

"I look forward to a visit from the SVP. We put the world to rights & have a laugh together"

"We really value the company."

If you would like a visit or know someone who might benefit from one, please contact our President, Anne on 01274 551 091 or 07970 632 230 or any member of the SVP.

All members are DBS checked and are required to visit in pairs for safeguarding reasons.

SOCIAL EVENTS

We hold 2 main social events in the year, one in the Summer and a Christmas Party, with live entertainment, in Advent with the help from the parish's UCM.

The socials provide an opportunity for both beneficiaries & senior parishioners to come together for chat, food and drink, perhaps a game and entertainment.



"Good company & a good chat with food, drink & entertainment. What's not to like!"

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

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| Saturday 17 th May 2025 | Parish Coffee Morning - 10.00am to 12.00noon |
| Wednesday 25 th June 2025 | Senior Summer Social - 2.00pm to 4.00pm |
| Sunday 21 st September 2025 | Mass of the Anointing of the Sick - 11.15am |
| Sunday 7 th December 2025 | Senior Christmas Party & Carol Service – 3.00pm to 5.30pm |

All events will be at St Mary & St Monica's Church, Cottingley.

Dates and/or times may be subject to change.

All will be advertised in the Parish bulletin.

SPECIAL CASES

We occasionally receive referrals from SVP Leeds Central Council, the Parish Priest, Catholic Care or St. Joseph's Catholic Primary school but individuals may also contact us directly.

In the past year we have been able to assist;

- 3 families experiencing food poverty,
- 1 family experiencing fuel poverty,
- 1 family requiring a carpet, for their main living space, & oven,
- 3 families needing basic items for their home & some clothing,
- 2 families with school uniforms and equipment,
- 1 family requesting paint to improve their home environment.
- 1 family requesting children's beds.

"Honestly it has changed my life being able to have a carpet in the living room."

"Thank you so much. I'd be lost without you all"

On occasions we have made requests for items from parishioners and would like to thank all those who responded to these requests, especially as it has been an exceptionally busy year for us.

LEEDS & DISTRICT SVP CHILDRENS' SUMMER CAMP

Every year, for a week in August, a dedicated team of volunteers organise a residential camp in the Yorkshire Dales close to Skipton for children within the Leeds Diocese, aged between 8 -13, which has been running for over 90 years! It is a highly organised venture where the children sleep in tents, live in community with others, enjoy games and activities and new experiences.



They are well fed and looked after. Children who participate build confidence and resilience and have fun.

Our conference works closely with the staff at St Joseph`s school to identify children who may benefit from the camp. It is an opportunity for children who may not have the chance to have a holiday with their families to get away. Children may be nominated for a raft of other reasons including bereavement, illness of a family member or pressures at home.

"I loved it all but my favourite things were the bowling & swimming & talent show"



Over a number of years, we have paid for up to 10 children to attend & have provided lifts where needed. Last year 5 children attended. We, also, supported the camp with a donation of £500 following Storm Lilian which occurred on the last night. Many of the volunteers lost tents & other valuable possessions while they were prioritising making sure all the children were safe.

"The tents were fab, so spacious"

"Food was delicious, great choices."

"I was inspired by the leaders."

MINI VINNIES

The Mini Vinnies, at St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, follow the same vocation that the parish SVP group do in that we all do what we can to serve the poor in our community. In recent years the group has been guided by Mrs Cath Abberton but following her retirement, in July of last year our President, Anne, volunteers to work with the group with the help of Mrs Stephenson.



In the current academic year, they have already helped with the Harvest Collection for the Franciscan Friars and a collection for the Gianna Baby Bank, in Bradford. They, also, have a number of projects planned for the rest of the year which includes; learning about homelessness in order to lead an assembly on the subject, making welcome cards for our Winter Shelter residents, sending Easter cards to our beneficiaries, assisting with the Lenten fundraising in school, visiting a local care home to meet with residents and hosting a social event, in school for some of our senior parishioners.

PRAYER AND SPIRITUALITY

The work of the Society is rooted in the example of St Vincent de Paul and the founder, Blessed Frederic Ozanam. At our meetings we reflect on some aspect of our spirituality and pray for all those we care for. The Mini- Vinnies also, always start their meeting with a prayer.

If a beneficiary we visit wish it we are always happy to pray with them, and for them, and can provide some prayer resources which may be helpful. However, prayer is never imposed on anyone.

The Mass of Anointing, usually held in September, organised by the members of the SVP, is valued by many of our parishioners and is a beautiful spiritual experience.

On the feast of St Vincent de Paul, which is 27th September, a special Mass is celebrated annually, in memory of deceased members and beneficiaries.

SVP MEMBERS

PRESIDENT: Anne McArthur

SECRETARY: Carole Quirk

RECORD KEEPER: Kate Nicholas

TREASURER: David Barrett

OTHER MEMBERS: Patrick Abbott, Jeremy Charnock, Stephen Cook, John McElroy, Paddy Spiller, Peter Taylor, Maureen White & Nicole Wright

"I have never looked back since the day I joined, the friendship, support & enlightenment has been wonderful"

We work as a dedicated team supporting each other and activities when they can.

"I have been richly rewarded in getting to know people"

New members are always welcome & we meet fortnightly on a Wednesday evening, starting at 7.30pm.

WORKING TOGETHER



More can be achieved when we work with others. The **Union of Catholic Mothers** in the Parish helps the SVP with all our social events especially with welcoming and chatting as well as baking copious numbers of sweet treats for our afternoon teas, which are enjoyed by all.

We have parishioners who volunteer in the **Bingley Food Bank** or in **the Bingley Community Kitchen**. They have helped us to refer families in need of support with food. This year a very kind gentleman who lives in Cottingley donated 5 pre-lit Christmas trees with baubles to us. Through the help of the Community Kitchen, we were able to ensure they went to families who would go without otherwise.



BINGLEY FOOD BANK

Canon Jim supports the work of the SVP with a generous donation from the Parish each year and, when possible, will take communion or the Sacrament of the Sick to those who make a request through us.

We work closely with **St. Joseph's Primary School** with the Harvest Festival gathering, the Mini-Vinnies and the Children's Summer Camp.

"The school really values the work that the SVP do within the Parish and the support they give to the Mini Vinnies. The children have great role models showing how they can put their faith into action."

Mrs L. Robinson, Head Teacher.



A message from the President, Anne McArthur:

We are in need of new members. We have a great team who work together to respond to need in the parish & beyond. We can do more with more people on board. If you want to know more about being a member please speak to any member of SVP or ring Anne on 07970 632 230 or 01274 551 091.

If you can't be a member, you can always support us by recommending someone to us who would benefit from a visit, responding to requests made through the bulletin or parish email list, attending our fundraising events or even donating to the conference via a standing order.