



Society of St. Vincent dePaul (SVP)

REPORT FROM OUR LADY & ST EDMUND, DOUAI including St. Mary's, St. Bernadette's, St. Luke's and the Abbey

It is a year since our last report and once again we would like to thank Fr. Peter and Fr. Benjamin, our spiritual director, for their encouragement and support, and all who give so generously, helping us to provide a wide variety of activities and to contribute to a number of good causes.

Local activities

- The core our work remains the visiting of those in need in their home, hospital or care home so 17 Members have visited 58 people making a total of 942 visits across the whole Parish. (Figures at 31st March, 2015)
- We are very fortunate to be able to use the facilities of Douai Abbey. We held our fourth Christmas party there last December which was much enjoyed by 48 older parishioners. We also held an afternoon tea party to celebrate Easter.
- We have held 2 Masses for the Sick & Housebound in the Abbey church with refreshments afterwards in the Guest Refectory.
- SVP are responsible for the Christmas Giving Trees in our Parish churches & in the Abbey church. The gifts are distributed to needy people known to us & parcels are made up for the Drop-in Centre in Reading.
- During the summer we took our guests for tea to Cold Ash Convent where the nuns always make us so welcome and there is a beautiful garden to admire.
- Members help at Cirdic (the Drop-in Centre for the homeless) in Reading & run a monthly afternoon "tea & chat" session for elderly residents in Pangbourne. This is organised on an ecumenical basis with members of St. James the Less. Pangbourne members also help at the monthly tea parties in the village hall.

- We continue to support two Food Banks. Members from the Abbey & St. Mary's are involved in helping the Food Bank which covers West Berkshire whilst members at St. Bernadette's & St. Luke's organise collections for Readifood which serves the Greater Reading area.
- In November we offered a mass for those we have visited who have since died & at the same mass members were re-commissioned. The winter months also saw us raising money to buy "Vinnie Packs" containing warm items of clothing for the homeless. This was a great success, made even more so by the contribution we received from parishioners at St. James the Less.

The re-ordering of the Parish has not made any significant difference to the SVP as we still keep in touch with most of our elderly friends from St. Oswald's and the three members from there decided to remain as members of our Conference.

International activities

Our international activities continue; we support two Parishes, one in southern India and one in southern Sudan. Our donations, through SVP Central Office, are used not only to support local families but also students training in socially useful subjects, which will benefit wider society when they qualify.

From this snapshot we hope you can see that our aims are to embrace all society, locally and internationally. Very little of this could happen without your support and generosity and for this we thank you. Other ways in which you can help are to pray for those we help, to tell us if you know of anyone who would like a visit from us or, best of all come & join us!

Please contact Sandra Brewster (0118 9422558) for further information

