



St Vincent de Paul Canterbury Area Council

SPRING NEWSLETTER Sept 2026



**Dear Vincentians, Volunteers,
Friends, Sponsors and Supporters**



Greetings everyone from the President's desk. It is great to greet another spring as we move out of the gloom of winter, and into the colour of spring flowers and blossoms. I would like to update you on the work currently happening in our area.

Firstly, the removal of the old house and shed at Stanmore Rd is complete and the area has been levelled ready for the new building which will be our centralised sorting and distribution area. This will relieve the current cramped area our wonderful volunteers work in sorting and hanging clothes.

Our Festival Day committee have been busy planning our day on 26 September. They have done a great job and I look forward to seeing you all at Marian College for a day of fellowship and engagement.

The National AGM is being held in Christchurch next year on 19, 20 and 21 March. The AGM committee have begun preparations for the event to be held at the Novotel Christchurch airport. If anyone would like to attend as an observer please discuss with your Conference President.

Polly and I were recently interviewed by TVNZ and took the opportunity to raise awareness of St Vincent de Paul and the work we do in Canterbury Region and across New Zealand. We don't have the profile that agencies like Salvation Army or City Mission do, so it was good to be able to give us some visibility.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank our wonderful donors and volunteers. Without their generous support we could not do the work we do, so thank you for giving your time so freely.

Bill Manning
President
Canterbury Society of St Vincent de Paul



Manager's Sept Report

Polly Fisher



Ehara taku toa i te toa takitahi, engari kē he toa takitini:
Strength is not that of a lone person, but the strength of a multitude.

As we start to move into spring and the warmer months that is the blessing for the saddening increase in homelessness.

With a strong new Welfare Logistics/Outreach Team working at Vinnies to deliver essential welfare support to those in need, our team is facing each day the extremely sad and heartbreaking stories of people living in tents and makeshift shelters who require welfare assistance and support.

The Welfare/Outreach team delivered items to 168 homes fulfilling these requests for the month of August.

We warmly welcome Dean and Bronwyn to the Logistics Welfare/Outreach Team and Ani to the Logistics Team, and we look forward to the valuable contribution they will make.

We would also like to sincerely thank Lynne, Wayne and Kate for covering the Stanmore Road shop during Teresa's absence, and we are delighted to welcome Teresa back.

At present, we are experiencing a shortage of furniture donations and would greatly appreciate any good-quality furniture you may wish to donate. If you have furniture or other items available for donation, please do not hesitate to contact Vinnies on (03) 389 7484, and we may be able to arrange a collection.

We are also seeking more volunteers to support our stores and Conferences. If you have a few hours to spare each week and would like to make a difference in the lives of people in our community, we would love to hear from you. To find out more about volunteering, please visit - **svdpcanterbury.nz**

Every donation and every hour given by our wonderful volunteers helps Vinnies continue its vital work supporting people and families in need throughout our community.



Relational or Transactional?

Phil Bell, Conference Coordinator

Today, at our Stanmore Road shop, I met a man called Ken. Ken came in to donate a fridge. On another day, that could easily have been the whole story. We receive the fridge, thank him for his generosity, work out what needs to happen with it, and carry on with the many other things demanding our attention.

But something about Ken made me stop.

He was unwell. He seemed fragile and vulnerable. As we talked, he shared some of the difficulties he was experiencing with people at the hostel where he lives. More than anything, I sensed that he simply needed someone to talk to. So I made him a coffee. We went into the staff room. I sat down with him. And I listened.

No welfare form was completed. No food parcel was given. No furniture was delivered. No financial assistance was approved. There is no obvious box I can tick to record what happened.

But I believe it was one of the most important pieces of Vincentian work I have done this month.

The fridge was the reason Ken walked through our door.

The encounter was the reason we were there.

Over recent months, as I have visited Conferences and talked with our members, I have increasingly found myself returning to a simple question: Are our encounters relational, or are they transactional? It is easy for our work to become centred on things: food parcels, beds, clothing, firewood, furniture, vouchers, referrals, numbers and processes. All of these are important. They allow us to provide practical and effective assistance to people who need it. But they are not the end of our mission.

Our founders did not establish the Society simply to distribute goods. They sought to encounter Christ in the poor and to allow those encounters to transform both the person being served and the Vincentian doing the serving.

Sometimes poverty looks like an empty pantry.

Sometimes it looks like having nowhere to sleep.

And sometimes it looks like a man standing in a second-hand shop donating his fridge, while quietly hoping somebody might notice that he is struggling.

That is why our Vincentian charism matters.

It asks us to notice. To sit down. To listen. To make the coffee.

To recognise the dignity of the person in front of us and to give them something that cannot be measured on a spreadsheet: our time, our presence and our love.

As Conference Coordinator, there are many operational matters I could report this month. Meetings have been attended, Conferences supported, problems worked through, recruitment encouraged and plans developed.

Those things matter. But perhaps the more important question for us as a Society is not simply, “How much are we doing?”

Perhaps it is:

Are we creating a St Vincent de Paul Canterbury where there is still time for Ken?

Because if we become so busy doing the work of St Vincent de Paul that we no longer have time to sit down and have a coffee with Ken, then we may have become very efficient — but we will have lost something fundamental about who we are.

LAST CHANCE TO ENROL FOR FESTIVAL DAY

DATE: Saturday 26 th September starting at 9.30am

Venue: Marian College, Lydia Street, Northcote

Please register by emailing Mary Brady:

mary@svdpcanterbury.nz

or, phone her on 027 455 9826.

The programme for the day includes Mass celebrated by Bishop Michael, an update by Bill Manning - Area President, Ozanam Trust Housing update plus Budgeting Services offered and a Social Justice update.

After lunch, there are a series of workshops including
"Growing our Membership, Finances for Treasurers,
Retail and Renewing our Mission plus
Young Vinnies - building the next generation.

Please make the effort to come along and learn more about the work of St Vincent de Paul and get to know great people. If you haven't been to one of our Festival Days before, come along this year and you will be warmly welcomed.



Phil Bell and volunteers at the recent Soup Kitchen in collaboration with Catholic Social Services.



St Vincent
de Paul
CANTERBURY



YOUR DONATION CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Every day, Vinnies helps individuals and families in our community who are doing it tough.



HAVE FURNITURE YOU NO LONGER NEED?

Your unwanted furniture could become someone else's much-needed fresh start.

WE WELCOME DONATIONS OF:

- ✓ Sofas & lounge suites
- ✓ Dining tables & chairs
- ✓ Beds & bedroom furniture
- ✓ Household appliances
- ✓ Other good-quality household items



WE CAN COLLECT LARGE
FURNITURE ITEMS FROM YOU.



WOULD YOU LIKE TO HELP IN ANOTHER WAY?



A financial donation, no matter how large or small, helps us provide practical support to people in need—including food, furniture, bedding and other essential assistance.



Your generosity helps us continue to put **people first**.

..... **GIVE. REUSE. HELP SOMEONE IN NEED.** 

People
helping
people. 



DONATE FURNITURE

03 389 7484

Press 3, then 1



EMAIL

admin@svdpcanterbury.nz



DONATE ONLINE

Thank you 
for supporting
St Vincent de Paul
and helping us
strengthen our
community



A big thank you to The **Goodtime Pie Co. South** who recently delivered 600 pies to our foodbank! Be assured that this donation will make a difference and help the many who are in need of assistance with food. So, the next time you "need a pie" look for the pies made by

The Goodtime Pie Co, South



A big shout-out to **Hotel Elms**, who have been wonderful supporters and sponsors of Vinnies for many years! The Society has benefited greatly from their generosity, including donations of beds, furniture and bedding, as well as contributions towards events and activities throughout the year.

Their support at Christmas, including donations for our food hampers, and other goods that can be raffled, has made a real difference to those we support.

So, the next time you, a family member or a friend need somewhere to stay, or you are 're planning an event,

Think Hotel Elms!

You won't be disappointed with your choice!



A huge thank you to **Kerry Tull at New World Stanmore** Rd! Vinnies were delighted to be selected by New World to receive food bags generously filled by the store and donated by their wonderful customers. These bags contained a great selection of foodbank-friendly items, and given the support of local community, nearly 240 food bags were donated during the campaign.

A heartfelt thank you to Kerry for your generosity and support, and to the Richmond community for coming together to help those in need.

Remember to shop New World whenever you need quality foodstuffs!



Vinnies Youth TERM 3 HOLIDAY PROGRAMME

*Make friends. Have fun.
Make a difference. ♥*



DATES

28 SEPTEMBER - 2 OCTOBER



VENUE

VINNIES MANCHESTER STREET SHOP
35 MANCHESTER STREET
CITY CENTRE



WHO CAN JOIN?

SCHOOL YEAR 6 TO 9



REGISTRATION ENDS

21 SEPTEMBER

LIMITED SPACES AVAILABLE!

*Join us these holidays
and be part of
SOMETHING BIGGER! ➡*

SCAN HERE TO REGISTER!



FUN
ACTIVITIES
MEANINGFUL
SERVICE
NEW
FRIENDS



PUT
YOUR
FAITH
INTO
ACTION



SERVE
OUR COMMUNITY



GROW
YOUR SKILLS



CONNECT
AND BELONG



Vinnies
good works



Vinnies Welfare in wider Canterbury Area

Over the past 3-months between June and August, the Society in the Christchurch and Mid Canterbury areas has provided support to over 2,700 requests for assistance. This is up 16% of the previous year. These requests resulted in over 3,000 individual requests for help for food, bedding or other furniture which means we have supported over 8,000 people in the past 3-months!

In South Canterbury, John O'Neil reports that the shop in Timaru continues to support the increasing needs of the community. Over the past 2 & ½ months, the shop has supplied 256 food bank family parcels and many of these people also received other essential items from the shop at little or no cost. John noted that affordable meat is a challenge and they are exploring new options having recently lost their mince contract.

Timaru has also had a consistent number of applicants who are desperate for dental work with most being eligible thanks to the success of the shop. The shop in Timaru has 57 volunteers and are central to its success and ability to support people in need.

John recently accepted an invitation to speak to Rotary, and he was encouraged by their interest in Vinnies work and was most grateful for their generous gift.



Society of St Vincent de Paul
CANTERBURY

Invite a Friend

Know someone who cares about people?

Please consider inviting a friend to volunteer or become a member of St Vincent de Paul.



Find out more:

www.svdpcanterbury.nz



Catholic
Cathedral College



Marian College



Villa Maria College



— YOUNG VINNIES —

Fashion Show

FUNDRAISER



VENUE:

Te Manawa Atawhai -
Catherine McAuley
Centre
21 Peer Street
Upper Riccarton



DATE:

17TH
OCTOBER



TIME:

6:00PM



TICKET INCLUDES:
RAFFLE AND SPOT
PRIZE ENTRIES



VIP TICKETS:

\$25

VIP experience, early access
and reserved seating.



STANDARD TICKETS:

\$15

Fashion show, clothing sale
after show and spot prize draw.

GET YOUR TICKETS!



 **Clothing Sale**

STYLISH PRE-LOVED FASHION • GREAT FINDS • SUPPORT A GOOD CAUSE



SUPPORT YOUNG LEADERS. EMPOWER COMMUNITIES. MAKE A DIFFERENCE.

Ozanam Apartments update

Mike Daly (Chair, OCCT)



Since opening in August 2023, the Ozanam Apartments have provided safe, warm and responsive transitional housing for young parent families. The service has supported families to stabilise, strengthen parenting and tenancy skills, address safety and wellbeing needs, and move towards longer-term housing.

The Ozanam Canterbury Charitable Trust (OCCT) in partnership with St John of God Waipuna, has supported 25 young parent families since August 2023, with 16 of the 19 transitioned families successfully securing long-term accommodation. This partnership is working very well, with St John of God providing the wrap around services, to the tenants, and OCCT providing the housing. SVDP are also called upon to assist when needed by providing furniture and household goods when tenants leave our apartments, transitioning into more permanent accommodation. OCCT then provides new furniture to the next tenants that arrive at our apartments.

Blessing

As we go on our way,
May God go with us.
May he go before us to show the way,
Behind us to encourage,
beside us to befriend,
above to watch over,
And within to give us his peace. Amen

Newsletter compiled by Mike Moore and Trish O'Keefe with contributions from Cyrene Tionko, Bill Manning, Polly Fisher, Phil Bell, Trevor Wall, Mike Daily and John O'Neil

**"...TO SERVE THE POOR
IS TO GO TO GOD..."**

St. Vincent de Paul

