

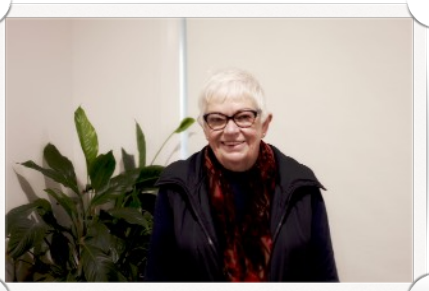
Our Gratitude

Thank you again for joining - or continuing - the Mini Vinnies team. We do understand the workload you are under and we deeply appreciate your commitment to faith formation and service for your students. With thanks, Helen, Kim, and all Wilcannia Forbes Vincentians.

Fifty years of Mini Vinnies

Mini Vinnies has been part of Catholic Schools in NSW for fifty years, and we're writing a book about it! If you have pictures of Mini Vinnies activities, or stories you'd like to share, please reach out. Given the strength of the Mini Vinnies groups in the Wilcannia Forbes diocese, it would be great to have your schools featured in the book.

Helen has kicked off the



proceedings with an article in the forthcoming Vincentian Vision magazine in which she talks about what being involved with Mini Vinnies since its inception in our diocese has meant for her.

Mini Vinnies at work in their world.

St Joseph's School Balranald Mini Vinnies started the year with a Shrove Tuesday Pancakes Fundraiser on the 21st of February.

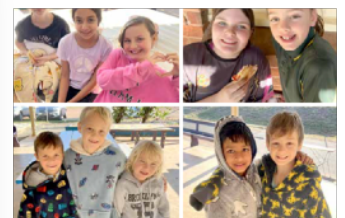
St John's School Cobar Mini Vinnies have reached out to their community appealing for clothes to assist the winter appeal.

St Joseph's School Condobolin had a Mother's Day Morning Tea.

St Michael's School Deniliquin have an extraordinarily strong Mini Vinnies contingent! Their Commissioning Ceremony on the 18th of March looks amazing. So far this year these young Vincentians have created Easter cards for the residents of Orana and Navorina and recently held a lunchtime cupcake day to raise funds for our winter appeal.

Holy Family School in Parkes is holding a Mufti Mission day on the 9th of June to fundraise for the winter appeal.

St Joseph's Peak Hill was Kim's first Commissioning Mass, and it was a lovely privilege to be able to greet so many students looking to show their faith throughout their works. So far this year they've done an Easter Raffle fundraiser, a Pyjama and Hot Food day for the winter appeal, and had a visit from Helen on their leadership day. If you'd like a visit from us or your local conference members but aren't sure of whom to contact, please reach out to Kim and she will make arrangements.



Housekeeping notes

With regards to donations, please do mark the conference that you want to receive the funds, or if there is a special project you would like the funds to work towards. The options are:

- Cash or cheque presented to the senior St Vincent de Paul Conference in your town;
- Cheque posted to the Wilcannia Forbes SVdP Central Council Office, PO Box 997 Parkes, NSW 2870;
- Directly debited to the Society bank account: St Vincent de Paul Society NSW, BSB 062-193, Account 10057471 Reference Conference name;
- Directly debited to the Society via our online service with credit card or Paypal <https://donate.vinnies.org.au/donation-hub> Reference Conference name.

If you would prefer your own [fundraising page](#), please reach out to Kim for any assistance.

If you would like to make a presentation to your local conference and you don't know who in the conference to contact, again, please contact Kim at kim.colbourne@vinnies.org.au or 0477144862.

Vincentian possibilities

Red Bend College recently presented Forbes Sacred Heart Conference with a cheque for over \$2000; the proceeds of their Easter Egg fundraiser. They are now planning their school sleepout in support of the Winter Appeal. School sleepouts are fantastic fun, but often not suitable for our youngest Vincentians - an alternative that often works is a pyjama day. While it's great if this raises funds, that isn't its primary purpose; the goal of Mini Vinnies is to encourage the development of spirituality through service and friendship. Part of our service through faith is to develop empathy for those we serve and to see in them Christ: "For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me." (Matthew 25:35)

Some possible activities are building and decorating a cardboard home from boxes, or deciding what three things students might take with them if they didn't have a home (and then designing an obstacle course where students work out how to navigate the world with only their three items, like "how do you clean your teeth without a sink or toothbrush", or "how can you watch your favorite movie", or "how do you cook noodles"?).

Often something people don't consider about homelessness is the ingenuity people show in devising ways to survive and the effort it takes to simply live while homeless - effort that often prevents people from having the energy or time to find ways to better their situation. If students come away with an understanding of that as an issue, (and perhaps realising how sharing resources can help in a situation like homelessness) that's a brilliant Pyjama Day!

Movies have always been a great way of instilling an empathy for others, and the 2014 film Paddington has a wonderful start for this topic - from about 6 minutes in to when he's left at the station (about 11 minutes in), Paddington and his aunt navigate homelessness. It's a non-threatening way for the students to put themselves in the place of a person experiencing homelessness and the emotions they feel. (Actually, the whole movie is wonderful!)

Please keep in touch

Please continue to send us information and pictures on what you and your Mini Vinnies accomplish, whether that is recycling to help their school community, packing hampers for those in need, writing cards to install a sense of community and hope, or fundraising to help those they know and for their wider community. We would love to be able to make a Mini Vinnies newsletter about their achievements to give away at our stores, to acknowledge the amazing work your schools do and to cheer people up in hard times and will be working towards that in the future.