

St Vincent de Paul Society

Our Lady and St Kenelm, Halesowen Conference

Annual Report 1st April 2020 to 31st March 2021



Statue of St Vincent de Paul

**displayed at Our Lady and St Kenelm Catholic Primary School
inspiring children of the Parish through the Mini Vinnies' Group**

The Parish Conference at work

“Turning Concern into Action despite COVID-19”

The SVP is committed to combatting poverty, tackling isolation, providing support and offering sincere friendship to people in our local communities. We support the most vulnerable in society and give them a chance of a happier life. Vital Covid-19 precautions meant much of our usual activity had to change.

Home visits by conference members were severely curtailed. Where possible we kept in touch with parishioners by telephone, texts or email. Members also gave regular telephone support to an additional number of people from outside our parish community who were suffering from feelings of anxiety and isolation as a result of the Covid crisis. We kept everyone in our prayers and arranged for Holy Mass to be offered for the sick and housebound of the parish.

In July 2020 we were allocated £9,555 from the Gubay Foundation to help those experiencing food poverty or family crisis as a result of Covid-19. This was all distributed within three months as planned to those families or individuals referred to us by Our Lady and St Kenelm Catholic Primary school, the Welcome Group Halesowen, local voluntary groups and GPs. More than 100 families were helped and we estimate we reached over 400 individuals.

On 1st March 2021 we received £15,000 from the Gubay Foundation to be used within three months – again for the relief of food poverty and those in crisis as a result of Covid. This money will be distributed to families or individuals referred to us.

We are so grateful to the Gubay Foundation for its generosity and to the Archdiocese of Birmingham for its help in securing this much need funding.

We are in regular contact with our 2 Twinned Conferences in Kerala in India which we help to support with our prayers and annual donation of £150 to each of them..

We also supported the refugee women at Fatima House with a donation of £200.

A sponsored sewing project provided personal protection gowns for NHS care staff and raised £136.

Easter and Christmas cards were distributed to the housebound of the parish.

Through the Prison Chaplaincy at HMP Hewell near Redditch, Easter and Christmas cards and inspirational bookmarks were given to men serving their sentences at the Prison. Spiritual books have been donated to the Library in the Prison Chapel.

When stewarding the public celebration of Holy Mass was made compulsory as part of the COVID-19 regulations Conference members joined the team of stewards ensuring church use was safe and therefore could be opened for public worship.

OLSK SVP Conference pages on the Parish website continue to be updated.

“We thank you for your prayers, donations and practical support.”

Mike Weaver – Conference President, 16th April 2021

Money Matters

Details	£	£
Funds in hand on 1st April 2020		1,390
Add Income:		
Gubay Foundation		
• July 2020	9,555	
• March 2021	<u>15,000</u>	
Sub total	24,555	
Birmingham SVP Central grants	500	
Conference members' and other donations	370	
Sponsored sewing fundraising	<u>136</u>	
Total income for the year		25,561
Less Use of funds:		
COVID -19 relief of food poverty and those in crisis	15,440	
Support of two Conferences in India	300	
Support of refugees at Fatima House, Birmingham	200	
Mass stipends	60	
Conference administration and postage	17	
Supporting SVP National Office costs	<u>125</u>	
Total use of funds for the year		16142
Funds retained on 31st March 2021		
Earmarked for Gubay Foundation COVID-19 Projects	10,026	
Conference funds	<u>783</u>	
Total funds retained on 31st March 2021		10,809

The SVP Mini Vinnies Group at Our Lady and St Kenelm Catholic Primary School

Headteacher, Mrs Christine Finnegan writes: "The Mini Vinnies have not let the pandemic get in the way of their vital work during the last twelve months; they have been instrumental in ensuring that their mission 'Turning Concern into Action' continues, supporting those who need their help. They have raised funds for the SVP, financially supporting the Food Kitchen in Birmingham, to help feed those who have nothing to eat.

They have been really proactive in encouraging all the children in school to make religious Easter Cards for the housebound and lonely in our Parish and have raised

further funds for the Birmingham Children's Hospital, who is treating our very own Mini Vinnie, who is waiting for a new heart!

They will continue their Mission through to the Summer Term, planning many activities to support those less fortunate than themselves!

"Dear young people, do not bury your talents, the gifts that God has given you. Do not be afraid to dream of great things".

Pope Francis



Join the Parish SVP Conference!

There are many ways you can get involved with our work. Please consider joining the Society. New members are very welcome.

Conference Details

There are 21 members.

The Parish Conference Officers are:

Spiritual Directors Father Gerry Lennon (April -September 2020) Father Stefan Laszczyk (October- March 2021)	Hon Secretary Roy Williams
President Mike Weaver	Hon Treasurer Kevin Sables
Vice President Jane Clarke	School Liaison Martin Redden

Contact the Conference

Telephone or text Mike Weaver 07396 246729

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