27.7.17

**Talk at Masses (“Go you are sent…..to reach out to the peripheries”)**

(Please remind the Mass priest that before the final blessing this short introduction and story will happen).

1. **Parish councillor**

Dear (church) members – I’m …… and I am on the Holy Trinity Pastoral Council.

We have set our Parish Vision:

*“We are a prayerful, diverse Catholic community in the Eastern suburbs of Wellington; drawing strength from one another to grow and become full alive as missionary disciples.”*

The council is considering the upcoming Synod theme of “go you are sent”. We would like all parishioners to reflect on how we can become “fully alive” and “draw strength from one another”, and importantly how we can become “missionary disciples” to reach out to those “on the peripheries”.

One of the most important services that we can fulfil is to people of our parish and suburbs most in need of our love and support at times of need. The council is fully supportive of those groups and individuals within our parish church communities such as the St Vincent de Paul Society who serve those in need.

I would like to introduce you to a local member of the Society of St Vincent de Paul to invite your participation in their parish mission.

1. **SVDP member**

My name is …….and I am a member of your local Society of St Vincent de Paul group.

I’d like to read you a short example of how our Society reaches out in the community……

*(\*SVDP member reads one of the attached “examples of the mission of SVDP”)*

What motivated me to join SVDP was ………

We are making a request for your participation

* by praying in your worship and various parish prayer groups for the Holy Spirit to nourish the lives of those in need
* by boosting our St Vincent de Paul group as active members or as occasional helpers
* by being watchful for and to respond to the needs of those around you.
* (For Brendan, solely for St Patrick’s Kilbirnie – and by seeking out those in St Patrick’s Church community who would be keen to resurrect the presence of the St Vincent de Paul Society within your Kilbirnie community)

We will talk again briefly at the end of each of the Masses on the last Sunday of August and September to continue the pastoral council’s considerations on our parish service to those in need.

We will be here in the foyer after Mass – please come up and chat to me and your pastoral council member.

**\*Examples of the mission of St Vincent de Paul Society**

1. The SVDP visitor delayed their weekly visit till a couple of hours after lunch time before calling at the lonely person’s place. “Are you alright?” the visitor said. “Yes, yes,” she replied sobbing, “I just thought that no-one was going to come to see me today”. Our visit may be the only contact someone has had with another person in the week. This is an example of how much a visitor is appreciated by the lonely person, even if it doesn’t involve much to do.

Visiting for one hour makes so much difference to someone who lives alone. Conversation flows easily. They say “I have visitors sometimes, however it is always quiet when you are on your own. Silence is lonely”.

1. One SVDP member has for some decades loyally visited elder parishioners in rest homes spread around the region. Some lonely residents meet only those who pass their door. Their family and friends may have died, or moved away, or cannot come and see them unless there is a crisis. The visits enable the lonely person to recall stimulating memories from the past and feel loved.
2. Because of his hard drinking a father of five school-age children lost his job and was out of work for over three years. The family was in dire need as the mother suffered from ill-health and could not work. Over several weeks, a SVDP member took around a bag of food items, toiletries, milk and bread each week from the foodbank. This small donation helped the parents cope with the needs of their five children, and showed them they were not completely alone in their troubles.
3. The refugee family was really struggling to make ends meet after arrival in New Zealand whilst the adults looked for employment, but straightaway the kids needed uniform items, shoes and stationery for school. Kind parishioners had made donations for local students in such dire need. The SVDP member met the family at the shopping centre, helped them choose the right gear over a couple of hours, and paid the shops directly for the goods from the donations. We hope we showed them our Holy Father’s assurance to migrants and refugees that “they have a special place in the heart of the Church”.
4. Through the Hospital Chaplain we learnt of two overseas visitors who had dashed to NZ to be with their hospitalised son who had suffered a heart attack. The parents were from a very poor community and had scrapped together the airfares to be with their only son (who thankfully recovered). The cost of a motel was tough, leaving little for food and drink. SVDP members took bags of food to them during their stay and drove them to the airport departure. The parents expressed their “heartfelt appreciation for receiving such love and help from strangers on the other side of the earth”.
5. A family of six experiencing lengthy unemployment was having difficulty with the paperwork for getting assistance from Work & Income whilst the father was going for job interviews. A SVDP member successfully helped them put their case relating to a technical point about their entitlement, involving a delay of several weeks when the parents and children suffered without assistance. Regular food parcels from St Vincent de Paul locally and the family’s vegetable garden gave some relief until their full entitlement was eventually paid.

**Timetable for introducing St Vincent de Paul to the various parish churches at all Masses on the last Sunday of July, August and September 2017**

Dates: 29/30th July, Aug 26/27th, Sept 23/24th

Pairs of pastoral council and SVDP members shown for each Mass time.

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| **CHURCH** | **TIME** | **Sat/Sunday July 29th/30th** | **Sat/Sunday**  **August 26th/27th** | | **Sat/Sunday**  **Sept 23rd/24th** | |
| Good Shepherd | 8.30am | Va’a Lotavale | | Va’a Lotavale | | Va’a Lotavale |
| Paul Franken | | Paul Franken | | Paul Franken |
| St Anthony’s | 10.30am | Barry Brook | | Barry Brook | | Barry Brook |
| Katie Hill | | Katie Hill | | Katie Hill |
| Holy Cross | 5pm | James Heffernan | | James Heffernan | | James Heffernan |
| Clare Maddock | | Clare Maddock | | Clare Maddock |
| Holy Cross | 9am | Justine Samson | | Pat Dunn | | Pat Dunn |
| Clare Maddock | | Clare Maddock | | Clare Maddock |
| St Patrick’s | 5.30pm | David Sullivan | | David Sullivan | | David Sullivan |
| Brendan Quirk | | Brendan Quirk | | Brendan Quirk |
| St Patrick’s | 7.30am | Andrew Gunn | | Ray Whelan | | Ray Whelan |
| Brendan Quirk | | Brendan Quirk | | Brendan Quirk |
| St Patrick’s | 10am | John Rodgers | | John Rodgers | | John Rodgers |
| Brendan Quirk | | Brendan Quirk | | Brendan Quirk |

**Contacts**

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