



You are never too young to inspire others!



Exams were over, the school year had finished and while most students were heading off on holidays, enjoying sleeping in 'til 1pm or hanging out at Cas Square, fourteen St John's College students had different plans.

In term 4 these year 10 and 11 students were spending their Tuesday afternoons after school planning and preparing to run their own camp for children with special needs.

Eight students aged between 8 -12 years old from Namarluk and Woodroffe primary attended the camp which was held in the first week of the school holidays. The St John's students were buddied up with a camper and over the 3 days they developed wonderful

friendships with their campers while together enjoying activities such as tenpin bowling, jumping croc cruise, a Christmas party, movie making and swimming at Casuarina Pool.

Being a full time carer is not an easy job, but it is extremely rewarding as the St John's students found out. It takes self-sacrifice, patience, empathy and a lot of love, all of which these students have in abundance. These students proved that today's generation are capable of inspirational acts; they only need to be given the opportunity.

2013 St John's College Camp Leaders: Liam Hopps, Belange Kabalu, Jennifer Packer, Marena Terupo, Emily Burton, Cammile Escarian, Maddy Bryan, Paula Ezeogo, Lucus Biship, Jessica Musgrave, Emma Boek, Samantha Bell, Danielle Close, Aiden Lee.

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Congratulations to...

John and Margaret Byrne of the Holy Spirit Conference for celebrating their 50th Wedding Anniversary this month.

John and Marg wed on 25th January 1964 at St Paul's Retreat, Adelaide, South Australia.

A wedding remembered for the extreme heat, the bride's beauty, the groom's sweaty palms and the honour guard made up of the entire South African Test squad singing "Tonight Tonight".

John and Marg celebrate 50 years of wedded bliss with 5 children and 10 grand children.



Above: Christmas comes to Vinnies at Stuart Park via Peter, volunteer at Vinnies.

Christmas cheer!

Collecting donated gifts at Christmas to distribute to those who need them is a tradition at St Vincent de Paul.

Christmas is a time of giving and thinking of those less fortunate than ourselves.

With the help of companies such as Bendigo Bank Nightcliff, The Bungalow, Goodstart Early Learning Marrara, Ray White Real Estate Darwin, Position Partners, Charles Darwin Uni, MIX 104.9, Bunnings Darwin Airport, Dept of Foreign Affairs and Trade and Dept of Human Services collecting gifts, St Vincent de Paul was

able to distribute 867 gifts to children throughout Darwin and surrounds. The four St Vincent de Paul conferences and Ozanam House distributed the majority of the gifts. The remainder were distributed through various women's and children's organisations, emergency shelters and via contacts in several communities around Darwin. We thank all volunteers, staff members, businesses and organisations that have given their time and effort to assist.

President's message

by Gerry McCormack

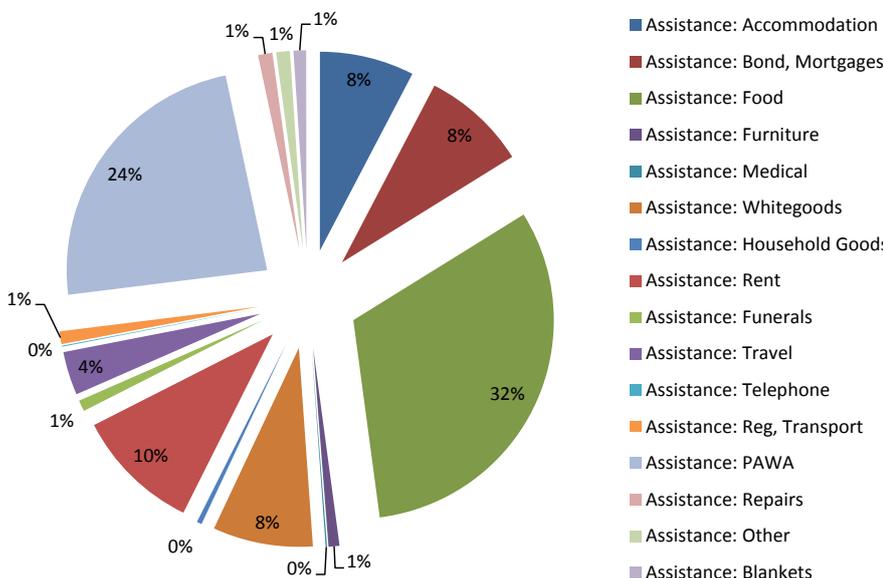
Welcome back to one and all! Before Christmas, many members and extra volunteers put in a lot of time and effort to provide hampers and presents to people in need. This turned out to be a very successful effort so a big "thank you" to all those

involved. Special thanks go to Martha Swart and Christine Cleary for their leadership in the Darwin & Palmerston parts of the effort.

It does not take long for us to settle back into our life patterns, so many of us are doing much the same as we did last year. One of the challenges though, is that we sometimes need to adjust to the loss of some people

who were alongside us last year and now we have someone else undertaking their role. This can be a real challenge as the new combination probably does things a little differently to what the old combination did. Have we the patience to meet this new change or do we just give up because it is too different? Hopefully we will rise to this challenge and find that most times, change is good.

Emergency Relief distribution Jul - Dec 2013



The chart to the left shows all assistance given for the previous 6 months until December excluding Telstra vouchers.

The largest items distributed were food - equating to over \$25000 and Power and Water bills equating to \$19000. The next two biggest were assistance with rent, bonds and mortgages showing that people are very much struggling with the basic necessities of life.

Government support provides Vinnies with the financial capacity for most Emergency Relief and the difference is provided by donations.



A few of the 82 participants from the Northern Territory of which several are volunteers with Vinnies Youth. (Jaz O'Campo, Ladan Moradi, Sean O'Conner, Clarisa Lopez, Lauren Hill, Michael Cao and Paul Gilbert)

From the 5th – 7th of December 2013 over 3000 young people from all over the country joined together for Australia's largest catholic youth gathering, the 2013 Australian Catholic Youth Festival (ACYF).

Thanks to support from Vinnies I was able to be one of those people attending the festival. I had been part of several other catholic youth events before, but wasn't really sure what to expect of something this size. The experience was overwhelming.

As I walked through the festival areas I could hear speakers talking enthusiastically, people

cheering, prayer in the chapels, music sessions everywhere, people talking, laughing and sharing. I found it so encouraging to see what a huge community we are all part of. There was a great sense of belonging and family amongst everyone, not only the participants but the bishops, priests, nuns, speakers, musicians, guests and leaders as well. The festival also brought together many catholic organisations that work in Australia of which the St Vincent de Paul Society was of course one. Various youth leaders in the society ran sessions on leaderships and 'being part of

the solution'. Volunteers helped run a stall at the festival which aimed to connect people who were interested in being part of the society to volunteers and programs in their local areas. I also helped run the dress up / photo booth (pictured above) and worked to raise awareness through social networking sites. Regardless of what angle you approached the festival from, as a high school student, a bishop, a Vincentian or anywhere in between, the experience of encountering Jesus and seeing the young heart of the church so alive is definitely an unforgettable one.