



Resources & Preparation needed:

- A3 paper and Pens
- Youth SVP Prayer book and Prayer cards
- Ideas about a local project who would appreciate being reminded that they are welcome.
- Challenge sheet (enough for each group)
- Access to WIFI (The youth SVP in this session will need to search online for this).

Aims:

- An introduction to the SVP and to SEE, THINK and do.
- An opportunity for meaningful action from the off.

Opening Prayer:

Invite one of the young people to read a prayer from the prayer book ([Shop](#))

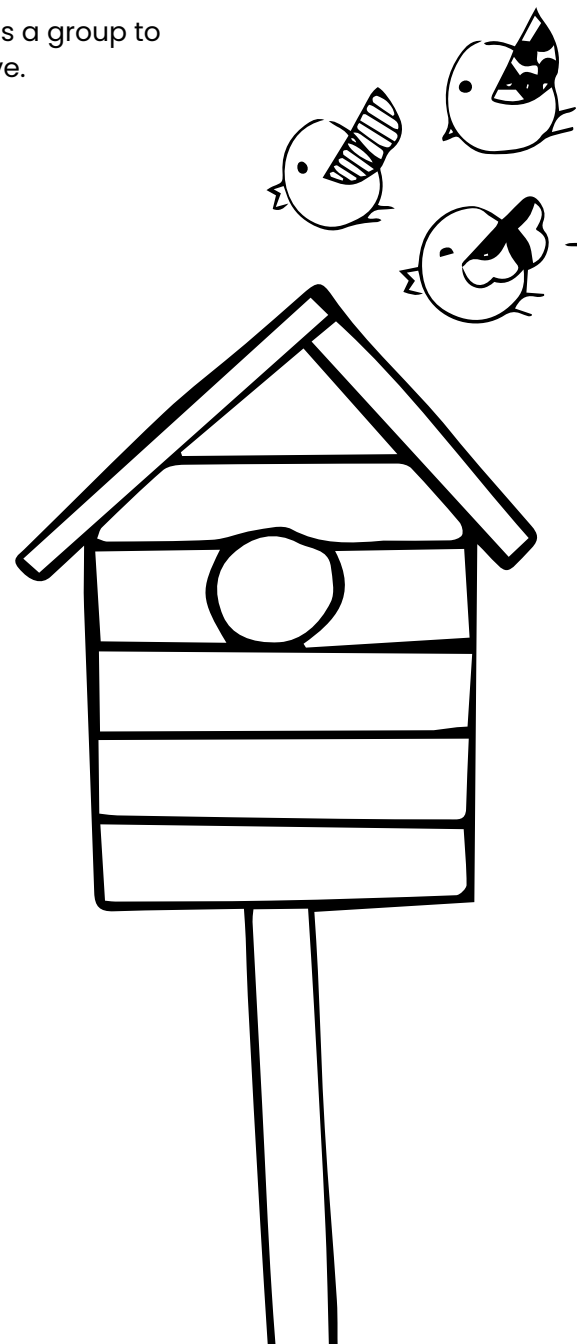
Reflection:

A story from an SVP Conference. Read it and then take a few moments as a group to explore what you as a group could learn in the work and help you will give.

A few years ago in December, the Mini Vinnies visited a local care home to sing carols, enjoying party hats and mince pies. The Head Teacher praised them at a school assembly, sharing that one resident called it "the best day of our year." When a student asked if they could return, the Head Teacher revealed they were invited back the next year. Another student suggested they visit more often, leading to plans for an Easter party, which were sadly disrupted by the pandemic.

One Mini Vinnie, who lived nearby, began daily walks past the care home, waving to residents. They brought posters and spent time making the residents smile. Noticing the birdfeeders were empty, the Mini Vinnie convinced their parent to buy seed. They created homemade feeders and continued their walks, growing a small audience of admirers.

One day, staff from the care home stopped them, curious about the Mini Vinnie's connection to the residents. The Mini Vinnie explained they had no relatives there but were dedicated to doing good. This sparked a deep friendship, with the residents adopting the Mini Vinnie as family. When school resumed, the Head Teacher received many letters from the care home, asking the mystery Mini Vinnie to raise their hand. Remarkably, they never did.





Activity (SEE):

- Give each small group an envelope of challenges.
- Explain that there are a lot of people around the world who are really interested in their family tree. These people spend hours and hours researching and finding out about people across the globe that they have family links with.
- Becoming part of the Youth SVP means that you become part of a worldwide family and network of change.
- Explain to them they have roughly 5-10 min to open the envelope and complete the challenges. There are no restrictions and they can get the information by any means possible.

Reflection (THINK):

- A big part of what our conference members do is to visit people, creating a safe and welcoming space.
- Using a piece of A3 paper give the group a few minutes to consider what the word 'welcome' means to them.
- On the A3 paper they can write words, draw images that express what welcome feels and looks like. They could write names of people who have made them feel welcome in different places. How did that look? What do they do that makes them feel at home there? (If a large group you may want to use post it notes instead)
- Once they have begun, ask them to consider people in the community who may not feel welcome? Where are the people who may feel a little detached from society, who feel like they don't have a place or might be forgotten?

Challenge (DO):

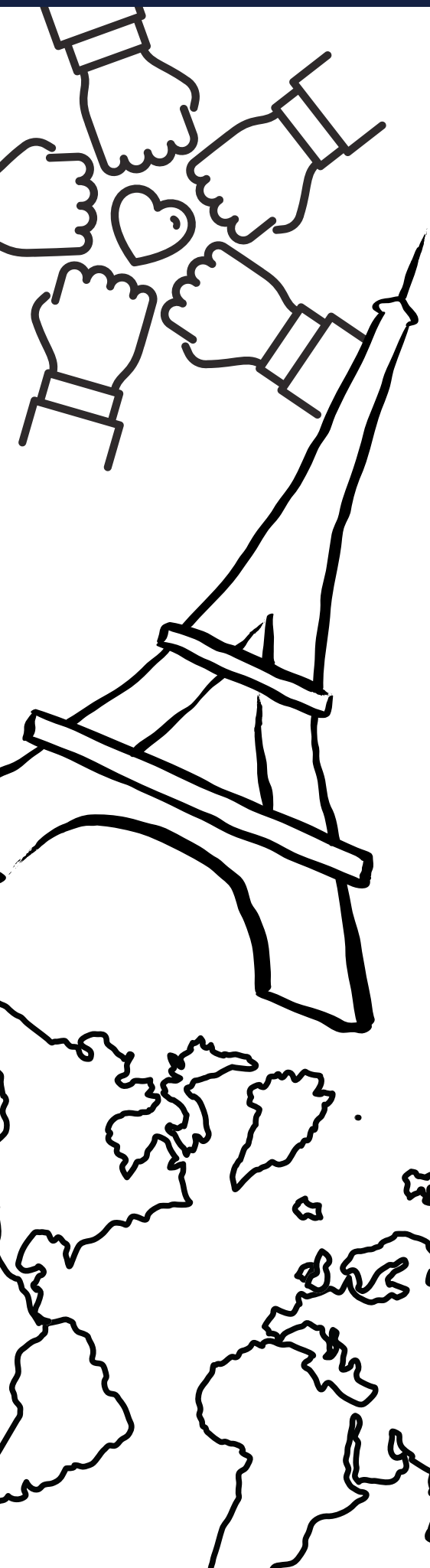
- The challenge for this session is for the group to create a poster or posters to give to a local community or organisation as a way of helping create a warm and welcoming space.
- Suggest a local project where these could be given. Here is an example of a young group who made this small gesture of kindness (<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-kent-66277735>)
- The local project could include a refugee centre, a probation centre or a care home.
- Ask the new members to bring the poster designs back for the following meeting.
- Encourage members of the group to take responsibility for practicalities of delivering by post or sending a message to the organisation they want to share support with.

Before you finish:

Invite all the young people to pray together the prayer from their prayer cards.



CHALLENGES



- Where is the shrine of St Vincent de Paul? Give the full address. **(2 points)**
- Where is the furthest away SVP group you can find? **(10 points to the group who find the furthest away)**
- How many SVP logos can you find. Sketch them and label what country they are from. **(2 points per logo)**
- Who is the current international president of the SVP and where are they from? **(1 point)**
- The SVP started in Paris in 1833. What year did the SVP start in England and Wales? **(3 points)**
- Gather as many facts about the SVP as you can. **(5 points awarded for every fact that no other group has found)**
- A bit like a tree there are many branches that are all attached to the Vincentian tree trunk. What we have in common is we all follow the inspiration of St Vincent de Paul. The SVP is one branch - can you find another branch and find out what they do now and where they began? **(4 points available depending on detail)**
- Can you find 3 types of poverty the SVP respond too? **(3 points)**
- The SVP in England and Wales run Centres around the country called Community Support Centres. How many does the SVP have? Which one is closest to where you live? What kind of support does your nearest centre offer? **(5 points)**
- Saint Catherine Labouré was a Daughter of Charity (a branch of the Vincentian family). What is significant about her? Roughly draw the medal and write down the quote that is on it. **(3 points)**
- Find three random items that you can link with an aspect of the SVP. **(3 points)**