

EMMANUEL COLLEGE YOUNG VINNIES STREET RETREAT

Emmanuel College Warrnambool's Young Vinnies group recently collected toiletries for homeless people and travelled to Melbourne to distribute them. An enormous thank you to the staff, students and parents who generously donated toiletry items to support the retreat, the donations were overwhelming.

The Year 8-10 Young Vinnies experienced their street retreat for three days in Melbourne on October 12, 13 and 14. The fourteen students also prepared food for the Edmund Rice Food Van in St Kilda with other volunteers on Wednesday afternoon. They then helped distribute the food that evening as well as their toiletry packs. The work can be confronting but well worth it.

On Thursday the students were involved in presentations from Urban Seed in Collins Street as well as representatives from Catholic Mission. In the afternoon sandwiches were made and distributed in the central business district that night to the homeless with the St Vincent de Paul team.

On November 23, 24 and 25 the Year 11-12's will repeat the experience. Well done Young Vinnies!

John O'Sullivan - Director of Enhancing Catholic Identity and Religious Education

Two students reflect on their experience:

Recently, students from Emmanuel College's Young Vinnies team went to Melbourne for a three-day camp where we would learn about homelessness and do some helping in the city. My personal favourite experience was visiting the Queen Vic Markets at night with the St Vincent de Paul Soup Van. All of the toiletry items you brought were distributed to the people we met there. Everyone was so grateful and were very humble and considerate. They would only take what they needed, rather than leaving nothing for others. All the people I met there seemed really happy and willing to talk with us. Amongst all the people at the Markets, there was a mother and her son who was in Year Nine. They said they were from Tasmania and the boy had ambitions to play for Carlton. I'm sure everyone else at the Markets had their own individual backstory, I just didn't get to hear them all. If anything, I've learnt we are very lucky to have what we have and it isn't that difficult to make a difference in the community.

Caitlin Garner



The Young Vinnies camp taught me a lot about homelessness and what can happen when something so little occurs. It really opened my eyes to what people go through that we don't see. Everything that happened made me realise that we should appreciate what we have and take nothing for granted. We saw a lot of different effects on people – people under the influence of drugs, domestic violence and people that were scared. We helped a lot of people and it made us all feel good about ourselves.

Tahlia Brown

