

# MINI VINNIE'S FESTIVAL DAY.

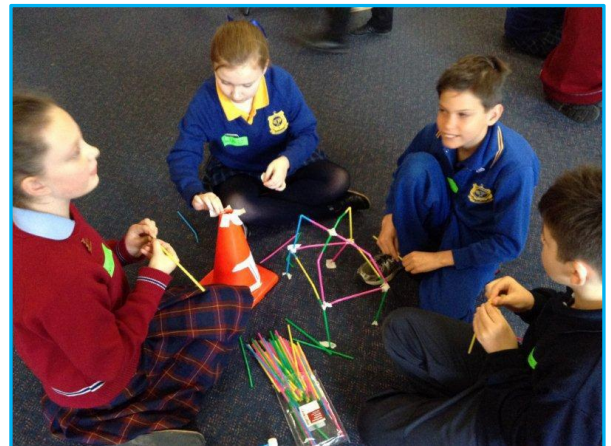


On Friday, July 24 St Columba's Ballarat North school community hosted the Mini Vinnie's Festival Day. It was a wonderful gathering involving staff and children from Ballarat schools including St Thomas More Alfredton, Lumen Christi Delacombe, St Francis Xavier Ballarat East and those from around our diocese including St Patrick's Stawell and St Michael and St John's school from Horsham. We had around one hundred and twenty children and teachers present at this day. The St Columba's school community felt very honoured to host this special occasion.

The children participated in activities to bring about a greater awareness of social justice issues in our local and wider community. We would like to thank Fr Barry for celebrating our Mass. Also we would like to acknowledge Kathy Walters from St Columba's Parish St Vincent de Paul group for her support in the preparation and for her presence and assistance during the activities. All of the children need to be congratulated for the way they participated in the activities. They displayed excellent behaviour and leadership in the way they interacted and worked together.



Each school was asked to give a presentation of the work they have been doing in the area of social justice. It was amazing to view the range of ideas and programs that are happening in our schools across the diocese. It was a wonderful opportunity to share ideas and learn from each other. We were very proud to show the other schools the development of our Mini Vinnie's group and the close connection we have to our St Columba's Parish St Vincent de Paul group. After participating in group activities and Mass the children had the opportunity to learn more about the founder of the St Vincent de Paul Society, Frederic Ozanam.



The children listened to a very interesting presentation on Homelessness, which is a reality for many people in Australia today. As a way to create a response for the day the children worked in groups to form toiletry Care Packs that will be distributed to those in need.

We thank all of the children and teachers who participated in this day. We especially acknowledge and thank Catherine Smith and her team for the wonderful work in organising and facilitating this event. It was such a beneficial day for all involved.

*Alison Thorpe and Rachel Martino  
Coordinators of Mini Vinnie's at St Columba's School Ballarat North*