

St Vincent de Paul.



The New Year got off to a great start, as we attended our lunchtime meetings on Mondays and Thursdays. We began to prepare for our visit from the High Hopes Choir. When the 18 shoeboxes we prepared at Christmas, arrived at the Men's hostel, the choir, appreciative of our efforts, wished to schedule a concert in our school. Terence O' Neill came to check out our social area and the planning got underway. Posters were created to generate interest among the student body. Debbie O Halloran, Youth Development Officer with SVP, continued to make her monthly calls and encouraged this latest endeavour.

March 23rd arrived and so too did 20 members of the High Hopes choir. They sang many wonderful pieces of music, both as a collective and with individuals taking themselves out of their comfort zone. One such member, a past pupil of our school, shared with us during her testimony, that quite literally the choir saved her life, as she was at a very low point in her life. For the past three years, she has been soaring; such is the impact of being part of this special community of singers. Mousy, another valued member explained how he has been reunited with his family after 20 years and how the choir has given added meaning to his life. The event sent a shockwave through our school, inspiring and motivating us all. The next day in class, students wrote down their

reflections on the visit and the feedback was a resounding success. Its affect will live long in the memory ...

Our final activity for the year involved all 21 students visiting, or returning to their old alma mater, Presentation Primary School, in order to conduct paired-reading with students in second class. The SVP volunteers completed this over four Mondays and enjoyed making a difference in the lives of young people in our community. The highlight for us all in SVP was a day in the WIT Sports' Arena, at the SVP Youth Day on Thursday, 27th April. The students got to meet other like-minded, charitable people. The presentations made by all 22 schools in the South-East region will further inspire us in the work we do next year.



Challenge to Change



Challenge to Change is a project run for Presentation primary and secondary schools. Students address a human rights issue, research it and challenge their peers and /or community to think differently about it. This year the 5th years chose the issue of human trafficking. They researched greatly on the topic and welcomed a speaker from Ruhama, an agency that rescues and helps to rehabilitate women in prostitution. They created a power point and delivered it to senior classes. They inspired 5th year art students to produce their best work to date, composing self - portraits reflecting the two sides of modern slavery - the fake appearance and the devastating reality. The girls took their project to Kilkenny, to join 15 other schools in the day-long Challenge to Change seminar.