

# Every Little Helps!

My apologies to Tesco, but their catch phrase captures the mood at Just Youth. We are not the most sophisticated in "this business", nor are we the most competent. We are just "a bunch of poor people", to use the words of Fr Francis Libermann, called to be part of this very wonderful ministry. Our various efforts, though little, have enjoyed His blessings. At the end of this term, we share with you our testimonies. As we thank you for being part of story in various ways, we ask God to continue to bestow his blessings on you.

**-Fr David**



## *Testimonial*

St Willibrord's commissioned Just Youth to work alongside our school beginning in September 2017 for the whole school year. This was to be for one day per week and would aid the spiritual development of our children and staff in school.

At the time of the commissioning, our parish was in a period of transition where we had lost our parish priest and were amalgamating with two further parishes under the direction of the Spiritans. The school was also expecting a Section 48 Inspection from the Salford Diocese.

Just Youth met with the Headteacher and the Religion lead to plan a programme which has supported our school immensely over the school year. Each class has the opportunity to partake in a session led by Just Youth on a weekly basis. We have covered a range of themes throughout the year such as understanding the Mass, understanding scripture and development of our understanding of key liturgical dates throughout the year. Throughout the year there were reviews and discussions about how the support for the school could be developed further.

Our children have thoroughly enjoyed each session, and this has led to our school being a truly catholic community. We have always felt that we were a Christian community, but it is now recognised that the development, understanding and practice of our Catholic beliefs and faith are truly evident in all that we do.

The sessions that have been taking place with staff have been very successful. Our school predominantly has teachers who not Catholic are but they have been offered a session where they can begin to understand our faith and also ask a wide range of questions in a safe environment. This has allowed our teachers to deliver the RE curriculum effectively whilst developing their own knowledge and understanding of our faith.

The work of Just Youth was a great support in our Religion Inspection where the school was awarded outstanding status. We have very much valued the support that the team and Father Jude in particular has offered our school and we have commissioned Just Youth for the coming school year. We would

This autumn term alone, we have met and worked with children and young people from

- Our Lady of Lourdes School, Bury
- Guardian Angles School, Bury
- St Sebastian's School, Pendleton
- St Clement's School, Runcorn
- St Margaret Mary's School, New Moston
- St Oswald School, Oswaldtwistle
- Sacred Heart School, Accrington
- St Mary's School, Oswaldtwistle
- St Gabriel's High School, Bury
- St Joseph's School, Ramsbottom
- St Michael's High School, Watford
- St Joseph's and St Bede's School, Bury
- St Anne's School, Ancoats
- St Peter's High, Gorton
- St John Vianney's School, Stretford
- St Mary's High School, Astley
- St Willibrord's School, Clayton
- St Joseph's Parish, New Malden
- St Raphael's Parish, New Malden
- Corpus Christi Parish, Oldham

From our weekly Chaplaincy and ministry, to, retreats, chaplaincy training, training days, pastoral support, discovery days, sacramental preparation, staff training and celebration of special events.



Dear Father David,  
Thank you for my day at the Spiritian Centre. Thank you for all the nice things that you gave us (like the biscuits, time, love) and all the activities that you had that were very exciting.  
yours faithfully  
from Ruth

good. The people here greeted us very kindly and introduced us to everything thoroughly. The first weeks were full of information and adjusting to the new situation, but everyone helped a lot and



contributed to making all the new volunteers feel as comfortable as possible. Working with the others has been real fun, so far, and I enjoyed learning new things about working with children and young people. The schools I assist with are Saint John Vianney's Special School and St Willibrord's RC Primary School. The work there is a lot of fun, even though it is very different to what I was used to. The satisfaction you feel when the children can learn something from what you prepared for them is just beyond imagination! I'm really looking forward to developing myself more and getting more fun from the work. **-Kathi G.**



It was never easy in the beginning to pick up to the new system especially when it came to plan for school visits, explaining different worksheets and crafts before the children and the like. Sincerely it took me some time to gather the confidence and do away with that first-time phobia. It took time learning to find crafts that are relevant to the day's topic and quite fitting for the different ages we work with.

However, the Just Youth team carried me along, introduced me well to the system, and gave me what it takes to carry on well. This ministry has helped me cultivate skills and build self-esteem. I now have a broader mindset towards the realities and nature of the work with children and young people. **-Fabias**



I arrived on the 20th of August 2018 literally not sure what to expect. I had randomly applied due to a Facebook post about Just Youth while job hunting for youth worker/ministry jobs. Of all the jobs I applied for, I only got a reply from Just youth. I offered it to God that, if this was his plan for me I will go, so now I'm here. From the start it has been a whirlwind experience, spending time with the other volunteers, we get on like a house on fire which is awesome. Along with spending time and getting to know the priests as well. For me it was very weird signing the sign of the cross when I started due to being Anglican and something we don't do normally.

Facilitating sessions, whether retreats or chaplaincy for the children and young people has been very eye-opening and fulfilling at the same time. There is a lot of work that goes into planning the sessions but it is definitely worth it though, because the children get a lot out of it, as well as lots of fun, which is a key part of the ethos of Just Youth. My favourite moment of this year so far is going to be going to Our lady of Lourdes RC for their G.I.F.T team training. As part of the day, we made clay fishes with them, as an activity on discipleship. It was heart-warming when some of the young people met us at a different retreat and told us they still have their fishes, as the fishes meant a lot to them. I have also been completely inspired by these young people and children from what they are write during reflections, like one boy wanting to find the cure for cancer. These small things and stories about the



Hello my name is Kathi, I'm from Germany and I turned 19 during my gap year, which started in January. As I am working and living together with the Just Youth Team for almost one year now I can look back at plentiful formative and enriching experiences. I learned, for example, how I can cope with my excitement while speaking in front of big groups of people during our weekly school visits as well as at our retreats and missions. In addition, I had the chance to experience how it is to live and work together with a community that is made of people from different cultural backgrounds. That can be a challenge, as differences between myself and my community members appeared at first so obvious, but I figured out that if you want you can always find a way to connect to people no matter how different you are from each other. In addition, I particularly enjoyed it to travel together with the Just Youth Team. Last week we spend for instance in London, in order to lead retreats in a school and at a parish. Furthermore, the other volunteers of the team and I were invited a few months ago to the Adoremus congress in Liverpool and then the entire team travelled also to one of our community houses in Chester, where we celebrated one of the founders of the Congregation of the Holy Spirit. Another reason why I think I could grow by working with Just Youth is, that I could educate myself on a lot of religious topics and I had a lot of opportunities to deal with my own faith by learning and talking about faith. All in all, I can highly recommend working with Just Youth as it is a unique and memorable experience, which helps you to grow spiritually, culturally and socially. **-Kathi P.**



### St Joseph New Malden

Our next stop was with the confirmation

papists. Currently I work at St Anne's Primary School, Ancoats on every Tuesday and in St Willibrord's Primary School, Clayton, on Fridays. Even though the schools are very different, I enjoy working in both very much and I cannot imagine not going there every week now! Working in St Anne's is very exciting because the children are very engaged in the topics we teach and are very interested in learning about faith and they grasp the contents very well, especially doing activities. In St Willibrord's we teach more than we do activities, but the students are also very engaged and smart and they really do love talking about God and the Bible. Teaching them really does spark my interest in Theology! I find it interesting to see the differences in the school life in England compared to Germany. The schools work completely different and I feel like the children have rather different abilities, which I don't notice as much in Germany. Maybe this also just seems like that to me because this is my first time working in a school. Working in this setting that is completely new to me is such a valuable and useful experience. I am looking forward to a lot more months full of work! **-Johanna**



### London Safari

On the 11<sup>th</sup> of November five of us left to comfort of our community house to travel to far away London. The lucky ones were our volunteers - Kathi G., Kathi P., Shannon and Jo - and Fr David. After an exhausting car drive, we reached Watford in the northwest of London. After a good night's sleep in our lovely accommodations we left for our first day in St Michaels High School.

Together with the school chaplain, Fr Terkura we set up the room for about 60 Year 7 students to come into with their Form teachers. After we introduced ourselves and Just Youth we had a little dance session with them to get rid of some piled up energy. When they had settled down again, we started with an opening prayer and introduced the theme of the day with a video about community and teamwork. After a day filled with lovely activities, it was closed mass in the school chapel, led by Fr David and Fr Terkura. The following two days we spend doing the same sessions with the remaining Year 7 Forms.

After three pleasant days in Watford we had to say goodbye and headed off to New Malden. **-Jo**



been enhanced by establishing a strong partnership with the Just Youth Team.

The working partnership between SJV and Just Youth has allowed Fr Pat and Mrs Garfin (The RE coordinator at SJV) to grow and develop students spirituality within not only the school but the wider community.

The first major impact of the partnership was the creation and growth of a Chaplaincy Team which fully includes members of other faiths and has flourished in terms of being a distinguished presence within the school.

The chaplain's decided they needed a strong identity within the school so they decided that they would wear a distinctive jumper and they picked the colour purple. This highlights the work of the Chaplaincy team around the school and out in the wider community.

Working with Just youth has helped the students make strong links with the wider community and Church. This is huge achievement for students with additional needs. With the help of Fr Pat the children and young people have worked with the elderly and invited asylum seekers and refugees to speak to the school.

Acts of Worship and Welfare and celebrated frequently with the partnership of Fr Pat and The Just Youth Team in terms of regular Masses in school and frequent Retreats to the Spiritan Centre.

The relationship Father Pat has built with the students has allowed for collective worship to be more student led and more nurturing experience.

Each of these acts of worship and welfare are differentiated to accommodate the unique and varied needs of the young people at SJV...where learning hymns, prayer reading and singing are restricted by some communication barriers, SJV express themselves successfully through Liturgical Dance to spread the Word of God through popular music.

This has resulted in the SJV Chaplaincy Team being especially invited to share their talents with other Chaplaincy Teams in the Dioceses at the Chaplaincy Celebration Day hosted by St Gabriel's RC High School, Bury, on more than one occasion.

Through the services of Father Patrick as school chaplain the CYP are enabled to engage and reflect on God's word in their lives. The CYP are able to witness and be express being part of God's family and loving their neighbour."

Julie Garfin



**St Joseph New Malden:** We received a handsome donation of £4,336 from the parish as their support for our work. We continue to thank God for their kind spirit and ask his blessing on Clergy and people of the Parish.



St John Vianney's Special School students made a Iconic Virgin Mary wall plaque and donated it to the Spiritan Centre.

Our collaboration with the Diocese of Salford in the ministry to the young people has been deepened with more opportunities for us to work together. We have also continued to enjoy support from the Diocese, through the youth coordinator, Lorraine Leonard.



During the course of the term, we were honoured with a visitation by the Provincial Council. The Provincial, Fr Kenneth Okoli, presided over the mass, after which we had a wonderful supper, put together by the volunteers, together. In their meeting with the community they encouraged and assured us of their support.



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