



Serving our Friends In Need

Ms Meera Ramachandran joined SSVP's Community Services Office (CSO) in 2017. CSO provides assistance and holistic care to FINs with complex needs.

Today, Meera oversees a team of five as the Head of Community Services, SSVP Ltd (an affiliate of the Society), with unwavering care and commitment to our FINs. Here's what her typical day looks like.

Morning Home Visit at Punggol:

Ting opens the door to Meera with a bright smile before rushing back to the bedroom to change her six-month old son Max's diaper. Thankfully, her two-year old daughter Ally, while sick was in good spirits playing with her toys in a mountain of freshly laundered clothes in their rental flat.

Earlier in July, Ting's sister was remanded in prison and Ting began caring for her two-year old niece. The family faced mounting

financial and emotional struggles and SSVP Ltd's Milk & Diapers (MaD) Programme volunteer befrienders referred them to CSO the same month.


The girls had been on the MaD Programme since 2023 while Max joined more recently. Ting's husband had to leave his job as a delivery man to support his wife and two young children.

Meera brings with her good news today. The Conference of Transfiguration will soon be providing them with added financial, and other assistance. Ting was overjoyed. She said, "I really try to save on expenses. If I have no choice, I use the CDC vouchers at Fairprice." They have both made plans to go back to work once the home situation stabilises.



Ting had tried to breastfeed both children from birth but was unable to sustain beyond three months. The family's milk and diapers cost about \$600 every month.

CSO, Conference of St Michael and other social service agencies, the couple relapsed to drug use and were again incarcerated.

Said Meera, "It is important that we focus on the best interests of the family and work towards a positive outcome. Our priority is the welfare of the young children. While it is disappointing that the siblings cannot remain together, we have tried to assure the parents during these prison visits that we will continue to work with the caregivers (an uncle and family friend) to provide the required support and assistance from our programmes till the parent's release." 



Meera (right) with Sufiah Binte Abdul Jalil and M Balachandran, interns from the Singapore University of Social Sciences after a visit to Ajay in prison.

Afternoon Prison Visit at Changi:

SSVP has journeyed with Ajay and his family since 2021, and have supported them through two home moves, multiple incarcerations and health episodes whilst their five-year-old son and one-year-old daughter grew up. Despite the efforts of

[All names of FINs have been changed.]

Essential Aid for Our Children

Milk & Diapers Programme Has Benefitted Over 1,300 Babies!


10 years ago, the Milk & Diapers (MaD) Programme was initiated with a mission to ensure that young children of low-income families are provided their basic essential needs of milk and diapers during their critical growing years from infancy to three years old.

As at October 2024, we have supported a staggering 1,308 children and continue to aid 450 children monthly.

Madam Susie and baby Adam (above), became MaD Programme beneficiaries in May this year. While pregnant, Madam Susie had continued working at Uniqlo. However, serious pregnancy-related medical complications led to Adam's premature birth and Madam Susie received multiple blood transfusions and was then admitted to the Intensive Care Unit after delivery. She was unable

to breastfeed and continues to need medical care and is now Adam's primary caregiver at home.

Adam's father became the sole breadwinner and the family faced escalating medical and daily expenses. Madam Susie shared: "At first I was shy to ask for help. Taking care of my children is our responsibility but due to my situation and medical condition, the Programme help lightens our financial burden."

Madam Susie had recently started working part-time at Uniqlo, while balancing the care of Adam as well as her older daughter who suffers from epilepsy. "My family enjoys simple things; we go on long walks and appreciate our time together as a family," said Madam Susie, who is determined to not let hardship and adversity get her down. 



Do you hunger to help?

**Donate to
Toast to Tots 2024**

Did you know \$150 can provide one child with milk and diapers per month on SSVP Ltd's MaD Programme? We need your donation to raise \$800,000 this year so that we may continue to help over 400 children every month.

SSVP Ltd, an affiliate of the Society, is an Institution of a Public Character and donations of \$50 and above to Toast to Tots 2024 are eligible for tax-deduction. Donors will also receive exclusive merchandise or a selection of fine wines as a token of appreciation with the donation (while stocks last)!

To donate, go to <https://ssvpltd.org/toast-to-tots> or scan:



EduFriends Celebrates Our First Graduating Classes



Ryan, together with Ms Julia Chan, an EduFriends' volunteer befriender who extends friendship and assistance. Julia noted that Ryan was missing lessons and upon following up, realised the laptop had broken down and helped the family procure a preloved device.

Confident and articulate, Ryan is glad PSLE is finally over and spends his time drawing manga-inspired characters and playing soccer when not bickering with his three-year-old sister.

A year ago, Ryan who had previously never attended tuition before, enrolled in SSVP Ltd's EduFriends Programme. The English Online Enrichment comprises multiple sessions including a tuition session and weekly buddy sessions.

Vincentians Come Together As One



“As we celebrate our Feast Day and the good works that we have done together as a community of faith, let us also take some time to reflect on what has happened this past year. Have we been praying enough as a community, have we been caring enough as a community and have we been selflessly serving together as a community?”

- Fr Jerome Leon, during the Homily


On 27 September, the Society of St Vincent de Paul (SSVP) Singapore celebrated the Feast of St Vincent de Paul with Mass at St Stephen's Church, followed by dinner. Mass was led by SSVP National Spiritual Advisor Fr Jerome Leon SJ and con-celebrated by former

SSVP National Spiritual Advisor Fr Eugene Vaz, and Conference Spiritual Advisors including Fr John Lau, Fr Arun Bellarmin, Fr Dexter Chua, Fr Jean Nguyen, Fr Robertus Sarwiseso and Fr Luke Zhang. More than 400 Vincentians, including 60 “newbies” (above), took the Vincentian pledge together.




Ryan said, “It’s easy to understand the tutors, if I don’t understand something, they can help me. If I need help with my School’s English homework, I can also ask them for help.”

The young man rates that his English has since improved from “3 stars to 4.5 stars”. His confidence has also been boosted as he now communicates better with his friends. What’s more, his stronger command of English has helped him to better understand his Math and Science questions.

This year, 27 Primary 3 to 6 students graduated from our inaugural EduFriends Programme which has also been refined to better meet the needs of the students. There were also multiple events organised for the students, including a recent outing to the Zoo with the befrienders. Students and their families were also invited to a graduation party where they were presented with graduation certificates. 

[All names of FINs have been changed.]

The celebrations continued at Swatow Restaurant amidst a festive and lively atmosphere where over 350 Vincentians and SSVP staff took the opportunity to catch up with old friends and make news ones.

Said Ms Lucy Cher, SSVP National Council President during her address, “Through you, our Friends in Need experience the love of God. You give them hope in their difficult situations. I thank you for being the hands and feet of Jesus in our community.” 



Above from left to right: Ms Lucy Cher, SSVP National Council President, presented the long-service certificates and medals to Mr Vincent Pang (25 years), Ms Shirley Gan (25 years), Mr Ashley Rodrigues (50 years) and Mr Peter Chia (25 years).



“I think Jesus was reserving a slot for me at SSVP. If you are planning to volunteer your time somewhere, you might as well volunteer with Jesus!”

- Mr Alton Foo, 31 years old, newly-pledged SSVP Youth (pictured on the left with Fr Jerome Leon, SSVP Youth members and friends).

Loving Our Friends in Need

Conferences of St Anthony and Our Lady Star of The Sea

To start the school semester on a high note, the Conferences of St Anthony and Our Lady Star of The Sea invited their Friends in Need (FINs) for a Children's Day celebration on 22 June (below). Attended by almost 30 children with their families, they enjoyed games and activities organised by student volunteers from the Singapore University of Social Sciences' Public Safety and Security Interest Group. The students also prepared more than 30 goodie bags and presents including Oreo and Chips Ahoy cookies, Milo, Ribena and cereal.



"We wanted to create an unforgettable and heartwarming day for the children so that they have joyful and lasting memories to commemorate the start of the school semester," said Mr Presanth, an SUSS student volunteer.

Conference of the Holy Family

Over the weekend of 27 – 28 July, Vincentians from the Conference of the Holy Family and L8 students from the Church of the

Holy Family welcomed our FINs at the Vinnies SSVP thrift shop (above).

In May, as part of their Service Project in support of SSVP, the L8 students raised funds by selling crafted rosaries, candle holders, stickers etc to gift our FINs with SSVP thrift Shop vouchers.



Popular items picked included household appliances and apparel. Our FINs enjoyed their shopping experience at Vinnies and had purposefully set aside vouchers to utilise at later dates for better bargains! Talk about intentional shopping with a goal in mind!

Conference of Christ the King

More than 30 Vincentians from the Conference of Christ the King celebrated National Day with over 60 migrant brothers hailing from Bangladesh, India and China, including those working at the Catholic Hub. Working together with the **Archdiocesan**



Commission for the Pastoral Care of Migrants & Itinerant People (ACMI), our special guests enjoyed a delicious Indian buffet spread of briyani, mutton curry, fish and chicken. They were also entertained by a live band and played various games including scavenger hunt, dance competition and traditional chaptch at Caritas Agape Village. Vincentians chatted and danced with our guests and even formed a human train circling the hall to the tune of "Country Roads".

"We really enjoyed it, especially playing chaptch," said Hossain Amd Molbul from Bangladesh. "We like many things about Singapore. Singaporeans take care of their workers and we feel safe here," he added.

St Vincent Home

On 1 October, there was a double celebration at St Vincent Home (below) as it reopened after four months of renovations and commemorated its 45th



Anniversary. Our beloved senior residents were all smiles as the extensive refurbishment ensured more space for their communal activities while ensuring more personal space and privacy.


Ms Denise Phua, Mayor of Central Singapore District and Member of

Parliament for Jalan Besar GRC, graced the event and Reverend Fr Valerian Cheong conducted a blessing of the Home. St Vincent Home is a partnership between Catholic Welfare Services and the Society.

Conference of St Stephen

On 15 November, more than 30 staff volunteers from **Roche Singapore Technical Operations Pte Ltd** with their collaborators, **ielectric Engineering Pte Ltd** and **Loh & Loh Construction Pte Ltd**, transformed three homes located in Circuit Road and Paya Lebar as part of a joint community initiative with **Conference of St Stephen**. This is Roche's third refurbishment project for SSVP's FINs.

"We cleaned, painted and provided simple furniture to "refresh" the homes of three FIN families. It is really satisfying to see the outcome of the hard work put in. We are happy to have made a difference in their lives," said Mr Low Thiam Huat (Roche Singapore Technical Operations Pte Ltd), Mr Khalid Faiz Mohamed (ielectric Engineering Pte Ltd) and Mr Nixon Loh (Loh & Loh Construction Pte Ltd) who were presented a Certificate of Appreciation as a token of our gratitude by Ms Lucy Cher, SSVP National President.

This year's refurbishment is even more extensive than last year's, especially for one of the homes which houses 12 members of a multi-generational family in a 3-room flat. 



The refurbishment of the flats included electrical and repair works, painting, replacement of fixtures like lights as well as installation of new furniture.



"We are very happy because you have brightened up our home. We feel like it's a new home and you are like angels who have come to our house and did a very good job. We will never forget it."

- Mr and Mrs Peter Bose, together with the volunteers.




Walking Together As One Community

SSVP Camino

For the first time, the Society's annual Day of Recollection was in the form of a Camino (also known as the Way of St James). On 19 October, we were blessed with wonderful weather at Changi Beach as more than 150 Vincentians were 'flagged off' at 8am. Vincentians took on three different routes of varying difficulty and were provided with accompanying scripture readings to guide their time of reflection and prayer.




After the mindful and invigorating walk at Changi, Vincentians headed to St Patrick's School. In small groups, they had meaningful conversations (right) which was followed by a session of reflection with Fr Eugene Vaz and then Mass. It was a morning of much physical and spiritual "heavy lifting" after which Vincentians enjoyed a time of fellowship together over lunch. 



As you walk you will come to realise that you are not walking alone. You not only have other Vincentians with you but also the Lord God Himself. God is always walking with his people.
- Fr Eugene Vaz

Walk with Caritas Family

The Society would like to thank all the Vincentians, FINs, volunteers, benefactors who supported the Society at the Walk with Caritas Family event organised by Caritas Singapore. In addition to \$8,510 raised, we were overwhelmed by all the love and support of the Catholic community who dropped by the SSVP booth and made purchases such as beanie bears, water bottles, sunglasses and bags. 



Meet SSVV Youth Co-ordinator Rebecca David

Rebecca is a familiar SSVV face, having been a Vincentian since 2016 with the Conference of Divine Mercy (CDM). Part of the “OG” SSVV Youth team when it was set-up in 2019, she recently took the mantle to lead in July.

Q: What prompted you to join SSVV?

My sister and I were looking for a ministry to join and probably it was God’s grace that CDM was recruiting for new SSVV members that weekend. At that time, even though there were few young people, they were very welcoming and encouraged me to help in my own little way.

Q: How has SSVV touched your life?

One thing I’ve grown in over the years in SSVV is gratefulness. When I’ve seen the lives of others, and when I see my own, my heart is filled with gratefulness. Even with the littlest of things, I see people feeling blessed. They’ve taught

me also to be grateful in the good and bad. Especially in the bad, I’ve grown to appreciate and also treasure my life and to use these instances to share my life with my brothers and sisters.

Q: Why do you think the young and young adults (14-35 years old) join SSVV Youth?

Serving is putting our faith into action! Our youth want to do something for others. When the youth see the impact they can make in someone else’s lives, the whole experience is priceless. And this keeps them going.

Seeing Christ in the poor touches us and changes our whole mindset. Just like how the Samaritan woman who met Jesus at the well, our lives are transformed when we meet Jesus. Once we have tasted the living water of Christ, we keep wanting to go back for more and to share Christ with others as well.

Similarly, as our youth meet Christ in the poor, they too will bring their family and friends along with them.



Rebecca David (above on the right with her fellow Vincentian and sister Rachael David) and at the recent SSVV Youth Camp 2024 (below).

Q: Share one common fallacy about being a Vincentian?

People always think they need to have a lot of time or they need to know a lot to help others. But that’s not true!! All Jesus needs is your willing heart.

Q: What upcoming plans does the SSVV Youth Team have?

We’re planning more collaborations with Conferences and also trying to “grow” more youth in the conferences as well!

We have exciting projects coming up, so stay tuned to our padlet for updates!

Check out SSVV Youth on Instagram @ssvpyouthsg or on Padlet at <https://bit.ly/ssvpyouthsgcal> to join and to find out more on upcoming activities! 