

# Twin Talk



St Vincent  
de Paul Society

England and Wales

Turning Concern into Action

## Edition 7: (Quarter 4, 2024 - 2025)

Welcome to the Quarter 4 (24-25) edition of Twin Talk. We are thankful to all members for their continuous Twinning support. Additionally, thank you to our Central Council Twinning Officers & Country Ambassadors for their commitment to Twinning.

## India

### Sponsoring Students

A key priority for SVP India this year is to increase their support of students. Students are supported at 3 levels by the Conference, who work closely with the student and their family.

#### **1. Primary & Secondary Schooling- The Vidya Jyothi Scheme (VJS)**

VJS means “Knowledge & Light”. Conferences find children and families most in need and use a range of criteria due to the high demand for support.

Each student receives £15 from the Conference, which can be used for school fees, uniforms, books, stationary, transport, and food. Those in more dire situations often receive additional Conference support.

Evidence shows that education is the key to escaping poverty and opening the doors to greater opportunities.

### How can you help?

By donating just £15 to the [India Fund](#), you would be supporting 1 student for the year.



*I like going to school and playing with friends. When I grow up I want to become a policeman.*

*- Nitesh, 7*

*Vidya Jyothi Scheme for school children*





## 2. Technical Vocational Training Scheme (TVTS)

Due to the slightly cheaper costs, students in specialised fields such as nursing, teaching, plumbing, and electrical engineering, are increasingly seeking vocational training courses.

### How can you help?

By donating £70 to the [India Fund](#), you would be supporting a student with the costs of fees, books, stationary, living expenses, and other educational costs.

## 3. The Higher Education Scheme (HES)

This scheme supports undergraduate university students. Due to the high university costs, SVP Conferences have a strict criteria in selecting students to support.

Selection criteria includes; where the student lives (rural or urban), gender (with intent to support more girls & women), household situation (income, single parent, number of siblings), and other support (if they are already receiving financial support from another organisation or the parish towards their education).

### How can you help?

By donating £120 to the [India Fund](#), you would be supporting a student through University for 1 year. Courses typically last 4 years.



To donate or to find out more information, please visit our [Give the Gift of Education webpage](#) or download our [Student Support Leaflet](#).

## Twin-Twin Communications

For communications support, please let us know at [twinning@svp.org.uk](mailto:twinning@svp.org.uk). We will then be able to put you in touch with the relevant Central Council Communications Officer.



## **Conference Easter activities**

Throughout the Easter period, many Conferences in India hand out baskets of groceries, vegetables, and essential items to local families. This is often a time of SVP appeals within Church and parishioners generously donate to support the Conference activity.

As Stanley Michaels, SVP India Project Officer, shared:

“When we [SVP members] eat a good meal, our adopted families eat a good meal. Conferences buy the same ingredients for their adopted families, as we would for their own families, to celebrate Easter. This is our Conference pledge”.

## **Easter wishes**

Brother T. Balaswamy, President of Eluru Central Council, shared the following message and below image:

“Wishing you a joyful and blessed Easter! Thank you for your continued generosity, which makes our SSVP Mission possible. We hope you have a wonderful holiday filled with joy, love, and peace. Thank you for your unwavering support, which helps us make a difference in the lives of our adopted families in under our CC of Eluru.

As we celebrate Easter and the promise of new life, we want to express our deepest gratitude for your timely assistance through Twinning, Special Grants, Scholarships and Projects. Your support is the driving force behind our work, allowing us to our underprivileged and downtrodden people in our Conferences especially adopted families through Central Council of Eluru, Andhra Pradesh, India. On behalf of all our beneficiaries and we wish you a blessed and meaningful Easter.”





## India Small Projects

Small Projects are managed at Conference level in India and provide direct support to individuals or a family in the local community, with the goal of supporting them to become self-sufficient.

### The impact of Small Projects

As a direct result of an England & Wales Conference sponsoring a Goat Farming Project, the Conference in India was able to purchase goats for 11 underprivileged families.

As a result, the families can make an income from the goats through selling the milk, fur and the resulting manure to farmers.

Incomes are often used to cover basic needs, pay school fees for children and cover essential need like medications.

Thank you to the sponsoring Conference- St James The Less & St Helen-Colchester.



Pictures of some of the beneficiaries receiving their goats.



## Getting involved

There are presently 25 projects in need of funding, ranging from £790 - £975. Conferences can choose to pay the full project request at once or spread across 3 years.

Project types include petty business, milking buffaloes and cows, goats, sewing machines & driver training.

To support a small project, or for more information, please contact John Wild at [wildjohn300@gmail.com](mailto:wildjohn300@gmail.com)



## Grenada

### New president

We are pleased to announce that Sherma Charles (previously Vice President) has now been appointed the new President of SVP Grenada, Carriacou and Petite Martinique.

Sherma was instrumental in planning and implementing the post-Hurricane projects to support affected children psychologically.

Thank you to Mary Charles for her many years of service as the President, and we are pleased she will be staying on as part of the SVP Grenada team. We look forward to maintaining our partnership.



Sherma (far-right) pictured with the Minnie Vinnies after service.

### Youth Development Projects

These projects aim to empower young people through community based youth workshops, school-based youth interventions, and a summer school programme (Summer 2025).

All of the projects have an end goal of encouraging students to complete their education, equip them with skills to excel in society, and to reduce poverty.

Thanks to your Twinning contributions, the two projects are running and making a positive impact in the community, starting with the youth.

### The Youth Workshop

60 young participants from different communities participated in the workshop. Conferences identified most at risk youth and referred them to the workshop. The workshops are on-going.

Youth are taught conflict-resolution skills, lessons in emotional intelligence and cyber safety skills.



An image of the youth participating in the Community Youth Workshop.



## **The School Intervention Program**

This programme targets high-risk students, prone to delinquent behaviour, truancy, and in need of additional support in school and at home. As a result, this programme involves parents, and teaches them ways to reinforce positive behavioural changes.

The programme instils a sense of purpose and pride in the students' lives, and encourages a positive approach to their school, home and community lives.

Image to the right: The School Intervention Workshop with students and their parents.



## **The Summer School Programme**

This summer school is intended to empower children during the school holidays, by teaching them various practical and life skills.

The programme will run in the summer holidays of 2025.

## **The Granny Scheme (GRANs)**

The GRANs scheme continues to support 11 GRANs with a £15 weekly donation used for accommodation, food, and medicine. Additional GRANs support includes SVP Members providing friendship and spiritual connection.

Please [donate however much you wish here](#). For cheque donations, please write GRANs on the reverse and send to the Finance Team or your CC Twinning Officer.

## **Twin-Twin Communications**

For any issues communicating with your twin in Grenada, please contact [twinning@svp.org.uk](mailto:twinning@svp.org.uk) for support.



## Guyana

### New President

SVP Guyana has a new President, Susan English, from Our Lady of the Mount. Sister Susan's main focus during her tenure is the re-invigoration of projects.



Pictured is the newly elected and re-elected Guyana Superior Council (Susan English is in the middle and Duane Lopez, Treasurer & Twinning Lead, is to her right)

### Care Home Repairs

The Thomas Street Homestead Care Home has recently undergone some maintenance work, thanks to the local Sacred Heart Conference in Guyana and SVP E&W Twinning donations.

For the first time, the home has had Internet installed, steps to buildings have been repaired, and the communal spaces have been painted.



An image showing completed works at the Care Home.

### Surprise visit from SVP India

In March, Brother Randolph from St. Teresa's Conference in India visited SVP Guyana. The two partner countries were able to share knowledge and experiences on Conference works. This is another wonderful example of how the Vincentian Family is truly global.



Brother Randolph pictured in grey, with SVP Guyana Members.



## Romania

### The Don Bosco Appeal Update

Thanks to your donations, we have raised enough funds to keep the doors of the Don Bosco project open until the end of the school year (end of June).

The Don Bosco project is a vital after-school club for 30 Ukrainian refugee children. The children receive a hot meal, socialise with other children – Romanian and Ukrainian, and receive homework support with the support of a Romanian teacher.



### Easter Celebrations

To celebrate Easter, the Conferences work to deliver food hampers to families in need. “Descent of the Holy Spirit” conference in Adjueni delivered 150 packages to local families (image of bags to the right).

Ana Dobos said “24 Vincentians are close to people in need all of the year... Great perseverance in doing good”.

St Teresa’s in Iasi distributed 460 packages to those in the nearby hospital (images below).

Ana Dobos, SVP Romania National President, posted “After the celebration of the Liturgy, the distribution of 460 packages bought a glimmer of hope to the sick, that they will not be forgotten and that Gove loves them”.







## South Sudan

### **New President**

After the April 2025 elections, Brother Jino Weni Anthony was appointed as the new National President for SVP South Sudan.

Jino advised his focus will be on improving twin-twin communications, increasing youth involvement in the society and increasing the overall number of active Conferences in South Sudan.

We are looking forward to working with Brother Jino.

### **Political situation**

We are saddened to share there have recently been increased tensions and violence between the two main political groups in South Sudan, affecting many civilians. Many feel that the always fragile peace agreement, has now collapsed.

A curfew was imposed at the end of February and although it is now lifted, our counterparts in the country have reported insecurity and security concerns amongst the population

We will continue to keep all affected by the recent tensions in our prayers.

### **Increase in the annual twinning financial commitment**

Due to huge inflation across food and essential items, the financial commitment for twins in South Sudan has increased from £150 to £200 annually. Inflation has also been affecting the costs of running essential projects, for example, it previously cost about £50 to feed one child per year and now it costs around £135 annually.

Conferences twinned with South Sudan have been advised of this increase. If you have any questions about this, please get in touch.



Pictured is Brother Emmanuel, the outgoing Interim President, handing over to Brother Jino (right).



Image from BBC article on 10<sup>th</sup> March 2025



## Projects Update

### The St Vincent School

The completed St Vincent School in Lologo continues to see increased numbers of enrolment. Following a mandated closure in February due to extreme heat, the school is now fully open and operating again.

The school is also equipped with a modern library, with students recently pictured enjoying the space (image to the right).



### Infant Feeding

Thanks to your support, the Infant Feeding project continues to run successfully in Nyarjwa (near the Healthcare Clinic), Rafa (a poor rural area) and Lologo (at the main SVP site), with around 700 children benefiting weekly.

### The Poultry Project

One of the new on-going projects is a poultry project. SVP South Sudan adopted chicks, raised them and are now distributing the resulting eggs for an income to maintain the project costs, and help fund other key costs. SVP South Sudan are proud to be the leaders of egg-distribution in Juba.



## An update on the South Sudan appeal

Thank you to all supporters of the annual South Sudan Appeal. Your kindness and generosity raised an estimated £101,000! This figure will allow SVP South Sudan to continue funding life-saving projects, such as those above, throughout April 2025 - March 2026. Thank you!



## Sudan

As news of suffering in Sudan continues, we continue to keep all affected in our prayers.

### Stopping twinning payments and donations

Due to the ongoing brutal conflict in Sudan, SVP England & Wales (E&W) has not been able to send funding to SVP Sudan, in line with International Regulations and rules regarding humanitarian funding in conflict zones. Some donors have kindly continued to make contributions in recognition of the desperate needs that are accumulating in Sudan. The decision has now been made by the National Twinning Committee to ask Conferences in England & Wales to stop payments for their Sudan Twin. All Conferences have been contacted and conference standing orders cancelled.

Alongside this, we are asking that all SVP Members **cancel any standing orders** set up towards Sudan projects or the Sudan Appeal.

Whilst you are unable to financially support Sudan, there are various ways to continue supporting Twinning and include but are not limited to; diverting donations to the South Sudan Appeal, twinning with another country, supporting a Small Project, donating to the India Fund, and supporting other project appeals.

For more information, please read: [FAQs Doc on Sudan Payments](#)

## The Sudan Support Fund

The Sudan Support Fund continues to provide financial support to Sudanese refugees and asylum seekers living in England & Wales.

Since December 2024, the Fund has supported 26 individuals and families. With support requests ranging from food vouchers, clothing, nappies for babies, toiletry kits, and transport fares to school, interviews, and English lessons.

“Thank you so much for the speedy response to our recent request. It has made one young man very happy!”

SVP Member response, following a successful application for funding to support a young Sudanese boy with household goods, clothes and shoes.

Please contact [twinning@svp.org.uk](mailto:twinning@svp.org.uk) to request an application form or to find out more.



## Finance – Standing Orders

To change from cheque payments to standing order, and join the 40% of Conferences who have already done so, please contact your CC Twinning Officer or email [twinningfinance@svp.org.uk](mailto:twinningfinance@svp.org.uk) to request a form.

### **Standing orders benefit both yourself and the overseas Conference.**

Standing orders allow for ease of transfer by the Conference, without the need to visit the bank/post office or remembering to make the transfer. They also streamline processes for your Twinning Officer, the Finance team and our overseas teams are aware of when funding will be available.

You can download a copy of the part completed Standing Order form [here](#).

Simply fill in the remaining information (such as Conference code and Twin code), have the document signed by two signatories, and then return to [twinningfinance@svp.org.uk](mailto:twinningfinance@svp.org.uk). You can choose whether your Conference would like to pay quarterly or annually.

We ask that you set up a separate standing order for each Twin. This way, if changes need to be made to one of your standing orders (such as changing an amount or ending the relationship) we can action this without impacting any other Twin's standing orders.

Please contact [twinningfinance@svp.org.uk](mailto:twinningfinance@svp.org.uk) or your CC Twinning Officer for support.



**NatWest**

### **Please remember to pay your Twinning Commitment or update your CC Twinning Officer or the Twinning team of any changes.**

In the year 2024/2025, **24% of conference twinning commitments were not paid.**

This results in the the overseas Conferences missing out. It is crucial that Conferences pay their twinning commitment within the year and a standing order can help ensure this happens. If you have any questions or want to make any changes to your twinning arrangements, please contact your CC Twinning Officer or [twinning@svp.org.uk](mailto:twinning@svp.org.uk).



## Thank you to Dermot!

The Twinning Team would like to offer a heartfelt thank you to Dermot McGilloway, who has now come to the end of his term as National Twinning Committee Chair.

Dermot has been integral in guiding Twinning through a great period of change. We thank him for his tireless support and clear passion for Twinning. Dermot, who is a member of staff with SVP Ireland, will continue to be a part of the Vincentian family.



We are pleased to welcome Anita Motha as the new chair of the National Twinning Committee.

Anita has served on the NTC for 2 years and is looking forward to supporting the committee in the role of chair. Drawing on her experience of international development, faith-based charities and board roles, she brings strategic insight and a deep understanding of mission-driven organisations to the role.

Anita shared: "The twinning programme gives us the opportunity to encounter communities and the situations they face around the world through shared Vincentian values. I am excited to see our global partnerships be strengthened by the continued prayers and support of twinned conferences."



## Would you or your Conference like to Twin?

If your Conference, or yourself as an individual, would like to twin with an overseas Conference, please contact your Central Council Twinning Officer or email [twinning@svp.org.uk](mailto:twinning@svp.org.uk).



The Twinning Team would like to thank you for your continued commitment and support.

## Useful contacts

### General enquiries:

[Twinning@svp.org.uk](mailto:Twinning@svp.org.uk)

### Finance enquiries:

[TwinningFinance@svp.org.uk](mailto:TwinningFinance@svp.org.uk)

01274 513045

### Central Council Twinning Officer

If you are unsure who your CC Twinning Officer is, please contact the general enquiries inbox to find out.

## Get in touch

Thank you, we hope you enjoyed this edition of Twin Talk.

If you have any feedback for improving the newsletter, or you would like something to be featured in the next edition, please email

[Twinning@svp.org.uk](mailto:Twinning@svp.org.uk).