



Mini Vinnies Winter Helpers

Leader's guide

Aim of the session:

To help children understand how small acts of service can make a big difference in their community, inspired by the St Alban's Mini Vinnies clothing collection.

Time: 20–30 minutes

Materials Needed:

For the Sorting Challenge, you will need cards or pictures representing clothing items:

- Coats
- Hats
- Scarves
- Gloves
- Shoes
- Jumpers/tops
- Boxes or containers to “pack” items
- Labels or sticky notes for boxes
- Markers, pens, or pencils
- Paper for group notes or delivery plans
- Optional: small cards for messages to go with the items

For the Creative Extension (Optional):

- Paper or card stock
- Colouring pencils, markers, or crayons
- Stickers or other decorations

Story Sharing (2–3 mins)

- Share the story of the Mini Vinnies at St Alban's Catholic Primary School: how they noticed the cold winter and wanted to help, organised a clothing collection, and sorted and packed hundreds of items for families in need. Emphasise teamwork, planning, and caring for others.

The cold winter weather prompted the Mini Vinnies at St Alban's Catholic Primary School to discuss what they could do to help their community and those in need. The Mini Vinnies decided to organise a clothing collection for the St Vincent's Community Shop. Thanks to the community's generosity, the Mini Vinnies received hundreds of items, including warm coats and shoes. The Mini Vinnies sorted and packed the clothes which were then sent to the shop to be sold or given to families who really needed them.

Sorting Challenge (10–12 mins)

- Divide the children into small groups. Give each group a mix of “clothing items” (these could be cards or pictures representing coats, shoes, hats, scarves, gloves, etc.).
- Challenge each group to “sort and pack” the items into boxes for different needs, e.g.: Families with young children, teenagers and adults.
- Encourage creativity: they could label boxes, make a “delivery plan,” or design a small note to include with the items.



Sharing & Reflection (5 mins)

- Each group presents their sorting plan and explains why they organised the items that way.

Discuss:

- How does working together make helping easier?
- How do you think the families felt when they received the clothes?
- What other ways could we help people in winter?

Connection to “To the Heights” Theme

- Link the activity to the Mini Vinnies’ mission this year: noticing a need, taking action, and helping the community rise “To the Heights” by showing love and care.

Optional Creative Extension

- Children can design a small “Winter Kindness” poster or card to go with the clothing, showing what caring for others looks like.

Call to action: Could your Mini Vinnies organise a clothing drive at school? Why not check out where your closest SVP charity shop is to organise donations.

Closing Prayer (2–3 mins)

Lord Jesus, thank You for showing us how to care for others. Help us to be kind and helpful every day, and to share love with everyone we meet. Amen.

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