



MANY STORIES ONE LIGHT



This resource has been produced by the St Vincent de Paul Society. The St Vincent de Paul Society (SVP) is a Catholic international volunteer organisation whose members work with anyone in need in their local community – the homeless, the elderly, prisoners, struggling families, people who are sick and lonely. Young people are an important part of the Vincentian family. We are all called to be like Jesus by helping people, becoming their friend and working with others to make a difference. Find out more and view our school resources by visiting svp.org.uk/youth-svp

Leaders Guide

Suggested Scripture and Reflections

God did not create one kind of person, one type of work, or one way of being. He created a human family where each of us is called to reflect His love and become a light for others.

Many Stories, One Light celebrates the diversity of people, experiences, gifts, and vocations that make up our communities, united by a shared commitment to putting faith into action. Through four themes – Belong, Grow, Serve, and Shine – the SVP invites people of all ages to journey together. We are called to belong to communities rooted in friendship and faith, grow in compassion and confidence, serve with purpose through acts of love and justice, and shine as signs of hope in the world around us. These resources support young people to explore the Vincentian mission and discover how their unique story can help bring Christ's light into the world. Together, though our stories may be different, we share one light.

Matthew 5:14-16

"You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven."*

Suggested Reflection

When Jesus says, "You are the light of the world," he isn't talking to a select group of people who have it all together.... He's speaking to everyone.

Not because we're perfect, and not because we always know what we're doing, but because God has a way of working through ordinary lives. You notice it when someone quietly helps another person without making a fuss. Or when someone brings calm to a situation that felt tense. Or when a person simply shows up for a friend who needs them.

In the Vincentian tradition, a way of living the Gospel inspired by St Vincent de Paul, we believe that every person has God-given dignity and that faith is something we put into action. It means noticing people who might otherwise be overlooked, seeing Christ in them, and responding with love in a way that is practical and real. In that same tradition, holiness has never really been about standing out or being seen. It's about noticing people properly and allowing God's love to reach them through us.

The challenge for us this year is simple:

Can we notice the light in people whose stories are different from our own?

Can we allow our own light to shine for others?

Light

Philippians 2:14-16

"Shine among them like stars in the sky."

Suggested Reflection

When Paul writes, "Shine among them like stars in the sky," he isn't talking about being famous or standing above everyone else. He's reminding us that, in a world that can sometimes feel dark, each of us has something unique to offer. God has created every person differently, with their own gifts, experiences and story. We are not called to be the same; we are called to reflect God's light in our own way.

In the SVP, we believe that faith becomes visible through the way we treat others. We shine when we choose kindness, offer friendship, stand up for what is right, and notice those who might otherwise be overlooked. Like stars in the night sky, our individual lights may seem small on their own, but together they can bring hope, guidance and warmth to those around us.

The challenge for us this year is simple:

Can we recognise the unique light that God has placed within us?

Can we notice and celebrate the light we see in others?

How can we use our gifts to bring Christ's light into our communities?



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Belong

Ephesians 2:19

"You are no longer strangers and aliens, but citizens with the saints and members of the household of God."

Suggested Reflection

God's vision for humanity has always been one of belonging. He does not create outsiders or people who are forgotten; He calls each of us into His family. Whatever our background, experiences or circumstances, we have a place in God's story. We are not defined by our differences, but united by the love of the God who created us.

In the SVP, we try to reflect this by creating communities where people are known, valued and welcomed. Belonging is more than simply being included – it means being seen, listened to and recognised as someone with dignity and something to offer. Through friendship, faith and service, we can help others discover that they are not alone, but part of a community where they are truly valued.

The challenge for us this year is simple:

Who around us might be feeling like they don't belong?

How can we make our communities places where everyone feels welcomed?

How can we help others discover their place in God's family?



Grow

Luke 8:16-18

"No one after lighting a lamp hides it under a jar, or puts it under a bed, but puts it on a lampstand, so that those who enter may see the light."

Suggested Reflection

God gives each of us gifts, talents and experiences that are meant to be shared. A light is not lit to be hidden away; it is given so that it can brighten the lives of others. Sometimes we can doubt what we have to offer or think our contribution is too small, but God does not ask us to have all the answers. He asks us to use what we have, wherever we are, to bring His love into the world.

In the SVP, we see this through the many ways people live out their faith through service. It might be visiting someone who is lonely, supporting a family who is struggling, organising a community activity, fundraising to help others, or simply taking time to listen and build a genuine friendship with someone who feels forgotten. These actions may seem small, but they can become moments where Christ's light is made visible. When we share our gifts, we help bring hope to the people and communities around us.

The challenge for us this year is simple:

What gifts and talents has God given me that I can use in service of others?

How can I make sure my light is not hidden, but shared with those who need it?

How can I help others recognise and share the light they carry?



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Serve

Matthew 25:35-40

‘For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.’ Then the righteous will answer him, ‘Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food, or thirsty and gave you something to drink? And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you, or naked and gave you clothing? And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?’ And the king will answer them, ‘Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.’

Suggested Reflection

Jesus reminds us that God’s light is often found in the places we least expect. When we serve someone who is hungry, lonely, struggling or in need, we are not just offering help – we are sharing Christ’s light. Service becomes a way of showing God’s love in practical ways, bringing hope and reminding people that they are seen, valued and never forgotten.

In the SVP, service is at the heart of our mission. We are called to notice where there is need and respond with compassion, whether that is visiting someone who feels isolated, supporting a person facing hardship, welcoming someone who feels like a stranger, or working together to strengthen our communities. Through these acts of service, we become signs of Christ’s light in the world, showing that every person matters and every story is important.

The challenge for us this year is simple:

Where is God calling me to bring His light through service?

How can I use my gifts to respond to the needs of others?

How can my actions help someone else experience hope, belonging and God’s love?

