

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**

FEBRUARY: St Brigid, St Josephine Bakhita & Bl Rosalie Rendu
The Reckless Giver, The Dignity Defender & The Post-it Note Warrior

1 February — St Brigid
8 February — St Josephine Bakhita
9 February — Blessed Rosalie Rendu

Love is a Verb

February. The month when shops suddenly turn pink. Hearts appear everywhere. Cards get sent. Flowers become mysteriously expensive and apparently love comes in a box of chocolates which no one would complain about.

But Jesus had a slightly bigger idea about love. For Jesus, love wasn't just something you **felt**. It was something you **did**.

And February gives us three brilliant women who show us what that might actually look like.

St Brigid of Kildare lived in Ireland around 1,500 years ago and the stories about her generosity are slightly bonkers.

Someone needs food? Brigid gives it. Someone needs clothes? Brigid finds them.

Someone needs something that possibly wasn't even hers to give away? Well… **Brigid probably gives that too.**

She seems to have been wonderfully bad at asking: *"What's the least I can get away with doing?"*

Instead, Brigid asks: **"What have I got that somebody else needs?"**

And maybe that's generosity. Not having loads of stuff. Just realising that what we have doesn't always have to be just for us.

St Josephine Bakhita's story is harder. As a child in Sudan, she was kidnapped, enslaved and sold several times.

People treated her as if she were something to own. They even took away her real name.

Eventually Bakhita became free and later became a religious sister.

And her story reminds us of something the world still sometimes gets badly wrong:

Nobody is a thing. Nobody is a problem to get rid of. Nobody is worth less than anybody else.

We put labels on people all the time. Refugee. Homeless. Poor. Troublemaker. Weird.

But before any of those words comes a much more important one: **Person.**

Someone with a name. Someone with a story. Someone who matters. Jospehine says: **Actually see them.**

And then there's **Blessed Rosalie Rendu**, our very own SVP **Post-it Note Warrior!**

A Daughter of Charity, Rosalie lived among the poorest people in Paris 200 years ago. She didn't admire charity from a distance. **She got stuck in.**

She walked the streets, listened to people's struggles and wrote things down. Names, needs, promises. A messy notebook full of people's lives that often became somebody else's hope. Rosalie understood something important: **Love pays attention twice.** Once when someone is talking, and again when they've gone.

She remembered. She followed up. **She came back.** And when the first young SVP members wanted to help, Rosalie showed them how. **Go and meet people. Learn their names. Listen to their stories. And don't forget them afterwards.**



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Reflection Questions

- Brigid didn't wait until she had more before she gave. Think about the time, skills, resources, connections or opportunities we already have. Where could one of those be put to better use for someone else?
- Bakhita reminds us how easily a person can disappear behind a label. Who in our community or wider world is easily overlooked, avoided or talked about rather than listened to? What could we actually do to change that?
- Rosalie listened, wrote things down and came back. What have we noticed, heard about or said we would do that could easily be forgotten? What is one practical next step we could take?

Optional personal challenge:
This week, where could you be more like Rosalie? Remember and follow up. That conversation, that promise, that person you meant to check on. Do it!