

NEWSLETTER

CONFERENCE OF ST FRANCIS XAVIER

NEWS UPDATE



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Message from the Parish Priest

Greetings Vincentians and friends in the Lord,

On the 65th Anniversary of the Church of St. Francis Xavier, Petaling Jaya, I am honoured to be asked to write this foreword for the 2026 edition of SFX SSVP's newsletter.

It is proper to begin with gratitude: we thank the Lord for inviting us to join Him in this mission which calls us to feed the poor, clothe the hungry, heal the sick and visit those incarcerated (Mt. 25:35-40). Let us always be mindful that this is the Father's desire which Jesus outlined from the start of his mission in Lk. 4:18-19. As such, the credit goes to God and we respond by doing what we can with the graces that have been lavished upon us.

Next, we pray for the grace of humility. For as the labourer deserves his wages, we expect no more than the daily bread that God gives us. This ensures that we do not let pride and entitlement determine our giving that should come without "counting the cost and heeding the wounds save that of knowing that we are doing His will" as St. Ignatius of Loyola reminds us in his Spiritual Exercises. Indeed, Vincentians must be the people of the beatitudes - poor in spirit, meek, peacemakers who thirst for what is socially just and right - even if it means persecution - for only then do we know that we are men and women for others (yet another Ignatian virtue).

Finally, let us beg the Lord for ourselves to be patient because everything works out in God's time and in accordance with His will, not ours. It is imperative that we plan and have timelines for our projects, but let us not despair when these are not met. "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways" (Is.55:8-9)

This brings us back to the fundamental Christian call to trust in the Lord as we surrender our life-mission to Him. We are 65 years old as a parish because God wills it, nothing more. And even as the mission increasingly gets more challenging in the light of fast-changing worldly events; even as evil seems to loom larger in our midst, we do not fear nor despair. For although we all wish that violence and injustice do not happen in our time; that God's justice would prevail sooner rather than later, in the end we need to heed the advice of a fellow Catholic in his famous work:



"I wish it (evil) need not have happened in my time," said Frodo. "So do I," said Gandalf, "and so do all who live to see such times. But that is not for them to decide. All we have to decide is what to do with the time that is given us." (J.R. Tolkien, The Lord of the Rings)

Truly, that is all we need to do - gratefully, humbly and patiently - our best and leave God to do the rest.

On behalf of our parish community, my heartiest thanks to all members of SSVP for your service of love. Congratulations on the publication of this newsletter and I assure you all of my prayers and good wishes, ad maiorem dei gloriam!

Fr. Alvin Ng, SJ

From Orphan to Engineer: A Journey of Hope

When I was a child, I never imagined that one day I would be working as a planning engineer in United Arab Emirates (UAE). My story began with loss. I was orphaned at a very young age when both of my parents passed away. Shortly thereafter I was placed in a welfare home. I moved from one welfare home to another and at age 12, I found myself at Rumah Pengajian Xavier (RPX).

Initially RPX was just another boarding place. But over time it became more than a shelter, it became a home. Within those walls, I formed close friendships with the other boys. Together we created many memories which stayed with us till today. Although we had left RPX more than 15 years ago and each have found different paths in lives, the brotherly bond we formed remain strong. I realised that family is not always defined by blood, but by the shared journey of life.

Among the many people who shaped my life during those formative years, one person holds a very special place in my heart, Uncle Francis, who was the administrator of RPX then. To us boys, he was a strict man. Discipline was something he insisted upon, and at times we feared his stern voice and high expectations. But as I grew older, I realised that beneath the toughness was the love and concern of a father preparing us for the world beyond the walls of RPX.



Today, I am happily married and working in UAE. Sometimes, I pause and reflect on the long road that brought me here. I offer my sincere gratitude to everyone who have helped transformed my life—mentors, volunteers, donors, and the members of the Society of St Vincent de Paul (SSVP) who gave their time, support, and love. I carry that kindness with me each day and I will strive to pay it forward.

-Helbert Palaniandy

A Father Figure When I Needed One Most



My childhood was spent in an estate in Batu Gajah. My single mother had little time to guide us as she had to work tirelessly to put food on the table. Whether we went to school or played truant was our choice. Those were days without structure nor direction.

When I was 13, the estate manager, Uncle Lawrence, was concerned about the way I was growing up without supervision or guidance. He spoke to his church friend, Uncle Dunstan, and through their assistance I was admitted into RPX.

My early days in RPX were far from happy. I could not understand a word of English, and suddenly I was in an environment with strict discipline and structure. The then administrator, Uncle Francis would lecture us about saving money. Every week we were given RM10 for canteen expenses, but we were strictly instructed not to spend more than RM2 a day. Uncle Francis would conduct spot checks to see if we had overspent. If we did, he would lecture us on financial discipline. He even told us to spend only RM1 a day and save the other RM1. As a child, I found those talks annoying. But on reflection now, I realise Uncle Francis was teaching us the concept of saving and investing—ideas that were foreign to me as a child.

After finishing Form 3, I had to leave RPX as my mother had fallen ill and needed me. To help feed the family, I went to work and eventually stopped schooling. More than a year passed. One day, out of the blue, Uncle Francis contacted me to enquire how I was preparing for my Form 5 examinations. I told him I had stopped schooling. Uncle Francis convinced me to enrol in Montfort Boys Town, where I could learn practical skills. At Montfort I studied hospitality and began building the foundation for my life ahead.

Today, I look back with deep gratitude. I am currently working as a medical executive in a pharmaceutical company in Ipoh. The financial discipline that Uncle Francis insisted on all those years ago has stayed with me. Because of those lessons, I saved diligently at every pay cheque and have since managed to acquire 2 properties. My mother has long left life in the estate. She now enjoys her retirement being cared for by the very son she once struggled to raise.

I will be getting married in April 2026. As I prepare to start my own family, the lessons I learned at RPX—especially those about discipline, responsibility, and financial wisdom—are lessons I hope to pass on to my own children.





-Logesvaran Balan



EMPOWERING THROUGH SERVICE: STUDENTS LEADING, COMMUNITIES RISING

SSVP has launched a meaningful initiative that empowers our college students to take an active role during its Service Sundays. This initiative aims to nurture leadership qualities, strengthen oral communication skills, and awaken in our students a deep spirit of service and giving back. At the same time, these sessions seek to inform and empower our Friends-in Need (FINs) equipping them with practical knowledge to take greater ownership of their health, education, and overall well-being.

The programme began on 3rd August 2025 with a lively 10-minute mini-Aerobics session led by Theva, a diploma student in Early Childhood Education. This energising start set a positive tone for future engagements. The topics covered so far are as follows:

Pupils	Topic	Conducted by
	<p>Health Awareness- NOVEMBER 2025</p> <p>a. Hypertension, causes, symptoms and preventive measures. b. Diabetes, debilitating impact and importance in strict adherence to medical advice for better blood glucose control and wound healing. c. Healthy diet to improve health span.</p>	<p>Risha (Diploma in Nursing), Sarmilaa (Diploma in Civil Engineering) and Salini (Degree in Business Management)</p>
	<p>Gratitude- DECEMBER 2025</p> <p>a. Expressed their heartfelt gratitude to their sponsors for the financial assistance, guidance. b. Unwavering support they have received in their journey towards higher education and a brighter future. c. Invited the community to share their blessings.</p>	<p>Roshini (Degree in Psychology) and Salini (Foundation in Sains)</p>
	<p>Education- DECEMBER 2025</p> <p>a. Monitor their children's schoolwork and create a conducive study environment at home. b. Encourage parents to send their children to pursue education beyond the SPM level in order to enhance their employability in an increasingly competitive job market.</p>	<p>Rangita (Diploma in Business Management)</p>
	<p>Legal Rights- MARCH 2026</p> <p>a. Rights to ask for reason if police officers ask you to step down or move away from your motorcycle. b. Knowing the law helps protect your rights. c. Importance of following traffic laws and have valid driving licence.</p>	<p>Shran (Diploma in Law Enforcement)</p>

Through this ongoing initiative, SSVP continues to build bridges between service and empowerment—shaping confident student leaders while enabling our FINs to rise with hope, knowledge, and dignity.

COMING HOME TO GIVE BACK

More than 15 years had passed since they last walked through the familiar gates of RPX. Time had carried them into adulthood - into jobs, responsibilities, and lives of their own - yet the memories of their childhood there remained vivid and close to their hearts.

When news spread about the fundraising dinner organized by SSVF, the former residents of RPX signed up, eager not only to contribute but to reconnect with the uncles and aunts who had shaped them. The SSVF members, many of whom had aged gracefully over the years, welcomed them like long-lost family.

As the dinner progressed, a familiar face caught their attention - Aunt Cecilia. Once a dedicated volunteer at RPX, she had spent countless afternoons teaching them mind mapping, a concept which seemed strange and complicated at first. Under her patient guidance, they had learned how to organize their thoughts, plan their studies, and approach problems creatively. Beyond academics, Aunt Cecilia had also encouraged them to dream boldly, to think critically, and to believe that their circumstances did not define their future. Seeing her again after so many years was an emotional moment.

Yohannes, now a confident young man, laughed as he shared a memory. "I still remember the Christmas when Aunt Cecilia bought me a set of ten toy cars," he said. "I treasured them so much." Smiling at the boys, Aunt Cecilia said "I first met the boys about 25 years ago when they were playful students. I used to nag them to study hard and to have a goal in life. Meeting them again as successful adults brought me such pride and joy."



Another former resident, Ganesh glanced across the hall at the current batch of young boys from RPX and said "They are living the moments we used to live." He paused before adding, "I'm happy to contribute to this fundraising effort. I have benefitted much from the Home. Now it's my turn to help others." Ganesh's words echoed the feelings of everyone present. That night was not just about raising funds. It was about gratitude, remembrance, and the powerful cycle of giving back. The ex-residents had returned not merely as guests, but as living testimonies of what love, guidance, and opportunity could accomplish. As the evening drew to a close, there was a renewed sense of connection between the past and the present. The Home which had once nurtured them; now, they stood ready to nurture it in return.



Merry Christmas

THE CHRISTMAS GIFT THAT COULDN'T BE WRAPPED

Michael Choo, age 83 lives a quiet solidarity life. With advanced age and reduced mobility, the daily upkeep of his flat had become an exhausting chore. Over time, the flat grew cluttered and dusty.

Recognising Michael's situation, SSVP decided to give him a special gift last Christmas. Instead of material presents, members organised a spring cleaning of his flat. Armed with brooms and cleaning cloths, the team swept, cleared, and organised the home. What seemed like a simple act became something much more meaningful—an act of love that allowed Michael to welcome Christmas in a clean and comfortable environment.

After the cleaning, the team treated Michael to lunch, sharing not just a meal but companionship and care.



FESTIVE CELEBRATIONS WITH OUR FRIENDS-IN-NEED (FINs)

A WARM WELCOME

Our Christmas and Chinese New Year celebrations were filled with warmth, creativity, and meaningful connections, especially with the active participation of FINs. These festive gatherings brought everyone together in the true spirit of unity and cultural appreciation.

During the Christmas celebration, the FINs enjoyed cake-decorating activities, where they showcased their creativity by designing unique festive cakes. The activity encouraged teamwork, laughter, and joyful interaction among everyone present.

As we welcomed Chinese New Year, the atmosphere transformed with vibrant red decorations symbolising prosperity and good fortune. Lantern-making was one of the highlights of the celebration. The FINs enthusiastically crafted traditional lanterns while learning about the cultural significance behind each design. This hands-on activity fostered an appreciation for traditions and encouraged artistic expression.

In addition to the fun-filled activities, meaningful talks and sharing sessions were conducted. The FINs shared their personal journeys with SSVp, including their struggles and triumphs. These sessions created deeper understanding, strengthened friendships, and promoted inclusivity within the community.

Overall, both celebrations were not only about festivities but also about building connections, embracing diversity, deepening understanding, and creating memorable experiences together.



CHRISTMAS

A MISSION OF LOVE AND PRESENCE

For the FINs who are homebound and unable to attend our Christmas Celebration at Loyola Hall on the 7 December 2025, SSVP members carried the celebration to them. With hearts full of compassion, they visited their homes to bring God's love, Christmas cheer, and the comforting reminder that they are not forgotten.

Bearing simple gifts, snacks, angpows and joyful carols, our members stepped into each home not merely as visitors, but as family in Christ. The true gift shared that day was not wrapped in paper—it was presence, prayer, and heartfelt fellowship.



MICHAEL CHOO

As promised, SSVP members returned to celebrate an early Christmas with him. They filled his home once again with warmth and festive cheer. After singing Christmas carols together, they brought him out for a light lunch at a nearby coffee shop in Puchong Perdana. The simple outing brought a change of environment and, more importantly, the joy of fellowship.



JOSE AND NOHELEN

Jose, who suffers from an acute autoimmune disease that has affected his mobility, welcomed us with deep emotion.

"We are so happy. This is the first time that members from the Church are celebrating Christmas and singing carols in our house."

What may have seemed like a simple gesture to us became a treasured and unforgettable moment for them. In their smiles and gratitude, we were reminded how powerful it is to bring Christ to those who cannot come to the Church.



SELLAMAH

An elderly lady with heart complications, Sellamah lifted her voice in praise, "Alleluia, Jesus sudah datang. Ini semua Jesus bagi saya." Her words reflected a simple yet profound faith—one that recognises God's love in every knock on the door, every prayer offered, and every song sung in His name.



SAMARITAN HOPE HOME (LADIES' SHELTER)



At the Samaritan Hope Home, the residents gathered in prayer and song. Sr. Fatima shared: "I'm happy that SSVP and the Divine Mercy Apostolate are able to bring prayers to this house." In that sacred space, Christmas became more than a celebration—it became a living testimony of hope, solidarity, and shared faith.

Through this outreach, SSVP hopes that Michael, Jose, Sellamah—and others who are elderly, sick, or homebound due to mobility challenges—will feel remembered, cherished, and loved. Christmas is not only about decorations or gatherings in large halls; it is about bringing the light of Christ into homes that may otherwise feel quiet or forgotten.

May our Christmas outreach continue to be a source of comfort and joy, as we celebrate the birth of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, and share His love with those most in need of companionship and care. By bringing Christmas to their doorsteps, we encountered Christ Himself—in the sick, the elderly, the lonely, and the vulnerable. And in serving them, our own hearts were filled with deeper gratitude, compassion, and joy.

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