

## **Media Release: St Saviour's College awarded Social Justice Award**

St Saviour's College was recently awarded the Social Justice Award for their "Walking Nuns" Collection initiative with the award presented by Bishop Ken, Bishop of Toowoomba.

Established in 2002, the Social Justice Award recognises the outstanding efforts of people in the Toowoomba Diocese in the field of Social Justice.

Organised by St Saviour's College Assistant Principal, Mrs Megan Schulze, with the support of College staff Helen Ryan and Ann Young, the "Walking Nuns" Collection initiative was a resounding success.

The event engaged Year 11 and 12 students in a community driven effort to support the Vinnie's Winter Appeal, paying homage to the Sisters of Mercy, who founded St Saviour's College over 150 years ago.

The Sisters of Mercy were known as the 'walking nuns' for their dedication to visiting the poor and sick in their homes.

Recognising that many people want to help but are constrained by time, the project involved collaborating with local businesses to gather donations of blankets, warm clothing, and food.

These donations were then collected by the Year 11 and 12 students and sorted by the Youth Ministry team before being donated to St Vincent de Paul.

By involving students and local businesses, the initiative not only addressed immediate needs but also fostered a sense of community and solidarity.

"I really wanted to give our students the opportunity to give back to the community through a series of community service initiatives. Often our students don't have the means themselves to donate to organisations or are too young to donate their time, so the idea of engaging businesses allowed us to meet the community need where businesses are keen to get involved and give back without the organisation and it allowed our girls to be the vehicle that made the donations happen, rather than trying to be the ones that had to donate," St Saviour's College Assistant Principal, Mrs Megan Schulze said.

"I was quite nervous about the public uptake and was thrilled when the Toowoomba community completely embraced the opportunity to help others, and we ended up with more than we had hoped for in the way of donations. It was more than our College community could have ever gathered and our girls loved being out there speaking with businesses and explaining where the items would go. It gave them a sense of helping others in a real practical way rather than tokenistic."

Given its success, St Saviour's College is excited to continue this initiative as an annual event, ensuring ongoing support and engagement in social justice efforts.

"I think all people want to be of service but don't know how to. By involving Year 11 and 12 students and collaborating with local businesses, our initiative created lasting relationships and ongoing community engagement to the benefit of more vulnerable members of our community. It was an initiative well worth organising and we will continue to do more into the future." Mrs Schulze said.

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For more information  
Stephanie Bauer, Marketing Communications Officer  
St Saviour's College  
07 4637 1600  
[stephanie.bauer@twb.catholic.edu.au](mailto:stephanie.bauer@twb.catholic.edu.au)