There is nothing quite like the first meeting of the Mazenod Young Vinnies. To walk into the room at the start of every year, and to take in both familiar faces and – even more excitingly – to meet the young men who’ve decided that this is the year for them to step up in making the world a generally brighter place.

Ultimately, it’s this spirit of selflessness which defines what our College’s Young Vinnies Conference is all about. As a group of students who meet together once a week, being a member gives the boys the chance to plan and run fundraisers, working towards helping those who are less fortunate within our community. It’s brilliant to look back and confirm that 2012 has been another very successful year!

As in-school branches of the wider Saint Vincent de Paul Society, its annual Winter and Christmas Appeals often keep the boys busy! Every year, the College amasses a huge amount of good quality clothing, accessories, and merchandise – these pre-loved items are given to those who find themselves struggling during the winter. As its counterpart throughout the season, the Year 9’s place an emphasis on donating to the Saint Vincent de Paul Society’s ‘Passages’ program. As the boys study Robert Swindells’ ‘Stone Cold’ in their English classes, its tale emphasises the hardships endured by homeless youth, with the boys displaying great empathy in collecting food and toiletries for street-present youth.

The Christmas Appeal takes place in Term 4, with each Form class being assigned an anonymous family from the Perth community, who find themselves in need of assistance. It is a fantastic opportunity, at a time when school finds itself wrapping up, to see the boys and their generous families donating large quantities of treats, decorations and much more.

Once again, Project Compassion proved to be a great success, as the College raised a total of $5,565. This considerable sum will be vital in assisting and educating people in poverty-stricken nations across the world. Furthermore, the annual Mission Fun Run, which provides funds for the Oblate missionaries working to alleviate suffering in many different communities, saw the students raise an amazing total of $9,605. Yet another brilliant effort!

I would like to thank our younger members, whose compassion and energy have seen them work throughout the year in displaying a true regard for those in need. Namely, their efforts in running both the Stationery Shop and the (unsurprisingly popular!) Winter Hot Chocolate stall has seen them raise over $800 for a variety of Vinnies’ causes. As another success, the annual Mother’s Day Jewellery Stall and Father’s Day Raffle presented the College community with another opportunity to dig deep for those in need, with over $240 being raised.