

## Vincentian Family Schools Ireland heading to IVYM and WYD

On the evening of Friday 28 July a group of twenty-six students and teachers from St Paul's Raheny, Holy Faith Clontarf and St Mary's Holy Faith, Glasnevin led by Sr Éibhlís NicUaithuas DC, Chaplain in St Pauls, leave Dublin on Pilgrimage to the International Vincentian Youth Meeting (IVYM) in Felgueiras, Porto and World Youth Day (WYD) in Lisbon. Of the twenty-two students, thirteen from St Paul's, one from Holy Faith Secondary School, Clontarf and eight from St Mary's Holy Faith, Glasnevin, seven are eighteen year olds, nine are seventeen year olds and six are sixteen year olds. The accompanying teachers are Ms Serena O'Connor, St Paul's; Mr Ciarán Coll, St Mary's and Ms Sinéad Mullally who was a final year student on placement in St Paul's from DCU when our planning began.

As a collaboration between three of the Vincentian Family schools in Ireland we are delighted to be taking part in both the IVYM and WYD. In Felgueiras at IVYM we will join over one thousand two hundred other young pilgrims belonging to the Vincentian tradition from more than fifty countries. As a result we will have the opportunity to experience the world-wide Vincentian Family and learn how being part of the family is expressed in many different cultures, something which all who are taking part are excited about. One of the ways that this will take place is on 'St Vincent de Paul Street'. This is a dedicated space where creative and innovative Vincentian projects can be presented so that everyone has the opportunity to get to know the best of the Vincentian Family. As many of the students from the Vincentian Family Schools in Ireland have been members of their schools Ember Faith Programme they are looking forward to taking their place on St Vincent de Paul Street.

Preparation has been on-going. Beginning in Advent the organising committee of the IVYM prepared and communicated reflection sheets on five Vincentian virtues: Advent – Meekness; Christmas – Humility; Lent – Mortification; Pentecost – Zeal and for May – Simplicity. We used these in St Paul's as we met each week on Fridays at lunchtime, as well as plan some fund-raising activities which helped them focus on what they were undertaking and communicate it with others. At the same time Mr Coll met with the girls in St Mary's. In addition at different times a number of us met with the wider AMRI group at preparation events they had organised, among them the gathering in DCU Inter-Faith Chaplaincy; the pilgrim walk of the seven churches; the Dominican prayer and social; the Kimmage Pilgrim walk and BBQ. Since the completion of the Leaving Certificate Examinations we have had our own more intensive preparation. We spent a Saturday morning in the Oratory in St Paul's – finishing with social time in St Anne's Park – and a Wednesday afternoon in the Oratory in St Paul's exploring and sharing on the lives of the different Founders and Foundations within the Vincentian tradition – as well as getting to know one another better. Another Wednesday afternoon is planned as well as the Wednesday before we travel. On that day we will meet in St Peter's Church in Phibsboro' for a 'Sending' Ritual which will be attended by members of each branch of the wider Vincentian Family in Ireland and to which parents of those travelling and the School Principals have been invited to attend. Following the 'Sending' Ritual we will have some social time together, iron any out last minute queries or glitches and make our plans to meet on the Friday afternoon in the airport.

At this point the excitement is building and palpable especially as all begin to realise how they will be involved both in Felgueiras with the St Vincent de Paul Street and a Cultural Night during which they will be able to show something of what it means to them to be Irish and Vincentian and in Lisbon with the Rise Up moments they have been asked to animate. It is pure joy to watch and interact with them all.