

ST JOHN VIANNEY YOUTH GROUP RAISES THE ROOF ON NEW SCHOOL KITCHEN IN MALAWI

St John Vianney youth group from Coventry has made a life changing contribution to a school in Africa by raising £7000 in one year to build a kitchen through international charity Marys Meals.

SJV youth group members, aged 11-17, were inspired to help other young people when they saw the DVD called Child 31. They were incredibly moved and felt compelled to do something. Samantha Himmonds and Maria Price, two members of the youth group said “we really wanted to help someone live a better life and give them a better future so we just had to do something”. The young people undertook a range of fundraising activities including barn dances, Irish nights, teddy bear sales and table top sales amongst many other activities which were all supported by the St John Vianney Parish. One parish member Dani Shaw even took part in a triathlon to help fundraise!

Perhaps the most unusual fundraising method was inspired by a member of the parish, Catherine Carr. Catherine suggested that the youth leaders gave all the young people £5 each and challenging them to at least double their money. Everyone used their £5 in different ways. Some people worked in groups and set up a tuck shop at school; some held afternoon teas, some washed cars, some made reindeer food and decorations to sell at Christmas, some made cakes, the list goes on. By the time the money was collected back in, the young people had all raised over a thousand pounds which was outstanding! Erin Normoyle, a SJV youth group member, said “I really enjoyed raising the money, it was a great experience and it makes me feel proud to know that as a group we have made a difference”. All of these fundraising methods helped towards the funds that will be used to build and equip the kitchen in Malawi.

The kitchen, which will be built through Marys Meals Sponsor a School initiative, provides a safe and hygienic place for community volunteers to prepare a daily meal of likuni phala – a nutritious vitamin enriched maize porridge made in Malawi.

Mary’s Meals fundraiser and St John Vianney youth group leaders Maureen Bell and Deborah Bell said “We are so proud of our young people and their fantastic achievement. They showed true dedication and perseverance to raising the money and this was inspiring. They are an example of the great things that young people can achieve”.

Marys meals vision is that every child should be able to receive one good meal every day in a place of education. By building a kitchen, St John Vianney youth group is supporting the growth and expansion of our programmes by releasing funds that can be used to reach more children with a life-changing daily meal

For further information on Mary’s meals, please visit www.marysmeals.org.uk or follow the charity on @marysmeals and on www.facebook.com/marysmeals.