



St. Vincent College
(Affiliated to Savtribai Phule Pune University)
Pune -411037

Title of the Event	Social Outreach Initiative on the Occasion of the Wari Pilgrimage		
Date of the Event	June 21, 2025	Place of the event	Pune
Objectives of the Event	The initiative aimed to offer practical, compassionate support to Warkari pilgrims during the arrival of the Palkhi in Pune, while encouraging cultural respect, community cohesion, and experiential learning rooted in the values of selfless service (seva) and civic responsibility.		
Name/s of the Resource Persons	Dr. Gilbi John and Dr. Vishal Bhavre		
A short narration of the program			
Social Outreach Initiative on the Occasion of the Wari Pilgrimage			
On the morning of June 21, 2025, as the sacred Palkhi of Lord Vitthal made its ceremonial entry into Pune, marking a pivotal moment in the annual Wari pilgrimage, faculty members and students of St. Vincent College undertook a quiet yet deeply meaningful act of social outreach. Spearheaded by Dr. Gilbi John and Dr. Vishal Bhavre—Programme Officer of the National Service Scheme (NSS) unit at the college—the initiative was carried out in collaboration with NSS volunteers at a designated resting point along the traditional pilgrimage route. Rather than a formal or ceremonial event, the outreach was conceived and executed as an authentic gesture of seva (selfless service), grounded in respect for the cultural and spiritual significance of the Wari and empathy for the physical demands faced by the Warkaris. Many pilgrims had walked hundreds of kilometers over several days, often in intense summer heat, sustained by devotion and community. Recognizing their fatigue and needs, the college team established a modest but thoughtfully organized service station to offer immediate, practical support. Volunteers provided essential refreshments including cool drinking water, oral rehydration solution (ORS) packets, nimbu pani (lemon water), and light, easily digestible snacks such as poha, roasted chana, and biscuits—items selected to restore hydration and energy without causing discomfort. In response to the prevailing weather conditions, basic hygiene kits were distributed, containing hand sanitizers, wet wipes, and cotton caps to offer relief from sun exposure. Special attention was given to elderly pilgrims and those			



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showing signs of exhaustion: shaded areas were arranged for rest, and volunteers assisted with foot care, including mending worn-out slippers using available materials—a small but significant act that underscored the initiative’s hands-on, compassionate approach.

Beyond material aid, the outreach fostered genuine human connection. Faculty members and students engaged pilgrims in conversation, listened attentively to their personal narratives of faith, resilience, and community, and at times participated in devotional singing of abhangs, thereby honoring the cultural and spiritual rhythm of the Wari. This relational dimension distinguished the effort from transactional charity, embodying instead a spirit of solidarity and shared humanity.

The involvement of the NSS unit ensured that the initiative remained aligned with the core principles of civic engagement, social responsibility, and experiential learning that define the Scheme. For student volunteers, the experience served as a living lesson in empathy, cultural sensitivity, and grassroots service—values that complement their academic formation at a Jesuit institution committed to cura personalis and service to others.

In its simplicity and sincerity, the outreach reflected St. Vincent College’s ongoing commitment to being an active, responsive, and compassionate presence within the wider Pune community. It was not an event marked by fanfare, but by quiet dignity—a testament to the belief that education extends beyond the classroom, and that true service begins with seeing, listening, and walking—even briefly—alongside those on their journey.

Name of the Collaborating Agency	NSS unit of St. Vincent College
Learning Outcomes of the Event for the Participants	Student volunteers and faculty deepened their understanding of grassroots empathy, cultural traditions, and inclusive service through direct engagement with pilgrims. They developed interpersonal sensitivity, learned to respond to real-time community needs, and experienced the integration of social action with spiritual and cultural awareness.
Learning Outcomes for the Organizing team	The organizing faculty enhanced their capacity to coordinate responsive, values-driven outreach with minimal resources, while reinforcing the role of the NSS unit as a bridge between institutional education and societal engagement. The experience also affirmed



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	the importance of humility, adaptability, and presence in meaningful community interaction.
No. of Participants	50 students of NSS unit and all faculty members of St. Vincent
Faculty in Charge	Dr. Gilbi John and Dr. Vishal Bhavre
Documents Attached	1. Attendance Sheet 2. Geotag photographs 3. Resume of resource persons if any 4. Copy of remuneration paid if any 5. Notice of the event 6. Thank you letter to the resource persons