

Western Regional Council

- Western Regional Council takes in Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, North West Territories and Nunavut.
- The first two Western Conferences started in Manitoba in 1965 and 1980.
- In 1982 the first Alberta Conference started in Calgary. Currently there are 18 Conferences in Calgary and other Conferences in Medicine Hat, Lethbridge, Coalhurst, Taber, Brooks, Black Diamond, Edmonton, Okotoks, Moranville, St. Albert, and Athabasca.
- Vincentians are actively working in these conferences serving and visiting approximately 10,000 people in their homes, assisting them with basic necessities and other services.

Local Councils

- St. Pius' Conference was aggregated in 1989.
- In Calgary, St. Vincent de Paul operates a free clothing outlet run by Vincentian volunteers. There are also smaller household items, and usually bedding and towels available. A list is kept of persons in need of furniture or appliances, as well, as a list of persons wishing to donate specific items, then a match-up is made (About 1200 matches last year).
- The Calgary Conferences provided 1,400 Christmas Hampers citywide in 2000.
- Last year, St. Pius X Conference provided 165 food hampers, 89 Christmas hampers of food and gifts; 73 families were provided with furniture, clothing and household items, and approximately 100 visits were made to hospitals, hospices, to the infirm in their homes, as well as transportation of clients to medical appointments.

The following is an example of a prayer for home visitation, taken from "The Society of St. Vincent de Paul Prayerbook," published by the Council of Scotland.

**O God, someone in this house needs me.
I don't know how I will be received,
but I go as Your ambassador,
however unworthy and weak I am myself.
Give me Your power to help in the best way possible,
offering what is needed,
giving the proper advice,
saying the right thing.
I am Your servant
and the servant of anyone who needs me.
I am weak - You can make me strong:
I am tongue-tied - You can supply my words:
I lack courage - You can reinforce me:
I am perplexed - You can give the answer:
I am useless - You can make me useful.
Above all, make me recognise You in these people,
and seeing You let me love them as I love you.
They need Your love,
they need my love,
let's love them together.
I'll do my best:
be with me in what is Your work, and mine.**

**Kind, gentle, understanding Saint Vincent de Paul,
inspire me in all my dealings with the needy
whom you knew, understood and loved so much.**

AMEN

The National St. Vincent de Paul office provides a website for additional information about the Society -- www.SSVP.ca

Society of St. Vincent de Paul

St. Pius X Conference



Servants of the Poor

"For I was hungry and you gave me food; I was thirsty and you gave me drink; I was a stranger and you made me welcome; naked and you clothed me, sick and you visited me, in prison and you came to see me. And the King will answer, "I tell you solemnly in so far as you did this to one of the least of my brothers, you did it to me." (Matthew 25: 35-40).

Society of St. Vincent de Paul

The Society of St. Vincent de Paul is an International Catholic Lay Organization, founded in 1833 by Frederic Ozanam (1813-1853, Beatified: August 22, 1997) and his companions. The first St. Vincent de Paul Conference in Canada was founded in Quebec City in 1846 by Dr. Painchaud.

Faithful to its founder it constantly strives to renew and adapt itself to the changing conditions of the world.

It seeks in a spirit of justice and charity, to help those who are suffering. It does this by the person-to-person involvement of its members. Its work encompasses every form of aid that alleviates suffering and promotes the dignity and integrity of all people.

Vincentians gather in groups, called Conferences, which meet regularly. They are linked together locally, nationally and internationally. Today, The Society of St. Vincent de Paul is functioning in 132 countries on 5 continents with around 47,000 conferences and almost one million members. In Canada the Society has about 15,000 members working in well over 1,000 Conferences.

The objective, to bear witness to our faith, was the cornerstone of our foundation 168 years ago and is today as well.

**NO WORK OF CHARITY
IS FOREIGN
TO THE SOCIETY.**

HOW THE SOCIETY WORKS

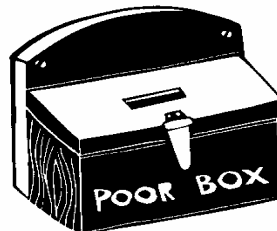
Situations requiring assistance are referred to the Conference based on their parish boundaries. In teams of two, Vincentians make personal visits to assess particular needs and take steps to alleviate physical needs (food, clothing or housing) and to mitigate other human needs. Vincentians serve everyone, regardless of religion, beliefs or nationality.

It is neither their intent nor purpose to assume the roles of social workers, welfare officials or psychiatrists, or to suddenly shatter the poverty syndrome. Their objectives are simple and realistic:-

- to supply food and clothing
- to encourage the weary
- to give moral support to the confused
- to bring warmth into the often sterile world of the elderly.

No matter how efficient and generous the Social Services provided by the Government are, "The poor you will always have with you." The work of the members of the Society will remain indispensable. The people will always need compassion, understanding and sympathy.

The Society of St. Vincent de Paul relies on funding through the Parish Poor Boxes, St. Vincent de Paul contribution envelopes, and the generosity of our benefactors.



*The Society of St.
Vincent de Paul
helping people in
your
neighbourhood*



MEMBERSHIP IN THE SOCIETY – A VOCATION

Being a member of the Society involves a commitment to:

- Regular, confidential meetings to discuss action and plans for assisting the needy.
- Visiting the needy in their homes as calls for assistance are received.
- Prayer and reflection on the service to the poor through the Vincentian vocation.
- By collecting resources such as clothes and household items on behalf of those in need.
- Addressing the root causes of poverty and injustice and a willingness to learn about poverty and injustice by attending workshops.
- A desire to help all, regardless of race, creed or origin.

The Society relies on people like you to give as much time as they can. The only qualifications are a desire to care for, and befriend, Christ's poor.

*If you are interested in the Society of
St. Vincent de Paul, please contact*

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