

Society of Saint Vincent de Paul

Toronto Central Council

Quick Reference Guide #3

Role

Conference President's

Role: (as stated in the new National Rule, 2007)

In general the conference president helps to conference to achieve its two main objectives: to serve the poor and to allow the members to act on and grow in their faith.

Duties & Responsibilities:

As the servant leader of the conference, the president must:

- ü take the fullest, most active interest in the welfare of the members;
- ü support and assist them in their Vincentian actions as circumstances require;
- ü meet with any member who does not attend meetings to discuss the situation.

It is the president's responsibility to:

- ü maintain the membership of the conference and provide positive reinforcement to the members,
- ü encourage the recruitment of new members.

To realize the main objectives of the Society, the president should:

- ü allocate a reasonable quantity of charitable work and various other tasks to each conference member;
- ü make sure that all tasks are properly carried out.

The president should:

- ü avoid autocratic behaviour;
- ü never claim, in the execution of his or her duties, special privileges or distinction;
- ü act with a considerable measure of humility;
- ü always keep in mind that the president is at the service of the members.

The president develops working relations with:

- ü neighbouring conferences,
- ü the parish council,
- ü agencies and government welfare organizations.

The president should serve as a model of the Society's spiritual mission and, at each conference meeting, ensure that there is a reading, carefully chosen for the spiritual benefit of the members.

The president should be an experienced, active member who possesses a thorough knowledge of the Rule and its application, and who understands and values the culture of the Society.

To ensure the uninterrupted pursuit of the work to which much effort has been devoted, the president should personally see to the preparation of one or more possible successors.

It is important for the president to remain fully informed of the needs of those served and of the work of the members without, however, monopolizing the work.

As much as possible, decisions should be taken collectively to foster a community/team spirit within the conference both in its orientation and in its activities.

The president ensures that links and communication are effectively maintained between the conference and the council to which it is attached.

As a voting member representing the conference at higher councils, the president shall attend and participate in meetings held by these councils. If unable to attend, the president shall be represented by a substitute designated by proxy.

The president represents the conference in contacts with the local civil and religious authorities and should take advantage of such contacts to acquaint fellow parishioners and other members of the community with the needs and achievements of the Society.

The president shall see to it that reports are submitted to the higher council, as requested.

The conference president role is a pivotal one within the Society. If the conference has lost its spiritual base or its focus or its dedication to serving those in need, the Society is less effective and less relevant. Without conference presidents who take on the role because they feel called and because they are dedicated to keeping the conference spiritual, vibrant and relevant, what future can the Society have?

Ideally, the president of a conference should reside within the limits of the area (e.g.: parish) served by the conference.

The president should not hold two presidential offices. If a conference president is elected to the presidency of a council, the conference must elect a new president.

Requirements:

Like the vice-president, the president must be a full member and a Roman Catholic.