

Society of Saint Vincent de Paul

Greater Toronto Central Council

In the Loop

March 2023

From the Chair...

Some of us have been called upon to deliver the annual appeal message for our Conference and all of us have listened, often with some trepidation, as the designated Vincentian does his or her best to convey to the parishioners the calling that we share and work that we do. Personally, I try focus on how thankful we are for our donor's generosity and let them know how grateful the vast majority of our neighbours in need are for whatever help we can provide. To lighten things up I sometimes try a joke and an oldie but goodie that I've used goes like this: there's good news and there's bad news. The good news is that we have all the money we need to meet our obligations. The bad news is that it's still in your pockets.

Well, I am pleased to say that the Greater Toronto Central Council has all the money it needs to do all the things it does for our 11 Particular Councils, 114 Conferences and 1400 Vincentians. The bad news is it's sitting in your bank accounts. While it's true that many of our outreach programs and residential settings are funded by grants and contracts with government agencies, not all of them enjoy that support. We certainly don't receive any grants or funding to pay for the staffing, equipment, insurance and resources we use daily to support our Conferences and Particular Councils. As Vincentians, we talk a lot about the need to find housing for persons in need, and our mission to advocate for these folks. Greater Toronto Central Council does just that and we do it on behalf of all our Vincentians, and could do even more, with more support.

The Board is extremely grateful to all the Conferences and Particular Councils who act responsibly and regularly pass up their fair share; we need all Conferences and Particular Councils to follow their example. Pardon my candour, but anyone regularly sitting on more than six months of operating expenses is hoarding, plain and simple. Our Society is not a top-down organization; at Central Council, we don't issue commands but rather are here to serve our Conferences and Particular Councils and individual Vincentians. We simply cannot provide those services without some financial help from those on whose behalf we labour. Just as Moses didn't come down from the mountain with 10 "suggestions", the Rule doesn't just "suggest" you pass up money not needed locally.

I believe each of you shares the pride and the sense of accomplishment we get from whatever outreach in which we are engaged. We are blessed with marvellous staff and generous donors and we want to be able to continue and grow in the work we do. We are all in this together and it's only by sharing what we have that we'll be able to succeed going forward. I ask each of you, in your Conferences and Particular Councils, to take a hard and honest look at what you really need to support your local outreach and think about all that Central Council does on your behalf; all the boring, behind the scenes efforts without which much of what we do would not be possible.

Our residents and our Neighbours in Need are counting on you; the Board and staff are counting on you. I am confident you won't let us down.

Bro. Gary Valcour, Chair

Mass Saturday, April 22, 2023: Remembering our Colleague and Dear Friend, Anar Adatia

It is with heavy hearts we say goodbye to Anar who passed away on March 6th after a brief illness. Anar worked for the Society at our Toronto Central Council office since 1992.

We have a very small head office, especially considering the size of the organization, and as with most not-for-profits, the staff readily assist with all tasks that need to be done, Anar was no exception. Anar was involved in all aspects of our administrative work from membership, camp registration, special events, meetings, donations, Special Work support, and on. You will know Anar best from managing the Membership Portfolio, she went above and beyond, and counted so many of you as her friends.

Anar loved the Society, and held great respect for the Vincentians and their challenging outreach. Anar joined the Society at a time of tremendous growth, she supported our program managers and teams as we broadened our Special Works; she firmly believed in the circle of care from Home Visitation through to our Residential Homes, Camps, Stores, Programs and Services; she exemplified service in her words and actions. Anar has left behind two sisters, her brother, two nieces and a whole faith community. Her family has asked that donations in Anar's name be made to the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul, GTCC. We will miss you, our friend.



Please join us for an in-memoriam mass and reception on **Saturday, April 22nd**, 9:30 am, at Blessed Sacrament Parish, 24 Cheritan Avenue, Yonge and Lawrence, M4R 1S4

Have you heard about ...

➤ Home Visitation Round Tables

The next session will take place virtually on Thursday, April 20, 2023, from 6:30 pm until 7:30 pm, the link will be provided. Home Visitation Chapter 3, the third session that was held on March 16th was well attended; Vincentians are always eager to seek out and share information on Home Visitation. After each session, **Frequently Asked Questions** will be released by chapter. Chapter Three is available by clicking this [link](#); Chapter Four will follow after the April session.

➤ Spiritual Facilitator Sessions

Please join us on Monday, March 27th at 7:00 pm for a virtual interactive workshop exploring our Vincentian spirituality in relation to the Rule of the Society. You do not need to be a Spiritual Facilitator to join, all are welcome to learn more through this interactive workshop. ([click to join](#)).

➤ **Completing your T3010**

All Treasurers and interested Vincentians are invited to this virtual how-to session, Tuesday, April 4, from 6:30 pm – 8:00 pm on how to complete the T3010, the [link for the meeting is here](#).

➤ **Orientation Sessions**

All new members must attend an Orientation Session to fulfill the screening obligations we put in place to satisfy the Archdiocesan requirements. This informative virtual session will be held over two nights, Part 1 will be Monday, April 24th and Part 2 will be Monday, May 1st, 7:00 pm until 8:15 pm. The link will be sent closer to the date. Not your thing you say? Don't worry, you will be glad you attended to learn more about our vocation, outreach and programs. The Greater Toronto Central Council expanded its services beyond Home Visitation to providing much needed supportive and emergency housing to persons in need from all over the GTA. We also operate camps, stores and other programs and services. You will learn all about our outreach, and will understand how GTCC serves, and how much we all do; you, your Conferences, Particular Councils and Central Council, and our donors, for persons in need.

➤ **Membership Applications and Information**

We have received many applications from new members, good news for the Conferences and for those whom we serve. Welcome! Questions have come forward regarding police checks. Please note, we cannot use the Archdiocesan screening services as they provide Criminal Reference Checks. The Society signed an undertaking with the Archdiocese that we would screen our own members. We have agreements in place with police departments to support Vulnerable Sector Checks as opposed to the Criminal Records Checks. This is due to the nature of our work, directly serving vulnerable persons.

The Vulnerable Sector check process may require an applicant to provide finger prints if they have a birthdate similar to that of a registered offender. While inconvenient, it is part of our duty of care to the persons we serve. Please inform perspective members that they should not provide a positive police check to the Conference President, individuals who have something on their record and who wish to continue the process of becoming a member should email the Executive Director, Louise Coutu to arrange a time to discuss the record. This process is in place to protect the privacy of the perspective member. If we are able to proceed with the membership, positive records are not kept on file. Please handle these situations with great concern for privacy.

➤ **Countdown to Camp!**

Camp Packages are on their way! If you have any questions, or need more applications, please don't hesitate to reach out.

Both camps are hiring staff. If you know of any young person interested in working with children in a beautiful outdoor setting, please provide this link to our staff applications [Camp-staff-letter-and-fillable-form.pdf \(svdptoronto.org\)](#)

May 6th is the annual Marygrove Camp Rake-a-Thon, now that is a sure sign that spring is on the horizon! More information will be included in the camp registration packages.

Wanted! Please consider sharing your talents

We are in need of qualified persons to serve on the Board of Directors and skilled members to join our new Engagement Committee. Please consider this opportunity, and please pass this invitation to apply to persons whom you think can assist the Society by serving.

Board of Directors Election - Nominations Close April 30, 2023

We are searching for individuals interested in serving as a member on our Corporate Board of Directors.

If you are passionate about helping people who are impacted by poverty and are willing to share your personal and professional skills in board governance, strategic thinking, financial oversight, problem solving and issues management; this may be the challenge you have been looking for.

Our current Board has two Directors finishing their term, with the remaining Directors part way through their terms. **There are two positions open for the upcoming election.**

Board Terms Expiring September 2023: Danny Bourne, Director and John Sidle, Director

The Nominating Committee oversees the process of nominations and the upcoming election.

Please [click here for more information](#) and the [application form](#) (a Word file will download when clicked). We will follow up with each candidate and will provide specific instructions regarding any additional information needed to proceed, including schedule an interview should you be short-listed.

Please contact Louise Coutu, Executive Director should you have any questions.

Join the new Vincentian Engagement Committee

We're thinking about the future of the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul. The environment in which we operate has changed and continues to change rapidly. The Society is facing several challenges as we continue to serve over 35,000 of the most vulnerable among us each year and these needs are growing.

The Society is a very frugal and efficient charitable organization where \$0.97 of every dollar donated goes directly to serving our Neighbours in Need. To ensure the Society can meet the ever-growing needs of our Neighbours, our base of volunteers and donations must also continue to grow.

As we look to the future, how does the Society:

- Recruit new and diverse members?
- Grow our base of volunteers and donors to accommodate the ever-increasing demands?
- Increase the profile of the Society in the GTA and in our parishes?
- Grow awareness for the extent of the many and diverse ways the Society operates and serves?

We are actively seeking people who can assist us in answering these questions. If you would like to help us, we invite you to apply to the new Greater Toronto Central Council's Engagement Committee. Please [click here](#) for more information.