

Society of Saint Vincent de Paul

Greater Toronto Central Council

Executive Directors Report – Annual General Meeting, September 2022

Serving through the Pandemic – Year 2

Vincentians continued to implement creative means of serving our Neighbours in Need, as the pandemic moved into its second year. Over the past year, many Conferences slowly moved back to home visits the way they were intended to be, providing service, person to person. For those not quite ready to return to full Home Visitation, some conferences developed a hybrid model of in-person and virtual interactions with their Neighbours. Some Vincentian events returned to pre-pandemic times with Vincentians attending meetings in person, hosting Bundle-ups and events, and new members joining.

Despite the challenges, our Neighbours received caring assistance from Vincentians, supported by the generosity of our committed donors. Welcome and thank you to our new members; may you find your Vincentian vocation rewarding.

GTCC by the Numbers

1,511 Vincentians
111 Conferences
11 Particular Councils
28,773 Home Visits*
2.5 million dollars =
Total Donations to all
Conferences (does not include
Special Works funding)

*modified for COVID protocols

Employees and Special Works

Our employees continued their work through the pandemic, serving the most vulnerable, providing emergency, supportive and long term housing in our residential housing programs and keeping the office open and operating. Short and long term adjustments to programs have been made ensuring service continues while congregate care pandemic protocols established by funders are in place. We have had challenges, like so many businesses, hiring new staff particularly in our part time and relief positions. Thankfully we have been able to attract enough talented workers to provide service in our homes and programs. We are grateful to the Board and our funders for providing funding to increase salaries so that we are able to compensate our staff fairly and competitively. We continue to work with the City of Toronto and Toronto Community Housing on the ownership

Special Works

Shelters for Women: Amelie House, Elisa House, Mary's Home, St. Clare's Residence

Supportive Housing: VP Community Homes, Ozanam House, St. Francis Residence

Developmental Services: DePaul, Vincent and Martineau Homes

Additional Outreach: Marygrove Camp, Camp Ozanam, Stores Division

transfer of 10 homes to the Society. We have leased these homes from TCHC for over 35 years as affordable housing for men in recovery. The same recovery homes portfolio was enlarged by one additional house as we assisted Huronia Central Council in transferring the house and program to Toronto Central Council; we are now the owners and operators of the recovery home in Barrie, Ontario.

After two years of not being able to offer our camp experience to deserving children, the camps are offering a modified program for 2022. Thank you for your efforts in supporting these invaluable programs, we are hoping to slowly increase our number children attending to pre-pandemic service levels.

Committees and the Work of the Board

Committees of the Board brought Vincentians together, working on various initiatives to support the work of the Board and the membership. The **Particular Council Presidents' Committee** continued to focus on succession planning and equity of service, and other initiatives designed to support Vincentian outreach. The **Membership Development Committee** launched a series of Learning Modules ranging from information for prospective and new members, to refreshers on our core service, Home Visitation and the 5 Guiding Principles, all available on the website.

The **Spirituality Committee** continued to encourage the efforts of the Spiritual Facilitators through our virtual gatherings. The quality of readings made available by the Facilitators has been impressive as they promote discussion and unity amongst the members, praying and reflecting together across the Society. To Monsignor Bianco, our Spiritual Advisor and member of the Spirituality committee, we offer our genuine thanks to you, an inspirational, caring and supportive Vincentian who has guided us over many years. You were instrumental in inspiring the work of the Spirituality Committee, and we must note your many years of hands on service to all whom we serve with and for – thank you Father Sam, your dedication and love of the Society will stay with us, we wish you all the best.

We are working on improving the website, a project undertaken by the **Communications Committee**, a talented group who also provide support to various initiatives undertaken by the Board and committees, supporting the Vincentian outreach. The **Finance Committee** continued to support the efforts of our Director of Finance, Liza Gowe, who steered us through the complicated accounting for pandemic funding, providing audited statements, improved financial reporting, implementing an automated payroll system for employees and providing training for Treasurers.

Continuing to refine the new Governance model, the **Governance and Board Resource Committee** are recommending minor changes to the By-law this year which you, the membership will be voting on this AGM. It is challenging to balance corporate legislation with the Rule. Toronto Central Council has had By-laws in place since we first incorporated in 1875, however, not for profit legislation has become more prescriptive in an effort to protect the service recipients and the donors. The basic tenant of the Rule is as inspirational and unifying as it has ever been. The challenge comes from application of the Statutes in the Canadian Rule which are at times in conflict with legislation. We are hopeful that the National Council will devote resources to updating their corporate documents understanding that the responsibility to comply with legislation does not negate a Vincentians desire to embrace the Rule; the critical elements of which are found in the International Section and clearly speaks to all Vincentians.

Workshops and Presentations for Members 2021/22

Spiritual Facilitators small group sessions
Filing your T3010
Orientation Sessions for New Members
Strategic Plan Presentations

Treasurer's Workshop
Tech Support Microsoft Teams
Home Visitation – Our Core Outreach
Understanding Financial Pass ups and
downs

Moving Forward

As you may well know, the Board worked with Vincentians, committees and stakeholders to develop a Strategic Plan to help us navigate out of the pandemic and optimize our service. We have Neighbours in Need, residents, clients and employees who all rely on the Society to be active, relevant and supportive. The Strategic Plan was presented to members at Particular Council meetings by members of the Board. As we move forward into this decade, we will reference this document often, refine it, upgrade it and check some things off the list. Thank you for your part ensuring that the Society thrives.

Following are the Four Strategic Foci that comprise the Strategic Plan. Please view it in its entirety on the website at: [SSVP Strategic Plan Final](#)

Strategic Focus: Engagement

GTCC will fully engage with Vincentians, Volunteers, Employees, Neighbours in Need, Residents, Clients, Funders and Donors, and our Parish Communities, to nurture a community where each of our stakeholders is invited into the Society's mission, contributing their unique gifts to the work of the Society so that we may grow together living the Gospel message of love, respect, justice and joy.

Strategic Focus: Awareness

GTCC will use all available tools to raise the profile of the Society, connecting our outreach to the core of our Catholic charism, utilizing God's gifts in the service of others.

Strategic Focus: Foundation

GTCC will ensure that the organizational structure of the Society has a firm governance foundation, supporting all aspects of the Society's volunteer and staffed outreach.

Strategic Focus: Stewardship

GTCC will ensure all funds, properties and equipment donated or purchased by the Society are carefully and responsibly accounted for, maximized and reported to the membership and community.

Thank you to the Board of Directors, Committee Members, Council and Conference Executive, Vincentians, Employees and Monsignor Bianco who all worked collaboratively to ensure service to our Neighbours, Residents and Clients continued through these past few tumultuous years. The Society is blessed. - *Respectfully submitted, Louise Coutu, August 2022*

Charity must never look to the past, but always to the future, because the number of its past works is still very small and the present and future miseries that it must alleviate are infinite. — Frédéric Ozanam