

Hello my name is xx and this is xx and we are members of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul.

We are especially pleased to be speaking to you today on this eight World Day of the poor, a day in which we are encouraged to consider those less fortunate than ourselves to give generously what we can.

As Pope Francis reminds us that “The measure of the greatness of a society is found in the way it treats those most in need.”

On behalf of our fellow members and the 110 families, 356 family members, including 141 children that our Ministry serves within our immediate neighbourhood, we offer our heartfelt appreciation for your ongoing generous support.

Without your financial, volunteer and prayer support, we would not be able to serve the families as we do.

We are a dedicated group of volunteers who serve in hope, (pause) the hope that comes from our Lord Jesus Christ.

Poverty is largely hidden in Oakville and the challenges of those living in poverty are not well understood

It may surprise you that for a single person receiving Ontario Works benefits (Welfare) will receive only \$733 a month, or \$8,786 a year. That is it. These benefits are shockingly low and that is the gap we are being called to try to fill.

Due to the rising costs of food, gas, rent, more and more families are reaching out to us for assistance.

We respond to the calls for assistance regardless of the families' background or religious denomination.

The families include many single mothers who struggle to feed, clothe and shelter their children on minimum wages ('the working poor'), The mothers and their children are the modern day widows and orphans that Jesus instructed us to serve

We witness fear, scarcity and loss of hope.

The families we serve rely on food banks in order to feed their families.

On a day-to-day basis, the most pressing need is for food.

We provide a large box of Fresh Fruit and Vegetables once a month which we supplement with milk, eggs and cheese

The core of the ministry work is home visits. We receive a call for assistance and we go to them to understand their circumstances and we do our best to assist them. We also refer them to local agencies and community resources that can help them.

We are able to provide help for today and hope for the future

It's that time of the year again!

Our Christmas drive launches this weekend, and our goal is to provide each family with gift cards towards a proper Christmas dinner and a few presents under the tree.

We are also holding our monthly collection for the fresh food boxes we provide monthly

You can provide support by cash or cheque or through our new on line giving platform Pllenty.

As well as our traditional ways to sponsor a child, adult or a Christmas dinner, we are offering our Partners in Hope option through our monthly Pre Authorized donation option or Pllenty.

The needs of those living in poverty are 365 days of the year and for some of you listening, this option will appeal to you as you consider how you can best participate.

You will find a SSVP prayer card in the pews as well a blue SSVP Christmas envelope.

If you feel the call to serve our neighbours in need, please speak with one of the members at the Christmas display table.

The families and their precious children need your time and your talents, so please come join us in service

I will finish now with more words of wisdom from Pope Francis.

The parable of the Good Samaritan is not simply a story from the past, it continues to challenge each of us in the here and now of our daily lives. It is easy to delegate charity to others, yet the calling of every Christian is to become personally involved.

Thank you sincerely for your continued support of our Ministry and the families we serve.