

# The Vincentimes

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## How to attract big fish

Remember the Vincenpaul ONRC article *Gone Fishin'* earlier this year? It is time to mend the nets and cast out into deep water!

Without an active recruitment plan, it is highly likely that your membership is on the decline or worse still your membership is the same as it was 15 years ago but getting more and more tired and lethargic of the work of SSVP. We need to stay constantly fresh to serve compassionately.

Is your Conference...

Dynamic? Adjective

1. (of a process or system) characterized by constant change, activity or process.
2. (of a person) positive in attitude and full of energy and new ideas.

Does your Conference embrace Systemic Change projects? Do you and your fellow members have a basic knowledge of the services and op-

portunities that are available for low income families in your area? Do your members always refer to local resources and opportunities that are free for them (and SSVP)? Have you an active Social Justice Representative? Do your members look for collaboration and seek those from whom you can learn from? Do you share your successes?

If your Conference is 'dynamic', chances are you have recently welcomed new members in. If 'lethargic' is a better description of your Conference, it is time to take action. You can be a change agent. There are others like you. Find them.

How can a Conference transform itself into a place that is attractive to potential members?

Be the energy you want to attract. Aspiring members want to feel like they are making a difference.

With a culture of 'relational ministry' we can take our Conference ac-

tivities from simply collecting items, to transformative listening with active consequences moving towards human development and reduction of poverty. Our global International President Renato Lima de Oliveira calls it "...this beautiful proposal of Systemic Change". We won't eradicate poverty today, but we will make a difference one family at a time and engage our members while we are at it. This is what will make our Conferences dynamic and attractive to those 'big fish' that we know could form the SSVP leaders of tomorrow.

Let us continue our home visits, stay a while and have transformational conversations. This is a relational ministry and once we have integrated this into our Conference culture, the big fish will swim right into that net.

*Judith Nunn  
Rejuvenation Team*



# Conference/Council Rejuvenation

## - Why should we care!

To understand the value of rejuvenation, all we need to do is see what God envisioned when he conceived earth. He created four seasons for a reason. Spring is a time of new life and excitement; Summer provides growth and vibrance; Fall we absorb the beauty of His creation; and Winter provides the opportunity to make adjustments, move aside the tired and stale, to set the stage for renewal with Spring. This cycle of rejuvenation cannot exist without all four seasons occurring annually.

Conferences and Councils similarly go through the same series of change, providing opportunity for rejuvenation annually. However, what happens when this cycle is broken? Our Society was founded on the principal that Vincentians are living the message of the Gospel in serving the Poor. Sadly, we have many Conferences and Councils that over time deviated from this rejuvenation cycle, resulting in loss of their Spiritual focus; they experi-

ence difficulty in recruiting new and younger members as well as difficulty finding and developing leaders and executive members to keep Conferences and Councils vibrant. So where do we start if a Council or Conference finds itself in need of rejuvenation?

Start with the Basics:

- Spirituality – Do you have a Spiritual Advisor? Do they have the resources necessary to guide us in this faith journey? Denise Bondy, [denise@ssvp.on.ca](mailto:denise@ssvp.on.ca), ONRC Spiritual Advisor and her team will provide you with the tools necessary to develop this vital role.
- Leadership – There are President term limits for a reason. They are the starting point of the rejuvenation cycle. A farmer will tell you that crop rotation is necessary so as not to deplete the nutrients in the

soil otherwise crops over time will dwindle and fail. The same can be said about leadership. Without change, membership, excitement, vibrancy and vision will overtime dwindle and fail. Leadership is more than just having a 'warm body' take on this role. It is imperative we identify and invite the best candidates to lead us. Phil Bondy, [phil@ssvp.on.ca](mailto:phil@ssvp.on.ca), can assist you with finding new leaders through his Succession Planning workshop.

- Recruitment – Are you seeking new Volunteers or are you seeking persons interested in experiencing the Vincentian way of life? This distinction is key to your recruitment efforts. Judith Nunn, [nnuncj@me.com](mailto:nnuncj@me.com), and Linda Alexander, [lmja@bell.net](mailto:lmja@bell.net), will guide you through the steps necessary to create the environment to attract new Vincentians.

So where is your Conference/Council in this Rejuvenation Cycle? Do you conduct an annual Self Assessment to determine what is necessary to stay true to our Mission and Value? ONRC has the resources to help, all you need to do is ask.

*Phil Bondy*  
*Rejuvenation Team*



# Our Next Store Project and Volunteer Recruitment

"The harvest is plenty, but the labourers are few." Luke 10:2

Anyone who serves in a volunteer organization is acutely aware of this reality. So when we, of SSVP Brant, embarked on "The Graced Journey to our Next Store" (Cf. Vincenpaul Canada Vol. 3 No. 1 [www.ssvp.ca/sites/default/files/vp-2019-01-e.pdf](http://www.ssvp.ca/sites/default/files/vp-2019-01-e.pdf)), one of our several sources of anxiety was the challenge of maintaining and recruiting volunteers.

In Brant, 100% of our people (in Conferences and at our Thrift Store) are volunteers. As we moved from our previous store location of 24 years to a larger, more accessible space, our initial volunteer-related concerns were that we could burn out our current volunteers and/or alienate them due to the stresses of the change. For these reasons the project steering committee adopted the joint strategies of consultation and support.

The priorities for the project were established in an initial visioning session with all local Vincentians. Next, professional community members (experienced in fundraising, marketing, engineering, etc.)

were approached to share their time and talents to form the Next Store Committee (NSC) in an advisory capacity. At a second visioning session, local Vincentians considered the finer points of the new operation. Finally, members of the Store

Leadership Team and representatives from Conferences joined the NSC to guide the final stages of planning.

The actual move to the new space called on additional community members to do a lot of the "heavy lifting" under the direction of the Store Leadership Team. These included the local Be A Man group, high school Campus Ministry team and football team, firefighters and Conference members. Many Store volunteers worked innumerable extra hours but they were well-supported by community volunteers.

Attrition, as is usually experienced

contingent. Without compromising our full screening process, we have experienced a net increase of about 15% of Store volunteers to date.

To what do we owe that success? Some of our community helpers have made a longer-term commitment; some Conference members and Council executive members are now also Store volunteers. The marketing plan developed to support the fundraising campaign has increased our profile in the community. The new space provides a pleasant work environment. We are doing a better job of discerning the talents and interests of prospective volunteers so as to provide them with fulfilling work.

Thank you, Lord.

*Pat Lenz, President  
Brant Particular  
Council*



*SSVP Brant Vincentians (past & present, Conference & Store) participate with friends & partners in the official blessing of the Store by Bishop Douglas Crosby OMI in May 2019*

with an older volunteer base, was limited. However, the scope of the new operation, including the geography of the new space and the dramatic increase in quantity of donations, calls for a larger volunteer



# How to Plant Seeds into Education, Health and Wellbeing

Everyone can have green thumbs when it comes to planting seeds of hope. You just have to start with one family. The project seeds are already carefully cultivated and can be easily sown for a fruitful outcome.

At our Conference where the seed first germinated, we started by helping a family new to Canada open an RESP and get access to the Canada Learning Bond (CLB) educational funds for their two young daughters. Since that time the Seeds of Hope project has flourished and a recent testimonial from a mom shares how impactful this has been for her son. "SSVP actively nudged me to set up an RESP in order to get access to the CLB for my son. Phoenix is always SO excited when we visit TD and contribute a little more, and he watches that bank statement grow. It's at \$2400 now, by the way. Thank you!"

There is no limit to how many families can be reached with this essential opportunity to reach into government funds for a brighter educational future.

Another flourishing Seeds of Hope project is dental. There is nothing more heartbreaking than an 18 year old with extensive dental needs that are now out of reach because his Healthy Smiles Ontario dental benefits window has expired.

The families are on one side needing the opportunity, and on the other side is the opportunity itself. We can bring the opportunities in reach by continuing to mature our role of Informed Navigators and be the link from awareness to access to dental assistance.

Little Daniel watched The Karate Kid movie every day and his dream was to be a martial arts expert. We got busy connecting the mom to Canadian Tire Jumpstart funds, negotiating a fee discount with the studio and tapping into our recreation budget to make this dream come true. Daniel and his brother go five times a week and it's a home away from home for them.

In Halton, with access to Jumpstart, Regional and Municipal funds each and every year every



child we serve can access \$1700 of opportunities. Some regions and municipalities offer even more generous incentives to encourage the children to participate in the community.

Where there is money available for our families to benefit from in education, health and wellbeing we need to get informed so we can walk alongside the families to access.

Feel free to contact [lmja@bell.net](mailto:lmja@bell.net) for more information.

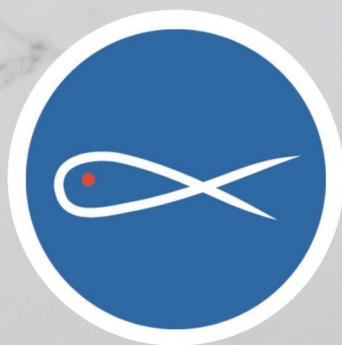
*Linda Alexander  
Rejuvenation Team*



*Society of Saint Vincent de Paul*

# FALL MEETING

Ontario Regional Council's  
General Members Meeting



**SEPTEMBER 20 - 21, 2019**

HOSTED BY BRANT PARTICULAR COUNCIL &  
ST. PIUS X CONFERENCE  
9 WAVERLY STREET, BRANTFORD, ON

FOR MORE INFO VISIT [WWW.SSVP.ON.CA](http://WWW.SSVP.ON.CA)  
OR EMAIL [INFO@SSVP.ON.CA](mailto:INFO@SSVP.ON.CA)

**SOCIETY OF  
SAINT VINCENT DE PAUL**  
**ONTARIO REGIONAL  
COUNCIL**



**Visit us on the web**

[www.ssvp.on.ca](http://www.ssvp.on.ca)

Email: [secretary.ssvp@ssvp.on.ca](mailto:secretary.ssvp@ssvp.on.ca)

Email: [administrativeasst.ssvp@ssvp.on.ca](mailto:administrativeasst.ssvp@ssvp.on.ca)

## **The Society of Saint Vincent de Paul**

### **Mission:**

The Society of Saint Vincent de Paul is a lay Catholic organization whose mission is: To live the Gospel message by serving Christ in the poor with love, respect, justice and joy.

### **Values:**

The Mission of the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul implies that as Vincentians, we:

See Christ in anyone who suffers;  
Come together as a family;  
Have personal contact with the poor;  
Help in all possible ways.

## **Upcoming Dates**

**September 20-21, 2019** — Ontario Regional Council General Members Meeting (aka the Fall Meeting). Hosted by Brant Particular Council. For more information and to register, please check your email and visit [www.ssvp.on.ca](http://www.ssvp.on.ca)

**October 15, 2019** — Deadline for newsletter submissions (please note: we cannot guarantee all submissions will make the next issue, but will do our best to include in upcoming issues)

## **Notice of Passings**

We would like to recognize and remember the following Vincentians who have passed.  
They blessed so many with their lives.



June 7, 2019: Jean Jenkins, Brant Particular Council (Thrift Store)

July 19, 2019: Peter McDonald, St. Basil, Brant

July 19, 2019: Bill Murphy (William Francis), St John Fisher Conference, Brampton

