

The Vincentimes

Volume 6, Issue 3

February 2018

Housing Our Friends in Need

The **Society of Saint Vincent de Paul, Toronto Central Council** continues its commitment to serving the most vulnerable through our Special Works programs. Largely focused on housing, the Special Works operate in contractual partnership with three levels of government receiving annual funding for the provision of emergency, supportive and longer term housing to individuals who may otherwise find themselves without safe housing.

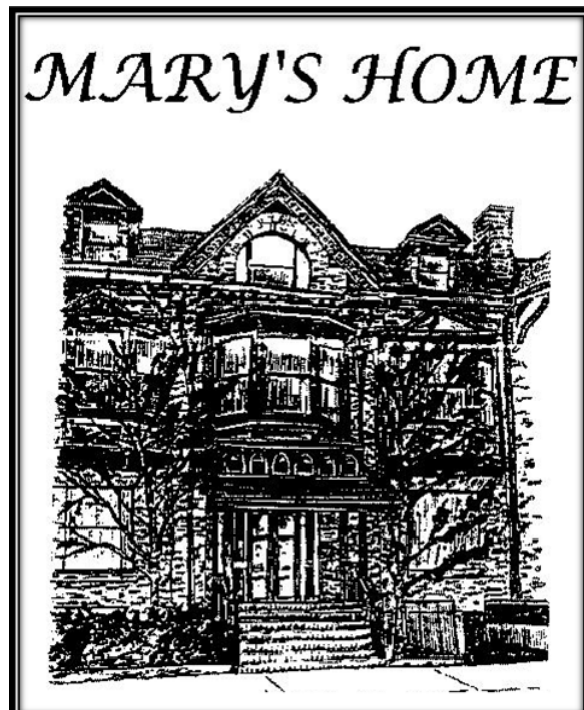
Emergency Housing

The Society continues to be the largest provider of shelter beds for single women in the City of Toronto. Per diem grants based on a nightly occupancy are paid to the Society for the 134 shelter beds allocated over the four locations; **Amelie House, Elisa House, Mary's Home and St. Clare's Residence**. With occupancy pushing 100%, the shelters are a very busy part of the Society's outreach. The largest number of the Society's staff are employed in our shelter division.

We are often asked why the shelters are located in the City of Toronto when the Toronto Central Council catchment area extends to the GTA. Simply put, it is a matter of finances. The City of Toronto tops up the provincial funding allowing these programs to be viable. Municipalities bordering the city of Toronto do not provide this top up which amounts to an additional 20% income. Shelter standards are in place that provide operating guidelines for the staff to follow, ensuring that the women who stay at the shelters have equal opportunity to services, case management and supports.

The two biggest challenges facing shelter residents are the lack of affordable housing for those who are able to move on, and the lack of supportive housing for those who will require ongoing support. Our residents range in age from 18 to our most loved resident who recently

turned 93! From all walks of life, our residents have found themselves in need of shelter housing as a result of domestic violence, abuse, addictions, mental health, abandonment and unresolved refugee status claims.



Supportive Housing

The Ministry of Community and Social Services directly funds the Society for the operation of three homes for adults with developmental disabilities located in the Scarborough area of Toronto providing both operational and facility grants based on occupancy.

The majority of adults served in these homes have moved from now closed government run institutions to our community based residential housing. Providing permanent housing for 18 residents, the staff of DePaul, Vincent and Martineau Homes are entrusted with the complete care for persons who will, for the most part, spend their entire lives in our care. The urgent housing list for persons who have developmental disabilities totals more than 2,000 individuals in this province. Urgent housing is defined

as an individual transitioning out of the youth system, or those whose primary care giver is now a senior (over age 80). Martineau House will undergo a renovation during 2018 to provide housing for two more individuals as well as a space for en-

ing an accessible and meaningful healthy living program in his name.

Consistently underfunded, but always in high demand, services and housing for individuals living with mental health is slowly becoming a

priority in the provision for supportive housing. Celebrating 30 years, the Society operates St. Francis Residence, a 24 bed residence serving this vulnerable client group. We have experienced firsthand, the lack of services for persons who require on going supportive housing as a result of mental health challenges. St. Francis Residence provides a secure, supervised environment for 24 men and women. The Society continually advocates for additional housing following this model. It is safe, secure, and cost-effective and addresses the reality

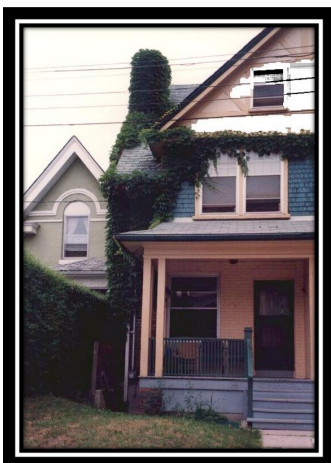
that some individuals simply need low supports in order to retain a level of functional independence.



De Paul House

hanced day programming. We hope to recognize our longest term resident, our beloved Lionel who turns 96 years of age this year by provid-

Recovery Housing



With a total of 86 beds, the Society operates a network of recovery homes to assist those who are committed to pursuing recovery. The Ministry of Health funds Ozanam House which is an 11 bed pre-treatment facility for men waiting to enter a recovery program. Once formal treatment has taken place, individuals can move into one of 13 Vincenzapaul Community Homes, residential housing for people to live and work in community with others perusing a clean and sober life.



We pray ...“For those who have no homes, that they may quickly find a place to lead a decent and happy life”

The Society owns many of the facilities we operate including Elisa House, Mary's Home, St. Clare's Residence, Ozanam House, 2 recovery homes, and the 3 homes for adults with developmental disabilities. These homes were able to be purchased due to a combination of housing grants, bequests and donors. The Society works in partnership with the Toronto Community Housing Corporation leasing homes for the recovery program and renting the St. Francis Residence facility from Mainstay Housing. We do rely on funding from benefactors as well as grants, to maintain the capital integrity of the buildings and to improve the program space. Additionally, funds are allocated each year for appliances, furniture and bed replacements as the wear and tear on these items is substantial. Operating funding does not always cover all costs associated with the programs, especially those which rely on occupancy to boost the income levels. Funding

shortfall is provided for through the support of Toronto Central Council, surpluses in some programs, and Stores Division revenue.

Over the years, the Society has responded by addressing the root cause of poverty which for so many is the basic need for housing. This was a brave response built on faith and thankfully, for those whom we serve, has resulted in this multi-service housing portfolio. Toronto Central Council was also involved in the development of a 164 unit rent geared to income building in East York in partnership with the Ministry of Housing. Gower Park Place is an award winning facility, and continues today with governance through a Vincentian Board.

The persons served in these programs and services are not limited in any way to the geography of the City of Toronto. Service is provided to persons eligible for; or in

need of particular supports. More than two thirds of the shelter and recovery residents are persons who reside outside the city core; persons seeking assistance outside their local community, those who wish to disenfranchise themselves, and those who simply go where the services are. While owned and operated by Toronto Central Council, the Society provides service to persons in need from across the province, the country and beyond.

We pray ...“For those who have no homes, that they may quickly find a place to lead a decent and happy life”

~ This issue of The Vincentimes was written by

*Louise Coutu,
Executive Director,
Toronto Central Council*



St. Clare Residence



Amelie House

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

38-1502 Warbler Woods Walk
London, ON
N6K 0A7

Email: secretary.ssvp@ssvp.on.ca



Visit us on the web

www.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 Events

February 28, 2018 — Annual Reports due from Particular Councils. Pass report up to Central Council or Regional.

March 28, 2018 — Annual Reports due from Central Councils. Pass report up to Regional.

April 13-14, 2018 — Ontario Regional Council's Annual General Members Meeting (aka the Spring Meeting), Hosted by the Toronto Central Council and St. Clement's Conference. For more information, please check your email and visit www.ssvp.on.ca

April 15, 2018 — 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.

January 15, 2018 — John Nordholt,
St Michaels Conference, Cobourg