

The Vincentimes

Volume 2, Issue 4

Summer 2014

Welcome to Marillac Place!

Marillac Place, a Saint Vincent De Paul Special Works Conference, is a home for moms and babies located in Kitchener, Ontario. Over the last 22 years we have housed a multitude of moms from different backgrounds, with their own unique life story, but all with limited financial resources, in need of a place to live and people to care about them. For these moms, Marillac Place becomes their home and the staff become their support system.

We can house up to 10 mothers between the ages of 16 to 25 and 11 babies. Moms can stay a maximum of 12 months which may start any time prenatal up to when the baby is two years old. This extended length of stay makes us unique and provides the moms time to make significant changes in life and to grow into independent women.

It takes individual hard work and commitment from the moms. All the

moms are responsible to do their share of cooking, cleaning, keeping their bedroom tidy and in general maintaining the house in good order, as well as attending weekly in-house meetings.

Our Residential Counselor works closely with each mother, helping them to set and achieve their goals. She co-ordinates with community support groups and agencies to ensure the mothers are receiving the help they need.

Our Program Manager spends time each day with mothers, helping them to gain valuable life skills catered to the particular needs of the residents at the time.

As a life-changing experience, the mothers work very hard to achieve their goals, whether it is to parent alone, parent with the support of family, regain custody, or to place their child up for adoption. Our role is to support the mothers as they make these important decisions and prepare



Marillac Place, a home for young mothers in need

them with the skills and resources they need to follow their plans.

For more information, visit www.marillacplace.ca

~ Danielle Anderson
Co-chair of the Board of Marillac Place

Helping Attawapiskat

Spring is slowly arriving this year but the sun continues to shine through our Vincentian spirit.

With the help of our PC conferences we began a project, to send winter clothes from our Val Caron Thrift store to Attawapiskat. This is a Native reserve in the far North of our Province.

After speaking to Fr. Vezina, the Catholic priest in Attawapiskat, our store manager and her crew began putting clothes into bags. Ed, Charlene, Dean, Michelle and Gord prepared and labelled 50 bags of clothing to be sent off.

We were so blessed to have three amazing companies who donated the transport.

We brought the bags to Muskoka deliveries where they shrink wrapped them on 4 skids. The clothes were now on its way to Cochrane. From there Ontario Northland Railway transported it to Moosonee where Air Creebec air lifted it to Attawapiskat.

So you see the journey is far and God blessed us with very generous companies. We are so grateful.

We spoke to Fr. Vezina and after two weeks they received the cargo;

they were extremely grateful. We are hoping that we can continue to build a relationship with the people in Attawapiskat.

Praying that they will have a gentle spring so they will not have to be evacuated again this year.

Keep praying for our friends in the North

~ Michelle Jenkinson
Rainbow Spirit North Particular Council

Healthy Eating out of a Food Bank

Healthy Eating out of a Food Bank is a new project intended to distribute a healthy eating newsletter to all our friends whenever we assist their families with food and groceries. It is developed by a registered dietician. Look for the quarterly newsletter on the websites of ONRC and SSVP National, then print the document and hand it out. Please help us with future issues by telling us that you (your conference name and location) are using the newsletter and how many people you serve (X families, Y adults, and Z children) with an e-mail response (see below). This way we can determine the breadth of the program and better target the audience. This new project is just another way Vincenians can help in all possible ways.

National:

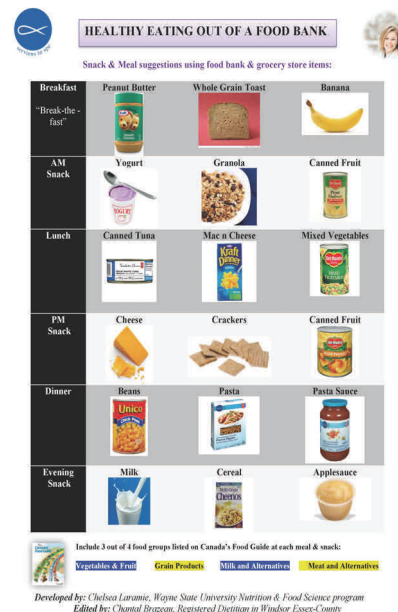
<http://www.ssvp.ca/English>
<http://www.ssvp.ca/Accueil>

Ontario:

<http://www.ssvp.on.ca/rc/index.php>

E-mail your intended usage and coverage to:
ssvpkingsvillecanada@hotmail.com

~ Michael Chomyshyn
 St. John de Brebeuf Conference
 Kingsville, Ontario



St Catharines Store Celebration

The St. Vincent de Paul store in St. Catharines has been serving its neighbours for 40 years. It was the suggestion of one of the parish priests who was ably assisted by some of his parishioners.

Initially we had rented quarters but when one of our former members retired, he used his savings to purchase a building. Over the years he and his family dedicated their lives to the success of this venture. The money was paid back to

the family and interestingly enough, his wife is still a regular volunteer.

During our celebration we decorated the outside of the store (making more people aware of us) and offered amazing sales. We served wonderful banana bread to the shoppers which was generously provided by St. Alfred's conference.

We are very grateful to all our volunteers who worked overtime to make sure of our suc-

cess. And a success it was. Our sales, our donations and our inquiries about volunteering are all up.

I would suggest that if your store is "lagging" find a reason for a party.

~ Annette Urlocker
 St Catharines

Home Visits

The home visit is vital in how we respond to the hardships of our neighbours in need. But it seems that there is a growing tendency to bypass the home visit and provide help in other ways. There are many reasons why this is happening, but it is often forgotten that the home visit is actually an exchange.

On the surface it appears that

we give and they receive.

But that is not so: everybody receives and everybody gives.

Because the home visit happens in someone's home, we are welcomed into the private space of someone in need; we are welcomed into the realm of poverty. Here the giver becomes the receiver and the receiver becomes the giver.

It is within the realm of poverty that we might realize that the promise of love has not been fulfilled yet. In no other place will we ever learn that.

~ Eddie Alkemade
 Toronto

FAITH, FRIENDS and HUMBLING WISDOM

Five years ago I became a member of Holy Family Conference. I did not one day "know" that I needed to join. I was asked by a friend, who is a member and felt I might be a good fit, to come and check out a meeting. Since then, I have gained knowledge and compassion for those we call our "Friends in Need".

I want to share a little of what I've learned.

A report by the Ministry of Health stated those living with mental illness are the most frequent repeat users of our hospital emergency system. I think I understand why.

Years ago, the government reduced the number of in-patient psychiatric beds. As a result, many who live with this invisible illness must live in "normal" society with outpatient support.

Society expects everyone who looks "normal" to be able to manage an average daily life. This places huge pressures and expectations on those afflicted by mental illness.

Some lack control of their emotions and behaviours; others cannot get a job because of the stigma associated with their diagnosis; some live on welfare; and some live in low rental housing which has its own negative realities. Some employers will not hire persons with a subsidized



Five years ago, Dora Johnston had no idea what being a Vincentian could do. She is now president of Holy Family Conference in London

housing address.

Many can't keep friends due to recurring symptoms. The friends they do have are often others in the same situation...they understand each other's plight. Negative habits such as drinking and doing drugs allow temporary escape from the realities of life. Many are ostracized by their families because of their illness-related behaviours.

The strong medications prescribed have side effects intolerable to many, so they stop taking them and symptoms return. The cycle starts again, which prompts the emergency visit.

In the ER, they see staff who know them from previous visits and

consider them "friends", looking forward to seeing them again. Here they feel acceptance, even if it is only because staff show them the care and compassion.

Society sees the results of all this, and judges.

I thank God that I have learned these things and that my understanding of mental illness has grown, in part due to my SSVP membership. I believe I am a better person for it.

Please feel free to join us for a meeting. Check us out and perhaps you might consider SSVP ministry as a volunteering option. Visit www.ssvp.on.ca to find a conference nearest you.

~ Dora Johnston, President
Holy Family Conference, London

SSVP Supplies

Anyone wanting Society of Saint Vincent de Paul supplies should go on National's web site and look under "catalog" for a list of available supplies at www.ssvp.ca

If you would like an apron or other clothing supplies as shown at the London ONRC meeting, contact Becky Ollett for a price list beckyollettssvp@gmail.com

Needing ONRC bookmarks English or French, Systemic Change Brochures or the new ONRC brochure, contact ONRC Secretary at geraldine.ssvp@hotmail.com

Need a copy of your aggregation certificate, contact Josee at national@ssvp.ca

Other brochures and forms can be printed right off the ONRC's website if you need to at www.ssvp.on.ca

~ Geraldine Campbell
ONRC Secretary

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

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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.

Notice of Passings

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

Jan 13, 2014: Eugene Whaling, St Joseph, Stratford

Feb 21, 2014: Elizabeth Smits, Burford, Brant Particular Council

Jan 28, 2014: Vince Heffernan, Peterborough

March 31, 2014: John de Bakker, Our Lady Help of Christians, Wallaceburg (Kent Particular Council)

Announcements

Congratulations to St Benedict Conference in Milton as our newest conference.

Congratulations to Thunder Bay Particular Council as our newest particular council.

Grimsby Particular Council is now closed. Their conferences have moved to either Hamilton West Particular Council or to St Catharines Particular Council.

Upcoming Dates

June 2014 — National AGA in Edmonton, AB

July 15, 2014 — 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)

September 12-13, 2014 — Ontario Regional Council Annual General Assembly in Barrie, Ontario