

Rejuvenation Workshop January 2021

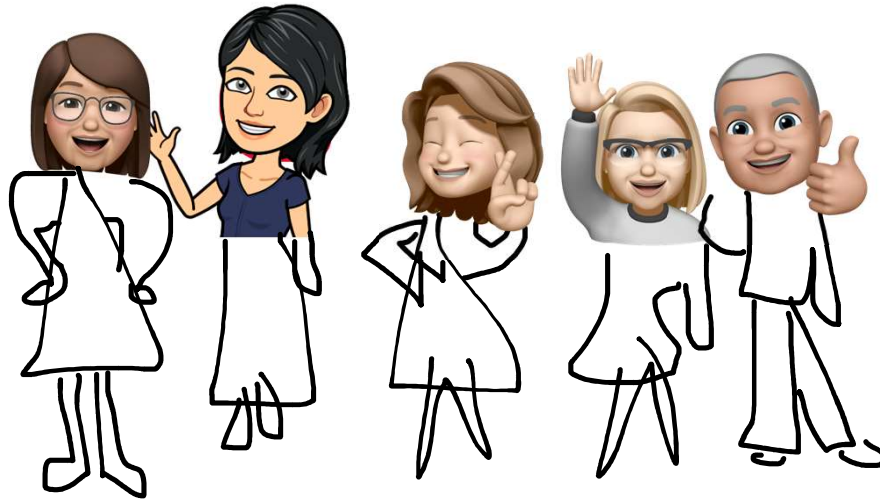


Rejuvenating Our Society before its too late!

By The Ontario Rejuvenation Team: Linda Dollard, Phil Bondy, Pat Lenz,
Linda Alexander and Judith Nunn



Introducing the team...



Linda D

My name is Linda Dollard, President of Ontario Regional Council, and my team includes, Linda Alexander and Judith Nunn from Halton Particular Council, Pat Lenz from Brant Particular Council and Phil Bondy, Vice President of Council/Conference Rejuvenation for Ontario Regional Council.”



**The Society is showing signs of decline and has lost touch
with spirituality and our mission**

LD

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After I became ONRC President in July 2016, I made 50+ calls to Council and Conference Presidents to hear about the good work being done by the Society & also to hear about the challenges facing the Society.

The one thing I heard repeated over and over again was “our Councils & Conferences are in need of rejuvenation.

What does that mean – 7 topics were identified – Spirituality, Succession Planning, Recruitment & Orientation, Member training & development, Communication, Public Awareness & Stores.



**Our Society depends on our dedication and baptismal
responsibility to care for persons in need**

LD

Our Society depends on our dedication and baptismal responsibility to care for persons in need

We must always focus on our mission to live the gospel message by serving Christ in the poor with love, respect, justice and joy.

Think about these 3 questions - Why did you become a Vincentian? Why do you stay involved? Do you care about the future of our Society?

I have been a Vincentian for 14 years; I became involved when someone personally invited me to join. I stay involved because of my passion for helping people & I continue to grow spiritually when serving persons in need and, in particular, when I have done home visits. After each home visit, I get a reality check and I thank God for my many blessings. Since we have been unable to do home visits in the normal way due to covid, I have had time to reflect and focus on what is important which is doing whatever I can to help in all possible ways. I know that I will continue to stay involved & serve persons in need for as long as I am physically able to do so. The future of our society is very important to me, as I am sure it is for you too."



**If we don't take action *NOW* the Society which we are
passionate about may not have a future**

Ld

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During my term as President, I have seen Conferences and Councils who have become stagnant, and this has taken place over a number of years due to lack of rejuvenation, and I have seen Conferences & Councils sadly close.

Where Conferences and Councils have become stagnant, we must be ready to renew and rejuvenate them with fresh creative ideas to inject vibrancy and strength for the future of our Society.




**We want to renew the organization with energy and
commitment to enhance our service to persons in need**

LD

We want to renew the organization with energy and commitment to enhance our service to persons in need

We all want to renew and rejuvenate our Conferences and Councils so we can have attractive Conferences & Councils with spirituality being embraced, having more members join us and having more skillful leaders.

We all want to be able to expand upon our programs helping persons in need and helping them in all possible ways giving them the dignity and respect they so deserve.



By taking this pathway we can move SSVP to a place of
vibrancy and strength

1 2 3

LD

We are going to propose to you a pathway forward for rejuvenation and will focus on 3 main pillars that we believe will result in the outcome we are passionate in achieving.

When we commit to this pathway, we will be successful in moving our Society to a place of vibrancy and strength.

By Embracing Vincentian Spirituality

1



LD

The first pillar of rejuvenation is “embracing spirituality”. This is such a key pillar that we have seen neglected over time.

Did you know that in Ontario, nearly half of our Conferences and Councils are without a Spiritual Advisor which results in little to no spirituality.

We have an amazing Spirituality Committee in Ontario chaired by Denise Bondy who provides support and resources, so what are we waiting for?

You will hear more about “Embracing spirituality” from Pat Lenz.



LD

The second pillar of rejuvenation is the “Volunteer Cycle” of Recruit, engage, train and retain. Without this, we are not going to grow.

It is critical that Conferences and Councils have an action plan to recruit more members and to think outside the box – what has been tried in the past does not work.

Ontario Regional Council has a Rejuvenation Team, who you see here doing this presentation, which has developed tools and resources to assist with the volunteer cycle.

You will hear more about the “Volunteer Cycle” from Linda Alexander & Judith Nunn.



LD:

The third pillar of rejuvenation is “Succession Planning” – building leaders out of

Vincentians and Vincentians out of Leaders.

This pillar is often neglected until it becomes an emergency situation and there is no one ready and willing to step into the President’s role.

Phil Bondy who you will hear from has developed a Succession Planning workshop which has been very successful in Ontario.

Once leaders are in place, collaboration and support from all of us is needed as they are in an emergency situation and there is no one ready and willing

to step into the President’s role.

Phil Bondy who you will hear from has developed a Succession Planning workshop which has been very successful in Ontario.

Once leaders are in place, collaboration and support from

all of us is needed as they are not alone.
Now I will turn it over to Pat Lenz.

Embracing Vincentian Spirituality

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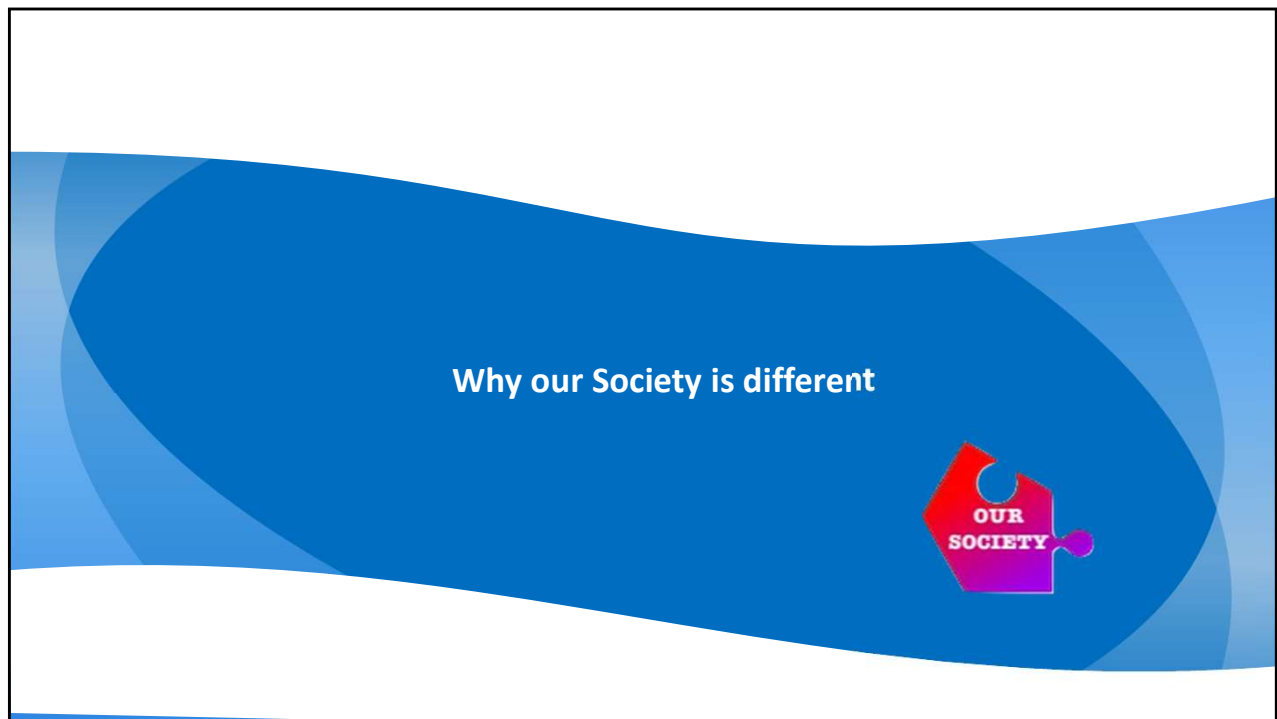


Pat

Many are called to the Society through a desire to serve, to give back by ministering to our neighbours in need. This is a daunting task but fortunately we have strong tools to assist us in this service, the tools of Vincentian spirituality.

We are reminded in the Canadian Statutes (accompanying our International Rule) that “The Gospels are the prime source of Vincentian spirituality. Meditating on the spirit of the Rule and on the lives of the saints, especially those of Saint Vincent de Paul and Blessed Frédéric Ozanam is recommended for greater spiritual development.”

To remind us further of the depths of this support available to all Vincentians I will rely, not on my own words, but on those of our patron, our founder and our leadership.



Pat

The first component of our spirituality puzzle is Our Society.

How **is** the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul different – from other organizations dedicated to supporting those in need and even from other faith-based groups?

Our patron St. Vincent de Paul exhorts his contemporaries and Vincentians throughout the ages to “Go to the poor: you will find God.”

The Rule explains that “Members show their commitment through person-to-person contact.”

In short, we are unique because of the spiritual context of our service and our practice of home visits.

The Spiritual Advisor is the glue



Pat

The role of the Spiritual Advisor, as mandated by our Canadian Statutes and emphasized in the current SSVP Canada Strategic Plan, is to "... foster the spiritual life within the conference/Council in the light of guidance from the Holy Spirit" in order to support Vincentians in this challenging venture of serving through personal contact with those in need.

As a lay organization, it is absolutely fitting that our spiritual advisors be lay persons. While the role has traditionally been filled by clergy or religious, the current reality dictates that these people are pulled in so many directions. To further expect that Father or Sister or Deacon could immerse him/herself in Vincentian spirituality in order to best guide other Vincentians is rarely feasible.

The most practical advice I have been given about the search for a lay spiritual advisor is "Don't worry about finding the right person already in your conference/Council. Instead look around at daily Mass for a faith-filled parishioner who would welcome the opportunity to share his/her faith journey with others, even to the point of learning about and embracing Vincentian spirituality."

Our founder will soon be a saint.



Pat

Beyond the words of wisdom from Vincent 400 years ago we are inspired by the work and words of the founders of our Society, especially Blessed Frederic Ozanam, a soon-to-be saint!

In his words, "We must do what is agreeable to God. ...Let us learn of Him."

He & his confreres brought to life the charism (grace) of Saint Vincent, showing us the path through service to salvation.

Our Mission and Values ground us and everything we do



Pat

A mission statement is a short statement of why an organization exists, what its overall goal is, identifying the goal of its operations.

The mission statement of SSVP in Canada is a striking example of this statement of purpose:

“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.”

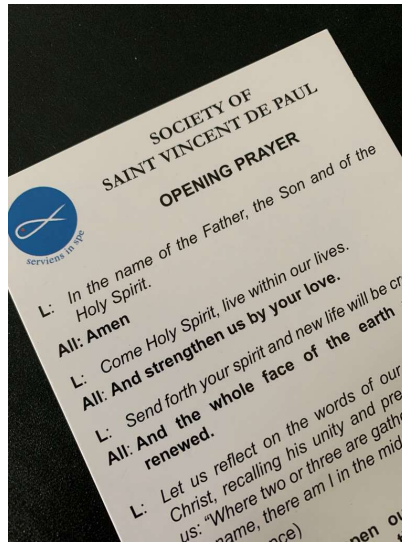
And ...A **value statement** shows the “soul” of the organization (its priorities).

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.

These clear messages are gifts to our ministry, bringing clarity to our intentions, direction to our planning and light to our journey of hope.

Our opening prayer guides and directs us



Pat

A rich prayer life is as much a source of enrichment, enlightenment and strength to a group (a conference or Council) as it is to an individual.

For our meetings, the Canadian Statutes provide our Opening and Closing Prayer,

The recommended meeting agenda provided in the Statutes shows a gathering beginning with the Opening Prayer, followed by a time of spiritual reflection and consideration of a segment of the Rule.

The spiritual reflection will, ideally, be shaped by a Spiritual Advisor steeped in Vincentian spirituality, easing all present into a Vincentian frame of mind, in which all subsequent discussions and decisions will take place.

Finally, Ontario region has developed a prayer for Vincentian vocations which all conferences and Councils in the region are encouraged to pray regularly.

Prayer is our way in



Pat

From our Statutes we understand that “The fundamental activity (of a conference) is the person-to-person encounter with the poor through home visits...”

Whether your conference is able at this moment in time to attain that ideal mode of operation or is currently serving your neighbours in need in alternate ways, the strength to do this work comes through prayer.

As expressed in The Rule, “Vincentians pray that the Holy Spirit may guide them during their visits and make them channels for the peace and joy of Christ.”

There are numerous benefits to prayer BEFORE , during and after an encounter with a person in need.

And, when, during your conference meeting, whether in person or virtual, you are reflecting on or problem solving about, one or more visits, would you pray with your Vincentian family for specific friends in need?



Pat

Vincent is often-quoted as saying "Humility is nothing but truth"

For many people of faith the journey to holiness is complicated and confusing and unclear.
For the Vincentian the path is clear.

As Vincent explains "When you are called from your prayers or the Eucharistic celebration to serve the poor, you lose nothing, since to serve the poor is to go to God."

We are growing in faith because we are serving



Pat

Our journey of Humility is reflected in our attitude to persons in need and those who serve with us.

A sure way for a Christian to grow rapidly in holiness is a conscientious effort to carry out God's Will in all circumstances and at all times." – words of wisdom from our patron

In my professional life (as an educator) I chose to work in the Catholic school system – with other people of faith - to nurture me along my faith journey.

As a Vincentian I have again chosen to walk with other people of faith: my Vincentian colleagues, leaders (local, regional, national, International), and of course, our neighbours in need.

It is a calling and not a hobby



Pat

A true Vincentian is a servant leader.

An indifferent volunteer volunteers on their own timetable while a dedicated Vincentian does what is needed - on the timetable of the persons being served - and looks at the role as a vocation, as a response to a call into ministry and service and living out the gospel message of service.

Those who inspire me most along this journey are those who share in this vocation, this ministry, this calling.

Does anyone come to mind?

**Vincentian family stays true to its values and seeks support
and help on the journey**



Pat The embodiment of the Vincentian family begins in your own conference, extends to all levels of Council, up to and including the International.

An inspiration to me in this respect is our International President-General Renato Lima de Oliveira.

In his first talk to the Canadian SSVF AGM in 2018 he explained how he manages the busy life as head of an international charity – in addition to a “day job” and young family.

One weekend a month he devotes to family, one to his local conference work, one to SSVF Brazil, the last to International work.

Clearly his life is more complicated than this but the important point is his ongoing grounding in his local Vincentian family.

Personally I also find inspiration from the daily prayer/news feed from famvin.org, a website speaking to and for all those in the broader Vincentian family – and, of course, from the local Vincentians with whom I talk, laugh, grieve, pray, problem-solve, celebrate and serve on a daily basis.

We give of ourselves totally in the home visits



Pat We listen and receive as we go in empty and are filled.

Whenever I am orienting new Vincentians or sharing our story with others I talk about the origins of the Society.

young Catholic students boasting of their faith

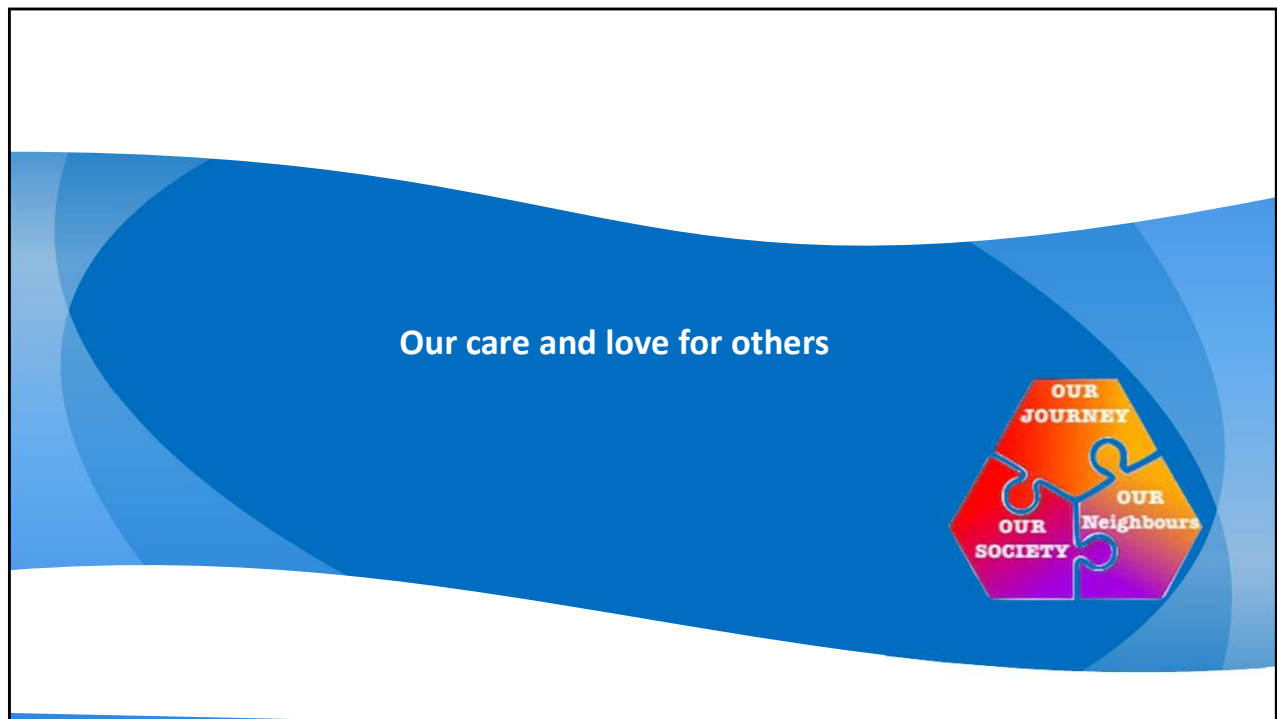
non-religious compatriots calling them on it

resolution by Frederic et ses amis: serve those in need

advice from Daughters of Charity

visit in their homes

Humility is magnified at its best in a home visit



Pat

The puzzle is complete when we add our care and love for others.

-our care for others including those we serve and those who serve with us. Our feelings for those we serve are not intended to be passive.

Indeed Vincent declares "Let us love God my brothers, let us love God. But let it be with the strength of our arms and the sweat of our brow."

“We are servants and they are our masters”



Pat

Its not about me.

Many of us have heard Vincent de Paul’s proclamation that “The poor are your masters and you will find them terribly exacting masters.”

I think the rest of that quote is even more powerful: “So the more unattractive and dirty they are, the more rude and unfair they are, the more you must lavish your love upon them. It is only by feeling your love that the poor will forgive you your gifts of bread.”

Our ministry can most effectively and appropriately be undertaken only from a servant leader perspective.

Listening means we are open to receiving



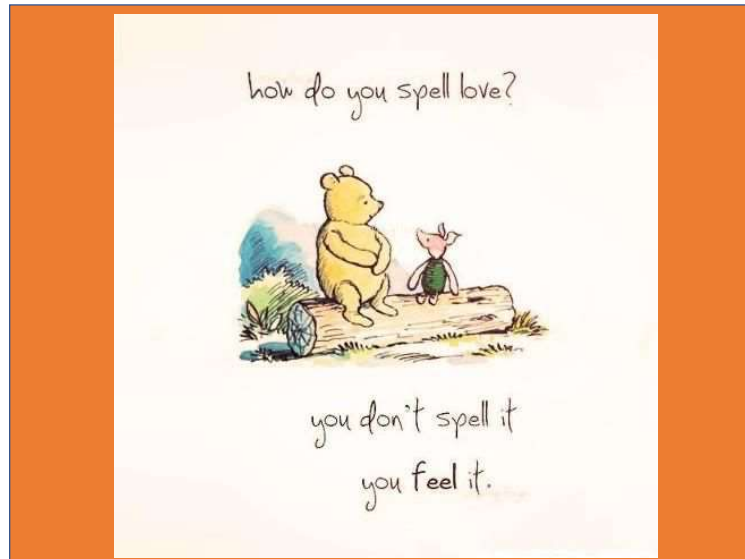
Pat

Rosalie Rendu & her colleagues, in advising young Frederic and his companions, explained that, in order to best serve, we cannot decide the needs of an individual or family; rather we must listen to their story and their needs, then provide.

The way Vincent explains it is “We should strive to keep our hearts open to the sufferings and wretchedness of other people, ...”

Frederic obviously learned the lesson because he tells us “Knowledge of the poor and needy is not gained by poring over books or in discussions with politicians, but by visiting the slums where they live, sitting by the bedside of the dying, feeling the cold they feel and learning from their lips the causes of their woes.”

Our attitude is everything to those we serve and to those who serve with us.



Pat

Our patron Vincent is very clear in his direction to his followers "Make it a practice to judge persons and things in the most favorable light at all times and under all circumstances."

I was gratified and heartened by a recent 5-star Google review of our Thrift Store operation noting: "... Met a man named Larry, very humble and kind."

Ours is a relational ministry, not a transactional experience. It calls us far beyond the action of dropping off the groceries.

The Rule promises that "Vincentians serve the poor cheerfully, listening to them and respecting their wishes, helping them to feel and recover their own dignity, for we are all created in God's image. In the poor, they see the suffering Christ." AND further

"Vincentians endeavour to establish relationships based on trust and friendship. ... They do not judge those they serve. Rather, they seek to understand them as they would a brother or sister."

And we strive to do all this "... with love, respect, justice and JOY."



Thank you Pat. The second element of rejuvenation is the Volunteer Cycle.
Recruit, engage Train and retain.

You may not have thought of it as a cycle before but in order for our rejuvenation efforts to bear long term fruit we have to think of this as a cycle from now on.

Recruit, engage, train and retain.

I am going to talk to you about recruitment and Linda will move into the other parts which are arguably even more important than recruitment itself. Even during covid we are able to welcome new members in to help us to connect to those in need.



J

Many of you at the last AGA in 2019 will recall the challenge made to everyone to just recruit in one person.

If we each recruit one person we could double our membership.

Despite what has happened since then, recruitment remains the number one lifeline for our declining society.

Recruitment has to be a focus because we have neglected it in the past.

Anyone with a higher percentage of senior members or very few members have to prioritize this now and so, we have to adapt.

Know your elevator speech



J

If you were given two minutes could you briefly explain why YOU were called into SSVP and why its so special?

Knowing what SSVP means to you and a special story that touches your heart could be the turning point for someone else.

A very small percentage of the population knows what SSVP does and perhaps a smaller number is aware of the significant levels of poverty. Do you know what the poverty statistics are in your area? Even in the most affluent parts of Canada poverty exists even though poverty looks different in different areas.

We are inviting people into a vocational experience, we are not just looking for a warm body, a volunteer. Our society is more than that. One member, Domenica from our conference said this" *the work of SSVP fills my cup in a world that empties it.*"

The work we do is about accompaniment and building trust with each of our encounters with the neighbours in need.

Think about what you currently do in your conference and how special it is. If we want to do better and do more, we need more people and more energy!

What are we recruiting into? Take a look in the mirror.



J

Before we start we all have to pause and consider, into what, am I recruiting?

Take a pragmatic and hard look at the culture of the membership.

Are you open and welcoming or are you a culture that is negative and resistant to change and new ideas and growth. Even if your conference is small, the energy in the group is so important.

Are we flexible, friendly, fun and faith filled?

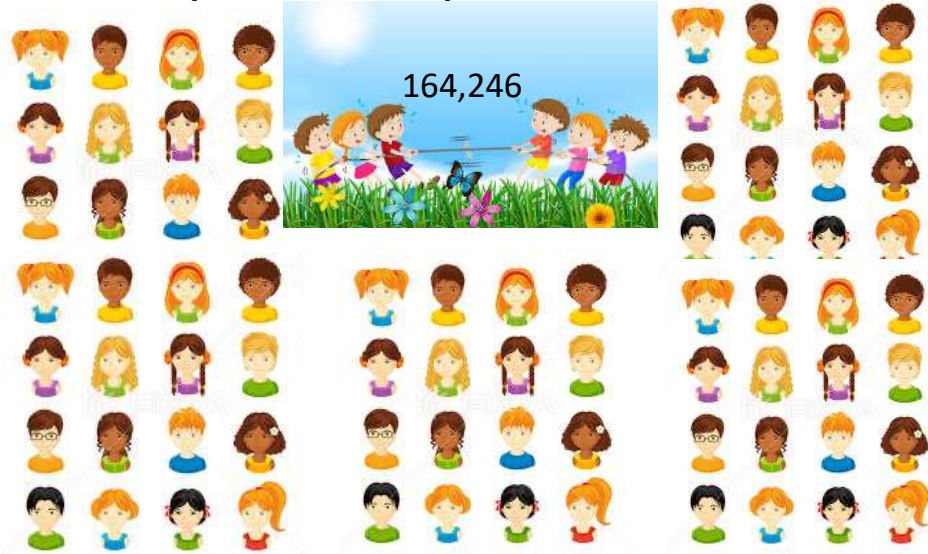
If you were to make a culture statement about your conference what 7 words would it include?

Welcoming, inclusive, spiritual, open, transparent, dynamic, friendly, Or

Would they be: inflexible, autocratic, self-focused, grumpy, fatigued, proud, static.

Stay in touch during covid and use the tools available to keep the members together will make all the difference to the experience that members share with their family and friends. It's the members of your conference and YOU who will be recruiting in new members.

Emphasize the impact of what we do



People love to help children

We served over *150,000 children* in 2019 across Canada.

Maybe it's the children we can help to move out of poverty?

How exciting it is to think that we have the ability to change the future of over 2% of the population?

It is with the children where the hope for the future lies.

Isn't this worth shouting about?

Children are our future.

Could we use these facts and goals to attract new members into SSVP?

Highlight the activities of the Society



J Pre-covid our most impactful way to spread the exciting news about SSVP was through the address to the congregation. The pulpit talks. For the time being we cannot do this, so we need to step up our game in other ways.

Covid is an opportunity to step up, because it is already a time of change.

If we are doing transformative work there is no reason why we cannot tell people about it.

During covid people are wanting to contribute.

Much of what we can do during covid can be done from home. Personal contact with the poor has changed now and staying in touch is as important.

We can build relationships with our neighbours in need and make a difference without doing home visits.

So lets talk about how we are doing this.

We have church bulletins, websites, facebook pages, and email lists to use and we have no choice but to use all the tools in our covid toolbox.

Lets pray intentionally for new members to come forward



J

If we are not praying this won't work.

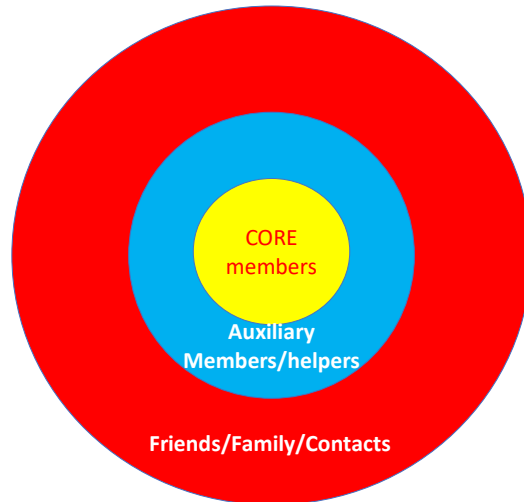
Ask for the intercession of our founder soon to be Saint Blessed Frederic Ozanam.

Pray for new Vincentians. At each meeting say the prayer for New Vincentians.

Pat mentioned the prayer for vocations already.

Since we are serving His most vulnerable He will help us - if we ask.

How can we build our circle of support?



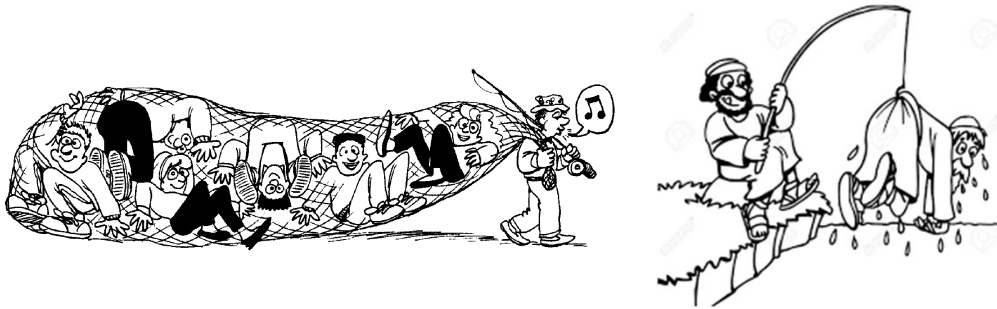
J Since we are in rejuvenation mode we must have a strategy. A plan of action for success. What is our recruitment strategy for rejuvenation?

Consider this circle on the screen. Everyone watching this is right in the middle yellow circle. We are at the grass roots. We have the interactions with the families we are witnessing the suffering and we are witnessing God work in action.

We have conversations about SSVP with people in the next circle, the blue circle. These are people on the periphery of the Society, the auxiliary members, those that help at events, occasionally at the stores, our supporters.

The work of SSVP can be shared wider, with those in the red circle. This is the congregation, the schools, your friends and extended family. Here are some examples. : **Earlier** in the pandemic a member of our conference in the yellow circle spoke to a friend of hers in the red circle and the timing was perfect and she was so interested she stepped forward to become a member of SSVP and has already been involved with the monthly phone contact phone tree calling. **Another** example member sharing the Christmas drive donation information with her friends by simply sharing an email request. This is how the circle draws outwards and then back in as people in the outer rings, move closer to the core. ABR! Everyone recruits. Not just the Presidents!

World Day of the Poor weekend is a SSVP gift



J

Thank you Pope Francis! Now every year SSVP has a weekend we can adopt for our mission and to grow our Society.

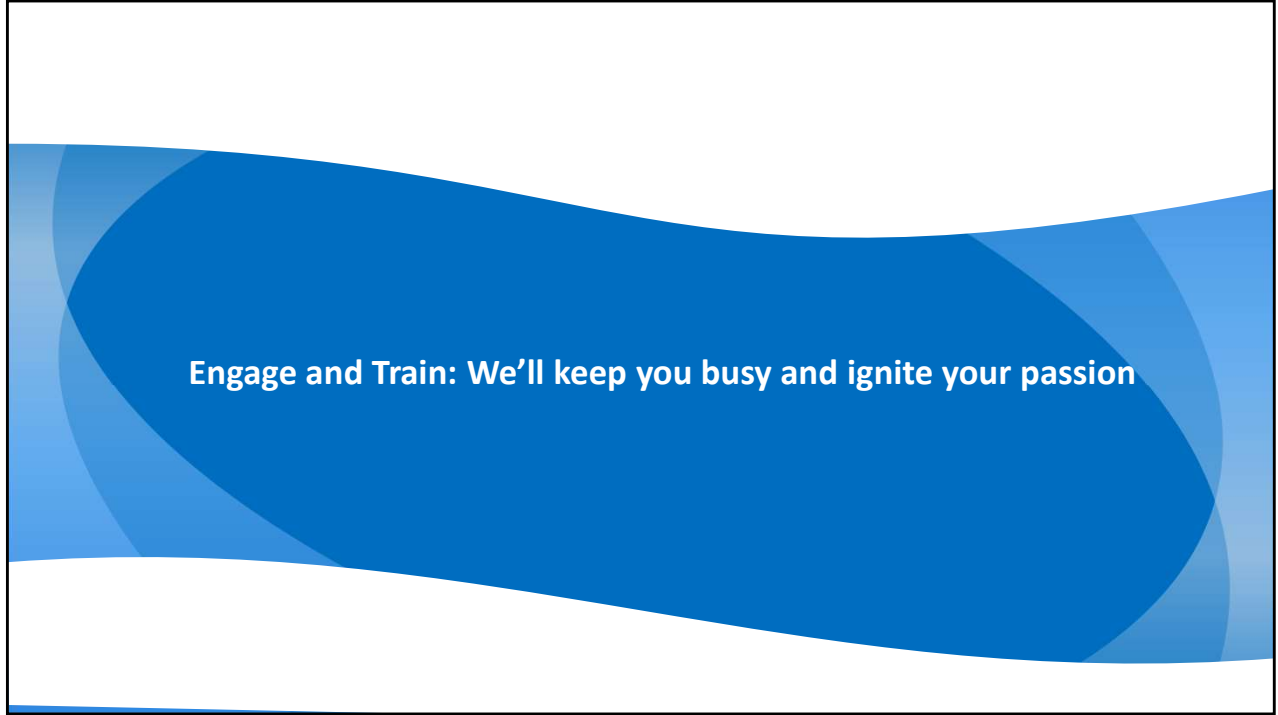
Blessed Frederic Ozanam was always recruiting in new and younger members with fresh ideas, if he had the marketing and media tools we had he would have used them. Lets not disappoint him!

Remember the fishing net and the fishing pole?

First we send out the message like throwing out the fishing net. The conversations that follow are key. This is the fishing pole.

Then one on one conversations take place and these are often invitations to join SSVP.

When we bring people into SSVP, especially at this challenging time, its important to give them something to do and hopefully make them feel valued.



LA

Every Conference needs an orientation and welcome process



LA Welcoming the members into Ministry has certainly proven a challenge during Covid but it remains a key focus.

Every Conference needs a well-defined and organized orientation and welcome process

2 people fulfilling the crucial role of volunteer coordinator is key. Whenever possible we pair 2 people together on key roles as we are always stronger together.

We have heard stories of people reaching out to join us in service and no one bothered to call them back.

We only get one chance to disappoint a person that is being called into Ministry

If we drop the ball, they will go and volunteer elsewhere.

We have to be consistent with this process and need to take it seriously

Create a new member orientation and onboarding process to welcome new members, to deliver the orientation and screening and the initial training

Set up some performance standards to follow, such as you will call a prospective new member within 1 week of them expressing an interest, you will have them go through the orientation and screening process within 3 weeks of your initial conversation, you will have them interact with a family within 1 month of them joining

Whatever you set as your performance standards for each step of this process, make sure

to honour it

Everyone watches the same training videos and we all learn together

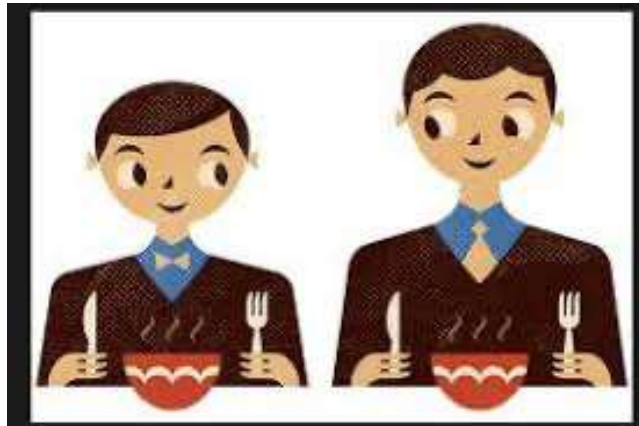


LA

Everyone watches the same videos and we all learn together

There are key powerpoint presentations on the National website, extra training videos, make sure everyone goes through this initial training.

Each new member can be partnered with a ministry buddy as a mentor



LA

Each new member can be partnered with a ministry buddy as a mentor

So they will have a seasoned Vincentian who can walk alongside them into service

Engagement is an essential element of the volunteer cycle



LA Engagement is the most important element of the volunteer cycle.

The interaction and the encounter with the family is so key in engaging the members.

This has been much more challenging as our ability to do home visits has been so curtailed due to Covid.

Many conferences have successfully pivoted from the face to face home visit to visits being conducted over the phone.

The encounter with the family is where a volunteer becomes a Vincentian.

Once the needs are placed on their hearts they will want to do their best to help

Each person needs to be given a task



LA

Each person needs to be given a task

Our job as leaders is to help the new member find where they can best share their gifts and talents with the families.

Find out where their interests and passions lie and help them bring these forth for the benefit of the families.

Have them join the dental team, the recreation team, the Canada Learning Bond team, as examples of engagement vehicles

**Home Visits and personal interactions are our core business
and allow us to touch the wounds of Christ**



LA Home visits and personal interactions with the neighbours in need are our core business.

This allows us to touch the wounds of Christ and bring His love to them through our interaction.

We are temporarily restricted due to Covid, but we can still have personal contact with those in need, over the phone as an example.

We are able to get to know them, to listen and know their stories and understand what their needs are.

We listen and then we help.

Help the members to experience direct interaction with the neighbours in need as part of their engagement into the ministry.



LA

We come together as a family so we belong



LA Here is a picture of us coming together as a family pre Covid.

We have shifted temporarily to zoom meetings, which is working out quite well. The more zoom meetings we conduct, the more comfortable the members are getting with the forum.

Connection and belonging is key.

Create opportunities for members to feel like they are an important part of the team.

We value our members and respect them and thank them



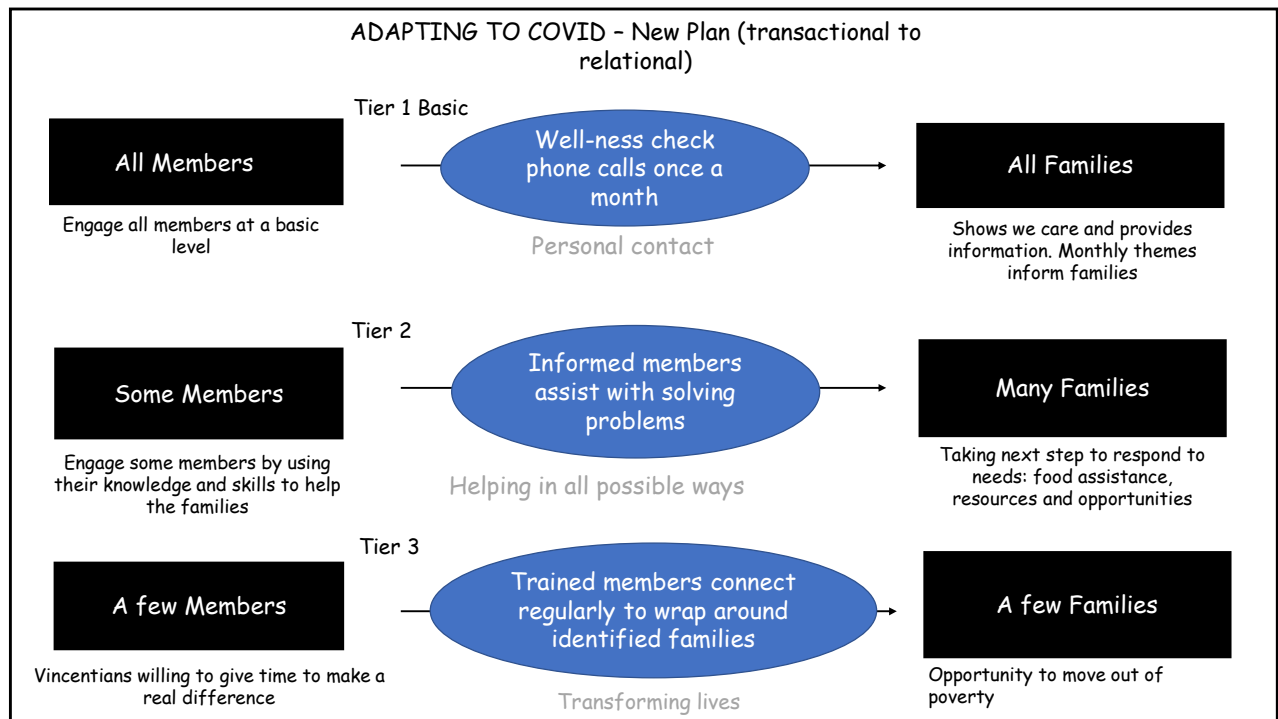
LA

We value our members and respect them and thank them (Omit this one)

Using the words THANK YOU is so important.

Let the members know what they are doing is making a difference to the families, to their fellow members and to the Ministry

Especially during Covid, it is even more important to stay in touch with team members, to encourage, empower, thank them.



Slide 46 A - Sometimes you have adapt to retain and engage the members. Covid is one of these times.

I will briefly give an overview of this slide that shows our vision of engaging the members and continuing to stretch past transactional to relational

If you want to learn more about our approach in covid, feel free to reach out after the presentation to either Judith or me

Tier 1 is engaging all of the members, (or as many as are able) through involvement in our monthly wellness phone calls that are placed to all of the families.

Tier 2 is engaging some of the members for many of the families and this is assisting with problem solving and connecting the families into various programs, opportunities and services.

Tier 3 is for engaging a few members and a few families, where we will have trained members who will connect regularly to wrap around identified families. Tier 3 is still in the pilot phase.



Phil The third theme for renewal and rejuvenation is about **Leadership**.

Making leaders out of Vincentians and making Vincentians out of leaders.

I have been given the opportunity and privilege by the Society over the past 8 years to visit many conferences, councils and SSVP stores across Ontario.

We have many dedicated, hardworking, faith filled Vincentians. I often hear how their talents and potential are not fully utilized resulting in the Society's efforts to serve our friends in need falling short of our potential.

Their Vincentian Spirit is boundless, so what is missing?

One word...Leadership.

This may seem like a bold statement when we have so many very gifted and dedicated Vincentians but it can be best demonstrated every election cycle when a council or conference President term expires.

Far too often a common challenge prevails...**how to find a leadership successor to step forward?**

The five most feared words Vincentians do not want to hear are... **Who wants my Presidents job?**

Who wants my President Job?



Ph

When these words are spoken, a vibrant atmosphere that prevailed at meetings **often ceases**. **Silence now looms**. Even the most vocal person suddenly becomes **Mute**.

Eye contact with the President no longer exists. Instead, **eyes skillfully** seek safety identifying the nearest **Exit door**.

So Why do we fear these 5 simple words?

Over several decades we have created a **Negative Image** and **Expectation** of the duties that accompany the person carrying the title of ... **President**.

These **barriers** have hurt our Society on many developmental avenues inclusive of;

Vincentian Spirituality

Member recruitment

Outreach initiatives to support our Mission

As a result, many conferences and councils are experiencing an **aging membership**, whose ability to serve the **increasing** and **changing challenges** of the families we serve, is becoming difficult.

To continue to succeed in fulfilling our Mission and Goals of the Society, we **MUST** change our **Cultural Mindset** on the Role of a President

So, where do we start to answer the question of...**WHY**... do Many Vincentians resist the **Vocation Call** to step forward as Leaders?

What we did in the past did not work



What we did in the Past to select a President did not work or at best had limited success.

Some **Historical Approach's** we used to find Leadership candidate include;

- We **Pressure** a person into accepting the leadership position
- Often the **last person recruited** is given the task
- A **sympathetic person** may step up when no one else will come forward.
- The parish priest "**volunteers**" a recruitment
- The position goes **vacant**

What Risks are involved with this kind of Historical Approach?

We have faced years of neglect



A Person whose **leadership skills are weak** may result in;

- **New members** are not attracted if the conference environment **does not meet their expectations**
- Members may begin to **lose interest** and may leave if they **are not engaged**
- Meetings may become **disorganized and not exciting** resulting in people find reasons not to attend
- Conferences may start to **cut processes on services**, they may no longer do **home visits** or conduct **new member screening and orientation**
- Spiritual readings and reflections are **abbreviated** or **become absent**
- They may **Discourage rejuvenation**, and not interested in new ideas

A person who **reluctantly** accepts the position may become **disgruntled** with the Society

- They find ways to cut corners just to get thru their term of office

Orientation and Training for New Presidents was often minimal and, in many cases, **did not exist**.

- Any mentoring by the Past President was **often limited to the knowledge base** the Past President, which may not comply with **Rules book**
- Training and Information Resources were often not used

Members expect that once you have the **title of President**, you are now an **INSTANT Expert** on all matters of business and the Society

- Conference problems are viewed to belong to the **President, NOT the members!**

Who in their right mind would want this?



Phil

We have created an environment that discourages leaders to step forward.

Simply put, many of our Succession Planning processes over the past several decades have **failed.**

Our **Society's future** is dependant upon our **ability to attract leaders** to carry us forward in the constant changing landscape of poverty.

We can **no longer** continue to go down the old pathways of Succession Planning.

We have many talented Vincentians and **we need to create an environment that attracts them to accept leadership roles.**

We must change our process ...**Now.**

We need to raise the bar



Phil

We need to raise the bar!

- We need to **treasure what is special and what is important about our Society.**
- Without excellent leadership **respected** and **supported by membership**, we will not be able to serve the families in the best way possible
- We need to **Raise our goals for the families** we serve
- We need to **Raise our expectations of the members** and our Vincentian Family
- We need to **create an environment** where the **skills and talents of all members are brought forth** for the benefit of the families

Its time to raise the bar!

- Where do we start?

Click to next Slide

Identify and invite the best person to lead



Phil We MUST Identify and Invite the Best possible person to Lead – there can be NO EXCEPTIONS

To help us in this identification process, we must first define **What Skills** are necessary to be a good leader.

Skills should include: Spirituality that represents values of the SSVP, Good Communication skills, Good Listening skills

Good organizational skills, Good technical skills, Reliable, open minded, Know and Respect the Rule

Sense of humour, Time management & prioritizing, Building relationships, Motivate people
Recruit/retain new people, Know the limits of their weaknesses, Patience & understanding, Good work ethic

Non judgemental, Inclusive of everyone, Good facilitator, Strong mediator and negotiator
Manage people, Enthusiasm. Compassion

You may say, this is quite a shopping list of skills.

You are correct...this is why it is vital that you must Identify and Invite the Best person to lead because....

Who will step forward to be the President



Phil

We need to **create an environment** that helps identify potential Leaders

Consider **changing the Nomination Process** whereby members

- First, review the **desired leadership skills** necessary to lead the conference or council
- **Each member then** Nominates a person who **best exemplifies the necessary leadership skills**
- Go beyond just providing a Nominee Name, but also **detail** the Skills your see and respect in the person you are nominating

For a Nominee, hearing what skills his/her peers see in the nominee may encourage the potential nominee to let their name stand

But is just changing our method of Nominee Selection process by itself enough?

- Is there more that must be done other than just Identifying and Inviting a person with the Best skills to consider accepting a nomination?

The answer is...YES

Then the role of the President changes



Phil

A New President brings together a New Leadership Team.

This is the opportunity to rejuvenate, to introduce new ideas, new passions, new visions, new excitement, to rekindle your conference or councils Spirituality

With a fully Committed, Engaged, Empowered Leadership and Support Team, the President can now perform the duties associated with Leadership, Mentorship and Visionary.

Click to next Slide

Everyone takes ownership to support the President and team



Ph

Everyone MUST take Ownership to Support the President and Team.

Each person has the **Responsibility** to let the President know what talents they have **AND** clearly state they are willing and ready to Serve.

DO NOT WAIT TO BE ASKED TO PARTICIPATE. Failing to step forward to share your talents weakens the conference.

Take **Ownership** of your talents. **Empower** yourself to support the President, fully engage yourself, do not become a passive bystander waiting for directions.

Why is this critical?

A Conference or Council requires a **Leadership Team of Vincentians** to be effective.

This means **EVERYONE** must participate and **use the talents** they possess to their fullest.

Remember, when a President's term ends, so do the duties of his/her Executive also end.

It is important to build a strong executive team



Phil,

- The **basic Team** is inclusive of VP, Secretary, Treasurer and Spiritual Advisor
- **Optimum Teams** include Youth, Social Justice, Advocacy, Store, Prison Ministry, other Special Works Chair persons

All these components are necessary to establish a **healthy base** for development of activities your conference or council strives to achieve.

So, what happens if any of these team positions are not filled? **Simply put, the Team is weakened**, meaning others must now share additional duties or worse, the conference does not fulfill its potential to carry out our Mission to Serve.

It may be necessary to **go OUTSIDE the conference** or Council membership to Identify & Invite the Best person with the skills necessary to **join** your team.

This task belongs to ALL Team members to achieve.

Click to next Slide

We have many training resources we can utilize for all roles.



Ph When we have assembled a quality Team of Vincentians to carry out various duties, is the job now done...?

The short answer is ...**NO**

Orientation and **Training** are very key requirements and its importance **CANNOT** be understated. Too often, training has been non existent or incomplete. **The mentality of Sink or Swim must cease.**

All Leadership Team Positions require Orientation and Training.

- Orientation/Training **MUST** be thorough using a wide variety of tools available for us.
- **Mentoring** by past leaders is important, but mentoring by itself does not replace the many resource rich tools available that are fundamental for a new leader be effective and successful.
- The first and most important tool is the rulebook...**yes, that means possessing one, reading it and respecting it.**

SSVP **National website** offers many valuable training modules covering topics such as;

- Handbooks for New Presidents & Treasurers,
- Operation Manual
- Training modules for new and existing members providing information about the Society, the Conference, Home Visits and the Abuse,
- Discrimination and Harassment Prevention Policy

Regional Websites also provide numerous informative tools on topics such as

- Social Justice, Youth Activities, Best Practices, Spirituality, Stores, Twinning, plus much more.

These resources must be “Go To” tools on a regular basis

Collaborating across conferences, councils and stores builds strength



Ph Use your network to collaborate across conferences, councils and stores

- **Collaboration** amongst sectors offer the opportunity to **Breakdown Silos** that often create communication barriers
- **Connect likeminded passionate people horizontally across the conferences** to bring out the **strengths** and **capabilities** of the **future leaders** that are within the conferences.

Collaboration groups can be formed to support **leaders** in areas such as;

- **Treasurers** – to support and share their challenges/accomplishments
- **Social Justice Reps** – to raise awareness of Social Justice issues and initiate actions
- **New Presidents** – providing guidance and moral support
- **Best Practices group** – these individuals offer the opportunity to keep conference activities vibrant
- **Spiritual Advisor group** – this is especially beneficial for Lay Persons seeking ways to enrich the Spiritual direction of the Conference

Higher Councils must be the vehicle for support



Higher Councils can be the vehicle for Collaboration and Support

- Regional Councils need to create environments to engage and empower PC's and Isolated Conferences to work together
- Particular Councils have the responsibility to participate at Regional and National Meetings

These meetings provide the opportunity to network with fellow leaders



We want to renew the organization with energy and
commitment to enhance our service to persons in need

Ph

By **Renewing** and **Rejuvenating** our Conferences and Councils, we will have attractive active, Conferences and Councils with **Spirituality** being embraced,

By having more **members join us** and having **more skillful leaders to drive rejuvenation**, we will be able to **expand** upon our programs helping persons in need and helping them in all possible ways.



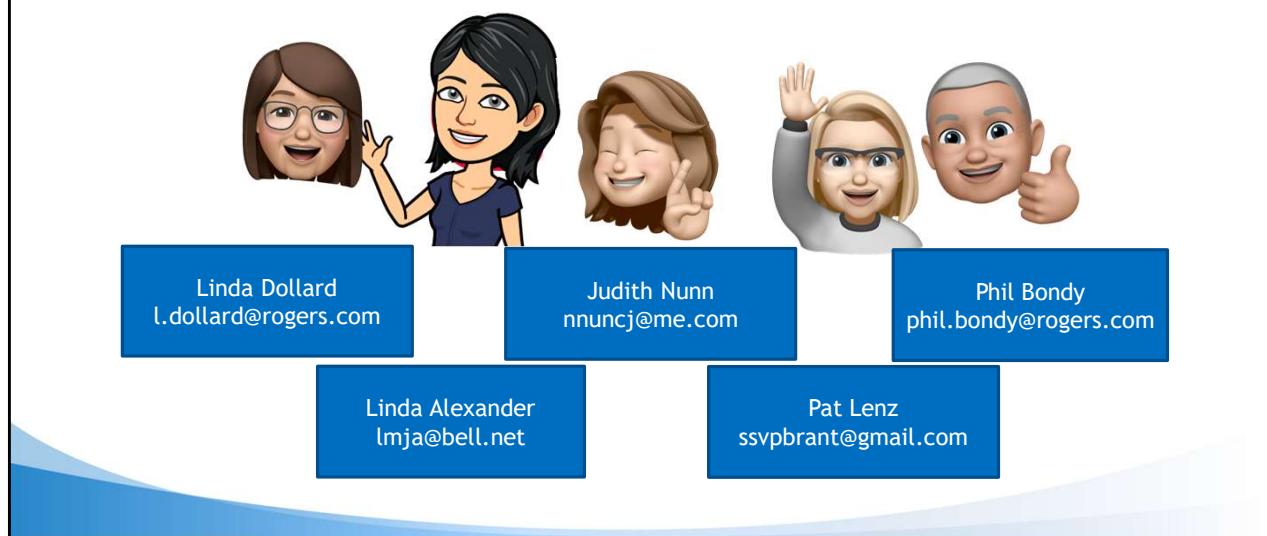
If we don't take action ***NOW*** the Society which we are
passionate about may not have a future

Ph

Now it is **YOUR** turn...**What are you going to do with the information you heard today?**

This is a **call to action** – **create your action plan** on what you will do within your Council and Conference to ensure vibrancy for the future of the Society – embracing spirituality, committing to the volunteer cycle & building leaders out of Vincentians and Vincentians out of leaders

Please feel free to contact the team



Linda D

My name is Linda Dollard, President of Ontario Regional Council, and my team includes, Linda Alexander and Judith Nunn from Halton Particular Council, Pat Lenz from Brant Particular Council and Phil Bondy, Vice President of Council/Conference Rejuvenation for Ontario Regional Council.”