



Society of Saint Vincent de Paul
Western Regional Council

North of 60 Project
2021 Annual Report

10th Anniversary



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Executive Summary

Ten years ago, Western Region of Society of Saint Vincent de Paul took on the challenge that was initiated by Eileen Orysiuk and Sister Fay Trombley – to assist those in need living in Arctic Canada. They started with the Community of Tuktoyaktuk. The list of Arctic



Highlighted are the Arctic Communities served by SSVP Western Region

Communities and the support from SSVP across Canada grew. Today there are 3 Regions of the Society supporting those in need that live in 19 Canadian Communities in the far North.

Ontario Vincentians focus on Nunavut Territory, Quebec Region has their focus on Nunavik and the Western Region of SSVP works to help those in Northwest Territories.

We again are grateful to our corporate benefactors who make this project financially viable. The warehouse and transportation logistics, food supply and household product donations continue to be strong.

The COVID restrictions continued in 2021 and resulted in very little food donations from parishioners, families, and friends. However, many loyal supporters, foundations and charities provided cash donations that allowed for bulk purchases of the basic food security shipments to those in need in the Northwest Territories.

This project is managed by a team of SSVP volunteers. There are no paid employees. Team members are assigned a community. Their role is to develop knowledge and most importantly rapport that allows for an accurate listing of the community needs as well as a confidence of fair distribution of the product shipped. The team members try to make Community visits every couple of years however Covid has restricted this over the last few years. Team members also meet their contacts or Community Elders when they are in Edmonton on personal or medical visits.



Your continued support will allow the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul - North of 60 Project to strengthen and grow.

Thanks for helping us to help others, and blessings to all of you.

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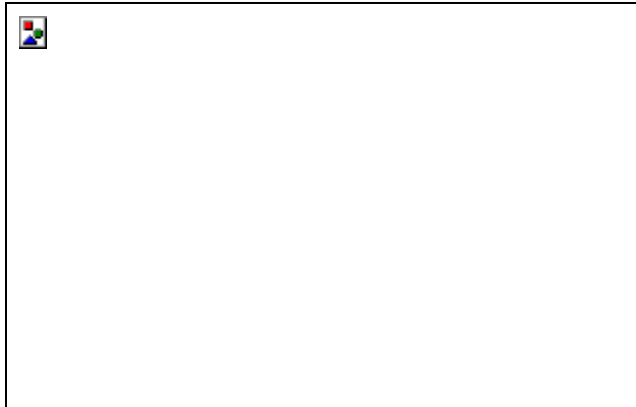
The Beginning of the Project

Sister Fay Trombley of Tuktoyaktuk, Eileen Orysiuk of Calgary and other members of the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul had no idea that the work they started over ten years ago would build to what it is today. The process of providing help to those in need in “Tuk” has been a success and has become the model for SSVP in all the Arctic Communities i.e., a location from which clothing and food can be stored, sorted, and distributed to those in need. Product is sold to those who have money and given to those who have none. Sister Fay and this SSVP Work has been recognized with the award of the [Governor General's Polar Medal](#). The North of 60 Program in Tuktoyaktuk has expanded to include systemic change programs such as driver education, sewing lessons, and a wood working shop. These programs are led by the Hamlet Residents for their Community. Our Society and your donations provide the materials and equipment needed to run these programs.



Sister Fay Trombley

Arctic Communities and the Southern Paired Conference



The SSVP Distribution Centre in Tuktoyaktuk

Tuktoyaktuk was the first Northern Community that our Society started to support. This Hamlet is paired with the Catholic Parish of St Andrews in Edmonton as well as St Michaels in Leduc. Pairing requires the parish parishioners and the Vincentians in the related SSVP Conferences in the south to be aware of the needs in the specific Arctic Community that they support. Sister Fay has had great success in Tuk. The Distribution Centre receives food, clothing, and household items

from the parishioners at St Andrews and St Michaels. They load the sea cans with items requested by their Arctic friends. An even stronger collaboration between this SSVP Centre and the Hamlet is under development.

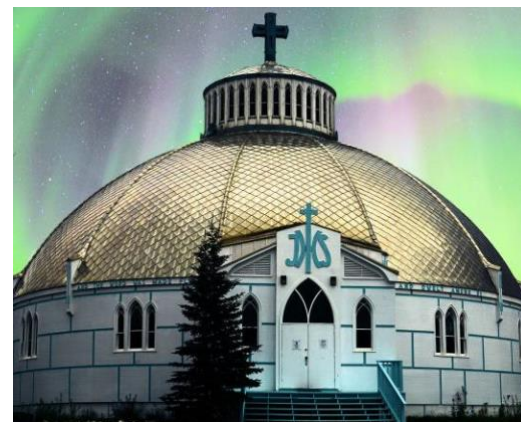
Paulatuk was first visited in 2014. A sea container of food and other items was shipped the following spring. Introducing the SSVP North of 60 program to this second Community



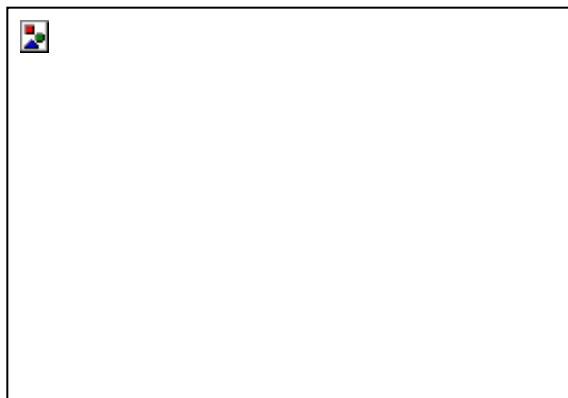
Father's House (1935) in Paulatuk, abandoned for 20 years, now being restored for SSVP food and clothing distribution

allowed for a new strategy. Our Lady of Perpetual Help Catholic Parish in Sherwood Park paired with **Paulatuk**. In addition to the shipment of food and household items in the sea containers, Vincentians provided building materials, siding, roofing, windows, furnace and utilities for restoring **Father's House**. Generous financial help from a Family Foundation has supported the restoration of this building for future use as a Saint Vincent de Paul Distribution Centre for the Hamlet. The plan for next year is to provide volunteer tradesman to be onsite for a month to catch up on the timetable that has been delayed because of two years of travel restrictions.

Inuvik is in the northern part of the Northwest Territories and the hub of activity for North of 60. This community has maintained a long-standing connection with Eileen Orysiuk, one of the founders of the North of 60 program and a parishioner of the St. Pius X Catholic Church in Calgary.” In following that tradition SSVP at St Pius X in Calgary is continuing the work with the help of other Calgary SSVP conferences. We started the year working to find supplies for a new homeless shelter in Inuvik, but issues have delayed this project. A sea container with food, mattresses, winter clothing, and other supplies has been provided for those in need. The plan for next year is to shift this sea can loading and handling from Edmonton to Calgary SSVP.



The Igloo Church in Inuvik



Tsiigehtchic and Fort McPherson (check out the [video](#)) are south of Inuvik and are on opposite sides of the Peel River. The sea can was [painted](#) and prepared to be permanently placed next to the church in Tsiigehtchic. It will be available for storage and distribution of goods provided by the North of 60 Project in the future.

St Thomas More Parish Youth paint the Sea Can As happens in the North, the transportation logistics and the weather were not in synchronization. This sea can arrived at the barge to cross the Peel River too late and was stuck until the ice roads were opened for heavy truck transport. Snowmobiles were used to shuttle some supplies to Tsiigehtchic, and distribution of food was available to those in need in Fort McPherson.

Aklavik food was distributed in hampers on Thanksgiving. Non-food items were sold, and proceeds were spent on food purchased locally for hampers that were distributed at Christmas. In the past the hampers went to assist the elderly in the Community however this



Aklavik Residents Distributing Non-food Items

year with Covid, there are many young families living in food insecurity and these younger families have also received food assistance from our North of 60 Program.

Sachs Harbour with a population of about 100 is the smallest Community that is reached by our North of 60 project. As in Aklavik, the people enjoy the prepackaged meals and need clothing and bedding. With COVID restrictions, jobs are gone and unemployment at a high. All households receive the same items as they were preboxed in Edmonton This made distribution much easier.



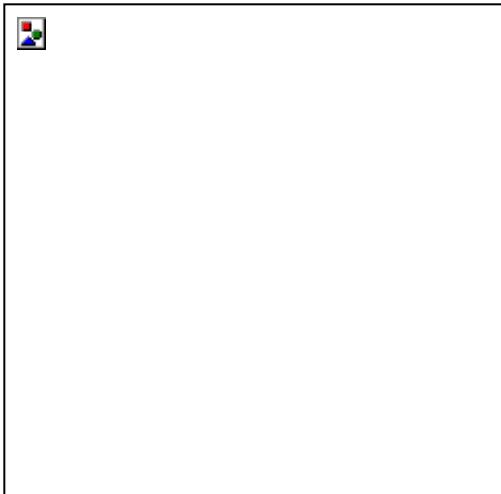
The Barge Landing in Sachs Harbour

Fort Good Hope (Kasho Gotine) have emptied their sea can. The donated hospital mattresses are in storage for emergency situations like floods, the two beds have found their way to a former homeless person who now has a place, and the other went to one of the flood victims. Much of the food product ended up in the original sea can. The rest went into the food bank. As the emergency around the pandemic is no longer active, the food bank has been busy, as has the clothing bank. We are preparing to deliver the quilts to the elders.



Our Lady of Good Hope Church and the permanent sea can storage unit

Ulukhaktok work is well documented in [this article](#) and other publications that feature the work of our great Vincentians in the city of St Albert. With COVID causing church closures, monetary donations were collected, instead of food items. These financial donations worked well and allowed for the safe purchase of food at a discount rate from Freson Bros, an Alberta Grocery chain. Food was palletized and wrapped. Nonfood items such as school supplies, sewing machines, baby items were collected in person at curbside. Since COVID NWT regulations prevented the Ulukhaktok school from preparing the normal breakfasts, food had to be individually packaged and distributed in paper bags to students so items such as granola bars and fruit cups were sent in bulk. Over the years Vincentians have had in person meetings with Ulukhaktok residents that travel to or through Edmonton for medical or personal travel. This practice continues.



Mary Kudlak and her daughter Emily Kudlak, contacts for Ulukhaktok Anglican women's sewing community.

What Products Ship

A list of the items typically in the sea containers is shown in Appendix 1.

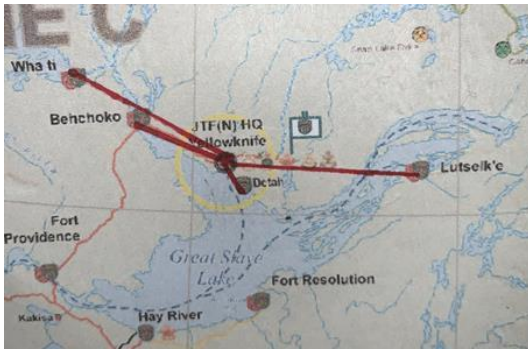
Over the last few years, we have developed two basic rules of operations:

1. We ship only what the Community asks for.
2. We continue to support the Community for as long as they want us.

This approach requires the development of rapport between the SSVP team member here in Alberta and the Community contact member in the Arctic. Take a tour of some of the Arctic Communities that we assist by [clicking on the North of 60 video](#) .

Where does it all come from?

This year a special thanks to [Cenovus Energy](#). As they upgraded their production facilities in Alberta, they donated to the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul several hundred beds for distribution to those in need. Many of these were sent up to the Arctic to our North of 60 Communities as well as a few Indigenous Communities around Yellowknife.



Communities around Yellowknife

Normally our preference in this project is to get small food donations from church parishioners and to involve as many supporters as possible to enhance

their awareness of Arctic needs. We have enjoyed the opportunity to talk to young people in the Edmonton area to discuss with them the differences in living in the Arctic. Kids



Students collecting and donating

are very helpful with donations and spreading the word about the good Work of the North of 60 Project. We still get some donations from parishioners when we have a truck or a sea container in the Church parking lot, however much of the bulk food and



Donations from Parishioners

nonfood items are collected in a warehouse and distributed in the sea containers using the professional assistance that is available by nearby companies. We are grateful that so many see the value of our Work and want to help.



Sea can in church parking lot

We look forward to post Covid times so that we can return to schools and other groups to promote the great relationships that the North of 60 Project has established.

Larger volume food donations were made by:

- \$4600 of powder milk was purchased this year from the processor Medallion Milk in Winnipeg – money donated by [Knights of Columbus Foundation](#).
- Dehydrated potatoes were provided by [Gleaners in Oliver, BC](#).
- Cooking oil was donated by the [Alberta Canola Producers Commission](#).
- [OneMeal](#) again provided high quality meal packs.



Sewing machines and fabric have now become a standard item for our shipments to the Arctic. We pick up used sewing machines from many private donors as well as both Johnson Sewing and Central Sewing, two large Edmonton retail shops. These machines are then refurbished by technicians so that they are ready to use



Mattress Pads from Albert Health Services

We have had many requests to ship sleeping pads to the North. There are often many living under one roof in these Arctic Communities. Again, Alberta Health Services came through with mattresses that are light weight yet strong, offering great support for the children and easily moved to the side to



Donations from Right Choice Catering

provide room for family time. Right Choice Camps and Catering continues to support us with bedding and linens.

Appendix 2 is a complete list of organizations with which our North of 60 project has established collaboration.

Anglican Support from Eastern Canada

Bales for the North is a program started by Anglican Church Women of the Diocese of Ottawa. They supply quilts, household items, clothing, baby clothing, knitted articles, etc. Since several of the Arctic Communities that receive sea cans from our North of 60 program are ministered by the Anglican Diocese of the Arctic, we have supported this program by piggy backing shipments to the Northwest Territory Communities. Again, this year COVID restrictions prevented them from building their bales, but they did send money that allowed for local Edmonton purchases of needed clothing that we forward to the Arctic.



Missions of the Anglican Diocese of the Arctic

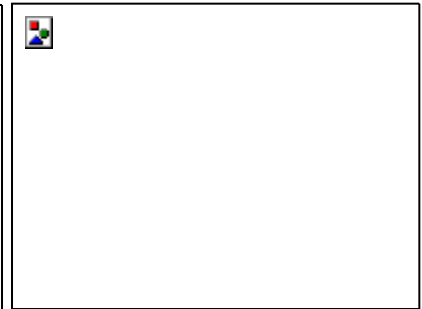
Corporate Logistics Assistance

Logistics and transportation are the primary input into this program and without the support of the following companies this program could not continue. Warehouse space has been provided to this program at no charge for the last several years by Amnor Group of Edmonton. They also help with fork lift loading of pallets into the sea containers.



The North of 60 warehouse donated by Amnor Group

Transport is the most expensive aspect of reaching those in need in Arctic Canada. Loaded sea cans must be picked up from various locations around Edmonton, marshalled at the Manitoulin Trucking Terminal, trucked to Hay River, loaded on the barge to travel north on the Mackenzie River, unloaded at the final destination and then spotted or positioned in the Arctic Community for contents to be distributed. We thank the Corporations which help. We thank all of them for their contribution and we hope that they will continue supporting the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul in the future. These companies, like so many others, value the future opportunities that will result from working with the Peoples of the Canadian North.



Manitoulin Transport and GNWT Marine Transportation Service

Appendix 1: Typical Product Shipped in the Sea Container

Dehydrated and Prepackaged Foods

Soup Mix 9 boxes

Potatoes 20 boxes

Apple chips 8 boxes

One Meal (rice casserole) 7x 36 bags

Canola Oil 20 boxes

Powdered Milk whole 7 boxes

Powdered Milk skim 7 boxes

Food Purchased from Wholesale

Salt 2 x 24 - 1kg

Paper Towels 3 x 30 rolls

Crisco Shortening 3 x 36 – 454g

Quaker Oats 4 x 10 – 2.25 kg

Pasta 10 x 16 – 454 gr

Sugar 10 x 6 – 4kg

Baking Soda 40 x 1 - 500g

Flour 60 x 1 – 10kg

Coffee 2 x 20 1 lb.

Red Rose Tea 3 x 4 250 bags

Baking Powder 24

Foods dropped off by Parishioners

Flour 65 kg

Rice 65 KG

Pancake Mix 4 kg

Veg Oil 3 litre

Pasta 34 KG

Tetley Tea 2 kg

Oats 10 kg

sugar 12 kg

Other Items

Box of soap and cards

School supplies

bag of mattress covers

Ziplock bags and plastic bags

9 sewing machines and 1 serger

3 cu ft sewing supplies

15 cu ft fabric

4 cu ft knitting and crochet supplies

9 sleeping pads

27 cu ft bedding and pillows

9 comforters and 2 blankets

Bath Towels

12 ski suits and coats assorted

25 cu ft assorted clothing

Appendix 2: Corporate and Private Collaboration

Many of you have asked who has been involved in this project. Below is a list of those organizations which have collaborated with our team and made donations of product or services to help us do an amazing amount of good work. Click on the organization name below and see what they are about. All Vincentians are proud that our name and our mission are being shared by so many.

[Canadian North Airlines](#)

[Aklak Air](#)

[Gleaners Oliver BC](#)

[Gleaners Medicine Hat AB](#)

[Emanuel Foundation](#)

[Cobs Bread](#)

[Alberta Canola Oil Association](#)

[Gov AB, Alberta Health Services](#)

[Anglican Church Woman Diocese of
Ottawa](#)

[GNWT, Marine Services](#)

[Gordon Food Services](#)

[Freson Brothers Fresh Market](#)

[Sisters of Charity of the Immaculate
Conception](#)

[Manitoulin Transport](#)

[Grannies Fabric Frenzy, Stephen Lewis
Foundation](#)

[Amnor Group](#)

[Knights of Columbus Foundation](#)

[St Theresa Knitting Group](#)

[Southgate Dental Centre](#)

[Anonymous Family Foundation](#)

[Edmonton Catholic Schools](#)

[Banff Sunshine, Lake Louise and Norquay](#)

Appendix 3: Thanks to so many who have had direct involvement in the North of 60 Project this last year

The North of 60 Arctic Contacts: Sr. Fay Trombley, Dorothy Loreen, Sheila Okane, Ruth Anne Blake, Michelle Lennie, Lisa Alikamik, Emily Kudlak, Mary Kudlak, Nick Kopot, Joyce Banksland and the Ulukhaktok Health Centre Nurse in charge, Derek Squirrel, Helen Kitekudlak, Grace Blake, Therese Steiner, Jacinta Illasiak, Joey Carpenter, Elizabeth Semple, Heather Bourassa, Roger Plouffe, Bishop Jon Hansen

The Western Region SSVP North of 60 Team: Stef Michniewski, Daryl Dittrich, Linda Tutt, Linda Wan, Rita John, Mike Mravinec, Lou Normand, Mary Dunnigan, Colleen Braun, Lance Berrington, Peter Ouellette

Society of Saint Vincent de Paul :

Western Region Council

Edmonton Central Council and their Conferences specifically:

- Our Lady of Perpetual Help in Sherwood Park AB,
- St Albert/Holy Family Conferences in St Albert,
- St Michaels Conference in Leduc,
- St Joseph Basilica,
- Good Shepherd,
- St John /Holy Spirit,
- Divine Mercy(St Thomas More, St Agnes, and St Anthony Parishes),
- Mother Teresa,
- All Saints,
- St Andrew Conferences.

St Pius X Conference in Calgary

St Timothy Conference in Winnipeg MN

St Mary/St Jude Conference in Brooks AB

St Mathews Conference in Surrey BC

And many more volunteers that have lifted, sorted, packaged, and helped in so many ways.