

Social Justice in your Council/Conference

Dear Vincentians:

Our national social justice committee identified several important actions last year on how we can continue to grow and expand the social justice actions of the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul. If we are to successfully attain these goals and create an informed and active social justice network across Canada, we must have the support of all councils and conferences.

The goals we have promoted include adding social justice as an item to all council/conference meetings. Of course, to be able to discuss a social justice issue, it becomes very important to also appoint a social justice representative at the council and conference levels, and perhaps even a larger social justice committee.

Our national committee realizes we have an obligation to provide relevant information to assist any social justice reps. and so we now have the Social Justice Guide available on the national website at https://www.ssvp.ca/sites/default/files/social_justice_guide_2018-04-20.pdf as well as other information on both the national website at <https://www.ssvp.ca/social-justice> and Ontario website found at <http://ssvp.on.ca/socjus/en/Socialjustice.php>

Social justice may include such topics as advocacy, systemic change, restorative justice or prison ministry and our efforts related to indigenous peoples in Ontario and Canada. We invite you to share with us any activities your council or conference conducts regarding these or other social justice issues.

I would like to thank the many councils and conferences who now have a social justice committee or rep and I would encourage those who do not yet have anyone to please consider appointing a member to this important position. As chair of our national social justice committee and a resident of Ontario, I am very pleased to say the Society here in Ontario is doing wonderful work with several national initiatives having started here with our membership. If we are to continue to grow, it is essential we have the support of our leaders and presidents at all levels. This is certainly evident in the support we have from the ONRC president, Linda Dollard. Thank you, Linda!

In closing, there is such a need for us to do more than just the great works of charity we are so well known for. Let's work together in looking at the root causes of poverty in Ontario and finding ways we can help people escape poverty and could live with a sense of dignity and hope.

Jim Paddon, Chair
Social Justice Committee
National Council of Canada
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