

# The Vincentian Newsletter



## Society of Saint Vincent de Paul, St. Patrick's Conference

Issue 1, June 2021

### SSVP Mission

To live the Gospel message by serving Christ in the poor with love, respect, justice and joy

### Our Work

The main focus of the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul at St. Patrick's is to provide food support in the form of Sobey's gift cards to recipients in the St. Patrick's Church area. We provide over \$50 000 in gift cards to our recipients every year. Approximately 70% of that amount is provided to us by SSVP Halifax Particular Council and the other 30% is donated by parishioners. As always, we thank you for your generosity and support.

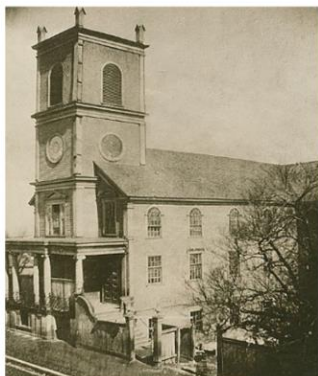
We're sure you've all noticed the increased cost of food over the past few months, particularly

since the beginning of the pandemic. In response to these increasing costs, we decided to increase the amount of food support that we provide to our recipients starting April 1. For example, households with 3 or 4 persons that used to receive \$75 twice per year now receive \$100 twice per year. This is a very modest increase, but we know from talking to our recipients that every dollar helps.

SSVP has two special collections at St. Patrick's Church during the year, on Ash Wednesday and on Thanksgiving Day. We also collect through the Christmas Giving Tree and the Poor Box in the Church.

Please think about those in our Church area who are facing increased challenges in providing food for themselves and their families during these special collections. If you would like to make an extra donation to SSVP you can leave it in the church collection in an envelope addressed to Saint Vincent de Paul. Be sure to include your contact information and we will send you a charitable receipt. Call or email us to find out more.

902 405 3806  
SSVP.stpatricks@gmail.com



St. Patrick's Church was a wooden structure in 1867 when our SSVP Conference was established. One hundred and fifty three years later, we continue to carry out the Society's mission.

### Member Profiles

#### Sister Cecilia MacNeil

My mission led me to Saint Patrick's after serving four years teaching in Reserve Mines. In 1970, I began teaching grade Six in Saint Patrick's girls' school. Father Joe Mills was Pastor and the now Bishop Martin Currie was Curate. I remember seeing a number of men meeting in the Rectory and leaving in twos with papers in their hands. I was

curious to know what they were doing. In time, I heard they were Vincentians that helped people in need. With Saint Vincent de Paul as our Patron Saint, I wanted to be a Vincentian, to help too. At that time, no women were part of the Conference so I think four of us asked if we could be Vincentians. This was in the 70s and since then I have been a Vincentian at Saint Patrick's Conference.

To be a part of the Vincentian family gives me energy and a great love for the people we visit. Being a teacher for over thirty years in the Parish certainly

gave me many ways to help. I must say the love and trust I experienced always energized me.

Our Saint Vincent de Paul Conference is hoping to have some new members come forward to help. We meet once a month and your commitment is sometimes once a week with another Vincentian to visit families, to bring a food voucher to someone in need. When we do this, we live out our Christian Vocation to show the love of Christ to all we meet.

Saint Patrick's Conference began the first Breakfast Program for children in the School and today supports the program at Joseph Howe School. We are a very active conference and we invite others to come along with us.

*After retirement in 2007, I sought to volunteer with SSVP as that was exactly what I wanted to do. I hoped to engage with the needy in our community and contribute my time to those in need through the Society of St. Vincent de Paul at St Patrick's Church.*

*Aline Bourgeois*

## Important Dates

**1833**

Frederic Ozanam, in Paris, founded the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul.

**1846**

The Society was first established in Canada in the province of Quebec.

**1853**

The first Halifax conference was established at St Mary's.

**1867**

Conferences were initiated at St. Patrick's and St. Joseph's.

**1873**

St. Patrick's Conference was officially aggregated to the International Council General.

## Community Outreach

Our Conference wanted to connect with the people who live within our boundaries who perhaps don't know about us or know they can reach out to us if they need help. As we have both senior apartments and shelters in our area, we decided to bring an afternoon tea to the residents. We have done this three times so far. We visited

Gordon B Isnor Manor, Sunrise Manor, and Turning Point Shelter. Each event was enjoyed by the residents and by us. We hope to continue this Community Outreach endeavor

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*SSVP gives me the opportunity to participate in a lay ministry to help those in our community who are disadvantaged by providing them needed assistance and by being an advocate for social change.*

*Donna Meagher-Stewart*

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once life gets back to normal after COVID-19.

Another community project in which we are involved is related to Joseph Howe School, which is an elementary school within our Conference boundaries. Each year we ask our parishioners to donate school supplies, which we then bring to the school. The good people of St. Patrick's have donated an abundance of pens, pencils, paper, notebooks, crayons, backpacks, etc. for the children. The Teachers are thrilled to have supplies on hand because many students do not arrive fully equipped for the school year. A teacher said it warms her heart to be able to present a child with a new backpack filled with school supplies.

## VOLUNTEER

Be the reason someone smiles today

If you are interested in joining us as a member of SSVP or want more information, send us an email at

[ssvp.stpatricks@gmail.com](mailto:ssvp.stpatricks@gmail.com)

or give us a call at 902 405 3806