

**The Society of St. Vincent de Paul of British Columbia
Provincial Council Fall Meeting
Our Lady of Perpetual Help, Vancouver, BC
Saturday, November 20, 2004**

1. Mass:

The meeting began with Mass at Our Lady of Perpetual Help

Attendance:

Claude Bedard, Rosalie Wells, Reg Humphries' Bernie Goold, John O'Flynn, Barry Grannary, Bill Clendinning, Rose Morin, Sheila Coutu

Apologies:

Apologies were received from Pat Carew who was in Ottawa on a grandparent mission.

2. Opening Prayer:

The prayer was led by Claude.

3. Spiritual Reflection:

Fr. Edward Kennedy CSSR, Pastor of Our Lady of Perpetual Help parish, led the reflection. As November is the month of the Holy Souls, Father reflected on the Jewish custom of praying for the dead and commented on it as a custom that began late in the history of the Jewish people. The Jews saw that they could not disappear as a people as the Saviour was to come from their midst. Purgatory has its origin in the writings of the Maccabean tradition. An early inscription in the Catacombs has the words, "Ora pro me" reflecting the need for prayers for the dead.

The concept of indulgences to release the souls of the dead arose from the need for funds to re-build St. Peter's in Rome to rival the Sancta Sophia in Constantinople. Commerce in indulgences led to the action of the Protestant Reformation. However remembrance of the dead is part of our belief. We pray in gratitude for our forebears. We give praise in thanks for what they have done for us. Though we are time-bound we are not constrained by time in our prayers for the dead.

Our prayer for the dead should be to "All Saints in Heaven; All souls in Purgatory; All on Earth."

3. a. Words of Welcome:

From Claude Bedard, Provincial President:

- a. There is still a need for a Provincial Spiritual Director - several names were suggested. Barry will contact Fr. Pat Monet
- b. Fr. Larry McLennan was also mentioned as a possible director
- c. News of aggregations - Port Alberni; Campbell River; Fort St. James
- d. We have lost a number of Vincentians since the Annual General Assembly - they will be remembered in the Book of Remembrance which is now online at the Provincial website. Please advise Reg of missing data.

4. Adoption of Agenda:

The agenda was adopted as circulated with the addition of

- a. Financial report - Council General as item 6(b)
- b. New Rule - as Item 5
- c. Moved by Bernie /seconded by Rosalie. Adopted

5. Adoption of Minutes from AGA:

Minutes of previous meeting should read "Victoria Particular Council" and not "Vancouver Island" on page 6. Adoption was moved by Rosalie / seconded by Sheila. Carried.

6. Correspondence:

Claude reviewed the correspondence with the meeting:

- a. A letter of resignation from the position of Spiritual Director was received with regret from Msgr Greg Smith.
- b. A report from the National Council on the 2004 AGA was received.
- c. Community Foundation of Canada information - this document had limited usefulness but Victoria Particular Council utilizes this source of information

- e. Resignation of Nora Criss - health matters have meant that Nora has had to resign from her position in Extension Committee and Ron has resigned as President of Port Moody Conference. Neil Doyle has stepped in to take over for Ron.
 - a. A letter of support will be sent to Port Moody - St. Joseph's Conference.
- f. Book of Remembrance - the email address of Florence D'Costa is included in the package sent to members. - archives@pgdiocese.bc.ca
- g. International Council Appeal - a letter had been received from International Council from Ian McTurk, the Treasurer General. It gave an indication of the financial strain placed on the Society through demands on its Expansion Fund, requesting immediate help.
 - a. The meeting discussed the process of "sending up" to the next higher level in the Society. In this regard Kamloops set an example with a cheque to the Provincial Council. Their generosity was greatly appreciated.
- h. A letter from National was received with information on appointees to positions. Jean-Noel LeCormier has been appointed to the position of Executive Director of the Society. Germain Souigny is the new Treasurer.

7. Financial Report:

The Financial Statement for the period from April 1, 2004 to October 31, 2004 was accepted as presented. In addition to current income there is a cheque for \$2,669.00 from Kamloops Conference and a cheque in the amount of \$1,004.81 from Okanagan Valley Particular Council representing surplus from the AGA held in Kelowna in May 2004.

Cumulative current balance is \$12,024,78

Moved: "That we disburse \$5,000.00 to National Council from general revenue" John O'Flynn / Bernie Goold. Carried

Moved: "That we disburse \$2,000.00 to International Council from general revenue" Bill Clendinning / John O'Flynn. Carried

8. Refreshment Break

9. Councils and Isolated Conferences Reports - Highlights:

Written reports from the Okanagan Valley Particular Council, Victoria Particular Council, Our Lady of Perpetual Help, Kamloops, and St. Francis, Prince George Conference were submitted as part of Agenda.

a. Okanagan Valley Particular Council mentioned the Provincial Annual General Meeting held in May 2004; the progress in the Ozanam House project for homeless men in Kelowna; the special programs such as summer camps for children through the Sue Lemmerick fund and Kids Kapers; the Mass for the Sick and Shut-Ins; the CHBC TV Good News Bears campaign; and the Chuck Heffernan Memorial Mass.

b. Victoria Particular Council assisted 7459 persons at their Social Concern office in the June - October period. Home visits totalled 692 and 1598 hours were volunteered. At their Annual General Meeting Jim Spencer and Joe Rigby were elected by acclamation to the Board of Directors. Members of St. Andrew's Conference engage street people in conversation over a meal at a local café or diner. Applications for grants have been submitted to a number of organizations and grants have been received from the Gaming Commission, The Rotary Club of Victoria, and the Catholic Foundation. A submission was made to the National Council with observations on the new Rule.

They hosted the Annual Provincial Retreat at Queenswood for 26 attendees. Mr. Pat Mulvey, a 73 year-old member and a recipient of a hip replacement in 2003 participated in a walk around Shawnigan Lake and raised \$1,000.00

c. Our Lady of Perpetual Help in Kamloops began serving hot breakfasts in May on Mon, Wed, Fri. and Sat. from 9 - 11 am. They have eight teams of cooks and servers from the four Catholic parishes. A Community Kitchen program allows those in need to shop, plan and cook meals together. Their Thrift Store breaks even with revenue taking care of salary, benefits, and utilities.

Help Office and Home Visits average about five calls daily. Calls are largely handled through the office, which is open three days a week. The REACH Project is funded by HRDC and will continue through May 2005. At present the Conference does not have a Spiritual Director with the move of Fr. Jim McDonnell to Vancouver.

d. St. Francis of Assisi Conference, Prince George re-elected Bernie Goold as President in May 2004. Their Drop-In Centre is a hive of activity serving approximately 350 meals per day. Up to 100 fruit and vegetable hampers and 75 emergency food hampers

Under their HRDC grant they have been able to open their Social Concern office three days per week. A successful Thanksgiving Dinner was served to 710 people with the assistance of volunteers from many walks of life. Mass was concelebrated by Fr. John Garden, a new ordinand, and Bishop Weisner and all the priests from the parishes for all Vincentians. Cake and coffee was served afterwards.

They spend over \$5300,00 a month on food. A "grow a row" campaign has been successful and the local jail has contributed over 2000 lb of potatoes. Local inmates put buttons from discarded clothes on cards for sale. They have had liaison meetings with City Hall over downtown homeless problems.

e. **Vancouver Diocesan Council** is having great success with their truck mission. It is set up twice a week at Main and Hastings and serves 350 people a week with food and clothing. They also report increased volunteerism. They co-operate with other agencies in the setting up furnishing of apartments. The Conferences are doing well. A replacement is being sought as President for Lou Soet.

10. Lunch

11. Committee Reports:

a. **OverBC** - a cheque for membership dues of \$100.00 will be needed in the New Year. They are having meetings with the GVRD. Claude expressed thanks to Sheila for her input.

b. **Newsletter** - no report

c. **Archives** - no report

d. **Twinning** - there were some problems related to money allocated to a specific priest - Fr. Prem. A number of Conferences were having difficulty in twinning arrangements in Peru. Claude will bring up these concerns with National.

e. **Website** - Reg updated the meeting on what has been done with the website. Secure access to Members' page is accessed by using the userid 'frederic' and the password is 'ozanam'. Please advise Reg of any corrections or additional information for the Book of Remembrance which is also on the site.

f. **Book of Remembrance**. We received an update from Florence D'Costa. Our prayers should be in thanks for those who have made us what we are. Bill will get information for us on the Founding Members of the Society in BC.

g. **Youth** - As yet there is no specific Youth Conference. A straw poll of the members show that there is the potential to have a Youth Conference of about 45 members. John O'Flynn has a guide and Reg will send John the "Young Vinnies" brochure. We would like to have a Youth group at the AGM. John asked us to be "heads-up" for opportunities. He would like to see representative at the Provincial AGA. Our goal is to have students first at a Provincial AGA and then a National AGA. John will do some brainstorming with Mary Spencer.

h. **Visioning** - this project is complete. Please refer to Michael Burke's letter and Penny Craig's summary. A package has been compiled.

i. **Provincial AGA** - slated for April 29, 30 and May 1, 2004 at the Retreat Centre in Prince George. Registration packages will come out in January.

j. **2005 Retreat** - this will be held in Cache Creek, probably in September.

k. **New Rule** - there is an additional conference on the New Rule in September 17, 2005 in Montreal. Six briefs on the Rule were received from across the country. The report on the Rule is longer but it is much clearer on details of roles, etc. Questions of sizes of Particular Councils and Central Councils have been addressed. We discussed the question of frequency of meetings.

l. **Privacy & Freedom Act** - Barry led a discussion of the presentation, "Nuts and Bolts of Privacy". It explains in detail what we can do with information and the limitations on information-sharing. In essence we cannot share client information without the client's written consent.

12. For the Good of the Society:

- a. Claude had attended four Particular Councils this year but none in the Okanagan.
- b. Claude had been installed as President in 2000. He will clarify with Michael Burke when his term is complete and when an election and installation should take place. A Nominating Committee is needed and requests for members will be sent out shortly.
- c. Rosalie spoke of Br. Ron McKenzie and his work in securing dental work for an inmate.
- d. Bernie thanked God for the work of Maureen
- e. Barry made comments on the life and work of Chuck Heffernan and his role on the spread of the Society in Western Canada. He also had an experience with a person in need who expressed the idea "wasn't I good enough for you".

13. Next Meeting:

At Prince George on April 29, the day before the AGA, beginning at 10:00 am.

14. Closing Prayer:

Led by Claude.

Respectfully submitted

Reg Humphries, Secretary

