

The Society of St. Vincent de Paul
Particular Council of Brant presents

**VINCENTIANS AS
HOUSING CHAMPIONS**

SPEAKERS:

- City Presentation
- Salvation Army Housing Resource Centre
- Brantford Native Housing
- YMCA Employment and Immigrant Services

WHEN:
Saturday November 4, 2023
8:45 a.m. - Coffee/Social
9:00 a.m. to 2:00pm - Sessions
Lunch provided.
Black Bag Donation appreciated.

WHERE:
St. Pius X Church Hall
9 Waverly St., Brantford
Accessible ♿


REGISTER:
CLICK HERE to register by Sunday October 29, 2023.
Need help registering? See your conference president or
store liaison for assistance.

LISTEN

EDUCATE

ADVOCATE

CREATE



LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The Society of St. Vincent de Paul, Particular Council of Brant acknowledges that we are gathering on the traditional lands of the Haudenosaunee, Anishinaabe and Attawandaron peoples. We recognize, honour and respect these nations as the traditional stewards of the lands and water where we live, work and play. This territory is situated on the Haldimand Tract, the land six miles on either side of the Grand River. As Vincentians, we pray that we will continue to grow in our efforts to serve our indigenous neighbours and that we may aid in the process of reconciliation.

Our Prayer for the Homeless

Hear our prayer today for all women and men, boys and girls who are homeless this cold winter day.

For those sleeping under bridges, in abandoned buildings, in doorways or bus stations.

For those who can only find shelter for the night but must wander in the daytime.

For families broken because they could not afford to pay the rent.

For those who have no relatives or friends who can take them in.

For those who have no place to keep possessions that remind them who they are.

For those who are cold, afraid and hopeless.

For all these people, we pray that you will provide shelter, security and hope.

We pray for those of us with warm houses and comfortable beds that we not be lulled into complacency and forgetfulness.

Jesus, help us to see your face in the eyes of every homeless person we meet so that we may be empowered through word and deed, and through the political means we have, to bring justice and peace to those who are homeless.

Amen.



Spiritual Reflection: Gospels

Now when they had departed, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, “Rise, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there till I tell you; for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him.” And he rose and took the child and his mother by night, and departed to Egypt, and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfil what the Lord had spoken by the prophet, “Out of Egypt have I called my son.” Matthew 2:13-15

“Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man has nowhere to lay his head.” Matthew 8:20



Spiritual Reflection: Vincentian Meditation

Gracious and loving God, we come together as a Vincentian family with our desire to care for and serve those in need in our community especially those who experience housing challenges... with love, respect, justice and joy.

We gather today on this Formation Day in the spirit of our founders and in a spiritual context to celebrate the beatification of Rosalie Rendu. Sister Rosalie Rendu was beatified on November 9, 2003. The International Rule of the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul calls her "the one who undoubtedly can be called our first Spiritual Advisor". Sister Rosalie taught the young Frederic Ozanam and his friends how to interact with, how to serve and how to love the poor. She was the one who showed them how to do home visits and was always there for the fledgling Society. Her charity was inventive. Sister Rosalie's name was a promise of hope. She started a free clinic, pharmacy, orphanage, child-care center, youth club for young workers and a home for the elderly poor. Blessed Rosalie personifies our Vincentian promise to "help in all possible ways". Her accomplishments are remarkable. Blessed Rosalie Rendu helped those in need in creative and inventive ways. May her inspiration guide us as we journey together toward our goal to enhance our understanding of how to better serve those in our community experiencing housing insecurity.



Spiritual Reflection: Reflect

Reflecting on the scene of the Holy Family fleeing to Egypt we can imagine how similar that night may have been to a homeless family's experience today. The Holy Family's story is like the story of many poor homeless families who will seek shelter in our community. This Christmas story illustrates the challenge of those who experience homelessness. Mary and Joseph traveled a long way to Bethlehem. There was no room at the inn in Bethlehem for them, and they were forced to find shelter in a stable for Mary to give birth to Jesus. The Holy Family knew poverty and homelessness.

Jesus grew in his ministry and travelled from community to community preaching and healing. Jesus left his paternal home and gave up all security in order to proclaim the Kingdom of God and to reach those on the margins. Pope Francis refers to this as "the absolute poverty of Jesus." (Angelus, June 30, 2019.) Jesus could identify with the homeless in His itinerant ministry. In Matthew's gospel, Jesus states that even animals have a place to call home, but he had nowhere to lay his head. He stayed in the homes of whoever would welcome Him and sometimes outside. Jesus became homeless as he moved among his people, identifying with them. In a sense his people were homeless too.



Spiritual Reflection: Reflect

The familiar bronze sculpture of the “Homeless Jesus” depicts Jesus as a homeless person, sleeping on a park bench. The statue has been described as a “visual translation” of the gospel passage from Matthew which Jesus tells his disciples and us as well, “as you did it to one of the least of my brothers, you did it to me.” The designer of the sculpture intended for it to “challenge people.”

Caring for the homeless is fundamental for us, an integral part of who we are as believers. Catholic Social Teaching principles show the way to a more just and truly human housing system. The Church’s teachings remind us that housing is not a valueless system but a core part of what it means to live a dignified human life. Having adequate shelter is a basic human right; a right that the Church affirms as a key part of respecting and recognizing our personhood. Ensuring everyone is able to access a safe, stable and adequate home is one part of working for the common good. This means that social, economic and political structures must be ordered towards making home ownership or rental equitable for all.



Spiritual Reflection: Pause and Reflect

In what ways can the life of Jesus and the experiences of the Holy Family help us to understanding our neighbours in need living with housing challenges?

How do you see the spirit of Blessed Rosalie alive today?

Let us pray

O God, as we recall the life and virtues of Blessed Rosalie grant that we may continue her work of bringing good news and hope to those in need. We ask this in Jesus’ name.

Amen.



Spiritual Reflection: Closing Prayer

For the grace to do justice,

All: Loving God, help us to grow in holiness!

For the grace to love kindness,

All: Loving God, help us to grow in holiness!

For the grace to walk humbly with our God,

All: Loving God, help us to grow in holiness! Amen.

“Be kind and love, for love is your first gift to the poor. They will appreciate your kindness and your love more than all else you can bring to them.” Blessed Rosalie Rendu



Spiritual Reflection

With the gift of our presence let us bring listening and compassionate hearts to those we serve. May God continue to strengthen and guide us in our Vincentian lives. May we have the openness to see Christ in every person, place and situation. May God bless us all in our endeavours as we strive to become an effective part of the housing solution.

O God, Mother Teresa of Calcutta reminded us that, “In the poor it is the hungry Christ that we are feeding, it is the naked Christ that we are clothing, it is to the homeless Christ that we are giving shelter.” Be with us today, and every day, to see Christ in all we serve. Amen.



Spiritual Reflection: Resources

Homily delivered by Bishop Rhoades at a Vigil Mass for the Feast of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph, December 30, 2019. Bishop's Column: In Truth and Charity: The Shining Example of the Holy Family.

Catholic Social Teaching and Housing and Homelessness. Justice & Peace Office Catholic Archdiocese of Sydney.

A Christmas lesson on housing and the poor by Timothy Cardinal Dolan
New York Post.

SSVP campaign prayer for Safe, secure and affordable housing.
Archbishop Lavoie.



AGENDA FOR THE DAY

8:45 – 9:00	Registration & Coffee
9:00 – 9:05	Welcome & Land Acknowledgement
9:05 – 9:20	Opening Prayer & Reflection
9:20 – 9:25	Goals
9:25 – 9:45	Housing Champions
9:45 – 10:15	City of Brantford
10:15 – 10:45	Salvation Army, Housing Resource Centre
10:45 – 11:15	Brantford Native Housing
11:15 – 11:45	YMCA Employment & Immigrant Services
11:45 – 12:15	Breakout Groups
12:15 – 12:30	Wrap up: Your Commitment
12:30 - 1:15	Grace, Lunch & Family Time



TODAY'S GOALS ARE:

- to promote change for those we serve by educating Vincentians about housing challenges within Brantford and Brant County
- to provide you with tools so that you can continue this challenge to become Housing Champions within your conferences, parishes and the wider community



What?

Prioritizing SSVP activities, beyond the core activities of personal contact with/support of those in need through home visits and Store visits, for the next few years.





Who?

This prioritization is a task for **Particular Council of Brant** i.e. SSVP Brant conference presidents and delegates along with executive members.



Why?

- Successful transition to our new Store is proof of our capacity locally.
- We are called by The Rule to consider local needs and respond “in all ways possible”.





What? (cont'd)

Consideration of

- **food insecurity** &/or
 - **housing/homelessness**
- as priorities for action locally



Why? (cont'd)

- **Food insecurity:**
 - Considered in Next Store project (Pantry?)
- **Housing/homelessness**
 - Vincent de Paul's 13 Houses
 - Global/national SSVP priority
 - Local priority and some activity





How?

- Preliminary research – into local need & possibilities
- Council Committee to focus research and make recommendation(s), under direction of Council
- Council approval of priority(ies)
- Begin planning of actions



When?

- Preliminary research – beginning fall 2022
- Council input/Committee formation – Nov. BPC meeting
- Interim report/Council response- Jan. BPC meeting
- Committee recommendation(s)/Council setting of priority(ies) – Mar. BPC meeting





Recommendations

- Minimal changes to food insecurity services
- Housing insecurity
 - establish ongoing ad hoc committee
 - terms of reference > belief statement
 - 2023 Formation Day topic



HOUSING CHAMPIONS

LISTEN

“Understand that every individual or family facing housing instability is unique and faces unique challenges. Commit to building a closer relationship with persons in need by actively listening to them and learning about their housing concerns.”

EDUCATE

“Familiarize yourself with at least one government, legal, social or medical support program that relates to housing.”

ADVOCATE

“Familiarize yourself with housing issues by listening to what persons in need have to say about it, by following relevant stories, and by doing background reading.”

“Think about how you might inform and inspire government and other service providers to create needed services or remove barriers faced by persons in need.”

CREATE

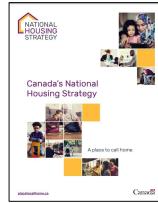
“Take part in petitions, letter writing, and awareness-building campaigns that the National Action Committee, or your Regional, Central and Particular councils will issue throughout the campaign.”

“Create a solution in partnership with persons in need, your conferences, your Particular council, and outside organizations. Partnership avoids overlap and helps us get more done: small groups working together can do great things!”

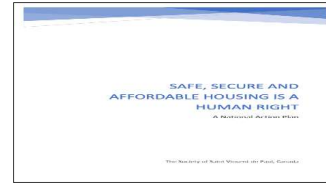
“Join a local coalition of Catholic or faith-based helping agencies, or a local coalition working on housing or homelessness. Work together with them to determine how you can best fill the gaps.”



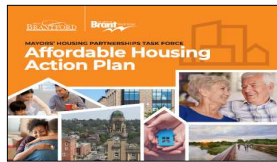
RESOURCE DOCUMENTS



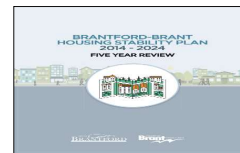
[Canada's National Housing Policy - A Place to Call Home](#)



[Safe, Secure and Affordable Housing Is a Human Right: A National Action Plan](#)



[Affordable Housing Plan](#)



[Brantford-Brant Housing Stability Plan - 5 Year Review Update](#)



BELIEF STATEMENT

We, of the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul Particular Council of Brant (SSVP Brant), believe safe, secure, and affordable housing for all is a human right leading to a dignified life and sustainable communities. Further, we believe we can become agents of positive change with regard to our own work, so that we are an effective part of the housing solution. (Consistent with The National Housing Strategy Act, 2019 and SSVP Canada National Action Plan, 2021).



BREAKOUT GROUPS

- Groups
 - Conference
 - Store
 - Delivery & Furniture
 - Reception & Retail
 - Pre-sorting & Processing
- Starter Discussion Points
- Hand-in
- Take Away

WRAP UP: YOUR COMMITMENT

For the materials from Formation Day 2023:

- Go to ssvpbrant.ca (our website)
- Click on Member Login tab.
- Username: vincentian
- Password: vincentian

WRAP UP: YOUR COMMITMENT

Check out

<https://www.nationalhousingaccord.ca/>

- read all 10 recommendations
- consider adding your name in support OR
- click on TAKE ACTION to send a letter to your member of Parliament

WRAP UP: YOUR COMMITMENT

Join a community group advocating for secure affordable housing e.g.

- Grand River Council on Aging
- Community Living Brant
- SSVP Brant Housing Champions

WRAP UP: YOUR COMMITMENT

- Add housing insecurity to the agenda for every conference meeting
- Support your conference in attaining and maintaining the goals it has set at today's breakout
- Share solutions and challenges discussed at conference meetings with other local Vincentians through Conference Presidents' meetings
- Offer a mass intention for the homeless and those suffering from housing instability
 - Pray for landlords, landowners, developers, municipalities that they may continue to find solutions to build and maintain supportive, affordable housing
- Others ...



GRACE, LUNCH & FAMILY TIME

