

SOCIETY OF ST. VINCENT DE PAUL TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

FOUNDED IN PARIS 1833 – ESTABLISHED IN TRINIDAD & TOBAGO 1857
INCORPORATED BY ACT #35 OF 1950

NATIONAL COUNCIL REPORT 2003 –2004

**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
SUNDAY SEPTEMBER 19TH, 2004
ST. MARY'S COLLEGE, PORT OF SPAIN**

**TRUSTEES: BROS. CLIVE BELGRAVE, CECIL MILNE, HUGH A.S. CLERK, KENNETH
AUGIER AND JOHN JARDIM**

MEMBERS OF NATIONAL COUNCIL

MEMBERS OF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

President	-	Bro. Anthony Wong Doo
Honorary National Secretary	-	Bro. Clive Belgrave
Senior Vice President	-	Sr. Leah Gordon
Spiritual Advisor	-	Rev. Fr. Rudolph Mohammed
Vice President	-	Bro. Hugh A.S. Clerk
- Emeritus	-	Bro. Kenneth Solomon
- South	-	Bro. Ronald Ho
- Central	-	Bro. Rudolph Boneo
- North East	-	Bro. Kenneth Augier
Chairman	-	Bro. Winston Mathura
- Finance	-	Sr. Yvette Woodruffe
- Development & Communication	-	Sr. Alake Atiba
Administrative Secretary	-	
Recording Secretary	-	

PARTICULAR COUNCIL PRESIDENTS

Port of Spain	-	Bro. Victor Cuffy
Central	-	Bro. Bobby Ramrattansingh
North West	-	Sr. Heather Alleyne
North East	-	Bro. Rudolph Boneo
Tobago	-	Sr. Crescent Parisienne
Sub-urban	-	Bro. Patrick Baptiste
South	-	Bro. Paul Fitzwilliam
South West	-	Bro. Mc Donald Bedeau
Institutions	-	Bro. Evans Foncette

SPECIAL RESPONSIBILITIES

Finance	-	Bro. Kenneth Augier
Legal	-	Bro. Isidore Smart
Development/Communication	-	Bro. Winston Mathura
Institutions	-	Sr. Yvette Woodruffe
Communication	-	Fr. Rudy Mohammed
Employment/Social Relief	-	Bro. Horatio Nelson
Local Twinning	-	Sr. Leah Gordon
Foreign Twinning	-	Bro. Ignatius Ferreira
Care of the Aged	-	Bro. Evans Foncette
Training	-	Bro. Dennis Bryan
Tobago	-	Sr. Evelyn Stewart
Prisoners/YTC	-	Sr. Cynthia Soodeen
Ecumenism	-	Fr. Pascal Tiernan

- **MEETINGS**

The National Executive Committee continues to meet on the ***first Monday of every month***, while meetings of the National Council are scheduled on a quarterly basis. In addition, special meetings of Conference and Council Presidents are scheduled to discuss specific items. Two such meetings were held during the period under review, one to discuss the issue of stewardship and its impact on Conferences and the other to discuss the new RULE of the Society adopted by the International Council General.

- **RE-ORGANIZATION**

The recommendations of Ernst & Young arising from their evaluation of the Society continue to be implemented. The refurbished offices of the Secretariat were blessed by His Grace the Archbishop on Friday 19th December, 2003. The facilities now include a Board Room for Executive meetings and visitor interface, a meeting room for National Council and other large meetings, a fully integrated telephone system throughout the Duncan Street Complex, accommodation for our volunteer Social Workers and e-mail capability. A society website is currently in development as well as the computerization of our accounting functions.

Contracts have been developed and implemented with the staff of all Institutions with the exception of the Centre for Socially Displaced Persons which the Society operates on behalf of government and which requires special treatment.

.....*Re-organization*

Considerable work has been done on the refurbishment of our Institutions and in particular, the FINBAR RYAN GERIATRIC HOME, the TRITSCHER HOME and the CYRIL ROSS NURSERY. With respect to Finbar Ryan, the elevator has been commissioned, the kitchen facilities completely redone, the grounds paved and beautified, the water tanks relocated and a full-time Manager employed. In this connection the Society acknowledges, with thanks, the work of the Finbar Ryan Committee, which financed most of this work and is also funding the Manager's salary. With respect to Cyril Ross, substantial renovations have been effected and further work is in progress. This includes the rewiring of the facility, the installation of new kitchen and toilet facilities, the relocation of sleeping accommodation for the girls and expanded facilities for the volunteer doctors and medical supplies. We acknowledge, with thanks, the agreement of the Tunapuna Conference to hand over their meeting room to provide additional accommodation for the children. Most of this work at Cyril Ross has been funded by donations from individuals and organizations including Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), which agreed to fund a total of \$153,000 in renovations.

In addition to the above, the services of an Administrative Manager have been secured for the Nursery and a display booth with appropriate Aids literature has been donated and installed by the Benjamin family in memory of their deceased daughter. A feature article on the nursery was also published in the International Vincenpaul magazine.

The Tritscher Home renovations have been largely funded by Powergen.

In the area of Youth, a new thrust has been initiated with the appointment of a Youth Coordinator and the holding of several meetings and spiritual exercises. A Report on these activities is included in this document.

- **NEW INSTITUTIONS**

There have been major developments with respect to the construction of a new Home for the Aged in San Fernando. Republic Bank Limited has agreed to partner with the Society in this project. As a new consequence the project has been re-assessed by a team of professional volunteers including Hart & Leonard Ltd, A de B Consultants Limited and Mr. Selwyn Vidal, a Civil Engineer. On the basis of this re-assessment, the proposed facilities have been substantially enhanced and based on current material and labour prices, the Home is now estimated to cost \$6 million for construction. Of this sum, the Society has raised some \$1 million to date while Republic Bank has agreed to contribute \$2 million. The Bank has also placed display posters at selected branches and has produced a leaflet for distribution to its customers soliciting donations for the project via a special account opened for this purpose.

.....*New Institution*

Several pledges of donations of building materials have also been received by the Society and the formal contract for commencement of work is expected to be signed by end September 2004 at which time construction will commence. A fourteen (14) month time frame is anticipated for the completion of construction.

A new facility is also proposed for the Cyril Ross Nursery. The Society and the Hibiscus Foundation are jointly developing this project. Two acres of land at Caura have been earmarked for the Nursery and steps are underway to have the property deeded to the Society. Discussions are being held regarding the facilities to be provided so that building plans can be developed and submitted for approval. Initial estimates for construction are \$3 million and the Hibiscus Foundation has raised over \$600,000 to date from functions held and pledges obtained. Construction is targeted to start in 2005.

With respect to the Penal Home, a decision has been taken to demolish this structure and relocate the resident, while the future use of this property is being determined.

- **SPECIAL WORKS**

The Committee set up to interface with the young offenders at the Youth Training center at Arouca continues to meet on a regular basis and minister to the various needs of the youth.

The project of Rebirth House counselling and assisting the victims of drug dependency has been very successful. The Society provides the facilities for this project at Duncan Street.

- **EVENTS**

As is the practice, a number of functions was organized during the last Christmas period at our several homes to bring cheer to the residents and create bonding with members of the community in which these homes are located. The annual get-together of residents of all our homes also took place.

The National Rally for the Society's membership and their families keeps growing in popularity this year witnessing the largest turnout ever.

- **SPIRITUAL EXERCISES**

At the national level a number of spiritual exercises was organized. This included the day of Prayer and Eucharistic Adoration at Mt. St. Benedict to mark the feast of Christ the King, the Palm Sunday Walk to give public witness to our Catholic faith and a Mass for Benefactors of the Society celebrated at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception. All these exercises were well supported by the Society's membership and friends. A Mass for deceased members of the Society and benefactors is planned for later this year.

- **PUBLIC RELATIONS**

The Public Relations Committee continues to produce the Society's Newsletter for distribution to members and the wider public. The Society continues to have a major presence in the national media via its radio programmes, newspaper articles and television appearances. The Society has been able to negotiate a cost reduction for its radio ministry.

- **TRAINING**

The Society succeeded in making arrangements for a number of its members to attend various seminars, and training sessions and national consultations. These are listed below.

- **SEMINAR/ COURSES**

1. **DISASTER PREPAREDNESS** - Social Services Delivery
 - Sr. Cynthia Soodeen
 - Bro. Kenneth Solomon
 - Bro. Horatio Nelson
 - Bro. Maurice Ragoonath
2. **DRUG DEMAND REDUCTION** - Ministry of National Security
 - Bro. George Morrison
 - Bro. Roger Watson
 - Bro. Maurice Ragoonath
3. **PROPOSAL WRITING** - Community Development Fund Secretariat.
Ministry of Community Development
 - Bro. Maurice Ragoonath
4. **CATHOLIC COMMUNICATIONS SCHOOL**
 - Emmaus Centre
 - Sr. Doreen Auguste-Garcia
5. **LOCAL GOVERNMENT CONSULTATION**
 - Sr. Yvette Woodruffe
 - Bro. Rudolph Boneo
6. **FORMATION OF NATIONAL YOUTH COUNCIL**
 - Ministry of Sports & Youth Affairs
 - Bro. Kevin Solomon

7. DOMESTIC VIOLENCE TRAINING
 - T&T Coalition against Domestic Violence
 - Sr. Yvette Woodruffe
 - Sr. Ava Berkeley
 - Sr. Angela Jiminez
8. NUTRITION & HIV/AIDS
 - CFNI (Caribbean Food and Nutrition Institute)
 - Sr. Patrice Bernard
 - Sr. Candice Bain
9. NATIONAL SENSITIZATION SESSION FOR CHILDREN IN NEED OF SPECIAL PROTECTION
 - Ministry of Social Development
 - Sr. Hyacinth Cross
10. SHARING BEST PRACTICES AMONG NGO'S WORKING WITH CHILDREN & YOUTH
 - Y.M.C.A.
 - Sr. Hyacinth Cross
11. VOLUNTARY COUNSELING & TESTING PROGRAMME - CARE
 - Sr. Beverly Lopez
12. N.I.S. AMENDMENTS 2000 - National Insurance Board
 - Sr. Sumintra Deokali
13. SIGN LANGUAGE
 - Home for the Deaf
 - Sr. Beverly Lopez
 - Sr. Maria Fraser
 - Sr. Mildred Blackman
14. LITERACY TRAINING
 - U.W.I. School of Continuing Studies
 - Sr. Michelle de Four
15. SEX EDUCATION
 - Ministry of Health, Education Unit
 - All staff of C.R.D.N
16. MEDICATION ADHERENCE
 - Medical Research Centre
 - All Supervisors and Manager of C.R.N.
17. 15TH BIENNIAL INTERNATIONAL AIDS CONFERENCE
 - Bangkok, Thailand
 - Dr. Nosa Igbinomwanhia

- **FUND RAISING**

Proceeds from our annual raffle increased from \$54,000 to \$70,000 as a consequence of the new ticket price. It is anticipated that this figure will be bettered in 2004. The annual Tea Party, and the brunch at Top of the Mount continue to attract increased public support while the Chinese Wok luncheon in aid of Cyril Ross was also well patronized. The Society was also the beneficiary of funds from several organizations which give total or part proceeds of functions held.

- **ARCHDIOCESAN RELATIONS**

The Society has sought to strengthen its relationship with other arms of social action within the Archdiocese and has worked closely with the Social Justice Commission in this regard. Some of the joint projects being undertaken include the establishment of a Halfway House for ex-prisoners and the Day of Prayer and Repentance scheduled for Sunday 17th October at the Queen's Park Savannah.

- **GOVERNMENT RELATIONS**

Members of the National Executive met with the new Minister of Social Development to discuss the involvement of the Society in government's social programmes and to review the programmes operated by the Society on behalf of the Government. A meeting was also held with the National Aids Coordinating Committee at the Cyril Ross Nursery to familiarize the Committee with the project and to discuss possible areas of financial support for the Home. Discussions are ongoing in this regard.

- **CARIBBEAN RELATIONS**

The relationship of the Societies in the member countries of the region continues to develop and strengthen as a result of the annual meetings of Vincentians. Visits are being made to countries in need of assistance and advice in fostering the growth of the Society and a Caribbean structure is being slowly developed.

- **INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS**

Our National President attended the International Assembly of the Society held in Rome to review the International Rule, a revised version of which has been agreed and circulated to all member countries. A new policy document on twinning has also been developed and adopted.

The Society continues to provide the International Council General with data and reports as requested and to make financial contributions to appeals for assistance.

- **NATIONAL PRESIDENT**

The term of office of the current National President terminates this year. In accordance with the Rule, the Senior Vice-President convened a meeting to receive nominations for the position. Brother Anthony Wong Doo was the sole nominee and has therefore been elected to serve as National President of the Society for a further three-year term.

- **GENERAL ITEMS**

A decision has been taken to sell a parcel of land at Gasparillo given to the Society. A current valuation is being prepared to facilitate this process.

The Central Particular Council has been requested to consider the use of another parcel of land in Piparo donated to the Society.

The St. Martin Welfare Association has asked the Society to assume responsibility for Pensioners Quarters owned by the National Housing Authority at Beetham Estate. Further information has been requested from the Association before the proposal can be considered.

Site Acquisition Limited has requested the lease of a portion of the Society's lands at Independence Avenue, San Fernando, for the purpose of developing a cellular site. This request has been agreed to in principle pending the company's securing of the required approvals. Terms of the lease will then be finalized.

Forms have been distributed to all Particular Councils seeking to collect updated information on the status of the conferences of the Society throughout the country. It is expected that all these forms will be completed and returned by the end of 2004.

- **OBITUARIES**

The under mentioned members of the Society and benefactors went to their eternal reward during the last year.

- **DEATHS FROM SEPTEMBER 2003**
MEMBERS

October	2003	- GERALD GIBBS	- Laventille Conference
October	2003	- LEONARD SMITH	- Crystal Stream Conference
December	2003	- IVY PEREIRA	- Cunupia Conference
December	2003	- DENNIS GELLINEAU	- Belmont Conference
January	2004	- WINSTON CALLISTE	- Mayaro Conference
January	2004	- JEFF TYSON	- O.L.O.P.H Conference San Fernando
January	2004	- HAMEL ALEXANDER	- Cathedral Conference, P.O.S.
February	2004	- RITA PIERRE	- Tritscher Home Committee
February	2004	- BOYSIE MONTEIL	- Woodbrook Conference
February	2004	- ALCALDE WARNER	- St. Finbar's Conference Diego Martin

....*Members*

March	2004	-	LESLIE BANNISTER	-	Chaguanas Conference
April	2004	-	FENRICK DE FOUR	-	Rosary Conference
April	2004	-	CLARENCE MADER	-	Morvant Conference
May	2004	-	CARLTON NEPTUNE	-	Laventille Conference
June	2004	-	COURTNEY DEANE	-	Marabella Conference
June	2004	-	GLORIA EDGHILL-TAYLOR	-	Sangre Grande Conference
August	2004	-	ROSANNA JONES	-	Mt. D'or Conference
August	2004	-	STEPHEN JOBITY	-	South Oropouche Conference
September	2004	-	RITA HARRIS-NAKHID	-	Mt. D'or Conference

FRIENDS/BENEFACTORS

December	2003	-	BRO. CAMILLUS CULLEY
January	2004	-	BRO. EUGENE PAUL-JOHN
February	2004	-	BRO. RANDOLPH NATHU
February	2004	-	SR. GLENDA RODRIGUEZ
February	2004	-	BRO. FELIX ENCINAS
February	2004	-	SR. SYLVIA LAWRENCE
February	2004	-	SR. IRMA LANCASTER
April	2004	-	BRO. RUSSEL TEIXIERA
April	2004	-	SR. MARJORIE SPENCER-CLERK
June	2004	-	DR. VALANCE MASSIAH
June	2004	-	SR. EVELYN PROCOPE
June	2004	-	SR. HELEN RODRIGUEZ
August	2004	-	SR. ZILLA DASH
August	2004	-	SR. JACQUELINE LERA
August	2004	-	BRO. EDWARD WILLIAMS

• **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

We thankfully acknowledge all who have contributed towards our success during the period – the committed staff at the Secretariat, at our institutions and other staff who willingly go beyond the bounds of duty, our benefactors, volunteers, business suppliers, legal advisors and others who so generously give of their time, talent and treasure.

Most importantly, we give thanks to Almighty God, our Blessed Mother Mary, St Vincent de Paul and Blessed Frederick Ozanam who have all been the source of inspiration and motivation to us all.