

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 2004 – 2005

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
SUNDAY SEPTEMBER 18th, 2005
DR. JOAO HAVELANGE CENTRE OF EXCELENCE
MACOYA ROAD, TUNAPUNA.

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	- Emeritus	Bro. Hugh A.S. Clerk
	- South	Bro. Kenneth Solomon
	- Central	Bro. Ronald Ho
	- North East	Bro. Rudolph Boneo
Chairman	- Finance	Bro. Kenneth Augier
	- Youth	Sr. Angelique Taylor
Administrative Secretary	-	Sr. Yvette Woodruffe
Recording Secretary	-	Sr. Alake Atiba

PARTICULAR COUNCIL PRESIDENTS:

Port of Spain	-	Bro. Victor Cuffy
Central	-	Sr. Jane Ragoon
North West	-	Sr. June Gardiner
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

MEETINGS:

The National Executive Committee meets on a monthly basis to administer the ongoing work of the Society. In addition, two (2) special meetings were held.

The National Council met on a quarterly basis. Two of these meetings were expanded to include Conference Presidents and discussed specifically the revised International Rule of the Society and matters relating to the International Assembly of the Society during which the International President was re-elected for a further term.

SECRETARIAT:

The Secretariat handles the day to day affairs of the Society and provides assistance to Conferences and Councils as needed. A new vehicle was purchased to facilitate the collection and distribution of items and foodstuffs, particularly for the Society's institutions. Some Councils and Conferences have made financial contributions to this purchase.

The Secretariat has been pursuing the launch of a Society Website, which it is hoped, members will be able to view at this Annual General Meeting. The computerization of the Society's accounts is also nearing completion.

Invitations for the Society's participation in national fora and for training opportunities have led to participation of several members of the Society and staff.

SOCIETY REVIEW:

In order to assess, accurately, the current status of the Society's membership and the role which the Conferences are playing, the National Executive Committee has undertaken a detailed review of the Society. This involves personal visits by Executive members to Conferences and the completion of a questionnaire designed to elicit the required information. This exercise is now virtually completed and members will be apprised of the findings in due course.

As a consequence of an increase in the national minimum wage, the Society also undertook a review of staff compensation. This review has resulted in an increase of some \$20,000.00 monthly in the Society's wage bill, the effects of which are being felt by a deterioration of the Society's financial position and which will necessitate greater efforts at revenue generation if the Society is to maintain its current national work.

INSTITUTIONS:

The Institutions of the Society, which we detailed elsewhere, continue to be operated by Committees or Conferences. However, in some instances, operational costs have to be subsidized by the National Council. This is particularly the case in respect of the Finbar Ryan Geriatric Home and the Cyril Ross Nursery.

At the Geriatric Home, the FINBAR RYAN ASSOCIATION has been very supportive in enhancing and maintaining the physical facilities and more recently, has embarked on fundraising ventures to assist with the operational costs of the institution. This development is most welcome. The Society has also entered an arrangement with the Parish whereby facilities have been constructed on the Home's premises to house the

Parish's Book Shop, Fin Aid Office and also the local S.V.P Conference while the parish's proposed PARISH CENTRE is being constructed. Upon completion of the Centre, the new facilities at the Home will revert to the Society for its use.

At the Cyril Ross Nursery, the Committee has also been able to acquire substantial funding for improvement to the physical infrastructure and for some of the expenses related to the children's transport and education, PAHO was one of the major contributors. Unfortunately, anticipated governmental support has not materialized. Training has been provided both locally and abroad for staff at the Nursery so as to improve their understanding of HIV/AIDS and to apprise them of development in the treatment of the disease. The older children have also been introduced to computer literacy in a project organized by Tables Turn Workshop. Through the effort of Ms. Wendy Fitzwilliam, TSTT is now providing free telephone service to the Nursery and will continue to do so for five years. The Cyril Ross Nursery is also in the process of being formally registered to facilitate the adoption of any children that may be deemed necessary. Plans for the construction of a new facility for the children are proceeding apace. Land is in the process of being conveyed to the Society, the architect is currently designing the facilities based on the brief supplied, a Committee comprising representatives of the Society, the Hibiscus Foundation, BPTT and Home Construction has been set up for implementation. To date, close to two million dollars (\$2M) have been raised including a sum of \$700,000.00 from BPTT representing the proceeds of its annual charity Golf Tournament, construction should commence in early 2006.

In terms of the Society's other Institutions, work is proceeding on the new Home for the Aged in San Fernando largely through the generosity of Republic Bank, which has pledged \$2 million to the project. The St. Christopher's Conference has continued its fundraising efforts to the project with a significant measure of success but further corporate support will undoubtedly be needed to realize the goal of \$6 million which is the estimated final cost of the Home.

The Tritscher Home has been refurbished through a contribution from Powergen while the St. Colm's Hall at the Belmont Home is currently being redesigned to serve as a prototype Senior Citizens Centre in conjunction with the government and Rotary Club of Maraval. A decision has also been taken to demolish the Penal Home as soon as its lone resident can be relocated.

As regards the Centre for Socially Displaced Persons (C.S.D.P.), the Government has indicated its intentions to relocate the residents to other facilities by the end of 2005. While the new Minister of Social Services Delivery has expressed his intention to work closely with the Society, the future role of the Society in relation to the Government's Programme for assisting the homeless poor remains unclear.

FUND-RAISING:

Some members of the Society who had indicated a willingness to serve in this area were invited to become members of a Fund-raising Committee. This Committee organized the 'Top of the Mount' Brunch and the Par Excellence Dinner and Show,

both of which yielded excellent financial results. In addition, the annual Tea Party was also successful and our Annual Raffle is currently underway. Because of the late receipt of police permission for this latter undertaking, the Society has applied for an extension to the draw date, which it is now proposed, will take place in October.

Having regard to the substantially increased cost of the Society's national activities and an anticipated reduction in our income, it is clear that greater emphasis will need to be placed on our fund-raising efforts.

SPECIAL WORKS:

Three active Committees are in operation: our Public Relations Committee has continued to publish a regular Newsletter of the Society's activities; our Prison Committee has expanded its outreach to the boys at the Youth Training Centre and our Youth Committee has been actively involved in the formation of new Conferences and in the orientation and development of the new members with the assistance of members of the National Executive.

Our relationship with Rebirth House which ministers to drug addicts at our Duncan Street facility continues and our public outreach via one radio programme serves to highlight the Society and its work.

TRAINING:

A number of our members and staff of the Society continue to benefit from attendance at seminars and training exercises. These were organised by various Government Ministries and NGO's.

SPIRITUAL EXERCISES:

Our Conferences and Councils are encouraged to organize Festival Meetings, Retreats and Days of Recollection and have in most instances responded positively. At the national level, a special Mass for Benefactors was celebrated in November 2004; a day of Prayer and Reflection was organized at Mount St Benedict to mark the Feast of Christ the King; the Palm Sunday Walk took place as usual but was less well supported and Retreats were organized for members on a regional basis during the Lenten period. Members of the Society also participated in the National Day of Prayer for Repentance and Healing.

NATIONAL EVENTS:

These included the National Executive's Open House in December which members from all over the country visited during the day, shared a meal and exchanged Christmas Greetings; the annual luncheon and day of activities for residents of the Society's Homes and the National Rally of the Society held in Couva. Special congratulations must be extended to the members of the Central Particular Council and Conferences for the organization of this latter event.

ARCHDIOCESAN RELATIONS:

Members of the Society continue to be actively involved in the activities of their parishes and the Archdiocese. This included the second session of the Archdiocesan Synod and the Year of the Eucharist celebrations.

In March 2005, the Episcopal Delegate for Social Justice was invited to attend a meeting of the National Executive Committee to discuss a collaborative approach in the establishment of Social Justice groups at the parish level. It was decided that the youth arm of the Society would be challenged to become involved in this activity.

GOVERNMENT RELATIONS:

The Society has been interacting with various arms of the Government in order to assist in the implementation of national social programmes and to facilitate access to these programmes by qualified individuals.

Currently we are involved in discussions with the Ministry of Health on a proposal for the Society to accommodate at its Homes persons currently resident at Hospitals; we are seeking to access financial support for the Cyril Ross Nursery from the National Aids Co-ordinating Committee and we have indicated to the new Minister of Social Services Delivery our willingness to assist his Ministry in the execution of its programmes.

CARIBBEAN RELATIONS:

The Society maintains contact with other Societies in the region via correspondence and visits to our offices by overseas members. We also collaborate closely with the International Regional Co-ordinator located in Antigua. Because of the International Council General Meeting scheduled in 2005, the regional Presidents meeting due in 2005 has been postponed to February 2006 in Barbados.

Our programme of assistance for the rebuilding of Grenada has continued. This has been assisted by a grant from United Way International which the Society was asked to manage. We have reached agreement with the Society in Grenada that our efforts will now be concentrated on the repair and reconstruction of homes and this exercise is in effect. Our financial assistance to date has totalled \$ 112,849.95.

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS:

At the international level the Society has undertaken a comprehensive review of its operations. This has included a review of the Society's Rule; examination of its financial situation which is not healthy; international recognition of the Society and stricter conditions for the aggregation of Conferences and the recognition of National Councils.

In response to the appeal by Council General (Paris, France), regarding financial assistance for the Society's International Relief fund, in the aftermath of the Tsunami Disaster in Asia, we have received a total of \$9,000.00 towards this cause.

At the International Assembly held in Salamanca, Spain, the President General was re-elected for a second term.

The Vincenpaul is accessible on the Internet at www.ozanet.org

OTHER MATTERS:

The Society has declined an invitation from the St. Martin's Welfare Association to assume responsibility for the Pensioner's Quarters located at Beetham Estate.

The National Executive Committee has decided to sell two parcels of land, one at Gasparillo the other at Piparo both of which have been deemed unsuitable for the Society's use. We are also pursuing use of another piece of land in Laventille.

The Society is one of the NGO's that have come together to form an Association, one of the main objectives of which is to seek increased governmental support for the work of NGO's.

The National Executive Committee produces an annual Calendar of Events which members are urged to keep so that they can observe activities such as Festival Meetings and can send representatives to national meetings.

Each Particular Council and Special Works Committee of the Society has been requested to prepare a Report outlining their major activities over the period under review and those Reports form part of this document.

Finally, the Society's Reports Website has been completed and members may view this during today's Annual General Meeting. Comments designed to improve the Website would be welcomed. The website can be accessed via the Internet at www.svdptt.org

OBITUARIES FROM SEPTEMBER 2004:

We specially mention Pope John Paul II and Bishop John Mendes who went to their eternal reward during the year.

Also, MEMBERS who passed away over the last year:

September 2004-	SYBIL GEORGE	- Fyzabad conference
September 2004-	LENNOX CARTER	- Manzanilla conference
October 2004-	SAMUEL PARRIS	- Scarborough conference
January 2005-	STELLAN DAVIS	- St. Anthony's Jr. Conference, Petit Valley
January 2005-	BEATRICE JAMES	- Carapichaima conference
March 2005-	OCTAVE TELESFORD	- OLOPH conference, San Fernando
March 2005-	GAIL HUDLING	- Siparia Conference
March 2005-	ROSE Mc KAIN	- Scarborough conference
March 2005-	PHILIP JOSEPH	- Cunupia conference
March 2005-	REGINALD PIERRE	- Santa Rosa conference
March 2005-	CORNELIUS TIDD	- Santa Rosa conference
March 2005-	PETER PHILIP	- Woodbrook conference
April 2005-	FELIX KELLY	- St. John's conference, St. Augustine
May 2005-	WILMA FORDE	- Barataria conference

May 2005-	EARLINE PETERS	- Barataria conference
June 2005-	FAUSTINA RAMTAHAL	- Sangre Grande conference
July 2005-	ROSE HAYNES	- Morvant conference
August 2005-	OWEN B. GREEN	- OLOPH conference
August 2005-	DOROTHY PHILLS	- Homeless Project Committee

The following FRIENDS / BENEFACTORS passed away over the last year

October 2004 :	SYBIL BLACKMAN
November 2004 :	BARBARA JOSEPH
	VINCENT DONATIEN
May 2004 :	ELLEN LEE KIN
	RITA ASHBY
June 2005 :	MARLENE CAPRIETTA
	RUBINA FANCIS
	VERNON JOHNSON

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:

We firstly and most importantly thank Almighty God for His continued guidance and direction during this period. We are also grateful for the heavenly intercession of our Blessed Mother- Mary Most Holy, St. Vincent de Paul and Blessed Frederick Ozanam, all of whose prayers we have constantly beseeched.

We also thankfully acknowledge every individual and/ or group that has made this past year the success it was for us: the ever-committed staff at the Secretariat, our institutions and other staff who are willing to go beyond duty to serve those most in need in our national community. We must also sincerely thank our benefactors, volunteers, business suppliers, legal advisors, voluntary doctors and all others who have so generously given of their time, talent and treasure during this year and years gone by. We ask them to continue this generosity for years to come. We assure them that their heavenly reward awaits them-

"HE WHO GIVETH TO THE POOR, LENDETH TO THE LORD."

