

Invitation to Join the Society of St. Vincent de Paul

Dear Parishioners,

This week we are inviting all of you to consider joining the St. Timothy Conference of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul (SSVP).

SSVP is a Catholic lay volunteer organization working in 140 countries across the world, with 793 Conferences and over 15,000 members in Canada.

The primary mission of the Society is to help Catholics to ***“live the Gospel message by serving Christ in the poor with love, respect, justice and joy”***. Our Mission leads us to ***“see Christ in anyone who suffers, come together as a family, have personal contact with the poor and help in all possible ways.”***

Vincentians are especially inspired by the challenge in the Gospel of St. Matthew (25:37) when Jesus asks on our behalf *“Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? When did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you?”*

Here at St. Timothy, we foster person-to-person contact with the poor by delivering food to families in need in Winnipeg. And we do it with the very generous donations of food and cash from you our fellow parishioners.

Does *“person-to-person contact with the poor”* make you feel uncomfortable? Perhaps you are thinking *“I help the poor by donating money, or food, or gifts for children for our Christmas Hampers. But person-to-person contact is not for me. That’s too scary or I’m not good enough to do that.”*

But remember, the same God who asks us to take care of the poor tells us in John’s Gospel (10:10) that he wants us to *“Have life and have it to the full”*. So we are not asked to feed the poor because God loves the poor more than us but because He wants all of us to grow and flourish and be the best people we can be and because He knows how much we can be enriched when we live a life of service to others.

After Mass today some of our members will be available to answer your questions. You will find that we are very passionate about SSVP. Our Vincentians will tell you that that our very, very small acts of charity are enormously satisfying and meaningful to us. When we help to feed hungry adults and children in Winnipeg we are enriched by our encounter with Christ in them. It is not difficult at all and it brings us great joy. Certainly, if we can do it, you can do it!

Our need for more Vincentians to help us in our Mission is great, so in this time of Lent, when the Church asks us to reflect on almsgiving and mercy, think about joining us and giving yourself to the poor through the St. Vincent de Paul Society. It will surely be a gift *“pleasing to God”*.

If you don’t have time to meet us today, our email address is in the bulletin and our meetings, on every second Monday, are listed in the bulletin. You may also wish to visit: <http://www.ssvp.ca>

Thanks to all of you for your generous support.

Sincerely,

Your St. Timothy Conference Vincentians and Fellow Parishioners