



# **CONFERENCE OFFICERS**



## **RECRUITMENT**

### **HOW THE RECRUITMENT PROCESS WORKS**

The main responsibility for Recruitment in a District Council area lies with the District Council. Often there is a Central Council Recruitment Officer who is very experienced. Ideally, he or she will work with a small Recruitment Team from the DC and enable them to experience at least one successful campaign - either creating a new Conference or building up an existing Conference. From then on, they can continue on their own.

#### **Recruitment methods that have very little success**

- Making an appeal in the parish newsletter for new members
- Making an appeal from the pulpit for new members

#### **Personal approach**

A personal invitation sometimes works - to parishioners whom the Conference thinks would make good members - not overlooking some of those who attend daily Mass.

### **USUAL RECRUITMENT METHOD THAT WORKS**

See the Reference Manual Procedure 8b for the process in detail.

#### **THE RECRUITMENT PROCESS**

- 1) The Conference asks for DC help in building up the Conference.
- 2) The Conference President and the leader of the DC Recruitment Team see the Parish Priest.
  - a) Agree the need for new members and explain that all the PP needs to do is to agree a date for a pulpit appeal during the Sunday Masses in a few weeks' time,
  - b) Agree a date for an Information Meeting one evening, ideally within the week following the pulpit appeal.

Finding that the speakers for the Sunday and for the Information Meeting are supplied by the DC is a big relief for the priest. but it is obviously a big help if he supports the Sunday appeals and is able to attend the Information Meeting.

c) Ask the priest for some names of potential good members (who can be specially invited to the information meeting nearer the time). *Do not leave that task with him*, or it will be a burden.

Ask him, there and then, please to go through his address book or card index and, even if it takes 40 minutes, to give you at least the name, and phone number of anyone who would make a good member.

d) Ask if the 2 agreed dates could be put in the newsletter for the 2 weeks prior to the Sunday appeal and give suggested wording for the newsletter.

- 3)** The Pulpit appeal takes place. The aim is not to ask for new members but simply to invite people to the Information Meeting.

Have some members at the back of the Church to take phone numbers of people who would like to know more but cannot attend on the night

Later telephone the people suggested by the parish priest, specially inviting them.

- 4)** The Information Meeting is held. The DC Recruitment Team uses the Information Module, which is an excellent resource using coloured overhead projection slides.

As many as possible of the Conference members attend.

People interested are invited to attend the next Conference meeting and to try a visit before finally deciding if 'it is for them'.

- 5)** Allocate the 'provisional members' an easy visit with an experienced member, when they attend the Conference meeting. During the meeting, be very careful to keep particularly sensitive information about people we visit confidential.
- 6)** Always take new members to the next Festival Meeting etc. Explain that attendance is very much part of the Vincentian commitment.

N .B. Young members in adult Conferences

They find it difficult to fit in if all members are elderly.

It is easier for them if some members are in their 40's or 50's.

It is much easier for them to persevere if another young person joins too.

## KEEPING NEW MEMBERS

- Give them a warm welcome and encouragement Introduce all the other members. During visit reports, add the necessary background information so that the visit report can be understood by them.
- Introduce the new member to visiting immediately - with an experienced member. Try to allocate an 'easy' first visit to someone who talks fluently

Encourage the new members privately by complimenting them on something they contributed during the visit which was 'just right'. Encourage them publicly by mentioning this during the Conference meeting - it is a form of 'on-the-job' training.

For someone with family commitments, confirm that it is understood they will need some flexibility e.g. they may not be available every single week and may occasionally be delayed. Explain that it helps to ring the President on such occasions.

- Give them 'The Member's Handbook' immediately and, when appropriate, the Rule, and perhaps 'The Mind & Heart of a Vincentian'.
- Encourage them to attend the Society's Induction Training
- Take the new members to the first available Festival Meeting to meet other members.

Explain that attendance is very much part of the Vincentian commitment.

- Perhaps take them as observers occasionally to a DC meeting so they can see how the structure works

Taking a new member to an Annual National Festival Meeting will give them a new perspective on the national and international dimension of the Society

- After at least six months, the new members could be separately commissioned (Reference Manual Procedure 6a) or they could wait until the annual Commissioning Ceremony for existing members (6b).

The Annual Conference Review, conducted prayerfully, will make it much more likely that those who have been members for some time, will also remain in the Conference, as their frustrations will have been aired and their suggestions heeded.