



Position Description for Spiritual Adviser – St Vincent de Paul Society

Position Title: Conference Spiritual Adviser

Appointment: The Spiritual Adviser is appointed by the Conference President in consultation with the Conference members.

The Spiritual Adviser's term ceases with the election of a new president.

The Spirit of Poverty and Encouragement

“Members of the Society are united in the same spirit of poverty and sharing. They encourage one another to live a profound spiritual life and spirit of prayer. For this purpose the role of the Spiritual Adviser is very important.” (*The Rule, 2012 Edition, Part 1, 3.13*).

Conference as a community of faith and love

“The members meet as brothers and sisters with Christ in the midst of them, in Conferences that are genuine communities of faith and love, of prayer and action, spiritual bonds and friendships between members are essential, as is the common mission to help the poor and marginalized. The entire Society is a true and unique worldwide community of Vincentian friends”.
(*The Rule, 2012 Edition: Part 1: 3.3*)

Primary Objectives

The Spiritual Adviser holds a key role in helping Vincentians to achieve their primary purpose within the Society: growth in holiness, supporting them in their ongoing formation in the Christian Gospel, service to the poor, advocacy for those who are disadvantaged, and Vincentian spirituality. Their role is to facilitate the Conference or Council to be (as stated in The Rule above) ‘genuine communities of faith and love, of prayer and action’ and ‘meet as brothers and sisters with Christ in the midst of them.’

Key qualities and skills of a Spiritual Adviser

A Spiritual Adviser....

- Is an active Catholic and a person of prayer who is grounded in Gospel values and knowledge of or prepared to develop a good understanding of Vincentian Spirituality.
- Has a genuine desire to continually deepen their own spiritual and faith life and encourage others to do so
- Willing to grow in what is means ‘*to follow Christ through service to those in need and so bear witness to His compassionate and liberating love.*’ (Rule, Part 1, 1.2)
- Is able to share good counsel
- Has experience in building and nurturing relationships
- Is able to listen with sensitivity and openness to others
- Is willing to grow in their capacity to lead prayer and facilitate sharing

- Is committed to nurture the Conference to be ‘a community of faith and love’ as stated in the Rule excerpt above.
- Values the spiritual, formative and life experiences of all those in the Society and encourages the gifts and talents of all members.
- Is committed to and familiar with the Rule, mission and ministry of the Society
- Is prepared to work with the Conference President to nurture the three essential elements of Conference life: Spirituality, Service and Community within their Conference
- Is able to deal with tension and ambiguity
- Is aware of their personal strengths and limitations of their role.

The Role includes:

1. Attending meetings and encouraging regular attendance of all members.
2. Using the Society’s resources to provide scriptural and other spiritual readings for the Conference meetings or facilitate others to share this responsibility.
3. Creating opportunities for individual and group reflection and prayer.
4. Encouraging members to participate in reflection days and retreats and regional, Central Council and state-wide gatherings for members’ spiritual enrichment (e.g. Festival events).
5. Liaising with the Conference President to offer Eucharistic and other liturgical celebrations.
6. Confidentially offering support and advice to the President as they seek to develop the Conference in Vincentian service and being a community of faith and action engaged in spiritual growth.
7. Animating and advising, providing inspiration, challenge, advice and support to the Conference or individual members of the Society in their ministry.
8. Promoting a sense of unity and belonging among Confreres in the Vincentian family.
9. Collaborating with other Spiritual Advisers to grow in understanding of their role and new ways to support Vincentian formation.
10. Takes appropriate action based on their own personal limitations and strengths of their role as Spiritual adviser.

Training

The Spiritual Adviser will have completed Society Orientation or Welcome Friend (or its equivalent). It is highly recommended that they will also have completed a training program on providing assistance such as Vincentian Visitation Guidelines or Communication Skills with the people we assist.

Leadership Training and a Resource Kit specific for the Spiritual Adviser is being developed will be available in early 2019.

Feedback and approval of this document:

Reference Group	Feedback received	Final approval
State Spirituality Advisory Committee		3 August 2018
Report to State Council on 7 August 2018	7 August hard copy distributed	