



SOCIETY OF ST. VINCENT de PAUL



TRIVANDRUM CENTRAL COUNCIL ST. JOSEPH'S CATHEDRAL. PALAYAM, TRIVANDRUM-695 033

A BRIEF REPORT ON THE ACTIVITIES OF TRIVANDRUM (LATIN) CENTRAL COUNCIL

A brief history of Trivandrum Central Council

St. Joseph 's Conference, the nucleus of the Trivandrum Central Council and the first conference of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul in Kerala was established in St. Joseph's Parish at Palayam village in the Travancore state (At present St. Joseph 's Cathedral Parish) on the 24th November 1878, when Rev. Fr. Emygdaus O.C.D was the Parish Priest. Its first President was Mr. Frank Watts, who was then the Chief Secretary to the Govt. of Travancore State. It was aggregated to the Council General in Parish on 23rd June 1879. Charitable works such as helping the poor and visiting them, visiting the sick in the hospitals and occasionally visiting the prisons were the activities of the members. Person to person contact and sharing the love of Christ to the poor were given preference.



There was a break in its active working for some time and it was revived in 1931 when Rev. Fr. Ildaphonse O.C.D. was the parish priest. He encouraged and helped the conference. Mr. Joseph Thaliath, the then Travancore High Court Judge (later Chief Justice) became the President. He was later made Chevalier and under his guidance and leadership, the conference flourished. When he left to settle in Madras in 1955, Mr. J.T. Moraes, a veteran Vincentian and former member of Sri Moolam Assembly and a member of the Kerala Legislative Assembly, became the President. At this time, there were 3 Conferences in existence in Trivandrum Diocese viz., St. Anne's, Pettah, St. Mary's, Vettucaud and St. Augustin's, Murukkumpuzha. All these Conferences were originally under the Verapoly Central Council. Bro. Moraes and the members of St. Joseph 's Conference started a few more Conferences in other parishes and in 1966 a particular council of the Society was formed in Trivandrum. Bro. Moraes had the privilege to be the first President of the particular council.

Later on, with the increase in the number of Conferences, a Central Council was formed in 1972 which was instituted formally by the Council General on 10th June 1974. Till 1978 when the society celebrated its centenary celebrations, there were 71 conferences and three particular councils under the Central Council. When Mr. Moraes resigned after completing the full term of 8 years, Bro. Walter S.

Fernandez took charge as the President of the Central Council (CC) in January 1982. The impetus of the CC, the Society made a distinct thrust forward and spread to many parishes. There were nine particular councils and 174 conferences at the time when he resigned in 1987. Bro. Sunny Nettar took charge as President on June 1987. At this time by his efforts, the Society expanded to the nook and corner of the Diocese. The Trivandrum particular council was bifurcated because of the large number of conferences and a new particular council, Valiathura, was formed. He worked for the up lift of the youth conferences and organized seminars for the youth and women. When he left after completing his term, there were 10 particular councils and 223 conferences. We record our gratitude to him. On the expiry of his term, Bro. Sneby, who was the Treasurer during the time of the two preceding Presidents, assumed office on 18th July 1992. His team bifurcated to Trivandrum Central Council and a new Central Council, named Neyyattinkara Central Council.

After this Bro. Francis Stephen took the charge as President and his tenure was from 1997 to 2002. During this period the CC build the Ozanam Karunya Bhavan. Bro. Maria Georgeline took the charge of the President, from 2002 to 2008. In his period, free Ambulance service was introduced. Bro. A. Don Bosco took the charge as President in 2008 and continued up to 2014. He introduced several schemes like Fish vending loan, drinking water scheme, house maintenance support, self-help projects, toilets and sanitations, roof change to the thatched houses, community wedding program, distribution of sewing machine to poor people. The CC took the initiative and pooled Rs. 10 million locally and with Rs.2.5 million assisted by Trivandrum Latin Arch Dioces. The amount distributed Rs. 0.1 m each to one hundred poor girls for their marriages. CC distributed medicine and food kits to the cancer and leprosy patients. Conducted medical camps in different places to diagnose T B, Aids and Leprosy. We also distributed food kits to the starving people. The computer class and tailoring class are also started in this period.

Bro. Zacharias took the charge as President of Trivandrum Central Council in 2014 and continued up to 2020. During his period a major expansion happened in Ozanam Karunya Bhavan such as, the floor area extended from 3000 sq ft to 6500 sq.ft, constructed a new Chapel ,three nuns of Oblat Hospitality Franciscan Congregation took the charge of day today activities, the bed numbers increased from 15 to 34, registered the bhavan to Orphanage Control Board of Kerala Government and availed monthly food grain ration for the inmates, started periodic medical check up to the inmates by, visiting doctors, procured a new vehicle to transport the inmates to the hospital.

During his period M/s. Our Lady of Health a conference at South Florida in America gave scholarship Rs. 5000 per student of 20 seventh standard students. They gave the scholarship for three years. When OKHI the cyclone worst hit in the Trivandrum Central council area the same conference gave Rs. 7500 /month each to five families for three years. Apart from this the National Council of India with the support of overseas conferences transferred to us Rs.1.6 million to distribute OKHI victims. We pooled another Rs. 0.4 million locally and distributed Rs.0.1 million each to twenty cyclone hit families as for their livelihood support. The overseas conference gave a grant of Rs. 0.8 million when sea erosion happened in the North Trivandrum

cost. The CC pooled another 0.2 million locally and distributed Rs. 0.1 m each to ten families to rebuild their houses.

Bro. D. Francis took over charge as President from 20th Sept. 2020.

At present there are 147 conferences covering, the area from South Tamilnadu, Eraimanthurai village of Kanyakumari district to Ayiroor village in Thiruvananthapuram district the state capital of Kerala. These conferences are monitored by 17 Area Councils.



The central council focuses the poorest of the poor people living in the coastal and surrounding villages of this area. The Charity works covers, shelter to the destitute people, Livelihood support to the poor, provision kit to the starving and adopted families, educational support to the children of the poor family, Dress to the needy people and medicines to sick people of the poor families. House and sanitation to the poor, support to strengthen the family, support to the victims of natural calamities, Seminars and annual meet.

1. Shelter to the destitute

The Ozanam Karunya Bhavan an old age home, the project was visioned by the central council of Trivandrum during the year 2002 when Bro Francis Stephen was the president and Rev. Fr. John De Bosco spiritual advisor. The total land covers 48 cents. All the local conference supported by collecting a good amount of fund for procuring the land. We received an aid from the overseas council The England and Wales for constructing a 3000 sq. ft building. The Bhavan was opened by Bro. Jimo'commor, the National president of England and Wales on 17th January 1999. Dr. Susai Packiyam, the Bishop of Trivandrum Dioses Blessed the Ozanam Karunya Bhavan on 27th August 2000. In the year 2018, M/s. Ringwood Regional Council of Australia gave the support to extent the building from 3000 sq. ft to 6500 sq. ft.

We care, on an average 35 inmates every year, the annual expenditure spent Rs. 1.4 million for caring the inmates for their food, clothing, sanitation, medical support and entertainment. Three nuns of Oblet Hospitality Franciscan Congregation and four staffs caring the inmates.

Every year, each conference of the Central Council visits the Ozanam Karunya Bhavan in a rotational bases, giving financial and material support.



2. Livelihood support to the poor

Support to fish vendors and fish drying, established and running a Tailoring and Type writing cum computer learning institution, cottage net making, rearing cattle and poultry by the poor, support to vegetable vendors, support to small shop vendors.



2.a. We supported nearly 1750 fish vendors including fish drying people annually by giving a loan of Rs. 1000/ head without any charges or interest. On the other hand, the money lenders charge 60% interest annually from these beneficiaries. We avoided the exploitation of money lenders from this sector.

2.b. We have started tailoring institutes at the conferences Valiathura and Palayam in the area of Trivandrum central council. Each year nearly 500 students learn tailoring from these two institutes. We only charge a nominal fee from each student. These institutes produce garments and we have sales outlets. We sell nearly forty-fifty thousand Rupees worth garments annually from these units. Two teachers teach tailoring and we pay Rs. 6000/ month to each teacher. The profit of this unit has been distributed to the poor students as stipend as Rs. 500/- month.



2.c. The Central Council distributes sewing machines to the poor tailors through conferences. Every year the CC distributes 50 sewing machines.

2.d. We have started a type writing cum computer learning Institution at Palayam St. Joseph conference and running in full swing. One teacher teaches both basic computer applications and type writing. We give fee concession to the poor and charge a nominal fee from the others to cover the teacher salary. Yearly about 150 students pass through this institution.

2.e. Support to fisherwomen for net making. We supply nylon thread and other raw material to the poor fisher women
For the net production. We collect the finished products and sell out to fishermen with a nominal profit. We pay wages and share of profit to the netmakers.

2.f. We distribute goats to twenty-five poor families for generating house hold milk for their children on a condition that the owner have to return its first baby lamb back to local conference. The local conference in turn distributes the baby lambs to next poor family in a way continuous chain, likewise the project keeping live.





2.g. Poultry rearing: We distribute annually local breed hen not less than 10 numbers each to ten families for producing egg. These families sell egg and meet their family needs.

2.h. We support nearly sixty handicapped and poor people by distributing ten thousand rupees each per individual to run small provision / stationary/ vegetable shops.



The projects 2f, 2g and 2h are operated in the poor people living in the mission parish and rural areas irrespective of religion.

3. Monthly distribution of food grains and provision kit to the adopted families

Each conference of our central council takes care, more than ten adopted families by distributing one thousand rupees worth provisions including food grains and sanitary items to each family every month. Accordingly, all together the conferences of central council spent Rs. 1.5 million to the 1500 adopted families every month. Nearly eighty-eight conferences receive the twinning grant for this purpose. Mainly conferences of Australia, Scotland and England are supporting twinning grant incessantly. However, the rest of the conferences and even the grant receiving conferences also collect fund from members and benefactors to fulfill this commitment.



4. Financial support to the poor families for educating their children.

4.a. Every year, each conference issues books and study materials and school fee to more than twenty-five students. Accordingly, 3500 students benefit this support. The Total amount spent on this educational aid is accounted as Rs. 2.45 million.

4.b. We distribute scholarships to fifty meritorious students studying in higher and technical education every year. We receive nearly Rs.0.17 million from the national council in this regard. We also collect a twenty-five percent contribution from the local conferences and issue this scholarship.



4.c. Under the overseas project grant we issue study table and chairs to 45 students every year. One unit of chair and table costs nearly Rs. 7000/-. The total project expenditure is Rs.0.315 million on which 80 percent grant and 20 percent local contribution.



4.d. Under the Covid 19 pandemic situation the class rooms are transferred to electronic media. The students hail from poor families find difficulty to attend the e-classes lacking electronic equipment. We distributed nearly 75 numbers of television sets and 125 numbers of mobile phones to those who found extreme difficulty to attend the e-class. The total amount spent for this program was Rs. 0.192 million.

5. Medicines to sick people and dress to the needy people of the poor families.

5.a. We focused the patients who suffer from cancer, kidney disease, lever disease and parallelizes. We give Rs. 1000/- every month to 300 patients for their medical expense. We spent Rs. 3.6 million per annum on this account.

5.b. Some of the Conferences visited the tribal settlement inside the forest and distributed dresses to the people during special occasions.

5.c. During Vincentian Feast days, Christmas and Lenten occasions the conference members visit old age homes, jails, and the poor sick people in the hospitals and distribute dresses and bread. We spent nearly Rs. 0.7 million per annum on this.



6. House and sanitation to the poor

6.a. We support the homeless by constructing new house of plinth area 800 sq.ft. Yearly we support two beneficiaries costing Rs.0.6 million/house.



6.b. We give financial support to the poor families having incomplete and damaged houses for its completion and maintenance work. We provide up to Rs. 0.1 million to each house according to condition of the house. We spent nearly Rs. 1.2 million in this regard.

6.c. We give financial support 25 poor families each year who does not have toilet, drinking water connection and electric connection. We provide up to Rs.2500/- to each family based on the need. We spent nearly Rs. 0.625 million annually.

7. Support to strengthen the family.

The local conferences of Trivandrum support on hundred poor families by giving Rs. 25000 to each one for the marriage of their daughter. The conferences take this as a yearly commitment.

8. Support to the victims of natural calamities

The CC took an immediate step and convened a meeting to support the affected families when the TOUTHE cyclone hit Truvandrum coast. The local conferences and the Area councils supported this initiative. The CC pooled Rs 0.435 million with help of them and distributed this amount to fifty affected families for the house maintenance and educational support. The Sea erosion hit the coastal houses badly, we distributed Rs. 50000/- each to twenty-five families to rebuild their houses.



“Give to others, and God will give to you. Indeed, you will receive a full measure, a generous helping, poured into your hands – all that you can hold. The measure you use for others is the one that God will use for you.” (Luke 6:38)

Greetings from God to all the Brothers and Sisters of St.Vincent De Paul Society, conference members.

TURKTE CYCLONE FUND DISTRIBUTED

Donation from Various Area Council, Conferences and Benefactors

Sl.No.	Area Council	Amount
1.	Trivandrum Central Council	1,00,000
2.	Trivandrum Area Council	50,000
	St. Joseph Conference, Palayam	25,000
	Mother Theresa Conference, Palayam	50,000
	St. Jude's Conference, Killipalam	15,000
	O.L. Immaculate Conference, Vanchiyoor	50,000
	Sacred Heart Conference, Nanthencode	30,000
3.	Peroorkada Area Council	10,000
	Little Flower Conference, Vellayambalam	25,000
4.	Kazhakuttom Area Council	
	St. Joseph's Conference, Kazhakuttom	50,000
	Fathima Matha Conference, Kazhakuttom	10,000
5.	Vallavila Area Council	25,000
	TOTAL	4,40,000

TURKTE CYCLONE FUND DISTRIBUTED AREA COUNCIL UNDER THE PARISHES

Sl. No.	Name of Area Council	Relief Fund	Death Fund to Fishermen	Camp Fund	Total
1	Anjengo Area Council (Poothura, Anjengo, Mampally)	75,000		10,000	95,000
2	St. Andrews Area Council (Thumba, Pallithura)	50,000			50,000
3	Vettucad Area Council (Vettucad, Kochuvelli)	50,000			50,000
4	Valiathura Area Council (Valiathura, Kochuthope, Valiathope, Kannanthura)	1,00,000		15,000	1,15,000
5	Poonthura Area Council	25,000	20,000 (2x10000)	5,000	50,000
6	Kovalam Area Council (Vizhnam)		10,000	5,000	15,000
7	Karunkulam Area Council (Paruthiyoor, Pozhiyoor)	50,000		10,000	60,000
	Grand Total	3,50,000	40,000	45,000	4,35,000

Bro . D. Francis

Bro.Lawrence TJ

President, Trivandrum Central Council

Secretary, Trivandrum Central Council

9. Seminars and Meeting


The conferences conduct their meeting weekly. In the covid19 pandemic condition though an irregularity happened in the weekly meeting they somehow managed to meet online and kept the service to the adopted families regular. The Area councils conduct the meeting monthly. The Board and General body conduct their meeting every month. Under the covid19 pandemic condition the annual meeting is postponed. The Central council is nearing for its Golden Jubilee Year. The Board constituted a Golden Jubilee sub-committee to propose Golden Jubilee programs. The sub-committee members including the Spiritual advisor Rev. Fr. Joseph Bastin met the Arch Bishop of Trivandrum and the Auxiliary Bishop as part of the Golden Jubilee program proposals. The respected Arch Bishop shared his vision and asked us to construct a destitute home for women in central council area. Accordingly, the sub-committee made proposal to Board to build fifty bed sized destitute home for women, educational scholarship support to meritorious poor students, Planting the tree saplings at every conference to make the surroundings green and publish a Golden Jubilee Souvenir.



Conclusion

In spite of the Covid19 pandemic situation all the local conferences kept their services to the adopted families in time. The Central Council notice this as an appreciable work and wish to extend the gratitude to all the conferences. When a natural calamity happens the Overseas conferences, National Council of India and other supporters including the local conferences come together with the Central Council and stretch their helping hand to the affected families we wish to extend our sincere gratitude to all. We wish to express our sincere gratitude to M/s. England and Wales, The Australian National Council, The Scotland, The Netherlands, Ringwood Regional Council of Australia, the conference Our Lady of Health in South Florida USA and the National Council of India. In this occasion the Central Council remembers the nuns of the Oblat Hospitality Franciscan sisters for their good charity works disposing in the Old Age Home the Ozanam Karunya Bhavan. We also remember the Spiritual patrons Most Rev. Dr. Susai Packyam Bishop of Latin Arch Dioceses, Trivandrum and Auxiliary Bishop Most Rev. Dr. Christudas and the Spiritual advisor Rev. Fr. Joseph Bastin for the support. Not less than the last, we remember the support of other patrons and cooperation of the beneficiaries.

With Love in Christ



(D. Francies)
President, Central Council

Bro. D. Francis
President of Trivandrum Central Council.
Date: 15th October 2021