



### *Christmas Message*

Dear Vincentian Sisters and Brothers

Advent, a period of waiting and preparation, is drawing to an end. During this time I leave my crib stable empty with only the ox at the manger, Mary and Joseph waiting at the side. Each day when I pass by the empty stable it reminds of the humble birth of Our Saviour. This in turn makes me think of the people we strive to help.

2024 has been an interesting but also challenging year for the Society. There have been a great number of comings and goings at Trustee / National Council and National Office level. Following his return from a period of illness Danny Collins, stepped down after 5 years of service as National President in June and was replaced by me. James Heneaghan, our National Treasurer stayed on for a few months longer to complete the diocesan audits . He has been replaced by David Ryan, a member from Motherwell Diocese. Heartful thanks and praise are extended to both Danny and James for their commitment and dedication to the Society and for giving so generously of their time. True Vincentians.

Elizabeth Herlihy, Aberdeen Diocesan President, after many years' service has been succeeded by Hilary Young; Joe Maguire Vice President /Glasgow Archdiocesan President was firstly replaced by me as Diocesan President and now by my husband, Tom McCartney. Pat Carr, Motherwell Diocesan President was succeeded by Bridget Ann Devanny, Joe Henry Paisley Diocesan President, by James O Neill. Again thanks and praise to all our past Diocesan Presidents and also to all our new office bearers for taking on these roles.. They are the pillars of the Society. Without them the Society simply not function and comply with its legal and governance responsibilities .

T2024 therefore will close with only two of the original group of Trustees / Diocesan Presidents that started the year still holding office. They are Sid Grant, Dunkeld Diocese and Haydn Carr Pollock, St Andrew's & Edinburgh Archdiocese. Unfortunately Haydn has been experiencing a period of illness. Please keep him in your daily prayers. To

ensure that St Andrew's & Edinburgh Diocese are represented Richard Steinbach has been re-appointed as a Trustee. Galloway remains without a Diocesan President following Pat Snee's period in office ending earlier this year. Argyll & Isles continue without a President.

On behalf of all the members I would like extend a sincere thanks to all those mentioned above for their contribution and dedication to the work of the Society over the years they have held office. Also thanks to their family members for accepting the time those in office gave to the Society.

We are blessed to have Sr Maria Robb r remaining as our Spiritual Director, and for that we are truly thankful. We are also grateful to continue to have Sean Murphy as National Student Coordinator. Kate Kelley remains as Twinning Coordinator but is very keen to find a replacement so please consider this and contact her to learn more about this really interesting role at [twinning@ssvpscotland.com](mailto:twinning@ssvpscotland.com) Honor Hania replaced me as Social Justice Coordinator.

In the National Office two members of staff left at the start of the year and the year ends with Jacqueline Laird, Office Manager, leaving after eight years of service to the Society. Many thanks to Jacqueline for her work and time with us. Undoubtedly she will be greatly missed and we wish her well.

Thanks and praise go to Margaret Thomson and Mary McCarron, our administration staff. They kept the office going and me right whilst Jacqueline was off on long term sick. Fortunately they remain with us and will be a steady hand in the months ahead.

Grateful thanks also goes to all our volunteers both out in our communities and in the office, especially to Liz Strachan who is a stalwart of the Society both as a member in her own conference and in the national office. We also have had the great pleasure of having two young volunteers assisting in the office on a regular basis (well young in Vincentian membership age profile years!) Stephanie Kelley and Criag Allison.

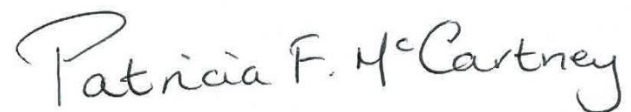
Again I want to thank you, our members. Without you we are nothing. You are what the Society is and does. Words cannot express my thanks and awe for the commitment you give to the society coming out to meetings on cold evenings, visiting people in difficult circumstances when sometimes it would be easier to be at home watching the telly, delivering food for others when there are 101 wee jobs needing done in the house. You do it because you are Vincentian.

Finally, last but not least a mention and thanks must be given to those members who in addition to their 'good works', are coming forward and offering their skills and expertise to help support the Society to prepare for the future. This is vital to ensure that the Society doesn't simply survive but thrives for years to come.

Advent is a time of moving from darkness to a great light. As the joy of Christmas approaches I am full of hope. Our time for waiting is over, the preparation has begun.

May God's blessings be on you, your families and friends, and all those we serve and those we have still to seek out

I wish you a very happy and holy Christmas.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Patricia F. McCartney". The script is cursive and fluid, with a large initial 'P' and a distinct 'F'.

Patricia F. McCartney

National President SSVP Scotland