



Sovereign Order Of
ST. JOHN OF JERUSALEM
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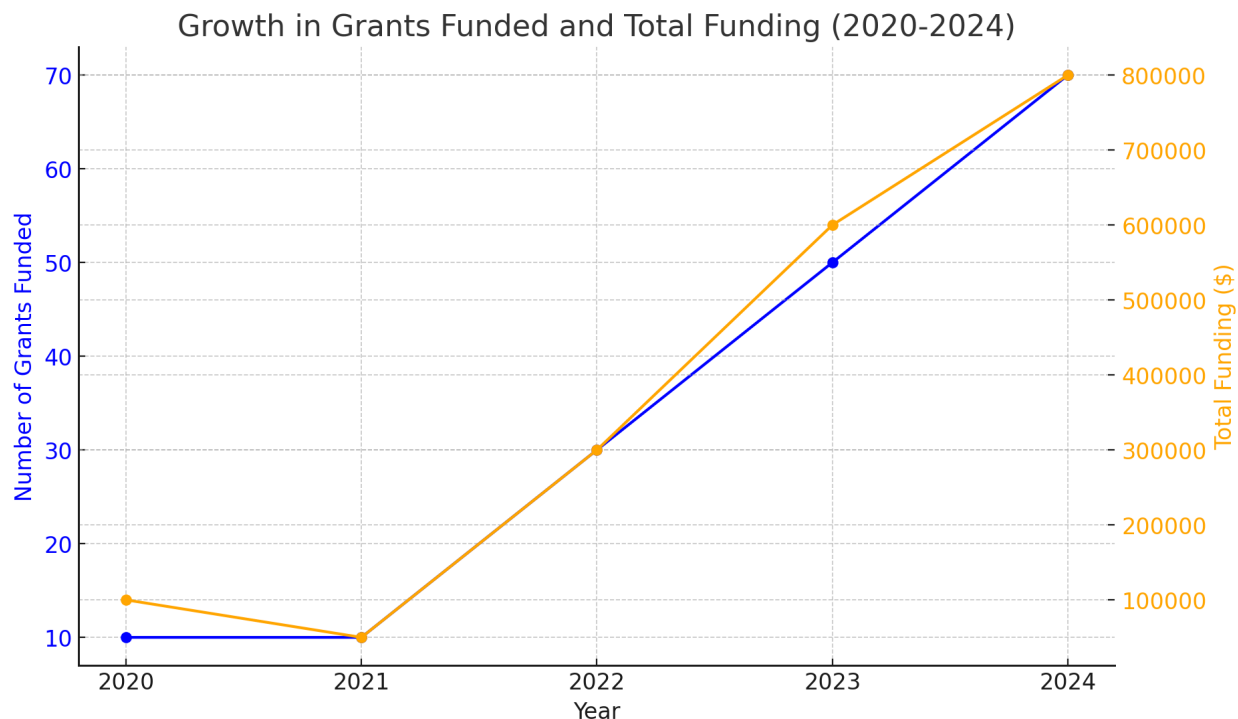
Victoria Commandery



2024 Almoner's Report

Our Impact is Expanding!

In just four years, we have seen remarkable growth. The Sovereign Order has expanded its support from awarding **10 grants totaling \$129,500** in 2020 to an impressive **69 grants amounting to \$847,860** in 2024. However, the need continues to grow. This year alone, cumulative funding requests exceeded \$1.3 million, highlighting the increasing demand for our assistance.



Community Grants in Partnership with the Times Colonist Christmas Fund

A Partnership for Maximum Community Impact

For the past three years, the Times Colonist Christmas Fund and the Sovereign Order Victoria Commandery have collaborated to address some of our community's most pressing challenges. Together, we aim to maximize the reach and effectiveness of our efforts:

- **The Times Colonist Christmas Fund** do what they do best, raising approximately \$1 million annually to assist individuals in need, ensuring minimal administrative costs to maximize community impact.
- **The Sovereign Order** distributes the money from the Times Colonist Christmas Fund, along with money raised by the Sovereign Order itself, to local charitable agencies. To do this, the Sovereign Order carries out a detailed environmental scan to determine individual and agency needs. This process combines data with direct discussions with charitable agencies to ensure funding is directed to the highest and best use programs/services that improve the lives and well-being of individuals in poverty and/or sickness. Every dollar raised directly by the Sovereign Order is put to work in the community.

In 2024, the Sovereign Order administered \$802,360 in funds to support charities serving vulnerable populations across Southern Vancouver Island. Sovereign Order funds included \$25K in gaming funds for which we acknowledge the financial support of the Province of British Columbia.

Sharing Insights and Building Connections

An Environmental Scan was conducted to assess the Human and Social Services sector in the CRD, Southern Gulf Islands, and Malahat North to Cowichan Bay. Findings were shared at a November forum, which provided:

- A platform for networking among social profit sector peers.
- Meaningful discussions on improving support for individuals facing poverty or illness.

Access Resources:

- [Executive Summary of the 2024 Environmental Scan](#)

Community Grants Program Highlights

Applications for funding were welcomed from federally registered charities. To learn more about the partnership and allocation process, visit: [Times Colonist Christmas Fund Article](#). For a complete list of grant recipients, visit the Victoria Commandery page on the Sovereign Order's international website. (link provided here)

Additional Sovereign Order, Victoria Commandery Grant Initiatives

Seniors Christmas Support Program - \$35,000

For the fifth consecutive year, the Sovereign Order partnered with Saint Vincent de Paul Vancouver Island to provide over 400 grocery gift cards to seniors who struggle with food costs and rely on food banks. This program was supported by \$35,000 raised by the Sovereign Order, with Saint Vincent de Paul managing program administration. Members, families, and friends assisted with delivering the cards to seniors with restricted mobility.

Commander's Emergency Fund - \$5,000

Major contributions included:

- **The Mustard Seed:** To replenish their supply of desperately needed canned goods, supported by additional member donations of funds and canned foods.
- **Cornerstone Youth Society:** For their Youth Sanctuary Centre.
- **Justice Van Society:** To provide vital street community support.

Meal Sponsorships - \$5,000

Hot breakfast sponsorships were provided to support meal programs at:

- **Cool Aid Society**
- **Our Place Society**

Both organizations are key in serving vulnerable adults and seniors in our community.

Looking Ahead

The Sovereign Order remains committed to addressing the growing needs of our community through strategic partnerships and impactful programs. Thank you to all our volunteers, donors, and partners who make this work possible.

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Grants Committee: Mary Collins, Richard Crow, Lori McLeod, Dave Cowen, Bob Coulter, Ian Batey, Ian Robertson, Marg Rose, Angus Izard (finances)

2024 Sovereign Order Victoria Commandery & Times Colonist Christmas Fund Combined Community Grants



	ORGANIZATION	PROGRAM	DETAILS
1	Our Place Society	The Food Services Program	Helps provide protein to 4000 adults & seniors served
2	Saanich Neighbourhood Place, on behalf of the Coalition of Neighbourhood Houses	Family Food Access	Funds to be distributed among 10 Coalition of Neighbourhood Houses
3	Shelbourne Community Kitchen Society	Pantry and Grocery Voucher Programs	Food programs serving 2310 children, youth, adults and seniors on low income
4	Victoria Community Food Hub Society	Good Food For Everyone	Funds for food distribution to 38 charities, schools and First Nations
5	Living Edge Community Church	Living Edge Weekly Neighbourhood Markets in the CRD - 2025	Food for 7 food markets in the Capital Regional District
6	Victoria Hospitals Foundation	Souper Meals Kitchen	Psychosocial training program-participants prepare meal for sale
7	Victoria Rainbow Kitchen Society	In-House Hot Meals & Food Sharing Programs	Supports in house hot meals; partners with 11 community partners in food sharing
8	Victoria Native Friendship Centre	VNFC Community Kitchen - Nourish and Network	Food security for indigenous through 75 programs including meals & food hampers
9	Soap for Hope Canada	Essential Hygiene for Vulnerable Seniors delivered regularly throughout the year.	Serving 1500 unique seniors experiencing poverty
10	Community First Foundation	Backpack Buddies Southern Vancouver Island	Providing 839 children in 52 schools in CRD alone (July stat) with weekend food

11	Cowichan Valley Basket Society	CVBS Food Hampers supporting food insecurity	Helping with growing food costs
12	Umbrella Society for Addictions and Mental Health	Foundation House Food Security	To help with food budget in 2nd stage recovery house so that rents can stay stable
13	Cobble Hill-Mill Bay-Shawnigan ake Food Bank Society	Food Hampers	3542 Directly impacted
14	Society of St Vincent de Paul Vancouver Island	Social Concern Office food & personal hygiene support	Funds for special dietary needs, cultural specific and adult hygiene supports
15	James Bay New Horizons	Senior Food Security	Food supports for seniors on low income
16	Victoria Cool Aid Society	Supporting Food Programs	Food supports for extensive programs for adults & seniors
17	Nourish Cowichan Society	Nourish Family Food Support Program	Food security including 400 weekend grocery bags for students
18	The Victoria Youth Empowerment Society	Connections Youth Food Pantry	Supporting a new food pantry for at risk youth
19	Threshold Housing Society	In-house Counselling for Youth at risk of homelessness	Counselling support for youth at risk aged 15-24
20	Mayne Island Food Bank Society	Mayne Island Community Pantry	serving 155 people in need per week out of population of 1200
21	Saanich Volunteer Services Society	Socialization Programs	Food for social programs for 1050 adults and seniors
22	Victoria Women's Transition House	Victoria Women's Transition House (VWTH) - Food Security Project	Supporting women and children with food insecurity
23	Vancouver Island Counselling Centre for Immigrants and Refugees Association	Trauma-informed Mental Health Support and Counselling for Refugees and Immigrants.	Counselling supports for clients of all ages
24	YMCA-YWCA of Vancouver Island	Young Moms & Pandora Youth Apartments Programs Enhanced Housing Support	Helps 150 children & young adults -to assist with transition to more secure housing
25	John Howard Society of Victoria	John Howard Society of Victoria Holiday Hampers Program	Holiday Hampers for 150
26	The Cridge Centre for the Family	Food Security for Families	Food security for 90 families
27	9-10 Club Serving Soup to the Hungry Society	Continuing to feed those in need	Victoria's oldest soup kitchen, volunteer run, helps with increased food costs
28	The Anglican Church of St. John the Divine, Victoria	Burgers All Year	Bolsters the food budget to reintroduce protein to 1120 served
29	Victoria Hospice Society	Music Therapy at Victoria Hospice	Spiritual and emotional support for 35 adults and seniors
30	Oak Bay Volunteer Services Society	One-to-One Volunteer Services Program	Sustains volunteer support serving 700 adult and seniors on low income

31	Vancouver Island Kids Klub Centre Society	Brown Bag Lunch Program	Supports food program providing 800 weekly lunches to children under 12
32	Pender Island Food Bank Society	Pender Island Food Bank 2024 Santa's Sac Program	Serving 164 of all ages (newborns-seniors), some living in derelict boats
33	The Anawim Companions Society	The Anawim Companions Society Drop-in Program	Contributes to meal budget for drop in providing meals, clothing, showers, laundry
34	Family Services of Greater Victoria Society	FAMILY MATTERS	Counselling & support services for 100 families in need
35	Cowichan Valley Youth Services	Outreach for Cowichan Youth & Support for Families	Outreach for 100 youth and support for families
36	HerWay Home	HerWay Home and XEXE PAHLATSIS Lelum "Sacred Cradle" Recovery Circle	Indigenous focused program for at risk mothers and children
37	Hulitan Family and Community Services Society	nəčelŋəx ^w (one people)	Aboriginal child care programs-funds to provide food & clothing for families in need
38	The Sooke Food Bank Society	Feeding Sooke	Supports food budget for meat and dairy; volunteer run food bank
39	Goldstream Food Bank Society	GFB Christmas Hamper Program	Christmas hampers with food and gifts for children; Volunteer run
40	1Up Victoria Single Parent Resource Centre	Parent Market Day	Healthy food for 1598 children, youth, and adults
41	Lake Cowichan Food Bank Society	Grocery Card Program	Grocer gift cards for low income families
42	Mental Health Recovery Partners Society South Vancouver Island	Community-based Peer Support	Supports for those impacted with mental health-addiction issues
43	Bridges for Women	Grocery Cards	Grocery Gift Cards for 100 families
44	Island Metis Family and Community Services Society	Winter Holiday Celebration	Groceries and gifts for 296 at risk population, largely children & youth
45	Salt Spring and Southern Gulf Islands Community Services Society	Salt Spring Housing First Drop In	Support & emergency assistance for 150 homeless population
46	Victoria Disability Resource Centre	Peer Outreach	Support for seniors experiencing isolation/lonliness- serves 1800 largely of senior age
47	Peers Victoria Resources Society	Drop In: wellness and support for sex workers	Hot meals and supports for 365 adults
48	SENIORS SERVING SENIORS ASSOCIATION OF BRITISH COLUMBIA	Return to Health For Seniors	Assistance for volunteers supporting seniors just out of hospital care
49	Ukrainian Catholic Parish of St. Nicholas	Helping those in need.	Grant to help with food budget for newcomers and those on low income
50	St. Barnabas Church	Food Ministry Program	Grocery hampers and grocery vouchers for families in need
51	University of Victoria	UVSS Foodbank 2024	Bolsters budget for 450 weekly food hampers to students (support 7500 students)
52	Greater Victoria Citizens' Counselling Centre	Adult Counselling Services	Counselling help for 1000 adults and seniors on low income annually
53	Cowichan Green Community Foundation	Meals on Wheels and More	Serving 100 adults and seniors with food delivery in remote areas

54	Justice Van Society	Justice Van Society: To walk alongside the Victoria street community	Provide food, clothing, supports to approximately 750 street entrenched community
55	Together Against Poverty Society	Volunteer Disability Advocacy Project	Assistance for individuals with disabilities access supports
56	Victoria Association for Community Living	Community Living Victoria Food Security Fund	Supports food program for 268 adults/seniors with intellectual disabilities living in 17 units
57	Wear2Start Society	"Shoes That Fit" Program	Supporting 111 self identified women with shoes and supports
58	Canadian Heritage Arts Society	Where Artists Thrive: Emerging Artist Wellness Program	Assisting college students with food bank supplies and crisis supports
59	Child Abuse Prevention and Counselling Society of Greater Victoria	Child Abuse Trauma Counselling	Help for up to 18 yr olds that have experienced trauma and don't have funding
60	Jewish Family Services of Vancouver Island	Expansion of our Wholesale Saanich Green Market infrastructure.	Assists expand the community's food market
61	Cornerstone Youth Society	Youth Sanctuary Centre	Keeping youth at risk busy with activities, to help with food and drinks

\$802,360 Combined Community Grants*

Additional Commandery Funded Programs:

62	Saint Vincent de Paul Vancouver Island-Partnersh	Grocery Gift Cards	Grocery Gift Cards to 420 vulnerable seniors relying on food banks year around.
63	Mustard Seed	Canned Goods Drive	Commander's Emergency Fund contribution
64	Cornerstone Youth Society	Youth Sanctuary Centre	Commander's Emergency Fund contribution
65	Justice Van Society	Supplies for Street Community	Commander's Emergency Fund contribution
66	Cool Aid Society	Hot Meal Program	Drop In program
67	Our Place Society	Hot Meal Program	Drop In program

\$847,860 Total Administered by Victoria Commandery

*Combined Funds includes \$25K Gaming Grant Received from the Prov of BC.

(We acknowledge the financial support of the Province of British Columbia)