

NATIONAL PRESIDENT'S ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2007-2008

May the peace of Christ be with all of you!

As we all know, time just flies by. I cannot believe we are again coming together for another family reunion! This is of course wonderful, especially since we will be having an anniversary celebration tied into it! 175 Years!!

The last year has been spent in cultivating ways to assist the Society to grow and realize its full potential. The ministry of administration continues to evolve as a caring and spirituality based mission that more clearly defines who we are as "people of the water and the towel" in the administration of the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul.

At this time it would be worthwhile to provide a quick snapshot regarding the health of each area of the ministry of administration. Each committee, as you know will provide a more detailed report of its activities. It is not my intention to reiterate these reports.

Administration: (Strategic Direction)

Several key areas that are visible manifestations of this ministry included revising the administrative staffing. We now have two administrative assistants, one full-time and one part-time. This in turn provided the opportunity for streamlining office procedures and the delegation of certain activities to each of these staff. In the Ottawa office **Joanne Filion** is the full time staff member, and **Nicole Schryburt** out of the Montreal office is part time.

I have also been able to be present in the office one day before all executive and board meetings, thus providing for better interactions, communications, staff meetings and coaching process for the staff.

Results have been favourable. We now have a defined process for such things as Aggregations and Institutions and follow-up for inquiries. Other standard operating office procedures are also being developed and are on the horizon.

Human Resources Committee under the leadership of **Clermont Fortin**, has also been very busy assembling all of the legal documentation requirements to care for our staff.

A vote of thanks to our staff, Nicole and Joanne, and to our consultants **Ghislaine DuNord**, who does our translations sometimes with very little turnaround time notice, and to **Josée Laforest**, our graphic artist who does a great job of graphics and set up for our Vincenpaul magazine and other national council items such as the new brochures. We certainly appreciate all of you!

Board Orientation Day

The Board of Directors had two-day meetings both in November and May. The Friday of the November meeting is considered a **Board Orientation Day**. New board members learn all aspects of the administration of the National Council and meet the staff that assists members to learn their staff functions. As well, all board members learn their own role in the administration and communications between the national council board and the members of their regions.

Board Retreat Day

In May, the Friday is spent as a day of retreat/spirituality. The time is spent reflecting on the importance of who we are as stewards and members of the board and the administrative team. We celebrate the gifts we each bring to the ministry of administration and within the Society. The day begins with prayer and recitation of the rosary and ends with the celebration of Mass.

As members have stated, "a very full day and very worthwhile for both events".

SOCIETY OF SAINT VINCENT DE PAUL
National Council of Canada

Spirituality Committee chaired by **Yvon Bussieres**, has been instrumental in making the May Retreat Day a very remarkable and edifying experience. Our **National Spiritual Advisor, Msgr Peter Schonenbach**, provides the insights needed to ground our decision-making both at the board level and at the executive level. The terms of reference for this committee were expanded to allow for a number of spirituality focused areas to emerge. Under the strategic planning process one area identified was that "There are No visible signs of spirituality within the Society". Through this committee will come measures to ensure that there ARE visible signs of spirituality within the Society. Yvon and his team will endeavour to ensure that Spirituality is a viable and visible presence at all Society gatherings and communications. This task does not rest with Msgr Peter alone; we all have a responsibility to animate the Spirituality of the Society!

Education/Formation (Strategic Direction)

Under the leadership of **Carle Horne VP**, meetings and communications have taken place that will generate the results that the Strategic Planning had identified as important concerns for membership. The establishment of the Education/Formation committee has begun to manifest signs as a very fruitful endeavour.

Strategic Planning will also continue under **Carol Horne's** leadership. It is so life giving when strategic issues are identified and attained. This gives life to both the committee itself and the organization. As a council we have met objectives in a timely fashion with tangible results. This is due in most part to the dedication of all of you as members of the Society wanting to see the Society grow and flourish in your local areas. Well done!

International Emergency/Disaster Relief under the stewardship of **Clermont Fortin, VP** again has been instrumental in providing assistance not only to international situations, but also here at home. Quebec City suffered a severe fire that saw 16 families left homeless. Our national council provided some financial means to assist our brothers and sisters of the conference in the area.

Twinning

Kathy Weswick, as the national chair and Nicole have worked very diligently to maintain the integrity of the twinning process for all concerned. Twinning has once again been very busy developing relationships and providing safe mechanisms that will see twinning connections made and the provision of monetary support find its way to those twins that rely on assistance both internally and externally outside Canada. A new brochure and twinning manual have been prepared.

Finance

The Finance Committee, chaired by **Marcel Tremblay VP**, has met a couple of times to develop processes that will provide for good stewardship of those funds that come to the national council for whatever reason. Our **Treasurer, Germain Souigny** has been instrumental in assisting the administration of the national council with the development of practices that enable sustainability throughout the fiscal year.

The finance committee has also developed Financial Guidelines that will assist everyone to understand the basics of financial practices as they relate to the national council administration. These new guidelines assist in the annual council budget preparations. Communications to members regarding what happens with funds was paramount in helping to assist members to understand the need for and basis for funding.

As more conferences and councils recognize the need, the national council finds itself slowly moving toward the expected goal of \$240.00 annual contribution from conferences and councils in all regions.

Last year we budgeted \$240,000.00 for the last fiscal year and we attained \$185,000.00. Bravo to all of you that can support the national council in this fashion, and also, bravo to all of you that send more in order to help those conferences and councils that cannot afford to send the annual contribution! Together, we can make a difference!

The Vincenpaul Spring Issue contains an article that explains the necessity of the \$240.00 contribution to the national council. This was in response to a question posed by a conference president. It occurred to me that if she did not understand, then obviously, there might be others who also do not understand. I called it "a teachable moment", and asked Marcel to help me write an article to help answer the question.

Voice of the Poor - Advocacy

The Voice of the Poor Committee is now underway. Both **Clermont Fortin VP**, and **Michael Burke PP**, along with **Msgr Peter Schonenbach** have undertaken to make this committee an audible voice within the Society for and with the poor that we serve. Issues will come forward for input and action as the committee plans strategies to make our voice heard. There indeed will be no shortage of issues and concerns.

Youth Committee

Our Youth Committee is under the able leadership of **Caroline Gilbert and John O'Flynn**. Caroline will have attended the International Youth Conference in Salamanca Spain in the beginning of June and I know she will have much to share in her Youth Committee Report. Both John and Carolyn have a passion for the work that is conducted with and for youth. We are so very pleased she is a member of the Board of Directors. We also have 4 youth and two adults attending the World Youth Days in Australia in July.

John will be retiring as co chair of this committee, and we thank him for his contributions to the national board of directors. I know he will continue to serve the BC/Yukon Region very well.

Board Administrative Communication

This aspect of administrative communication has been well provided for by having **Diane Pearson** as the secretary of the board. Her knowledge of both French and English assists with the comprehensiveness of her minute taking. Together we have established timelines for both the notices of meetings and the dissemination of minutes. **Joanne** becomes the main facilitator throughout this process as she communicates with the translator **Ghislaine DuNord** so that timeliness can be maintained.

Communications/Public Relations (Strategic Direction)

Communications/Public Relations is another of the identified strategic directions that members identified as important for continued growth of the Society throughout the country. It is well acknowledged that we need to be seen as well as heard. Our National Council materials need to be comprehensive, concise, and correct; they need to have the look of the organization be consistent. In this last year, we have created a new Society of Saint Vincent de Paul National Council brochure, a new Twinning brochure, prayer cards, mission cards, etc, all with the distinctive international logo and blue and white colours that define the Society in Canada.

Caroline Gilbert expressed a desire to work at establishing the "branding" of the Society on all of its material by creating a Branding Manual that will define the look of the Society throughout the country. I know there is several others interested in doing the same thing along with her. We look forward to their creativity.

Web-Site/Operations Manual (Strategic Direction)

The Operations Manual and Web Site: both of these have been updated. In these days of electronics, it is a mortal sin not to have these up and functioning correctly. Our thanks to **Nicole** for her diligence in managing that aspect for us.

SOCIETY OF SAINT VINCENT DE PAUL
National Council of Canada

Vincenpaul Magazine

Vincepaul Magazine has been managed by both **Nicole and Ellen Schryburt**. Both of these ladies have been gathering news stories and with the help of our translator and our graphic artist, have assembled a very informative magazine. We have received a number of compliments on how well done it is. Thanks to each of you, **Nicole, Ellen, Ghislaine, and Josée** for your hard work. However, a vote of thanks goes to all of you for submitting interesting articles...especially if there are pictures!

We do get a great deal of magazines returned to the national office as undeliverable. This can be due to deceased members, change of presidents etc. This past fall Joanne printed the mailing list. These were sorted according to province or region and circulated to the regional president for their region to review and correct. Our thanks to all of you for your help in getting this corrected and revitalized .

Screening Process

Screening process is well underway in most regions. It is a tribute to those who have helped to make it all possible. Each region has truly worked diligently to ensure that the process is understood and is indeed moving forward.

National Audit

At the time of this writing, the national audit has almost been completed. We are awaiting the report of one region. It is my hope that we can bring this report to the AGA in June. We can then send our report to the International Council General for their records.

As of this AGA 2008, I have the following numbers to report:

	<i>Conferences P.</i>		<i>Councils</i>		<i>C Councils</i>		<i>Region</i>	<i>Total Units</i>
	<i>Prev</i>	<i>2008</i>	<i>Prev</i>	<i>2008</i>	<i>Prev</i>	<i>2008</i>	<i>Prev</i>	<i>2008</i>
<i>BC/Yukon</i>	45	39	5	5	1	1	1	46
<i>Western</i>	42	48	3	7	0	2	1	58
<i>Ontario</i>	333	465	35	35	5	5	1	506
<i>Quebec</i>	358	359	38	42	6	5	1	403
<i>Atlantic</i>	68	68	6	6	0	0	1	75
	846	989		95		13	5	1088

Congratulations to all of you. We are nearing our 1000 conference in order to have standing at the International Executive Meeting.

President's Travel

As I reported in the Vincenpaul Magazine I have attended meetings in Joliette Quebec, Austin Texas, Paris, Ottawa, Victoria BC, Edmonton, and Spain in June. These have been wonderful opportunities for me to see the many good works conducted in the name of the Society and to meet so many brothers and sisters. Presence means so much to all of these persons and taking the time to go to meet with everyone is very life giving to all concerned. What an invaluable resource we are to one another!

Past Presidents

I could not possibly complete this report unless I paid tribute to the past presidents of this National Council of Canada of the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul. We cannot and should not ever ignore or dispense with the expertise that has gone before us. We have come so very far under their leadership. Each of these presidents continues to offer their services in whatever capacity the council may deem useful to further the efforts and work of the Society. To this end, even Madame Marie-Claire LeTarte will offer herself to come to visit our AGA and provides a very welcoming presence; Brother Bob Martineau has been instrumental in the writing of the Canadian Statutes and is always available for consultations; Sister Ellen Schryburt is very instrumental in the production of the Vincenpaul Magazine – taking pictures and assembling the articles, she is also the liaison for the coordinating members of AGA planning

committees; Michael Burke has offered to assist with the Voice of the Poor Committee and Advocacy, as well as provide his expertise in areas that may require mediations. What a wonderful legacy we have in the Society, people who want to continue to live out their spirituality in the name of the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul, what a gift!

International

The USA Annual General Assembly

The International Level has been very interesting. I had the occasion to attend the USA Annual meeting in Austin Texas last September. A very welcoming, and evidently spirit filled and spirit led meeting. Connecting with many new brothers and sisters provided a wider horizon of the work of the Society. It was all so very interesting; the time really went by all too quickly.

The International General Council Executive Meeting

I received a call to attend the International Council General Meeting in November. Of course this was so exciting to have the chance to go back into history and see where it all began. To meet and visit with the President General, to meet the members of the Society from all over the world, knowing they were all brothers and sisters doing Christ's work just as we do back home. It was interesting to be among these people, some whom you could not speak with, but it did not make any difference. We all knew why we were there. We came together and listened, laughed, prayed and ate together. It was interesting to note that we all came away knowing just what needed to be done. Brother José Ramón provided the grounding needed to assist everyone to realize that we are all in the business of doing God's work together. Père Yvon Laroche and Father Teodoro Barquín as the International Spiritual Advisors helped everyone strip away the differences that language made and brought everyone to the task of truly being mindful of our vocational call to the Society by their thoughtful spiritual reflections.

While the visit was very different for me, it also showed me that everyone is in the same boat. The issues and concerns in one country are not really too much different than those of any other country. As with Canada that depends on the "conferences and councils" to support the administrative work at the national level to support its work in our country, so too does the ICG depend on "countries" to support its work all over the world. We are truly brothers and sisters in this work of charity!

Vincentian Caring and Sharing

We also saw assistance go to Nicaragua to help them with their X ray machine module repair. These are all tangible ways that the Society provided assistance and relief to those who came looking for assistance. Each region contributed to the appeal most generously. The Vincentians in Nicaragua were most appreciative!

Summation

I will endeavour to continue to assist my brother and sister Vincentians to continually move forward in sharing their gifts in the ministry of administration. For in sharing who we are as gifts, we become more of who we are! Those that receive our gifts in the spirit of good stewardship can only be graced and blessed with the desire to do all the more!

"...all one in truth and charity!"

Penny Craig, President
National Council of Canada

SOCIETY OF SAINT VINCENT DE PAUL
National Council of Canada

ONTARIO REGIONAL COUNCIL REPORT FOR 2007-2008

By the grace of God we have been given a very active and dedicated Executive Council. They have spent many hours on your behalf researching and administering activities and assistance to Conferences and Councils across Ontario. In a special way, I would like to thank and acknowledge our executive: Agnes Turley, Treasurer, Brenda Kormendy, Secretary, and Jim Paddon, Vice President for their extraordinary service.

The theme chosen for our Provincial executive is a return to our spiritual roots found in the Rule. As you are aware, an updated version was completed last year. In it you will find a "user friendly" interpretation making it easier to find pertinent information. In order to have an informed Society all members must read it and follow the guidelines.

After the initial shock of organizing our Executive Council, we have become aware of some serious issues, which are evident across the province:

1. Stores: We have 46 stores providing quality, reasonably priced clothing, etc, for those in need. We will be implementing our first Health and Safety program this year. They must be organized, managed and are under the direct control of the Conference or Council. Store managers run the business operation and are responsible to the store Committee of their respective Conference or Council. If the Store is incorporated it should be done through the local Conference or Council. The store is a special work of the Society and is subject to the Conference or Council.
2. The fact is that in some instances the stores have become divisive. This is contrary to the spirit of the Society and the purpose for which the stores were formed. Lack of trust, innuendoes, and the lack of charity are some of the evils that spawn when egos and personal ambition get in the way.
3. There are some Conferences who are operating and we know little about their operations and in some instance their existence.
4. Traveling across Ontario is expensive due to the large distances involved. We are keeping our expenses to a minimum. It is important for the executive to be readily available to those who need us. Conferences and Councils must send monies to the Provincial level.
5. In all home visitations members must go in pairs. There have been some unfortunate situations because this Rule was not followed. Home visits have been the traditional means of serving the poor. There are exceptions such as in inner city situations where home visits are impossible. Efficiency in distributing goods to the poor is not the main objective. Caring, consideration and a spirit of love of our beloved poor is our paramount goal.
6. Our Web site is our main means of communication thanks to Bernie Hartlin. However, we lack communications to members who do not have a computer or are not into computers in spite of being in the age of modern technology. A St. Vincent de Paul information quarterly bulletin sent to all members is a necessity. I am looking for an editor to compile and organize such a project. Please feel free to volunteer.

7. Youth activities must be expanded if we wish to keep the vitality and creativity active. Do not be afraid to approach your local Elementary School, High School, College or University explaining how students can be active members in our Society of St. Vincent de Paul. Elementary and High School students can use the hours of service toward their graduation. Approach your local parishes and work in concert with the Youth Minister or Parish Priest. Our Executive Council Youth Coordinator, Carmela Addante and myself are available to assist you. This year we are sending 20 youth and two youth coordinators to the Annual General Assembly in Quebec. We are also sending two youth to the World Youth Day in Australia. Needless to say we are in a fund raising mode and we have raised most of our funds along with help from Windsor Central Council and their respective Conferences.
8. Membership and Screening are issues that must be brought up to date. In order to achieve this, Mary Anne Kieran, Chair of Membership and Ron Trent, Chair of Screening, need your assistance and cooperation.
9. Our model is the "Christ Model" as compared to the "Corporate Model" In the "Corporate Model" power comes from the top executive and trickles down to the grass roots. What the boss says is the law. In contrast, the "Christ Model" power is in the community of believers and through trust and love a consensus is reached.
10. Lawsuits are not the way we resolve disputes. Trust and sincere understanding are the tools to reach resolution. (See the Rule Book)
11. Jim Paddon has formed a committee to gather members and information on what we are currently doing in this area with a goal of developing a formal program that can access federal and provincial institutions in Ontario.
12. First Nations: We now have an aboriginal liaison officer who will develop a program designed to create partnerships with the First Nations of Ontario.
13. In Northern Ontario there were three aggregated Conferences added in 2008, for a total of nine aggregations. There is one other not aggregated for a total of ten Northern Conferences.

These are some of the issues and projects we are attempting to address.. Dear sisters and brothers as you can see we have our work cut out. Since we are a lay religious organization it is essential we continue to do corporal works of mercy. We are more than just a social agency. We are an apostolate that requires self-sacrifice. Prayer is our main source of strength. The mass and the rosary are our main means in community and individual prayer. From time to time giving alms and acts of self-denial will enhance our spiritual life. Since I have become a Vincentian, I find my spiritual life has improved. I have a long way to go but I am encouraged by your support to fulfill my mission. To paraphrase St Teresa of Avilla: A few dollars and the Ontario Regional Council are nothing but a few dollars, and the Ontario Regional Council and GOD, that is everything.

John E. Staley, President
Ontario Regional Council

SOCIETY OF SAINT VINCENT DE PAUL
National Council of Canada

QUEBEC REGIONAL COUNCIL REPORT FOR 2007-2008

One year ago already, I was chairing my first Quebec Regional Council meeting.

At the time, we determined our priority issues, which are:

- recruiting / healing and training / communications / spirituality / finances / solidarity / sense of belonging / sharing / twinning

In order to deal with those issues, various committees have worked hard to meet their 2007 objectives. I am proud of the results obtained by the committees. I wish to thank all the volunteers who contributed generously and shared their talent and their time for the benefit of all Society members.

1- The Recruiting committee has succeeded in developing a briefing document on ways of recruiting members from various age groups.

The document was produced after consulting several documents published by organizations (governmental or private) specialized in recruiting and motivating volunteers.

In 2008, those documents will be distributed to Regional Council members, inviting them to read and use the information.

The committee members are ready to meet groups of interested members to discuss further on recruitment methods.

2- The Resourcing and Continuous Training Committee:

The committee has entirely revised every resourcing and continuous training module. The committee members have worked very hard, individually and in team, to meet objectives. In 2008, they will focus on training trainers, finalizing documents, organization of resourcing sessions for already active members, and basic training sessions for new members. I wish to draw attention to the wonderful team and spirit of cooperation that has emerged in that committee.

3- The Communication committee:

After a few meetings, the committee has decided to publish a Mini Voix et Voie, a small electronic newsletter, which objective is to present brief articles on various SSVP aspects, such as spirituality, briefs on members, councils and conferences, the Rule, committees, etc.

It was also decided to publish the Voie et Voix magazine only twice a year.

In 2008, in addition to publishing V & V, the committee members intend to look at the possibility of improving our website.

After consulting with the voting members, the committee could work at publishing a 2009 calendar.

The committee could also try to find various ways of improving the visibility of the Quebec SSVP.

4- The Finance committee:

In addition to preparing the budget, that committee has ensured the good management of our finances all year round.

The 2007 results show a deficit of approximately \$5,000.

I can see in those results a possible decrease in future activities of the Regional Council, when there are projects that we could develop to enhance the position of the SSVP in Quebec, and help more people in a situation of poverty.

In 2007, we had proposed a theme, ***“Let us talk about love among ourselves”***

At the end of the year, we have asked the following questions to our members:

Did you do it? Have you been hesitant to do it?

Among conference members, did you tell your brothers/sisters that you thought they were nice? That you enjoyed working with them? That you simply loved them?

It is always time to say it, again and again.

In 2008, we propose a theme that would connect the following values:

Let us think about “sense of belonging, solidarity, sharing”

What does the **sense of belonging** involve in a group such as the SSVP?
For me, as an individual, for a conference, for a council.

What does it mean to experience **solidarity** for a member of the SSVP? Solidarity towards the poor? Solidarity towards the articles of the Rule? Solidarity towards the decisions of my group? Solidarity towards the decisions made by my representatives at higher Council level? Solidarity towards the SSVP mission? Solidarity towards the members of my conference? Solidarity towards conferences/councils having difficulties?

Sharing:

As a Vincentian, am I able to detach myself from unneeded possessions to the point of wanting to share them with other conferences or councils?

Am I ready to contribute to the operations of councils that work for us and for the welfare of the SSVP as a whole?

I am convinced that those concepts, those values are current, and remain contemporaneous in an organization such as ours.

I hope that in 2008, in consideration of those values, all active members and auxiliaries will become even more motivated in achieving the mission to which they are committed.

Jean-Claude Bienvenue, President - Quebec Regional Council

Active members: 3,274
Auxiliary members: 1817
Volunteer hours: 831,480

Number of visits: 278,524
Number of families helped: 95,570
Single parent families: 42,490
Families with couple: 31,988
Single persons: 21,092

Number of persons helped: 255,903
Adults: 182,339
Children: 73,564

Source of revenue

From social welfare: 77.1%
From unemployment insurance: 9.5%
From old age pension: 4.8%
From employment: 5.0%
Other: 3.5%

Total receipts: \$14,940,565
Total expenses: \$15,095,130
Deficit: \$ 154 565

Family assistance

Food: \$5,287,640
Furniture and clothing: \$844,275
Heating, medicine, other: \$755,302

Assistance to children (Opération Bonne Mine and Services d'Aide aux Jeunes Étudiants)
8,563 children for a total of \$421,945

Christmas hampers

27,203 hampers for a total value of \$1,906,401

Total assistance: \$9,215,563

BRITISH COLUMBIA & YUKON REGIONAL COUNCIL REPORT FOR 2007-2008

Statistics:

Families assisted 4037	Visits to families 4051
Adults 4356	Children 4902
Single adults 2824	Visits to Singles 1294
Sick individuals 1743	Visits to Sick individuals 604
Prisoners visited 773	Visits to Prisoners 169
Other visitations: 2446 (People taken to medical appts., to Mass, and hospital visits)	

Active Members 544
 Associate members 620
 Total members 1164

Christmas hampers to : 1382 families, 1842 singles, 70 seniors

Receipts	\$ 1,544,518.76
Disbursements	\$ 749,012.19

Overview of Activities

- Healing masses and lunches
- Visiting nursing homes weekly
- Giving furniture
- Making and delivering 1400 sandwiches a month to the Sisters of Atonement to be given to the people in the Downtown Eastside.
- Assisting the Mennonite Central Committee with packing school and medical supplies to be shipped for international relief.
- Visiting and shopping for Shut ins.
- Served dinner for 800 weekly
- Senior's dinners
- Easter and Thanksgiving Hampers
- Collected shoes for Jamaica
- Assisted at stores
- Gave food hampers and grocery cards
- Gave treats and small gifts at Christmas
- Outreach to the Downtown Eastside three times per week – coffee, sandwiches, sweater, blankets, etc. (our truck takes volunteers to do this work)
- Paid rents, phone bills, Hydro, cable and bus fares
- Worked at our stores and picked up and delivered goods

- Visited hospitals, prisons, transition houses
- Soup Kitchens, 101,585 meals, 4249 food hampers, 7691 fruit and vegetable hampers
- Out of cold - and breakfast and snacks
- Kids camps and kids kapers (after school activities)
- Advocacy
- Helped the homeless
- Twinning
- Social Concern office
- Held retreats
- Food drives
- Taught life skills, helped people with income tax and other forms and information
- “Mary’s Pantry” – Parishioners bring food
- Served hot school lunches
- Summer barbecue program
- Back to school supplies and back packs
- Served as Extraordinary ministers, lectors, ushers, PREP teachers, Parish Council, Knights of Columbus, CWL, Children’s liturgy teachers
- Breakfast programs
- Bringing Holy Communion to shut ins.
- Drop in and counselling for youth (Cyprus Centre)
- Day Programs for mentally challenged adults
- SSVP program for Catholic school children
- Providing housing, services and activities for hard to house adults – Ozanam-Victoria, Ozanam center, Victoria provides training and participation in activities.
- Providing housing, services and activities for men in Ozanam house in Kelowna.

Thomas O’Flynn, President
British Columbia & Yukon Regional Council

SOCIETY OF SAINT VINCENT DE PAUL
National Council of Canada

ATLANTIC REGIONAL COUNCIL REPORT FOR 2007-2008

It is with mixed emotions that I present my annual report for the Atlantic region for a society that I hold very precious in my heart. This is my final report as my term as president has come to an end. At this time I want to congratulate **Dave Grant** who has been elected as the new regional president.

I have the highest respect for Dave's love of our society and the poor we serve and I am sure that I am leaving the region in very capable hands. I know that the members in the Atlantic region will give the same love and support to Dave that they have shown me over the past five years.

As in the past, the councils have responded very well in submitting their annual reports. It difficult as our members are more interested actively serving those in need but they also realize the importance in keeping statistics so that we are better able to carry out His work. Our benefactors continue to support us and we are very grateful for that support. However, because of the many parishes that are being closed, it is becoming increasingly more difficult to raise funds and our members have to be very creative in the fund raising business.

Number of Members	695
Number of Particular Councils	6
Number of Conferences	63
Number of Visits Made	12,134
Number of People Helped	28,712
Total Receipts	1,214,714
Total Expenditures	902,902

This year has been a busy and challenging one for us as we struggle to serve those in need in the midst of parish closings. Each conference has their unique way in which they help the poor so when two or more conferences are told they are now all members of the one parish, Vincentians must then determine how they are going to continue His work. Although we all have the same mandate to serve the poor, we struggle to come to a mutual agreement regarding how we carry out that mandate. Thankfully, most of the pastors have been very understanding and want to work with us but it becomes more difficult when there is no assistance from the pastor.

Hope Cottage, our soup kitchen is rapidly approaching its 40th anniversary and continues to serve the poor in the inner city. The number of meals served is a little below 50,000 for the past year. Hope Cottage is well known within our city and they very much appreciate the financial support given to them by the community. Also, in addition to our three excellent staff we have a large group of volunteers who not only provide meals but also serve those meals. These volunteers are a tremendous help to our staff. Members of Dartmouth Particular Council are part of an ecumenical group who provide meals to the poor.

Hand in Hand (our second hand clothing and furniture store in Halifax) is slowly finalizing plans for their new building. The land has been purchased and the drawings are near completion. We also have a number clothing distribution centers throughout the region-most of which are located in church halls or basements and are run by our volunteers. Also, Dartmouth Particular Council is in the planning stage of opening up a store. We wish them well with this endeavor.

The screening process is well underway in the Atlantic region. We have now have Vincentians in all areas who have gone through the training process and are qualified to screen their fellow members. I would like to thank my screening committee consisting of Carol Horne and Paul Glenister who logged many miles with me to attend training sessions.

As I look back over the last five years I can't help but be very grateful for the many blessings the Good Lord has given me. My first blessing has to be the members of our society who never cease to amaze me with their unending love of our God and the poor that He asks us to serve. What a joy it has been for me to work with such compassionate people!

Another very precious blessing was my executive who never let me down in anything that was asked of them. I would have been lost without the support of my vice presidents-Joan MacKinnon, Dave Grant and Lloyd Harris. I cannot begin to tell you how supportive Carol Horne, my secretary and Paul Glenister, my treasurer have been. Another valuable member of the executive was Vi Corbett whose work as the Atlantic twinning person as well as our representative on the national Rule committee was fantastic. And when it comes to executives, I have the greatest admiration for both national executives that I have served with. I have never known a more caring group of people and I want to thank them for all of their love and support during my term. I can leave secure in the knowledge that all of you will give that same love and support to Dave and his new executive.

I want all of you to know that our society has been my spiritual lifeline and has enriched me in ways that I am still discovering. No greater work can one do that to serve Him by serving His poor. My prayer for all Vincentians is that He continues to give us the strength and compassion that we need to carry out the Gospel message of service to the poor. May the blessings of St. Vincent de Paul and our Beloved Frederic Ozanam continue to shine down on all of you and your family.

Respectfully submitted
Maureen MacIsaac, President
Atlantic Regional Council

SOCIETY OF SAINT VINCENT DE PAUL
National Council of Canada

WESTERN REGIONAL COUNCIL REPORT FOR 2007-2008

This first year as Western Regional Council President flew by. There is so much to learn, so much to do and only with God piloting this ship do we get things done. I have had the pleasure of traveling across our region and meeting with Vincentians across 3 provinces and 2 territories. What a dedicated, spirit filled group of people! We are truly grateful for the assistance we have received from our brother and sister Vincentians across Canada for our extension work in the far north. With love and prayer, all things are possible.

Projects: Our main focus remains Extension, with whatever assistance we can provide in keeping up and growing the membership of Vincentians in our existing conferences coming in a close second. Jesus told us the poor will always be with us and we need a lot more people to help them. I know this feeling is shared across our nation.

Technology: We continue to encourage conferences and councils to use the database. This is a wonderful tool and those who use it find it very helpful. Thanks to Ben Macht and Henry Shen for giving of their time and talent in this programme.

Our webpage has been updated. We are at www.ssvpwr.ca. We have been lucky to have a wonderful lady who volunteered to update the site and thank Bella Totino for all her help.

Alberta: Edmonton is continuing to thrive under the direction of the new Central Council President, Bob McKenzie. The Central Distribution Centre which houses the free clothing store and warehouse for furniture, household goods and food is being well managed by Daryl Dittrich and his devoted staff of volunteers. These volunteers logged in 8600 volunteer hours! Training is conducted on an ongoing basis and a spirit of love and encouragement among Vincentians is evident. Morinville, the lone conference in their diocese is struggling with lack of membership but those who carry on are devoted and faithful servants of Christ in the poor. We will be meeting with nearby towns and villages to try to build up the conference in May. Byron Price, president of the Calgary Central Council that encompasses all of the Calgary Diocese right to the U.S. border is guiding the Calgary area through the process of opening a new thrift store. It is still in the planning stages. They have begun working with the Mennonite community on prison ministry and have a committee set up to manage the housing project, which is still in the building stage. There is already a waiting list for the 31 units SSVP will be managing. The Central Council is also looking at how to better serve the needs of the poor through stronger lobbying and advocacy to strengthen the social safety net. Plans are underway to facilitate workshops in the area for further training of Vincentians. Lloydminster's conference, which sits on the Alberta/Saskatchewan border, is very active and plans are underway to start a satellite conference at a reserve near Lloydminster. Plans are being made to revisit Fort McMurray to get a conference going there and hopefully in Cold Lake as well.

Saskatchewan: Regina conference is continuing to become a strong conference and is very active. They have the guidance and encouragement of Father Don and have a true love for Jesus in the poor. Henry Siwak of St. Francis Assisi conference in Prince Albert continues to be our Saskatchewan representative. Prince Albert continues to serve the poor and shares the need for more Vincentians. They are continuing to pursue the formation of a youth group there. Henry's assistance and advice in our planned giving and insurance planning have been invaluable and we are truly blessed to have him. We will be making plans for further extension work in Saskatchewan this year.

Manitoba: St. Timothy's Conference in Manitoba has given me nothing but delightful surprises since my visit there late last fall. The membership is strong and growing, they are very active and...thrill of thrills, have a small youth group! Mike Langedock is the president there and it was a pleasure to meet with him and Joe O'Neil as well as the conference members. I attempted to visit the conferences at St. Augustine in Brandon and St. Vital in Winnipeg but couldn't. I did speak with the President at St. Augustine and they are still meeting once a week and visiting the sick and shut-ins.

North West Territories/Nunavut: This year we get to report from every part of our region! Yellowknife is doing very well and in the process of preparing their bylaws. St. Joseph Conference in Tuktoyaktuk is one year old and still going strong with many challenges. We are preparing a container loaded with a fridge, stove, freezer, washer and dryer plus clothing and other goods to go up on the first barge. The container will then become the storage facility for the thrift store. Sister Fay has procured the house next to the church so it isn't necessary to build a store. We have ordered a large supply of powdered milk to be sent up for distribution to our friends as well as funds to procure food and lend other assistance. We are excited to have the Conference president, Catherine Katigakyok attending our Western AGM this May. In Gjoa Haven, the conference is continuing to meet weekly after the church and meetinghouse were out of use when the boiler burst and flooded and froze the building. Keith Nimiqtactuq, the conference president, reports they will be going house to house to visit but have been kept quite busy with people coming to them for assistance. When someone announces on the local radio station that they need food, the Vincentians meet them and give them a voucher for the local store. Keith and Sister Dorica will also be attending the AGM in May. I will have two applications for aggregation ready for them to complete. Perhaps next year they will be able to attend the National AGA. Travel from the far north is very expensive. The conference in Gjoa Haven will be one year old in November.

Statistics

Our **900** reporting Vincentians have logged in **90,574 hours**. That is over 100 hours each!! We have **55 Conferences (only 35 reporting)**, **10 Councils**. We served Christ in our **15,259 friends** (men, women and children) with **6,839** home visits to our friends who were lifted up with food, clothing, furniture, financial aid, shelter, job search, budget planning, tutoring and much more in the gift of ourselves.

We received a total of **\$978,813** in to our accounts from donations, grants and fundraising. We disbursed **\$932,013** to the poor. This does not include monies received as transfer to conferences for tax receipts and does include the funds we received (**\$6,500.00**) from other Regions for our Northern account. All figures are down this year from last and may be in part to the number of conferences who had not submitted their reports by the time of this writing and I have a feeling we might almost add 40% to these statistics when all the reports do come in.

We continue to be good stewards of all the God gives us. Less than 5% of our budget is used for administration and a bare minimum is left in our accounts from one year to the next with the excess funds being passed up in true Vincentian spirit. We trust in God to provide for our needs and the needs of our friends, whom we serve in Christ.

Respectfully submitted

Patricia Bennetto, President
Western Regional Council – Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Northwest Territories and Nunavut
Phone: (780) 633-9762 fax (780) 633-9472
email: pres@ssvpwr.ca web www.ssvpwr.ca

SOCIETY OF SAINT VINCENT DE PAUL
National Council of Canada

YOUTH COMMITTEE REPORT FOR 2007-2008

This past year, Mr. John O'Flynn and Mrs Caroline Gilbert supervised the Committee. Some time was spent on sharing information and collecting data for a contact database of names and electronic addresses, intended to facilitate communications between youth conferences and the Committee.

Two important meetings are in the works: the World Youth Days, next July, and the International Vincentian Youth Study Days in Spain, in June.

Four young Vincentians (two boys and two girls) from Ontario will participate to the first event, accompanied by an adult.

Caroline Gilbert will attend the meeting in Spain, as spokesperson for Canadian youth. In preparation for that meeting, a blog was open to allow prior exchange between participants. Young Canadian Vincentians were invited to visit the blog, read about the issues to be discussed in Salamanca, and give their opinion to Caroline Gilbert.

The project to participate in the construction of a school following twinning between Ontario and Guatemala is presently dormant. We will try to revive the project soon.

We continue to promote the integration of youths into the SSVP. We wish to offer young people the necessary support to encourage their development, and see to the operational health of their conference.

Caroline Gilbert, chairperson
Youth Committee

NATIONAL EMERGENCY RELIEF COMMITTEE REPORT FOR 2007-2008

During the past year, the NER Committee received one (1) request of financial assistance. The president of the Conseil central de Québec made a request for a \$15,000.00 contribution on February 28, 2008. The funds were provided in support of a Sainte-Foy conference involved in emergency relief as a result of a fire at an apartment building, which left 16 families homeless.

The Committee's reserve fund is at about \$110,000.00 at the end of the fiscal year. All regional coordinators remain on standby to respond to emergency situations.

I wish to thank all Vincentians for their support to the Committee during the past year.

Clermont Fortin, 1st Vice President, National Council
Chair, NERC

INTERNATIONAL EMERGENCY RELIEF COMMITTEE REPORT 2007-2008

The Committee was created in 2007 to appropriately respond to and track requests for financial assistance from councils and conferences outside of Canada as a result of disasters. Funds are provided mostly to national councils twinning with Canada. The Executive Committee approved terms of references in February 2008.

The Committee recommended approval by the Executive Committee of four (4) requests for assistance, respectively by Peru, Nicaragua, Dominican Republic and Guatemala, to assist them with recovery efforts as a result of natural disasters. The National Council of each country confirmed reception of \$5,000.00, which was transferred via twinning banking channels. As well, a sum of \$4735.00 was collected by the Conference Annunciation of Our Lord in Hamilton, Ontario to assist Vincentians with disaster relief activities (earthquake) in the Pisco area of Peru. The money was sent to the National Council of Peru, via usual channels, in February 2008.

The IERF had about \$58,500 in a reserve fund at the end of the fiscal year.

Clermont Fortin, 1st Vice President, National Council
Chair, IERC

VOICE OF THE POOR COMMITTEE REPORT FOR 2007-2008

This is the first annual report of this Committee, which was created this past year. Terms of references of the Committee, policy and guidelines on advocacy were drafted and approved this year by the Executive Committee.

Advocating for the poor has been under discussion at the National level for a number of years; the National leadership proceeded carefully due to its complex and delicate nature, and lack of resources. As well, educating leading-servants of the Society to the program and hiring a competent resource to conduct advocacy were necessary steps before moving forward. National Board members attended a lecture on advocacy given by Mr. Joe Gunn, a professional advocate, in the fall of 2007. A request for funding a part-time resource to advocate for the National Council has been sent to a number of potential donors in March 2008. The intent is to fully engage in advocacy activities in the next fiscal year.

Some voice of the poor actions were taken during the year. Former National President, Brother Michael Burke, wrote a few letters to elected officials on social issues stating the Society's position. As well, we received correspondence and documents for the Quebec Regional Council, which has set up a good program a few years ago.

One of the Fundamental Principles of the Rule states, "*the Society is not only concerned with relieving need but also with redressing the situations which cause it.*" This Committee is working to achieve this goal, on the National scene, in an organized and competent way for the all the poor we serve. The prayers and cooperation of all Vincentians is needed as we embark on this new mission.

Clermont Fortin, 1st Vice President, National Council
Chair, Voice of the Poor Committee

NATIONAL STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE REPORT FOR 2007-2008

1. Training

Strategic issue: There is an overall lack of coordinated Vincentian training and training programs at all levels of the Society related to various topics and roles within the Society.

Progress report: This has resulted in the establishment of an education/ formation committee whose mandate is to establish the needed materials for this project. This committee is already hard at work to bring this about. This is very much a work in progress as the scope of this work is very broad. Terms of reference are in place. A time line is being set to ensure that all the educational materials can be developed in a timely manor. The first Educational component being developed is "Orientation and renewal". The plan is to have a Train-the-trainer workshop within 18 months to start the delivery of these materials into the hands of Vincentians. In this endeavour we are always cognizant of our mission to the poor. God is there in them and us and our work should reflect this, it will be reflected in our educational material.

2. Public Relations/Media

Strategic issue: There is an overall lack of official Public Relations/Media materials for all levels of Councils and Conferences to use in order to promote the Society.

Progress report 2007 - new materials are being produced with the new logo. This new logo is already present on our stationery, prayer cards and pins.

New pamphlets have been developed for the National office and Twinning. The President has put out a call to Vincentians across Canada to help with the issues of public relations and media.

3. Administration

Strategic issues: there is an overall lack of timely communication and administrative processes among all levels of the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul in Canada.

Progress report 2007 - With the hiring of a new office administrative assistant in the Ottawa office, there are now two administrative assistants for National. This can only help to improve administrative efficiency.

4. Advocacy

Strategic Issue There are no defined mechanisms/guidelines for advocacy by and on behalf of the SSVP.

Progress report 2007. A committee has been established to develop National Advocacy guidelines. This document will be used by all conference in Canada.

Statistical data strategic planning reports.

In July of this year, the national office, through our National President proceeded to conduct an audit of all conference and councils. Letters were sent out with information to be supplied by all.

As indicated this will be a valuable tool for the proper working of the Society in Canada.

To be a participating member of the international executive Committee we do need 1000 conferences and have been falling short of this number. It would appear that future formation work might provide a valuable service in acquiring additional conferences.

A very heart felt thank you to the members of this committee, who continue their faithful service and welcome to our new member, Jim Paddon from Ontario.

Fr. Joseph Quinn CSB - Spiritual Advisor
John O'Flynn, British Columbia
Tony L'Heureux, Western Region
Jean-Claude Bienvenue, Quebec
Jim Paddon, Ontario

Yours in Christ
Carol Horne, 2nd Vice President
Chair National Strategic Planning Committee/Atlantic Representative

NATIONAL EDUCATION/FORMATION COMMITTEE REPORT FOR 2007-2008

One of the identified issues that come out of the strategic committee was that first there was an overall lack of coordinated Vincentian training and training programs at all levels of the Society related to various topics and roles within the society. And second that there was no identified human resource leadership related to training at the national and regional levels.

The result of this has been the establishment of an education/ formation committee. The mandate of this committee is to establish the necessary material, provide training, and help with the selection of an coordinator to continue the program. This committee is already at work to bring this about. This is very much a work in progress as the scope of this work is very broad. Terms of reference are in place. A time line is being set to ensure that all the educational materials can be developed in a timely manor. The first educational component being developed is "Orientation and Renewal". With is developed and Board approved, the plan is that by 2008 a Train-the-trainer workshop will be held so that this component can be delivered into the hands of Vincentians. As each new component is developed they will be delivered to Vincentians in this maner.

In this endeavour we are always cognizant of our mission to the poor. God is there in them and us, therefore our materials should and must reflect this.

The committee members are a group of dedicated, very keen and trained people. There has been a weekend at Halifax in April where we were able to meet to work on continual development of the program. We have and will continue, to work by phone, email and face-to-face meetings.

A special thanks to them all for their commitment in working on this committee:

Nora Criss, British Columbia
Lynn L'Heureux, Western Region
William Graham, Ontario
Sr. Pat Wilson, Atlantic Region
Gérald Croteau, Quebec

Yours in Christ
Carol Horne, 2nd Vice President
Chair National Education/Formation Committee

SOCIETY OF SAINT VINCENT DE PAUL
National Council of Canada

TWINNING COMMITTEE REPORT FOR 2007-2008

- Promotion of projects as a way to further assist out twins
 - Article in the Vincenpaul
 - Encouragement of conferences who express the wish to help their twin more, to consider the project process.
- Assistance where possible of the young adults in their twinning endeavors.
 - Young adults are focused on attending World Youth Days in Australia.
- Approaching twins who haven't transferred funds in the past 3 years, to ask about their needs and wishes in regards to twinning.
 - Letter sent in March '08 to twins who haven't transferred funds in the past 3 years
 - Good response, with emails to twinning-chair@ssvp.ca, letters and phone calls.
 - Able to retwin several conferences who are interested in twinning, and to stimulate twinning in conferences who have lapsed due to a change in twinning contact persons or other reasons.
 - Intend to write letters again in January '09.

Task items '07-'08

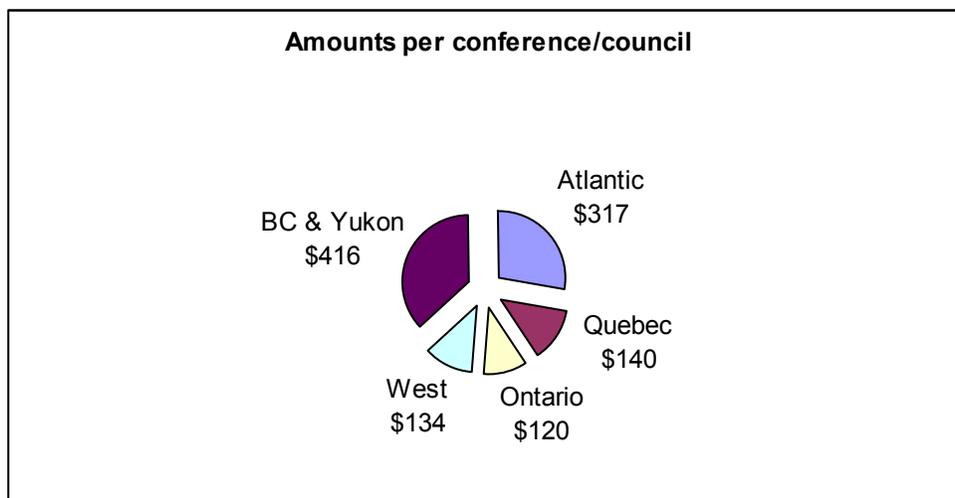
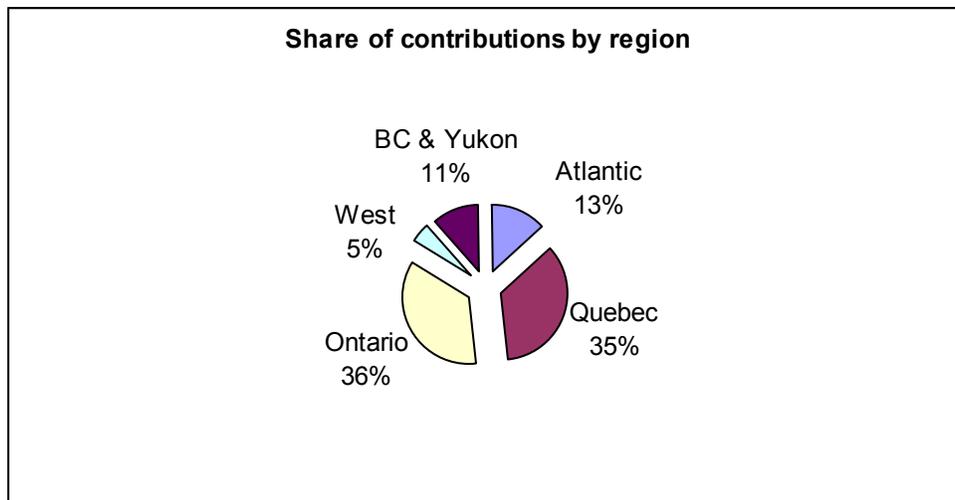
- Wrote or coordinated twinning articles in the Vincenpaul each publication.
- Presentation to new Board Nov. '07, about twinning and future goals.
- Assisted in the seeking, transfer and reporting on the contribution to our National Twin, for a replacement to an X-ray machine for dental care.
- Sought and found a spiritual advisor for the National twinning committee.
- Assisted with updating of National twinning pamphlet.
- Twinning x 25 since June '07
- 125 external twinings; 38 internal twinings
- \$ 57 770 sent to our external twins
- Instituted twinning connection with Guatemala, and received twins from El Salvador
- We are in the process of attempting to institute twinning connection with French Cameroun in order to have French-speaking twins for French Applicants.
- Persist in seeking a way to twin with Haiti. We are currently working with ICG to make this possible. Prepared item on Haiti for contribution to the ICG discussions.
- Funds that were raised for a family in dire need in the Dominican Republic, by a group in New Brunswick, were transferred to the Nat. Council, to be forwarded to a conference that knows this family.
- Arranged for a single contribution to the Children's Home of the National Council in Jordan.
- Again seeking correspondence from Sri Lanka re a specific contribution to a twinned conference.
- Assisted a consultant in writing a procedure manual for Vancouver Island Particular Council.
- Working with CRA to respond to regulations about National Council agreements for sending funds out of the country.

Respectfully submitted,
 Kathy Weswick, National Twinning Committee Chairperson

SUMMARY OF VINCENTIAN ACTIVITIES ACCROSS CANADA 2007-2008

Members	12 468
Provincial/Regional Councils	5
Central Councils	13
Particular Councils	94
Conferences	958
Number of visits made	380,351
Number of people helped	475,173
Total receipts	\$ 20,648,962
Total expenditure	\$ 19,326,566

Contributions 2007-2008	Atlantic	Quebec	Ontario	West	BC & Yukon
Amounts sent	\$ 21,840	\$ 56,915	\$ 58,620	\$ 7,640	\$ 18,700
Number of conferences/councils	69	406	488	57	45
Amounts per conference/council	\$ 317	\$ 140	\$ 120	\$ 134	\$ 416



MISSION

The Society of Saint Vincent de Paul
is a lay Catholic organization
whose mission is:

**To live the Gospel message
by serving Christ in the poor
with love, respect, justice and joy.**

VALUES

The Mission of the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul
implies that as Vincentians we :

- see Christ in anyone who suffers;
 - come together as a family;
- have personal contact with the poor;
 - help in all possible ways.