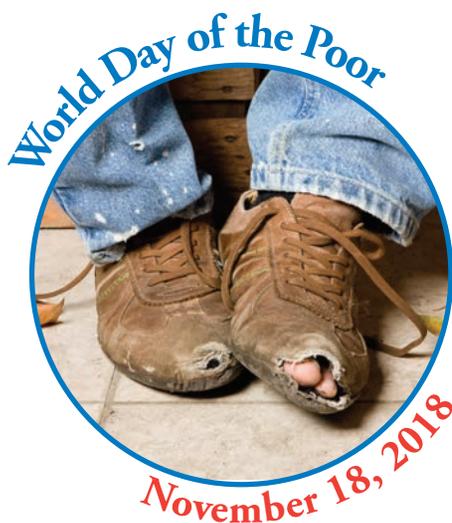




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Ulukhaktok N.W.T. on the shores of Queen's Bay.
 "Thank you God for this beautiful Day"
 Photographer: Robby Hologak

WESTERN REGIONAL COUNCIL EDITION

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Greetings to all Vincentians across the country. I hope that you had a good summer and are now ready for the rapidly approaching Christmas season.

For several years now, many members have been asking the following question: **When are we going to do something together, all Vincentians in Canada?** The idea is to find the right activity, an activity in which all can participate.

We think that Pope Francis has provided us with an answer. Indeed, in his apostolic letter *Mercy and Peace*, he invites us to celebrate the **World Day of the Poor** on the 33rd Sunday of Ordinary Time, taking place this year on November the 18th. For the past 170 years in Canada, the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul has been active in alleviating the suffering of people in need. **November 18 is our day. Together, let us take action and make people more aware of who we are, what we do and why we do it.** You will find on our website, under the tab “Members”, in the section **“World Day of the Poor – Tools for Members”**, a guide to help you plan that day. You will find blueprints for conference and store campaigns, a text for a parish speech and another text for the parish bulletin, as well as a poster to order, in three different sizes. The procedure to order the posters is shown in that same section. In addition, you will find a PowerPoint presentation and a video of that presentation, both available for download, as well as prayer cards to print. **Take advantage of that day to come out in the open and promote the wonderful work that you do.** You have chosen to do very rewarding volunteer work and you have everything to gain by making it known to all. Good luck, and don’t forget, send us your pictures.

NATIONAL HOUSE MORTGAGE

To conferences who are able to do so and have not yet sent us their \$200 contribution to help us pay back the mortgage on the national house, I invite you to do so by December 31, 2019. To date, thanks to your generosity, we have reimbursed \$82,000 of the total amount due. If all the conferences that have not sent us their contribution do so by the end of 2019, we will be able to eliminate this debt of \$70,000. Thank you all for your help.

CONTRIBUTION TO CGI

In order to set an example for our conferences, we have decided to donate 50% of our 2017-2018 surplus to CGI, more precisely an amount of \$11,250 (paid in July) in addition to the amount of \$42,000 that was already budgeted.

MY TERM AS PRESIDENT

Since several people are asking questions, I presume that things are not clear. My term will end on June 30, 2019 and the president elect, Claude Bédard, will start his six-year term on July 1, 2019. Good luck, Claude.

HEADPHONES

At the AGA of last summer, in St. John’s, Nfld, two sets of headphones used for transmitting translations were not returned at the end of the meeting. Those are very expensive pieces of equipment and we ask everyone who was present in St. John’s to check their belongings in case the headphones were taken back home by mistake. If that is the case, please contact Josée at 613-837-4363 or 1-866- 977-7787, or by email at national@ssvp.ca, to discuss sending back the headphones. Thank you.

Jean-Noël Cormier, National President

WORLD DAY OF THE POOR - TOOLS FOR MEMBERS

1. World Day of the Poor Campaign Guide for members:
 - Campaign blueprints for a conference or store/outlet;
 - Text for a parish speech;
 - Text for a parish bulletin.
2. Posters, in 3 sizes, to print or to order from the National Council.
3. PowerPoint presentation and video of the PowerPoint presentation.
4. Prayer cards to print.

<https://www.ssvp.ca/world-day-poor-tools-members>

SPIRITUALITY

SOCIAL JUSTICE INITIATIVE – FRIENDS OF THE INCARCERATED PERSON

Most of us Vincentians are familiar with prison ministry, which can include a number of different programs and activities that Vincentians do with our government or other secular organizations. These include assisting with the prison chaplaincy, visitation of prisoners or incarcerated persons in remand centres, assisting and advocating for families of victims of crime and programs in assisting released persons on parole to integrate back into society. These are all worthwhile and significant charitable activities that directly respond to our scriptural teaching of “visiting the prison”. However, one area of related charity generally ignored is the suffering and injustices that are imposed on the family members of incarcerated persons as a consequence of the family member’s crime. We know that family members, whether mother or father, sister, brother, husband or wife, are innocent of the crime committed, but they are quite often viewed as guilty by association in our community at large and are treated so by our justice system.

We, at Divine Mercy Conference, Edmonton, Alberta, were recently made aware of the general plight of families of incarcerated persons through the witness of a newly baptized Catholic and Vincentian member who had direct experience of being a family member of a person in prison. She related to us her own experience of the difficulties experienced at the time of her husband’s initial incarceration, how difficult it was just to get information from the justice system that would allow her to support him. When her spouse died in prison, she was not informed. In the community, she was ostracized and still suffers from her association. This was not the only testimony from our recent investigation into the plight of families of incarcerated persons. Chaplains, prison ministers, and Catholic social services agents invariably cited that there is an actual gap in services to families of incarcerated persons. Imagine being a spouse losing a breadwinner or a soul mate. Imagine you are a son or daughter

losing your father or mother, and then being labeled in school, among your friends and extended family.

Very often, the incarcerated person loses the only real support they may have in their immediate family that can encourage and support them when they are released and try to integrate into society again. This is a major reason why our correctional recidivism rate is very high.

Since we learned about the plight of this fellow Vincentian, we have listened also to other individuals with similar experiences and difficulties. There is no established organization in Canada that provides hands-on support for these family members except for a few related organizations that support families in distress, in a general way. These family members require a safe and receptive place to voice and share their experiences, to learn about how to navigate through the justice system to support their family member in prison and to receive support, emotional or material, while dealing with their family member in custody. Simply put, it will go a long way for them if there is a place where such families can gather to share insights, learn from one another or from specialized experts on how to cope and learn to work with the justice and correctional systems (even as simple as attending court hearings) and where they can gather some information on how to get specific help, material and psychological. It is important for them to be able to meet in a safe environment without fear of judgement.

We, at Divine Mercy, are investigating the opportunity to establish such a resource for these families through organizations such as our Catholic social services and others.

We hope to be able to bring good news in this regard soon.

*Joseph Tsui, National Spirituality Committee
Western Regional Council*

IN MEMORIAM

**It is with deep regret that
we announce
the following deaths:**

Delia Auzins

Precious Blood Conference
Surrey, British Columbia
March 22, 2018

David Thomas

Precious Blood Conference
Surrey, British Columbia
September 24, 2018

Ferdinand Cyr

Saint-Jean-Bosco Conference
Gatineau, Quebec
October 10, 2018

Larry Dietrich

Sacred Heart Conference
Victoria, British Columbia
October 14, 2018

Mary Spencer

Victoria Particular Council
Victoria, British Columbia
October 30, 2018

*They were our brothers and sisters
serving the poor.*

*Lord, we pray that all the good
they did bear fruit
and be continued.*

*Help us keep their memory
alive in our hearts.*

Let us keep them in our prayers.

**Please send your death notices to
editor@ssvp.ca**

TWINNING

DIVINE MERCY CONFERENCE, EDMONTON ALBERTA

Twinning is a mutual assistance program based on the vision that all Canadian conferences and councils be twinned with Vincentians in developing countries assigned to Canada by the International Council. This creates a unique worldwide community of love, prayer and solidarity dedicated to sharing the necessities of life with as many of Christ's poor as possible.

The countries assigned to Canada need our assistance to adequately respond to the basic needs of those they serve. These countries have a huge challenge in serving the needs of the destitute of their communities due to poverty and natural disasters -- countries like Trinidad and Tobago, Dominica, Haiti, St Lucia, Nicaragua, etc.

The SSVP Divine Mercy Conference, Edmonton, Alberta, is twinned with La Divina Pastora Conference in Siparia, Trinidad and Tobago. Through National, we send funds to our twin and communicate with the twinned conference during the year and receive a report on their activities.

Siparia is a southern town on the Island of Trinidad. It is a commercial centre and market town serving agricultural areas such as cacao plantations. Trinidad and Tobago is also a small oil producing country. Of particular interest, La Divina Pastora Church is host to the black Virgin statue. Catholics and Hindus in the area pray before this statue of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

I had difficulty re-establishing contact with our twin and informed SSVP National of the lack of response from La Divina Pastora. At one point, in concert with National, we were considering withholding payments to our twin.

With the assistance of National, contact was re-established and funding was continued.

We were advised by Divina Pastora that they had a complete change of directors and executive and that this had delayed their response.

I do not always receive a response to my emails but I have contacted the President and Treasurer by phone and had very cordial discussions with them. I was even invited to visit them, which I am considering.

*Patrick Moric, twinning contact person
Divine Mercy Conference, Edmonton AB*

YOUTH

EMMANUEL BAILLY SCHOLARSHIP 2018 TO ANDREA WAN

Over the last several years I have been blessed to know and to learn from many Vincentians. Andrea Wan has been the youngest of these and she has made the largest impact.

I first met Andrea when she attended an Edmonton Central Council meeting and delivered a presentation on her recent trip to Tuktoyaktuk, NWT. She was 15 years old at the time and had been working with her mother Linda, doing Vincentian work for three years in Leduc, just south of Edmonton. Andrea established a working and supportive relationship with Sister Fay Trombley at the Catholic Mission in Tuktoyaktuk. She spent the next four summers working with over 100 children and young adults in the Arctic.*

As the SSVP North of 60 Project started to take shape, Andrea was there to inform council of what was acceptable to ship and how best to introduce new ideas to those living in need in Arctic Canada.

Andrea has contributed to our Society at the conference level, and at the central, regional and national council level. Her dedication to serving has been exceptional. It is so good that this effort has been recognized in a way that will provide Andrea with the means to continue her education and her passion for helping others.

*Peter Ouellette, Past President
Western Regional Council*

* We invite you to read Andrea's article about her experience in Tuktoyaktuk, N.W.T., published in the [Vincenpaul-Fall 2014](#), on pages 14-15.

The Emmanuel Bailly Scholarship is an initiative of the National Council of Canada of the SSVP. It was created to reward young Vincentians who are combining studies and volunteer work. In addition to attending school and often working part time, young Vincentians find time and energy to help the less privileged of their community. The National Council of Canada wishes to reward them for their exceptional contribution, by offering a bursary of one thousand dollars (\$1,000.00) in Canadian currency and a merit certificate.

The scholarship is awarded to a Vincentian student who clearly stood out during the year. The bursary is to help the recipient pursue his/her studies and fulfill professional ambitions. For information and application, please download the PDF document: [APPLICATION](#)



SSVP WESTERN REGION COUNCIL REPORT FALL 2018

A highlight this year was the attendance of 31 western Vincentians at the St. John's AGA, only 3,000 miles from home. The happy group is shown below, except for Sr. Fay!



Edmonton Central Council (ECC) acclaimed a new president, Stephen Dufrense, following the retirement of Mary Dunnigan. I was a guest of an ECC meeting on September 4th. It was a dynamic meeting comprised of the President, two Vice-Presidents, four Particular Council Presidents, a treasurer, secretary and spiritual advisor Deacon Hyland. Key activities planned by ECC:

1. SSVP commissioning and reception on September 27th. Approximately 120 Vincentians attended and 44 new members from conferences in Edmonton and surrounding communities were commissioned. The number of younger women and men commissioned is very encouraging.
2. A Fall Development Day was scheduled for October 27th.

Calgary Diocesan Central Council (CDCC), led by president Theo Van Besouw, held the annual Ozanam Day on September 22nd. Approximately 60 Vincentians were in attendance and were inspired by keynote speaker Fr. Jonathan Gibson.

CDCC also hosted Jean-Noël Cormier and Joseph Claude Bedard that weekend. Both expressed satisfaction with the facilities booked for the planned 2020 AGA in Calgary. AGA facilities contracts will be signed in October.

Isolated Southern Alberta conferences of Taber & Lethbridge were visited by Theo Van Besouw and myself in September. Vincentian good works continue and conferences will benefit by more communication with WRC.

Yellowknife and Regina have not communicated since the Spring WRC AGM.

Winnipeg Vincentians of St. Timothy and Conférence de Sainte-Catherine Labouré provide very prompt support for all help requests. Nannette Langedock is the new president of St. Timothy's Conference.



Great volunteers in St. Albert loading sea cans.

North of 60 continues to flourish under the stewardship of Peter Ouellette.

The following communities are served by North of 60 Project, Western Region (Edmonton Area)

1. Aklavik
2. Sachs Harbour
3. Tuktoyaktuk
4. Ulukhaktok - partnered with St. Albert
5. Paulatuk -partnered with Sherwood Park
6. Inuvik (shares a sea can with #7)
7. Tsiighetchic (shares a sea can with Inuvik #6)

Expenses were \$20,000 for sea cans, \$6,000 for local transport, \$9,000 for Manitoulin trucking. Restricted donated cash of \$27,500 was used for powdered milk.

Expenses were \$5,000 for Sherwood Park members who travelled to Paulatuk for building restoration in August. Stef Michniewski of Our Lady of Perpetual Help Conference led the three-man renovation team.

This fall, Julie Boucher (North of 60 chair for Inuvik) is travelling to Inuvik and Linda Tutt (North of 60 chair for Ulukhaktok) is travelling to Ulukhaktok.

North of 60 used a donated warehouse in Edmonton, from April to July, with the condition that it be vacated if rented out by the owner.

*Tony Barry, President
Western Regional Council*

PROJECT NORTHERN ALBERTA - CADOTTE LAKE

Asking for assistance from others with regard to one's needs is not the easiest thing for most of us to do. Our own human pride and uncertainty play on us when our life situation requires us to ask for help. We have questions and thoughts like, "What will they think of me when I ask for help?" and "Will they think I am a failure?"

We all have experienced poverty in one way or another as we continue with our own unique life journey. Many times, we find the resources, either internal or external, to help and allow us to move past a certain poverty experience, but at other times, those resources are not available to us and we need to ask for help. And it is okay to do so.

When we ask others for help, we are giving them the opportunity to practice being charitable and generous with their Time, Talents and Treasure. They may not have the opportunity to do that if we do not ask for help when it is needed. It is a situation for both parties involved.

Many of our sisters and brothers living in numerous communities in Northern Alberta are dealing with suffering related to the lack of good food, warm clothing, adequate shelter, good education and proper sanitation as well as access to those necessities of life.

In the southern areas of Alberta, the lack of these resources is addressed by various charitable organizations. Many of these organizations do so without any support from municipal, provincial and federal governments. But often the need for those resources exceeds the capacity that many charitable organizations can fill.

Communities in the northern area of Alberta do not have such charitable organizations as the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul to address and deal with the lack of those most basic resources. The remoteness of these communities also adds to the problems of dealing with those issues due to transportation costs and even year-round access.

To address in some small way the lack of basic necessities in these communities in Northern Alberta in the first year, it was proposed that St. Theresa's Parish (Mill Woods) and the charitable organizations currently operating as associate ministries within St. Theresa's Parish (Mill Woods) form a Social Justice Ministry – Project Northern Alberta. These organizations are the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul, St. Theresa's Conference, St. Peter Council 7070 Knights of Columbus, Catholic Women's League, St. Theresa's Parish and St. Peter's Columbus Club.

In the second year, those same needs would be addressed and expanded to other communities in Northern Alberta, if other Society of Saint Vincent de Paul conferences in Edmonton would like to participate in Project Northern Alberta. It was suggested that the St. Theresa's Conference of the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul take the leadership role in Project Northern Alberta. The Society has some

experience in this area through its program in the Canadian Arctic, with the Project North of 60, over the past number of years.

The needs were identified over-and-over again. People are suffering every day because of the lack of those essentials for human life and the situation is not improving for a variety of reasons. However, it is time for direct and immediate action to be taken by social justice-oriented individuals and organizations. Through Project Northern Alberta we, as participants in this Project, will continue to have the opportunity to make a real difference in the lives of our sisters and brothers in a northern Alberta community.

Jesus Christ gave us numerous examples and parables about how his followers should be concerned for the poor and their suffering. If we proclaim to be followers of Christ, now is the time for each of us, as Catholics, to respond through real and tangible actions, such as sharing our time, talents and treasures.

Phase 1 of Project Northern Alberta – Cadotte Lake was completed in July 2016.

Phases 2 & 3 were completed in August 2017.

Phases 4 & 5 were completed by April 2018, by establishing a food bank and a clothing exchange bank that will benefit the community. Soon, the project will continue with **Phase 6**.

This was, and still is, an opportunity to reach out and extend a hand in friendship for Peace and Reconciliation.

*Maria Lupul
Cadotte Lake Project Committee*



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.

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**Society of Saint Vincent de Paul
National Council of Canada
2463, Innes Rd.
Ottawa, Ontario K1B 3K3
Tel.: 613 837-4363 / Toll free: 1 866 997-7787
Fax: 613 837-7375
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national@ssvp.ca



www.ssvp.ca



SSVP Canada