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CLICKABLE!

WE ARE
CALLED

ANNUAL NATIONAL
FORMATION
2020 ANF

Calgary, Alberta
June 25 to 27, 2020

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

MEMBER'S SPIRITUAL REVIEW

The primary goal of a Vincentian is to attain personal salvation by serving Christ in the poor, the forgotten, the marginalized, the oppressed and the unwanted. A routine examination of conscience helps to discover any failings, errors or omissions along the way and take corrective measures.

Socrates: **“The unexamined life is not worth living.”**

The beginning of a New Year allows us to review the past year, identify successes and failures and plot a new course when necessary.

1. As a Vincentian, do I

- a. Attend all conference or council meetings?
- b. Actively participate in the discussion, especially during the spiritual reflection?
- c. Pray for the members and volunteers, living and deceased?
- d. Celebrate Vincentian feast days?
- e. Pray before and after a home visit?
- f. Pray before and after work at a store or other special works facility?
- g. Pray for the poor, the forgotten, the marginalized, the oppressed and the unwanted?
- h. Attend retreats and formation and training workshops?

2. As a Christian, am I aware of God's presence during my day and do I

- a. Pray daily, especially morning and evening prayers?
- b. Read the scriptures?
- c. Nurture my personal spiritual life by reading the catechism, the social doctrines of the church or other spiritual material?
- d. As a Catholic, do I
 - i. Attend mass on Sundays and Holy Days?
 - ii. Frequently receive the sacraments of Reconciliation and the Eucharist?
 - iii. Attend mass during the week?
 - iv. Attend at a Holy Hour and benediction?
 - v. Pray the rosary?
 - vi. Adhere to and promote the teachings and social doctrines of the Church?

Inspirational quotes by St. Francis of Assisi:

“Preach the Gospel at all times and when necessary use words.”

**“Start by doing what's necessary, then do what's possible,
and suddenly you are doing the impossible.”**

“For it is in giving that we receive.”

Joseph Claude Bédard, National President

ANNUAL REPORT REMINDER

Have you started to compile the data for your financial and statistics reports?

If not, we invite all conferences and councils to download the forms from our website:

www.ssvp.ca/annual-reports

The information gathered is important for the National Council's reports to several areas that include:

- federal government
- International Council General
- general public
- donors
- Church authorities as information
- all members of the Society.

No longer can we seem to be nebulous in our responses. It is imperative to be knowledgeable at all levels of the Society of who is doing what. As well, these annual reports will assist the Canadian National Council to focus in areas of growth and development, special activities, education, and support.

Thank you for your precious cooperation.

SPIRITUALITY

WE ARE CALLED!

Vincentians believe that we have a vocation, a calling, to serve Christ in His poor. They might be those who lack sufficient money to feed and care for themselves and their families, but that is not the only definition of being poor. Anyone who is ill, alone, suffering, addicted, incarcerated or marginalized is also suffering poverty. It has been said that everyone is poor in some way, at some time. Vincentians serve everyone, in all possible ways.

Scripture reminds us that many who came before us were also called. Some responded eagerly; others were hesitant; some tried to evade or escape their call.

Noah, who 'found favour with the Lord', (Gen 6:8) was called and 'carried out all the commands that God gave him'. (Gen 6:22)

Abraham and Sarah were called to be parents whose children would be the Covenant people. Laughter accompanied their acceptance of God's call. (Gen 18)

When Moses stood before the bush that burned without being consumed, he tried to convince God that he wasn't really the best choice. 'I am slow of speech and tongue... If you please Lord, send someone else!' (Exodus 4) before accepting his role as leader.

The boy Samuel didn't recognize God calling his name. Yet with the guidance of Eli, he trusted and followed the Lord for the rest of his life. (1Sam 3)

Jonah ran away when God's call was to go to Nineveh.

In the New Testament, Zechariah doubted his call to father a great prophet and was unable to speak until his son John the Baptizer was born. (Luke 1)

Mary asked, "How?" but accepted the great vocation to become Mother of God with joy. (Luke 1)

Called by Jesus to become 'fishers of men', the first apostles eagerly 'left everything, and became his followers.' (Luke 5:11)

How do we accept our Vincentian vocation? Some of us have questions and we hesitate. Some resist for a time before accepting, while others recognize immediately that this is what Jesus is calling us to do. How we accept, how long it takes to accept, doesn't really matter. What matters is that each of us recognizes his/her call as personal and from God.

A hymn by David Haas is a favourite of mine and, I am sure, of many other Vincentians. It expresses the vocation we have to serve with love, respect, justice and joy. In very few words, Mr. Haas states the Vincentian way to serve all who need us and to serve each other as family.

Come! Live in the light!

Shine with the joy and the love of the Lord!

We are called to be light for the kingdom, to live in the freedom of the city of God!

We are called to act with justice.

We are called to love tenderly.

We are called to serve one another, to walk humbly with God.

Come! Open your heart!

Show your mercy to all those in fear!

We are called to be hope for the hopeless, so hatred and blindness will be no more.

We are called to act with justice.

We are called to love tenderly.

We are called to serve one another, to walk humbly with God.

This hymn states the Vincentian way of serving:

- We serve anyone who needs us, excluding no one, because we serve in Christ's love for all.
- We try our best to bring hope for the hopeless as we serve in love, respect, justice and joy.
- Each year, we renew our Vincentian promise to support the Society's works of social justice.
- We walk humbly with God who called us, knowing this is God's plan for us.

Let's renew our vocation as we begin this new year. We are indeed called by God to feed the hungry, care for those in need, and bring justice to the oppressed. For this, we give thanks.

*Denise Bondy, Spirituality Chair
Ontario Regional Council*

YOUNG VINCENTIANS

WE ARE CALLED

Imagine this. It's a cold quiet afternoon. The store is in chaos; people are lined up around the block at your local soup kitchen. Then imagine opening your email and seeing this message pop up. "There are 30 young people in your community looking for a way to volunteer in our stores and conferences, as well as giving you a couple of amazing projects to start in your community." Wouldn't that be amazing? What a dream! Unfortunately, this is not the reality. Ask yourselves, why young people are not coming to our Society to volunteer? If we're being honest, some of the reasons could be that our conference members are getting older, some are not willing to change, and they just do not know about us. We are limiting our growth and becoming narrow minded. We need to evolve.

Rejuvenation, succession planning, recruiting and retaining members is an issue for many of our conferences. People in our cities do not know about the work the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul does within the community, and this is because we are not competitive in marketing ourselves. Social media is a good tool to utilize to help engage people. If you're concentrating on young people, social media is the way to go. Time to be hip and get with the times.

Young people are a good investment. It will give a new diversity to the team regarding creativity, projects, and points of views. We must give equal respect to young people – we should not diminish their value. We should not diminish anyone's value. New concerns and potential projects will pop up and we must have an open mind, be supportive, and encouraging. Sometimes, it's time to throw out the dirty towel and buy a fresh towel. You wouldn't continue carrying boxes up and down the stairs when there's an elevator right there. Utilize what the community has and the gifts that young people have to offer.

Young people are motivated by acts of service, environmental issues, and social justice actions. The Society of Saint Vincent de Paul Canada has made sustainable actions more of a focus because it's not enough to just give a man a fish; we must teach him how to fish, too. Don't get us wrong, charitable works are always going to be needed in our communities, but we must start looking into social justice. Healing the wound instead of just constantly putting on a band-aid. Teaching people in need to be self-sustaining and self-reliant but also keeping in mind that if they ever need support, the Society will be there for them.

If your conference feels that they are ready to invite young people, you need to be organized in your approach. Nowadays, there are multiple extracurricular activities, multiple other volunteer organizations and jobs that young people do after school. If you are organized, then they can be organized. Figure out a platform where young people can go to and see which events are on each month.

Set reminders the day before an event, etc. If you can't do it or figure out how to set up social media platforms within your conferences, then find a young person who wants to boost up their resume and work experience.

We are not saying that you need to reinvent the wheel. If you have events where you need help packing the bags that go out to homes for home visits, sorting clothes in stores, volunteers for community events like BBQ's – invite them out. If you don't ask, you'll never know. However, even though the wheel is a perfectly good mode of transportation, don't be afraid of evolving, strive to become a rocket. Come up with ideas on how your conference can help in other ways around the community. Cover all sides of poverty – it's not just one facet of poverty. (See definition of Poverty in rule book.)

We hope that this doesn't sound too "preachy". Our goal is to keep our Society open-minded, to embrace, engage in and be excited about the possibilities of having more young people within our Society rather than being intimidated by it. To be able to help in all possible ways. (10 points if you know where that's from.)

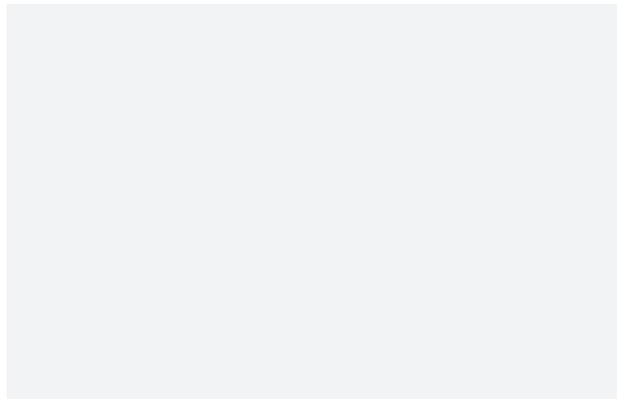
You Rock. Love you. Bye.

*Lillian Mulder & Sophia Mutuc, Youth Representatives
Ontario Regional Council*

ONTARIO GETS THREE NEW SSVV STORES

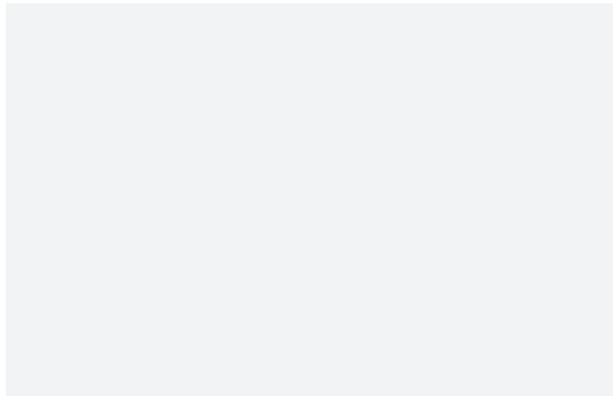
BRANTFORD

It took a village of like-minded Vincentians to build it. They used courage and a whole lot of faith. They set forth on a plan to rejuvenate their store as well as the community. This particular council worked extremely hard on planning and placed their faith and this idea in God's hands. They purchased a building and started fundraising. They visited other stores in the province and took ideas from each. They had a design and went forward. This store is solely run by a big team of likeminded volunteers. They have enlisted help from businesses, schools and the whole community pitched in. These Vincentians and volunteers did whatever was needed to open these doors. Store blessing and dedication was held May 11, 2019. Congratulations to every Vincentian, from the ones who had the vision to the ones who stacked the shelves. Praying for your continued success!



WINDSOR

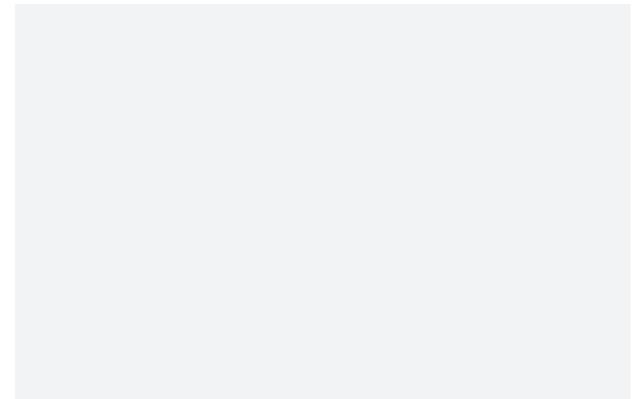
In a city where large non-profits are closing their stores, Roseanne Winger and her Vincentian family are evolving. Windsor has been changing their operations to meet and suit the times. They are purchasing bales from other SSVV stores and either use or sell it. They knew they had to make changes to stay viable in a changing market. When donations went down, Roseanne changed how and where they receive their donations. With all these changes going on in their city, they opened in a bigger and better location. This opening was accomplished thanks to the hard work of a great team of people working together. Someone said there is no way it will open on time. Lesson learned to not say that to Roseanne and the Windsor Vincentians. They all worked late in the night and the store opened on schedule and on time. The doors opened on October 19, 2019. Not only are they helping themselves and people in need, but they are helping other SSVV stores in the process. Congratulations to the Windsor Vincentians for being such visionaries!



PETERBOROUGH

When opportunity knocked, Peterborough opened the door. This new store is number "3" in the "Vin-nies feel good shopping" model. Providence played a role in helping where help was needed. This location came about all because of a donation to Vin-nies. The steering committee and landlord struck a deal and on August 24, 2019, the third store opened. The store is located very close to the SSVV food pantry. This gives the Vincentians at the pantry the gift of not only serving with food but also with clothing easily available just around the corner. Vouchers issued at the pantry are easily redeemed quickly for all our friends in need. The vouchers being redeemed have gone up considerably and that is truly serving the need where the need is. Keep up the great work Peterborough!

*Sue Mazziotti-Armitage, Vice President & Stores Liaison
Ontario Regional Council*



VINCENTIANS ARE CALLED TO SOCIAL JUSTICE

Blessed Frederic Ozanam said, “You must not be content with tiding the poor over the poverty crisis; you must study their condition and the injustices which brought about such poverty with the aim of long-term improvement.”

Vincentians are excellent at bringing relief to neighbours in need (neighbours) with immediate assistance to relieve their suffering, but we must not stop there. If we do, there will be no end to the suffering. If we work towards improving the long-term circumstances of our neighbours, we will fulfill the call to social justice and improve the wellbeing and future of our society.

In a just society, all persons have the right to a standard of living that meets their basic needs for shelter, food, healthcare and other necessities so that they can live in dignity and health and participate in the community. There are many structural issues which prevent our neighbours from being able to participate in the community. Some of these issues are lack of income, lack of access to healthcare, lack of opportunity for education and so on. Vincentians are called to understand how these issues trap our neighbours in poverty and we work towards improving their circumstances so that they can participate more fully in society.

So, what are Vincentians to do?

There are two aspects to the work of social justice. One aspect is to find supports in the community to improve the quality of life for our neighbours for the longer term. The second is to advocate for reform of the social systems so that our neighbours can have dignity and health which is their right.

Some neighbours will be able to escape poverty through participation in higher education and job skill training. They will be able to secure employment that provides wages that sustain them and their family. They will have better health outcomes if

they have dental care and other health supports that Vincentians can help them access. Their children will be more competitive with their peers and will have brighter futures when the family’s quality of life improves.

Other neighbours will never be self-sufficient because of age, health or disability. They nevertheless have the right to having their basic needs met and to live in dignity.

Some of the supports that can improve the long-term wellbeing of our neighbours are:

- Making sure that neighbours file their income taxes on time so that they will get the benefits that are already theirs by right. Find out who does taxes in your community for low income people and give this information to neighbours.
- Finding out what is available in your community for rent supplements, healthcare or enrichment programs for children. Walk alongside your neighbours as they access these supports.
- Finding out what educational opportunities there are in your community so that your neighbours can become employable. Help them apply for the Ozanam fund in Ontario if that is appropriate, or help families register their children in an RESP in order to have access to the free Canada Learning Bond funding from the federal government. Help your neighbours to navigate the education system.
- Finding out what other organizations in your community can help your neighbours. Services include access to counselling, affordable transportation and legal help. Help your neighbours to access these programs.

These supports improve the quality of life for the neighbours we serve, but many other people are left out. Furthermore, these supports that we help our neighbours to access should be part of the fabric of

our society to which everyone has a right. Advocacy is an important part of progress to a just society because it ensures a standard of wellbeing for all.

Some advocacy issues include:

- Wages and working conditions that make it possible for workers to meet the needs of their families. There are many examples from countries that fair labour laws benefit the economy and community.
- Quality education that promotes opportunity and optimal development of the person so that neighbours and their children can succeed.
- Wholistic healthcare with access to medications, dental care and vision care to ensure the long-term health of our neighbours.
- Adequate social assistance, old age incomes and child benefits are good for the community as well as the neighbours. Supports such as affordable childcare benefit the community because they make employment possible for low wage earners.

These activities may represent a departure from our traditional activities and take us out of our comfort zones but if we work with our fellow Vincentians on just one issue, and meet with success, we may be encouraged to try something more.

We are called to act!

*Conry Wink, Vice President, Social Justice & Advocacy
Ontario Regional Council*

CALL FOR WORKSHOPS - ANF - JUNE 25-27, 2020

WORKSHOPS ARE HELD ON THURSDAY JUNE 25, 2019

The theme presented at this ANF is:

“WE ARE CALLED”

The theme has been chosen so that we as Vincentians may take time to reflect on how we interact with those we serve. Workshops may be developed around the theme.

NATIONAL COMMITTEES SPONSORED WORKSHOPS – TOPICS VARY FROM YEAR TO YEAR:

1. Roles of the President and Executive - conferences/councils;
2. Succession planning - conferences/councils;
3. Policies and procedures;
4. Recruitment and orientation;
5. Train the trainers.

OTHER POTENTIAL WORKSHOP TOPICS:

1. Structural causes of poverty;
2. Collaboration with other organizations;
3. Spirituality of the work of a Vincentian;
4. Foundations of our Society;
5. Special works – the public face of our Society;
6. SSVP in North of 60;
7. Advocacy and how to advocate effectively;
8. Systemic change projects;
9. Youth in action;
10. Fundraising.

Workshops are typically 75 minutes long. Presenters must provide their own presentation materials and equipment, i.e. portable disk drives and their own pcs for connection to existing in-house-supplied AV equipment. Any handout materials are the responsibility of the presenters to produce, bring and supply to attendees.

Final date for submission of workshop forms is April 1, 2020. You may mail your forms in, or email them to exdir-digen@ssvp.ca.

Richard Pommainville, Executive Director
2463 Innes Road, Ottawa ON K1B 3K3

[CLICK HERE FOR ONLINE FORM](#)

TO PRESENT A WORKSHOP, PLEASE FILL IN THIS FORM OR THE FORM ONLINE AT: WWW.SSVP.CA/ANF-2020

Title of workshop: _____

Language presented: English ____ French ____

Description of the workshop: _____

Presenter name: _____

Address: _____

Tel: _____ Fax: _____

Email: _____

Short bio - presenter: _____

How does the title/topic tie into the AGA theme?

Required room size/type: _____

Required AV materials: _____

Handout materials are the responsibility of the presenter.

Please send by April 1, 2020 to:

Richard Pommainville, Executive Director
2463 Innes Road, Ottawa ON K1B 3K3
exdir-digen@ssvp.ca

Approved by the National Training Committee

Date: _____



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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