

# Vincenpaul-Canada

THE MAGAZINE OF THE SOCIETY OF SAINT VINCENT DE PAUL  
NATIONAL COUNCIL OF CANADA

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5 LOAVES + 2 FISH + VINCENT = ?



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## Mission

The Society of Saint Vincent de Paul is a lay Catholic organisation 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 is anyone who suffers
- come together as a family
- have personal contact with the poor
- help in all possible ways

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By the hand of iconographer  
Donna R. Rathert, based on image  
at St. Peter's Church, Phibsboro, Dublin.

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# Penny's Piece

## GREETINGS AND BLESSINGS TO ALL!

### He Hears the Cry of the Poor

*It seems so strange to be already entering the third year of the ministry of administration! The time has truly flown by. One may wonder truly what is next?*

We have celebrated 175 years of the birth of the Society in 2008; we have celebrated 160 years of the Superior Council of Canada 2009, and now we move into celebrating 350 years of St Vincent de Paul's death.

As the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul we have good reason to celebrate who we are! Especially when we "come together as a family"! However, "What is the glue that holds us together so well?"

The essential ingredient, or the glue, that has kept the Society held together so well, and in full motion throughout all of these years has been the aspect of "personal contact with the poor" through home visits. Our president, José Ramón Díaz-Torremocha once commented that "who among us was not surprised, upon joining the Society, to discover that home visits are the conferences' main activity?" He points out that "home visits have gained so much importance within conferences that we have made them the main activity of our Society, if not the definition of our vocation".

However, the intent of our founders, our first Brothers, went much beyond that. In reality, the home visit was nothing more in the 19<sup>th</sup> century than the easiest way to personally meet the poor, in their own environment, not our own. The main purpose of our activity is, as stated in our mission and values: "to have personal contact with the poor" and in their environment, not our convenient locations.

At the time, when our founders were inspired to create the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul, it was the custom for the poor to go ask for help in locations where charitable people gathered to protect them. The young Parisians who founded the Society wished to go further and, imitating our Lord who goes to those who suffer, "see Christ in those who suffer", they seek to share the needs, the suffering and the abandonment of the poor exactly where they occur, and not in the often frigid environment of charitable institutions. As Vincentians, we wish to "personally" bring courage to the poor where they live: "at home", thus...home visits!

Dear brothers and sisters, we must convince ourselves that in our work, what really counts, especially today when it is particularly difficult in some parts of our country to maintain the home visit tradition, is that our service is based on a *personal contact* with those who suffer. It is especially significant to be in the environment where the poor feel more at ease. It is this specific intent, and none other, that led our founders to start the tradition of home visits.

As well, never has the "one-to-one" contact realized among us at conference meetings been so important in this time of economic depression. We truly need to help support and feed each other's spirituality. It becomes very difficult to try to meet needs when we know the cupboards are getting pretty low. We need each other to help us make Gospel based decisions about how we get through these times.

May your conference meetings and home visits be Spirit led and Spirit filled!

**Faith in action: May the radiance of your charity be a beaming light.**

**Administration:** we have moved into the new office/home in July and August. Much was accomplished through the efforts of Clermont, Germain, Sandra and myself to arrange for a number of items to be either moved, fixed, updated or replaced. Many local Vincentians and Knights of Columbus members contributed time and effort into assisting us to do what was necessary, either gratis or for cost. This saved the Society numerous dollars. Kudos also to Nicole Fortin for her assistance with cleaning and decorating. She has been a tower of strength in helping to get things done.

We have successfully rented the apartment to a very nice young gentleman as well. The garage is also rented for a nominal price to the Orlean's Particular Council for the storage of furniture. Both of which assist in the offsetting of costs.

I think that each and everyone of you can be very proud of your new office/home. It is anticipated that we will have the grand opening at the board meeting in May. Pictures will then be taken for display at the AGA in June.

Sandra is now on a maternity leave until next October. We will manage the office with Nicole and Clermont. All call will be forwarded to the Montreal office for Nicole to handle. Clermont will visit the office twice weekly to look after the mail, faxes emails etc. and to oversee any maintenance.

### On the Road Again

#### SEPTEMBER

**Labour Day Weekend:** USA AGA, St Louis Missouri – as always such an enlightening and life-giving event.. The same issues that face us here in Canada are also facing our brothers and sisters in the USA. Common issues as depressed economy and the cupboards getting pretty bare are of grave concerns.

The one thing that I did promise myself about attending USA AGA is that I would bring additional members with me. Attending workshops and meetings such as Advocacy, Education, Twinning and Youth cannot be done with one person. We should all be present and strengthen the ties that bind our two Societies in these common interests.

**Ontario: St Catherine's Central Council** – kind invitation from Sister Maureen Boland had Fr. Joe Quinn and myself attend their Mass and celebration of commissioning. Some absolutely wonderful Vincen-tians doing some very hard work. So glad to have the opportunity to visit with them.

**Toronto Central Council** – As you know Toronto is hosting the 2010 AGA. It was a pleasure to meet the

planning committee. I think we will be in very good hands for this coming AGA. Many of the recommendations that were submitted are being reviewed and we are trying to accommodate as many as we can. Congratulations to Danny Bourne and his team!

**Ontario Regional Council Meeting - Ottawa:** great to be with members of my own home province. Many ideas shared, with much to look forward to. The commitment to the work of the Society was certainly evident in all that was discussed. Advocacy is also well under way in Ontario.

**Quebec Regional Council Annual Meeting – Trois-Rivières:** the dedication and support in the council was truly a heartwarming experience. Well attended, and a spirit of family networking and sharing was truly evident. Such a warm reception by the city of Trois-Rivières, who were also celebrating 350 years.

The launch of Saint Vincent de Paul week in the province of Quebec was an especially interesting endeavour. We will have Jean Claude present this idea at the AGA in June. Perhaps it may be something to consider for all of Canada!

#### OCTOBER

**Yellowknife NWT** – we held our executive meeting in Yellowknife with the members of St. Patrick's Conference. We were housed at the Trapper's Lake Spirituality Centre. Many thanks to Pat Bennetto, President of Western Regional Council and Gerda Groothuizen, President of St. Patrick's Conference, NT.

One of the dearest ladies we met there was Sister Mary Jo. She met us at the airport and toured us around Yellowknife and saw to all of our needs. What a great lady!



I had the opportunity to speak for a couple of minutes to the parishioners at three Masses.

Certainly to explain who we were and why we were there, but mostly to thank them for their support to the Conference members and their work. Most of the Conference members joined us for supper at the Centre on the Saturday evening. Truly a life-giving experience for all.

**Victoria British Columbia – Victoria Particular Council** – Victoria Particular Council will be hosting the AGA in 2011. We attended a meeting to help support the team and allow them to ask questions. The AGA Planning Manual was reviewed with all of the team. An excellent attendance helped to empower the team. They are looking forward to hosting us. Congratulations to Mary Spencer and her team.

**Gatineau/Aylmer Particular Council** – had the pleasure of visiting with the members of this council. It is so meaningful for all of us when we do come together as a family. Even with my new language “franglais”, everyone understands each other as family members do. Great communications with the community in many of the council’s activities. The cooperation and participation from members of the community that are not Vincentian is the key to its success.

**Ottawa – Advocacy Seminar** – a wonderful educational experience for those who attended the day. Chair of the committee Clermont engaged everyone’s attention and participation throughout the day. Many came to learn and learn they did. However we now have our work cut out for us. We need to sound good and look good in our materials and facts when we present information and meet with legislators, ministers, the press and others whom we will come into contact with.

A National Advocacy Committee also needs to be formally assembled. This national committee will work with Clermont and Michael Burke. We require a representative from each region that is interested in addressing issues of advocacy and systemic change. This committee will be coming together to identify and formalize approaches in order to speak intelligently and accurately on behalf of the poor.

We should strive to reciprocate the marks of confidence and kindness we receive.

### **Members to form National Council Public Relations/ Media Committee**

As I stated above, we need to present ourselves formally as a National body. I am looking for three or four individuals with this type of knowledge/experience who may wish to volunteer their time to assist the national council with these types of activities.

Experience/knowledge can include: journalism – writing of press releases, position papers, education materials etc; graphic design – to assist with the development of the look of education materials, public displays etc. If this interests you, please do contact me.

### **National Council Board of Directors Secretary**

I am very sad to report that our National Council secretary has resigned. Her workload cannot accommodate her continued involvement with the national council. We wish Diane Pearson a great vote of thanks for the past two years, and we wish her the very best in her endeavours.

While I have tried to have a good representation from across Canada on my board, the distance is somewhat of a travelling hardship, especially if one is working.

I am looking for someone to act as secretary for the National Council. This will involve –attending two executive meetings; three board meetings and the AGA. This person works with the paid staff to arrange for meetings and circulation of minutes and agendas.

Most meetings will be held in Ottawa, except for the Executive Meetings of September and the AGA.

*Charity is the name you bear,  
Charity it is the robe  
In which you are clothed  
With its three parts:  
Love of God,  
Love among yourselves and  
Love of the Poor.*

I look forward to seeing and welcoming you at the AGA in Toronto!

“..all one in truth and charity!”

**Penny Craig. President  
National Council of Canada**

# International

## FROM SALAMANCA...TO SALAMANCA!

*As we announced in our previous issue of Confeder@tioNews, the International Executive Committee of the Confederation (IEC) met in Salamanca, Spain, as it does every year in which the Plenary General Assembly of the Society does not meet. This issue reports briefly on the different events and meetings that took place on that occasion and in particular on the announcement by President General that an early elective Extraordinary General Assembly (EGA) will be held in May 2010.*

### A NEW PRESIDENT GENERAL IN 2010...

Thus, as he indicated in his traditional International Executive Committee opening talk (available on [www.ssvpglobal.org](http://www.ssvpglobal.org)) President General José Ramón Díaz-Torremocha has decided to resign one year before the end of his second term of office. He repeated that the current situation (particularly the changes necessary for the new Rule) had forced him to stand for a second term, but that a President General should only serve for one term. Much progress has been made on many key issues of his Presidency, and so the time is right for his successor to take over. Here are some examples of these successes...

The true globalisation of the Society, as pretty well demanded by the General Assembly in Fatima (Portugal) in 1999, has now materialised, as represented by the IEC and the other main Society bodies of the Society: there are 10 nationalities on the Board, 18 on the Permanent Section, once almost exclusively French people, and 8 nationalities on the Technical Territorial Commission.

Council General's chronic financial deficit was also a problem that President Torremocha did not wish to hand over to his successor. The Superior Councils, working with an international economic authority, and with excellent management on the part of our Australian fellow members, we are on the brink of achieving properly balanced accounts.

Vincentian Youth also remained a challenge until this second term of office, but last year for the first time ever, we witnessed the gathering together of young Vincentians from all over the world. This meeting was a great success in terms of numbers attending, and because of the importance of the issues dealt with and the quality of our young friends' conclusions. The International Youth Committee is now at work..

Vincentian Training also remained a concern. Today, however, it seems that the time has come when we may rely on this formation, at least at basic levels, over the coming months: the "Bailly-Lallier Foundation of the Society of St Vincent de Paul" has been enthusiastically approved by the Board.

The beginnings of our Society's presence in China (see Confeder@tioNews n° 19), and everything it stands for is also a emphatically historical move forward by the outgoing Presidency.

Last, but not least, even if from a more symbolic point of view, after adopting our international logo, the Confederation has just chosen a magnificent anthem that will soon be online on our Web.

### ...AND A NEW VICE PRESIDENT GENERAL

During these meetings, the President General has also announced the nomination of Mr Huáscar Nabuco de Abreu Filho as Vice-President General to replace Michael Thio, who did amazing work, not to mention his devotion for the Society and love of the poor. Br. Michael Thio remains President of the Territorial Technical Commission.

A Brazilian Vincentian, long time close friend of Council General, Huascar Nabuco has been International Territorial Vice President for South America and the Caribbean, and then President of the Reconciliation Commission. We wish him every success in his new position.

Mr Nabuco, as Vice-President General and according to the international Rule of the Society (article 3.6 and onwards of the International Statutes), is responsible for the organization of May 2010 election, forming the Electoral Board along with the Secretary General and the General Treasurer; you will find the details on [ssvpglobal.org](http://ssvpglobal.org).

## **A FEW WORDS ON JUNE 2009 MEETINGS**

### **The Board (8th and 12th June)**

The Board discussed several strategic and current issues, and each member presented a report about his own area.

Treasurer General Ian McTurk mentioned the improvement of CGI's financial situation and the importance of consolidating the Concordat's work and of ensuring 2010 EGA funding. Secretary General Erich Schmitz presented the office's current work, particularly on the update of the statistics of the Society around the world.

African Commission President John Meahan presented 9 projects in hand, and the conclusions, which were satisfactory in spite of difficulties. International Youth Committee chairman Julien Spiewak drew a picture of their first year of work, the first meetings and their international cooperation projects as well as their organizational plans for a Vincentian Family Youth meeting on the occasion of Madrid 2011 WYD. Lastly, the International Spiritual Adviser, Father Yvon Laroche, RSV, presented his views on his role and on the importance of establishing solid links between National and International Spiritual Advisers.

### **The Permanent Section (9th and 10th June)**

The Permanent Section was meeting as such and also as the Governing Board of the Confederation, as required by French Law. It listened to the reports of:

- the Delegate for Aggregations and Institutions (David Williams): 38 Councils in 9 countries and 760 Conferences in 22 countries registered in November 2008 and June 2009. A specific certificate is being

designed for the children or youth Conferences which cannot claim Aggregation;

- the Delegate for the Rule (D. Williams) about the internal Statutes of the countries: the statutes of 13 new countries have been approved. The countries that have not yet submitted their statutes will be sent standard statutes that will apply at once. They may amend them and submit them for CGI's approval;

- presentation of 16 newly elected or re-elected Presidents;

- the Secretary General of the Bailly-Lallier Foundation (Matthieu Bréjon de Lavergnée) the aim of which objective is to set up a common programme of formation for all Society members, including the spiritual and historical dimensions. The members of the Foundation's "Study Committee" have starting discussing issues, such as the contents of the training courses, a more suitable legal framework, location and funding;

Working...

- the VinPaz leader (Larry Tuomey): summaries of missions to Madagascar (suspended), Haiti, Ukraine, Cuba, and of the Training programme in Africa;

- the Henri de Vergès Holding company (Maria de la Concepción Tuero Alvarez), which did not register any purchase or sale of shares in 2008;

- the Delegate for the Vincentian Family and for Relations with the Vatican (Marco Bétemps): work with the Family on Systemic Change, preparation for the celebration of the 350th anniversary of the deaths of St Vincent de Paul and Ste Louise de Marillac, work with the new Presidents of Pontifical Councils for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and for Health (malaria)

- the International Youth Delegate (see report to the Board);

- the African Commission Chairman (see report to the Board, previous page);
- the Technical Territorial Commission (Michael Thio) who summarized the projects approved in 2008 and so far in 2009;
- the General Treasurer (see report to the Board, previous page);
- the Second General Vice-President for the Structure (Brian O'Reilly) who announced that its reform is being worked on together with all the Territorial Vice-Presidents and Coordinators so as to improve its efficiency;
- the European "Mobility Project" representatives (see Confeder@tioNews 20).

As the Governing Board, it declared the closure of the accounts for 2008.

### **The IEC (10th and 11th June)**

The International Executive Committee heard the reports of the 7 International Territorial Vice-Presidents present on their respective regions. The members had also received a hard copy of President General and Secretary General's annual reports as well as Treasurer General's financial reports. Those three reports were approved by the majority. The Committee also listened to the report of the representatives of the "Concordat": CGI's deficit is decreasing and it is expected to break even in 2009. But these encouraging results do not mean the stable situation will endure. All the countries need to unify their efforts and realize that the money gathered belongs to the poor.

The IEC approved the reappointment of the current members of the Financial Committee which manages the Concordat and also approved the 2010 budget by a majority.

The IEC also attended the presentation of the new Webpage [www.ssvpglobal.org](http://www.ssvpglobal.org), by our Webmaster, Paco Jardón, which replaces [ozanet.org](http://ozanet.org) with a much more active interface, as it will allow some members to post items and information directly through a secure server. This page will be described more in detail in a forthcoming issue of Confeder@tioNews on communication.

In addition, the members of the IEC and of the Permanent Section received the CGI Annual Report 2008, which is available online.

**28th May – 1st June, 2010**

### **EXTRAORDINARY GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

From Hope to Service...

The 2010 Extraordinary General Assembly will take place from May 28th to June 1st, at the Vincentian Fathers' Spirituality Centre in Salamanca, Spain, in the presence of representatives from each of the countries where the Society is present, several members of Council General and guests. The Assembly, under the motto "From hope to Service" will offer conferences on a range of subjects: systemic change in and for the poor, formation in the S.S.V.P, and youth and recruiting in the Society. The new President General will take up office on September 9th, 2010, the feast of Blessed Frederic Ozanam.



**ASIA – OCEANIA:**

**HEAVY DAMAGE FROM NATURAL DISASTERS**

*In the last few weeks, several countries in Asia and Oceania have been devastated by natural disasters affecting tens of thousands of people who have lost their homes, livelihood, and many family members. These countries are:*

*Taiwan: Typhoon Morakot*

*Philippines, Vietnam, Cambodia: Typhoons Ketsana and Miranae*

*Indonesia: Earthquake*

*India: Floods in Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka*

*Samoa and Tonga: Tsunami*

*The International Council General has sent emergency funds to some of these countries for the initial urgent help required. The countries need more funding in the coming weeks to continue to provide support once more long-term plans have been drawn up.*

## India

In India, the floods in Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka are really the worst in 100 years. 18 million people and 470 villages were affected. Many houses were swept away and almost all the villages submerged in the flood water. Civil and Military authorities have responded, NGO's have come forward to help the flood victims with their most urgent needs. The Andhra Pradesh Government initially estimated the damage caused by the flood at € 1.7 billion mainly affecting public infrastructure (roads, irrigation, power & communication), agriculture and horticulture, animal and husbandry, fisheries and housing. Sadly, even many of the families helped by the SSVP and some of our members are said to have been victims themselves of this calamities.

The National President reported that they have decided to give immediate aid in the form of food, clothing and utensils to the victims. All the 9 Central Councils in the Andhra Pradesh Region are contributing their services and financial assistance to this urgent cause.

## Philippines

Bro. Salvador G. Silverio, National President of the Philippines reported that typhoon "Ondoy" hit Manila with a historic record rainfall leaving in its wake hundreds of fatalities and thousands of homes under water. The National Council decided to give immediate food assistance to at least 2000 families. CGI approved 5000 euros and Australia donated US\$16,952.00 to help the poor and the victims.

It is sad that even some of our members are said to have been victims themselves of this calamity.

## Taiwan

Bro. Jimmy Wu (former Taiwan Central Council President) is coordinating the relief plan for Typhoon Morakot victims in Taiwan. The team is working closely with the CM fathers in Taiwan to help the poor and the needy. CGI has approved 5,000 euros as emergency relief. Hong Kong Central Council decided to donate the September church door collection for Typhoon Morakot victims.

SSVP Taiwan is currently setting up a rehabilitation plan of around 25,200 euros for the post-typhoon re-construction stage. They plan to distribute help to the counties of Nantou, Tai Tung Chiayi, Kaohisung and Ping Tung.

## Vietnam

Bro Mai Cam Tuê, Coordinator in Vietnam informed us that typhoon "Ketsana" hit central Vietnam and killed 113 in the coastal provinces of Quang Tri, Huê. The typhoon also damaged the Coastal provinces of Quang Ngai and Danang, causing the collapse of hundreds of houses, breaching river banks, causing flooding and mudslides that affected tens of thousands of houses. The SSVP Vietnam collected 400kg of rice from some friends and local Vincentians to help the victims. However, up to now, they do not have enough support as there are many victims and homeless people.





## Indonesia

In Indonesia, Bro. Alfonso Nainggolan, National President reported that SSVP is seeking information from the Diocese of Padang about what the SSVP can do to help the earthquake victims as there is no Society in the Province of West Sumatra.

## Oceania: Samoa and Tonga

In Oceania, Samoa and Tonga experienced a very serious earthquake and tsunami; as the Society of St Vincent de Paul does not have a very strong presence there, the assistance will be managed by the nearby National Council of New Zealand which has launched an appeal for their Twinned Conferences, to which CGI contributed 10,000 euros to top up the appeal in New Zealand for Samoa and Tonga. Councils and Conferences in New Zealand have excelled once again and responded with the generosity of spirit they are renowned for. The National President, Br Michael Hanrahan says that both the Samoa and Tonga relief projects will be an ongoing commitment for the National Council of New Zealand.

## Samoa

The funds will be used to rebuild people's lives and advice will be sought from those working at the coal-face on the best way to proceed. Canterbury Area Council President Keith Norton and his team have loaded two containers with non perishable food items, clothing and towels, kitchenware, sheets. Four containers also left Auckland on the 23 October sponsored by the Polynesian shipping company. Young Adult Vinnies working at the company rallied together and put a proposal to their Executive Manager. Other Young Adults from the region have been working till late at night filling the containers with contributions received from the people of Auckland. St Vincent de Paul representatives will be on hand to coordinate distribution to the most affected areas.

## Tonga

Nuiatoputapu, an island 650 kilometres from the mainland was struck by the tsunami. The island has a population of approximately 1500 inhabitants and because the island is so isolated a boat is only able to visit twice a year. Fr Mateo, a Tongan priest based in Newlands, New Zealand is visiting the island this month. He will speak to the local priest on the island and will evaluate the extent of the damage, advising the National Council of New Zealand on the best way to assist and support the relief effort.

The Vincentians in all these countries need you, your generosity and prayers to help the victims of these disasters!

*CGI thanks you in advance for your generous solidarity!*

## EUROPE: « THE MOBILITY PROJECT – GOLDEN AGE TAKING OFF! »

On Tuesday 13 October 2009, twenty-five people from all over Europe came together at the CGI offices in Paris for the latest meeting of the European volunteers « Mobility Project » network.

This project, supported by a European Union grant, is intended to allow volunteers of 50 plus to gain experience in various European countries, in order to deepen and improve their own understanding of their voluntary work with the poorest people.

A few figures about the project


- 19 registrations
- 10 trips completed
- 5 trips planned
- 3 non-SVP organisations interested
- 43 % of the budget allocated by the EU has been spent; 27 % on exchange trips.

Countries taking part and trips organised...		
<b>Romania</b>	2 visits	3 guests
<b>Hungary</b>	1 visit	3 guests
<b>France</b>	3 visits	1 guest
<b>England&amp;Wales</b>		4 guests
<b>Germany</b>	1 visit	
<b>Belgium</b>		2 guests
<b>Italy</b>	3 visits	
<b>Ireland</b>	1 visit	1 guest
<b>Scotland</b>	2 visits	
<b>Spain</b>	1 visit	

Feedback from exchange trips by the volunteers is all very positive. The results of the first evaluation questionnaires show a real desire on the part of those involved to be encouraged by the projects visited in renewing their own actions in the field. The Vincentians also recognise the importance of sharing their good experience and the need to create and weave new contacts among volunteers in order to be more effective for the least fortunate. Most of the participants have never found any problems while organising the trips or during their time in the host country. On the contrary they have often had a wonderful welcome and now want to encourage other retired people to take part in social voluntary work.

For example, two Austrian Vincentians went to Scotland from 6 to 9 September 2009 and were able to visit 3 prisons. Used to working in a prison environment, they asked questions about the organisation and modernisation of Scottish prisons. They were also able to meet and talk to the inmates and discuss the prison conditions, the training they receive for work, and their future plans.





Erwin Derler, Contact for Austria, reports: «Personally speaking, I have been able to learn a lot from this exchange. I have gained from this experience, learning that it is important to care for the prisoners and also for their family and relations. It is an almost limitless field of work. Last week I spoke to the chaplain at our remand centre Graz who assured me this was also important for Austrian prisoners. He suggested I complete a form to apply as a prison visitor to the Austrian Ministry of Justice. The SVP president of our Regional Council also promised me financial support and promotion for this project throughout Austria at the next national meeting in January 2010. »

At this meeting, the Contacts and partners for the project reflected on the benefits and contributions from this project for the Vincentians and for the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul as a whole. They also suggested several ideas to ensure the Project continues and why not, they envisioned a « Mobility Project 2! ».

In the meantime, there are still many options available for European Vincentians over 50 who want to renew their work and their projects with people in need. Please visit our webpage: <http://www.ssvpglobal.org/index.php/en/mobility-project.html> or contact [marie.grosjean@ozanet.org](mailto:marie.grosjean@ozanet.org) for further information.

### **30th Anniversary of « Mains Ouvertes » (Open Hands):**

Among the criteria for allocation of EU funding, including openness and collaboration with other associations: the participation of several European Vincentians in the celebration of the 30-year anniversary of the French « Mains Ouvertes » (Open Hands) association from 16 to 18 October 2009 is a good illustration. This association welcomes and supports excluded people: alcoholics, former prisoners, migrants, deprived young people, etc. on the way to human, social and employment reintegration, built around sustainable development. For this, « Open hands » collects items and equipment donated by individuals and companies in the region. Deprived people follow specific training courses so they can then repair, maintain and organise the many items which are then sold at low prices. It now provides employment for 130 people, including 25 paid staff, 60 volunteers and 45 « companions ». Overall, some 3000 people have benefited from help from « Open Hands » since the association's beginnings. It has just opened two more branches in France and very soon at Dakar in Senegal.

The Society of Saint Vincent de Paul was represented by the Board of Management of the Union des OEuvres Françaises, 2 Belgians and 5 Hungarians taking part on behalf of the Mobility Project, and Marie Grosjean of the CGI. Everyone took part in discussions on topics related to « Integration and sustainable development », « Changing outlook for better integration ». They visited warehouses, asked questions of the Chairman and all his team, and although Open Hands is not a religious organisation, a very worthwhile inter-religious dialogue took place between Christians and Muslims.

# International

## INTERNATIONAL SERVICE STRUCTURE

### Scope of Activities

1. Fostering the work of Society members world wide in serving the poor on a person-to-person basis
2. Leading the Society world wide in seeking out the poor and victims of exclusion to alleviate poverty and promote human dignity
3. Identifying the causes and structure of poverty across the world
4. Contributing to the elimination of poverty and fostering of sustainable development
5. Advocating at the international level for social justice on behalf of the poor of the world
6. Promoting spirituality, formation and training of members as prescribed in the Rule
7. Aggregating new Conferences to the Confederation and instituting new Councils
8. Approving Internal Statutes of each country member of the Confederation
9. Dealing with all matters relating to suspension of membership
10. Fostering development of youth and young adult membership of the Society and participation in Society operations
11. Leading strategic renewal of the Society to adapt to changing world conditions
12. Establishing and developing the Society in all countries particularly in Africa, former Eastern bloc countries and China
13. Generating funds from international sources such as the European Union and United Nations for Society projects in poor emerging countries
14. Fundraising from multinational corporations for Society work in developing countries
15. Developing and coordinating international appeals and practical action for major disasters around the world
16. Encouraging interaction particularly in poor emerging countries with State agencies and departments and other related organizations
17. Administration of the International Headquarters of the Society in Paris and all matters relating to IGC finances and operations for the Confederation
18. Providing effective communications within the Confederation and the outside world through the Internet and other mediums
19. Responding on call to requests for practical help, advice and guidance from National/Superior or Affiliated Councils
20. Advocating within the Confederation application of best practice in financial and general management of Society affairs at all levels
21. Representing the Confederation to the Holy See and developing the interaction with the Church Hierarchy at the Vatican
22. Fostering the Cause of Canonisation of Blessed Frederick Ozanam with the Holy See
23. Maintaining free-flowing relations with the religious and lay members of the Vincentian Family around the world
24. Undertaking other activities as required for the IGC to fulfil its role and responsibilities as the peak body of the Confederation possibly the largest community based charitable organisation in the world.

## CONCORDAT OF THE 16 « AFFLUENT » COUNTRY MEMBERS OF THE CONFEDERATION

### June 2008 International Executive Committee Meeting Salamanca

1. The concept was presented to the 16 affluent countries of the Confederation entering into a Concordat to provide the IGC with the minimum funding required for IGC to properly fulfil its role as the peak body of possibly the largest community based charitable organisation in the world.
2. At that presentation it was determined that the minimum target contribution must be €1.4 million per year
3. The figure of €1.4 million was agreed to as being the minimum funding that IGC needs to successfully fulfil its worldwide role.
4. A series of workshops were held during the meeting of the 13 Presidents present from the 16 countries of the Concordat Concept
5. The Presidents agreed to present to their National Councils the proposal to enter into a totally voluntary Concordat to jointly provide funding for the IGC based on a minimum of 0.3 of 1 cent on their 2007 income.
6. A Concordat steering committee was formed consisting of: Australia (Chair) - United States – Ireland – England/Wales – Spain
7. The committee has since been formally established under the IGC as the International Financial Accountability Commission (IFAC)
8. IFAC members meet by phone conference every quarter and in person at the annual IEC meeting.
9. Attendance of the representatives from the 5 IFAC countries at the IEC meeting is funded by their respective National/Superior Councils and is at no cost to the IGC

## INTERNATIONAL FINANCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY COMMISSION

### Terms of Reference – Board approved

1. IFAC oversees the contributions to IGC to ensure transparency of application of the funds for the furtherance of the works of the Society
2. Promotes commitment of other countries to participate in the Concordat
3. Provides strategic advice to the Board on IGC programs relative to financial matters associated with the Concordat aims
4. Provides minutes of IFAC meetings to the Board
5. Coordinates communication to keep Concordat countries informed.
6. Reports to the Board meetings and at least annually to the International Executive Committee.

To be continued...

# Spirituality

## A SOCIAL JUSTICE SPIRITUALITY

In 1994, Rev. Walter Burghart, SJ, presented this topic to an assembly of social action people in Washington, DC. His ideas bear review at this time. To begin, what is meant by the word Spirituality? One can identify several spiritualities in the Church: charismatic, cursillo, marian, Franciscan, Dominican, Jesuit etc. A definition that may help us enter into the subject is, « Spirituality is a process of being conformed to the image of Jesus, for the sake of others ».

A Social Action Spirituality finds its strength and richness from three sources, biblical, ecclesial and eucharistic. It is the Bible that provides three essential ideas:

**justice means fidelity to the demands  
of a relationship**

**our love of neighbour is to be the same love  
we have for ourselves**

**throughout both the Old and New Testaments  
God's preference is for the poor.**

The Bible also indicates that Justice is essential for human life. A text that should be on our internal hard drive is Micah 6:8, *O mortal, what is good, and what does the Lord require of you, but to do justice, love kindness and walk humbly with your Lord.*

Another source is ecclesial and it is gratifying that we have so much to learn in this area from Church teaching. But we have to realize that we in the Church took some time to properly understand the question. The following quotation from the Burghart article is important from an historical perspective:

*I find it fascinating that the biblical approach to the poor has found its way into more recent church teaching. You see, in a world that was hierarchically structured (home, school, church, state, society) Leo XIII and Pius X could not help seeing the poor at the bottom of an economic ladder, apparently ordained by God to remain that way. For Pius XI the poor were poor because personal sin and selfishness held sway in the world. Even Pius XII and John XXIII did not challenge the place of the poor within existing structures of society. But with Paul VI and John Paul II, as well as the documents of the Latin American and North American Bishops, a significant shift took place. Now the plight of the poor is seen not primarily as a part of reality that calls for charity, but as part of a disordered system calling for justice. In this context the spirituality demanded is solidarity with the poor.*

The Eucharist provides an action plan for social justice. Let us review the four steps taken by the Lord,

- Jesus takes what is available, simple bread and wine
- Jesus blesses, calls upon the Divine in all its strength, purpose and holiness, to be upon these simple elements
- Jesus breaks the bread; he is intimately involved in the action
- Jesus shares and distributes

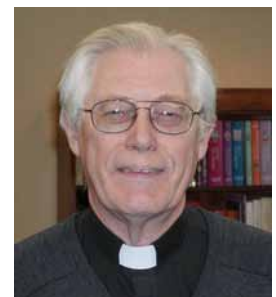
In conclusion, how can we develop such a Social Justice Spirituality? As you can see, it is a spirituality quite close to the Vincentian ideal.

- Learning to look at all reality, the world around us with the same love that God has for his creation. Such a way of looking is found among the great saints.
- Search for Christ in all encounters
- Appreciate anew the Eucharist, source of strength, inspiration and guidance.
- Remember what the Cross teaches, the road will be hard, suffering is a given, but as the Cross points to Easter, so will the road we travel on.

Father Burghart closed his talk with the following Hassidic story:

A Rabbi was visiting the owner of a tavern in the Polish countryside. Two peasants, Ivan and Peter, were in the tavern gloriously drunk, telling each other about their love for one another. Suddenly, Ivan said,

*Peter, tell me what hurts me?*  
Peter replied, *How do I know what hurts you?* Ivan's answer was swift. *If you don't know what hurts me, how can you say you love me?*





## YOU GIVE THEM SOMETHING TO EAT

*The Blessed Antoine Chevrier said that “compassion is the foundation of charity. It is the feeling that must grasp our soul at the sight of whoever experiences bad luck. Those who remain cold and insensitive at the sight of suffering cannot have charity”.*

In his latest encyclical letter (very dense text) CARITAS IN VERITATE (CHARITY IN TRUTH), Pope Benedict XVI addresses a concept similar to that of the Blessed Chevrier. The time to discuss has come to an end, now is the time to act; to be a disciple “not in words, but in truth”. “YOU GIVE THEM SOMETHING TO EAT”

The former auxiliary bishop of Lyon, Mgr Alfred Ancel, said that the world can be divided into three groups:

“No, you are mistaken, you exaggerate. Everyone has enough to eat.” That is the group of those who have not yet discovered the suffering, the poor.

“It is terrible, we will never succeed, there are too many of them.” Crushed by the task at hand, they refuse to budge: the second group.

“Let us do our share, and we will make it.” That is the group of those who continue the miracle of the multiplication of the loaves and fish, at the service of the needy.

“YOU GIVE THEM SOMETHING TO EAT”

IT IS TIME TO ACT...

YES, WE MUST ACT

So, what can we do?

To have a feel for the poor, we must realize their presence among us. The thought of those who are hungry must remain present in our mind. The rich man in the parable does not get condemned for having mistreated Lazarus, but for ignoring him. Closing your eyes in order not to see “is often more convenient”. Yes, we must seek those who are in need.

“YOU GIVE THEM SOMETHING TO EAT”

Would it not be scandalous that, in our country that remains mainly Christian, there are still underfed or even hungry people, who are not supported by their brothers and sisters?

“YOU GIVE THEM SOMETHING TO EAT...”

Could we not ask the Lord to give us the strength to open up to others, especially when we sit down at the table? Could our traditional Graces formula, “Lord, bless this table, and give bread to these who do not have any”, not be replaced with this new prayer, “Lord, bless this table and teach us to share with those who have nothing”?

**André Drouin, priest**

**Member of the national Spirituality Committee**

Sandra Melo gave birth to Kasey, her second son, last October 8th. His big brother Miguel is 6 years old. Sandra is administrative assistant at the National Council office in Ottawa. Our best wishes go out to all the family.



# Advocacy

## VOICE OF THE POOR – FIRST NATIONAL WORKSHOP

*On last October 24, the Voice of the Poor National Council Committee held in Ottawa the first Canada-wide workshop on advocacy on behalf of the poor. A group of 18 people, Vincentians and friends of the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul from every region in Canada, have made presentations and shared thoughts and experiences on that second aspect of the Society, the promotion of social justice and environmental protection.*

The Society is barely starting to meet challenges related to that mission of advocacy on behalf of the poor, aiming to represent them whenever possible to ensure that whatever their status in society, their fundamental rights and dignity are respected. Satisfied in acting as providers to the poor, Vincentians have taken too long recognizing the causes of poverty and acting upon them, even though our main founder, Frederic Ozanam, has worked all his life according to the fundamental principle that “*the Society the Society is concerned not only with relieving needs, but also with redressing situations that cause those needs*”. Ozanam was extremely interested by social injustice and the rights of the poor of his time, as we can see in editorials he published in *Ère Nouvelle*, his various texts and advocacy actions, all quite advanced for his time. The Voice of the Poor workshop has demonstrated that things are changing. The Canadian Vincentian brotherhood is alive with a new spirit, full of enthusiasm and determination towards the cause of the voiceless

The day started with the opening statement by Brother Clermont Fortin, in charge of the Voice of the Poor Committee and workshop organizer. He recommends a new attitude, that is to want to do something about injustices that assail the poor, and call upon us to fight social and economic inequality and ensure that human rights are respected in a general manner. The second attitude is to believe not only that the Society must do something, but also that it will be heard and successful in its approach.

That opening was followed by a lecture given by Mr. Albert Lozier, an expert in the field of social justice. Albert presented the two feet concept, created by Mrs Chittester. It is necessary for the Vincentian to help the poor take care of his own needs (one foot), and at the same time, to search for what causes poverty and act upon it (the other foot). It is only by using both feet that we can walk towards eliminating poverty, in all forms, in a spirit of justice and equality.

Brother Clermont also talked to us about the Voice of the Poor Committee’s concerns, and strategies. The Committee was created approximately 3 years ago, and there is still much to do. It has to develop a strategic plan and hire a competent resource in that field. The Committee has reacted to current concerns by writing to relevant Ministers and federal party chiefs over the past two years. Vincentians have been made aware of the social justice mission via AGA workshops, articles published in the *VincenPaul*, and follow up contacts with Vincentians dedicated to that type of work across Canada. Brother Clermont then shared with participants a text on the fundamental issue of social housing in Canada.

The two delegates from the Quebec Regional Council, Lise Blais and Marcel Tremblay, made a presentation on activities undertaken by the Social Equity Committee. The Quebec Council has the longest experience and obtained the most actual results in protecting the most vulnerable and reducing poverty. Their presentation was much appreciated.

In the afternoon, Jim Paddon, Eddie Alkemade from the Ontario Regional Council, and Paula Finbow from the Toronto Central Council, talked to us about their provincial committee’s activities. The Committee has been working for less than two years, and they are proud of what has been accomplished until now. They established contact with organizations pursuing similar objectives, and they followed and intervened in the adoption of Bill 152 (2009 legislation on the reduction of poverty). Their actions are full of Vincentian spirituality and a strong desire for justice.

Brothers and Sisters in other regions, except in Edmonton and Halifax, are not yet entirely engaged in the social equality mission. However, they brought with them a great amount of information, as well as energy to open up a new worksite.

The session ended with a discussion on the definition of a strategy in the middle-term, taking into consideration the economic context (coming out of a recession and at the end of government stimuli). Brother Clermont identified what are the ongoing national concerns (immigration, environment, social policy, review of all legislation tabled in the House of Commons and the Senate, etc.). There is a momentum in the provincial legislative circles to adopt a poverty reduction law or a plan. Vincentians in regions firmly intend to follow up and comment on such initiatives, since they formally engage governments. As well, the lack of social housing remains a serious problem, and we must keep fighting in view of this situation, which is unacceptable. Internally, we must better communicate on social justice issues, and on the work we accomplish.

National President Penny Craig made the closing comments. She thanked all the delegates for participating and presenting. She notes that the Society is really engaged in advocacy on behalf of the poor. She announces her intention to modify the Voice of the Poor Committee by including two representatives from each region. She also wishes the hiring of one resource person within the National Council to support members through research and publication of documents on

advocacy and environmental protection. Those changes will be brought to the attention of the next AGA.

As well, Penny recalled that conferences and councils must report annually and as thoroughly as possible on their activities. Such reports are extremely helpful in producing exact statistics to support social equality committees in their approach.

She also informed participants on a meeting to be organized by the Council General International (CGI), North America-Caribbean Region, on the development of a strategy for advocacy on behalf of the poor. That meeting will take place in Chicago, Illinois, USA, in November 2010. In addition to National Committee members, two members from each region, involved in that mission, will be invited.

We had a very full day that was also stimulating for everyone. We are better informed on issues related to poverty in Canada. We all wish to do more and better for the elimination of what causes poverty in Canada.

The workshop acted as a catalyst for that important mission.

**Clermont Fortin**  
**Responsible, Voice of the Poor Committee**  
**National Council**



November 5, 2009

Honourable Jim Prentice  
Minister of the Environment  
House à Commons  
Ottawa (Ontario)

Sir,

**Object: Plan for the reduction of GHG emissions**

The 2009 United Nations Climate Change Conference will take place in a few weeks in Copenhagen, and Canada will attend without a regulatory framework to reduce GHG emissions. The Society of Saint Vincent de Paul<sup>1</sup> (SSVP) strongly regrets that situation. We ask the Government to play a leading role globally in that field, and adopt a specific plan on GHG emissions reduction, in line with the Kyoto Protocol, which was signed by Canada.

The Society, at the service of the needy in Canada since 1846, knows that they are the first ones to suffer from the negative effects of a gradually deteriorating environment. Persisting smog in our large cities, rising sea levels, and melting ice cover, to quote only those three factors, have a definite effect of the population's wellbeing, especially the poorest, often destined to live in a more polluted environment owing to the lack of financial means. The reduction of our impact on the environment and the promotion of green technologies, adoption of forms of renewable energy, in a nutshell, of a green economy carrier of employment and wealth for Canada's citizens, must guide the federal government's decisions. You know that each Canadian produces approximately 23 tons of GHG every year, which a very high ratio.

A majority of Canadians support that approach.<sup>2</sup> Environmental protection and good stewardship of resources require political leaders to act jointly and as soon as possible on climate changes. The Canadian government must arrive at the Copenhagen Conference with precise objectives to reduce GHG emissions<sup>3</sup>. The American Senate is currently reviewing a new bill, supported by the White House, aiming to achieve a 20 % reduction of GHG emissions from 2005 levels. Recent studies show that a green economic strategy creates employment and does not harm the economy.

The Canadian government, host of the G8+ Summit next year, must take the initiative and define its position in the face of its peers in the international arena, to protect its population, particularly the most vulnerable. Becoming greener is opting for solidarity with other countries that are already advancing towards the Kyoto objectives, and for human development.

We submit our request in the name of the common good, now and for future generations.

Sincerely,

Clermont Fortin,  
First Vice-President  
National Council of Canada  
Society of Saint Vincent de Paul  
Chairman of the Voice of the Poor Committee  
Tel.: 613 824-9984  
E-mail: clermont.fortin2@sympatico.ca



CC: Hon. Michael Ignatieff, President of the Liberal Party and Leader of the Opposition, House of Commons

Hon. Jack Layton, President of the New Democratic Party

Hon. Gilles Duceppe, President of Bloc québécois

Élisabeth May, President of the Green Party

<sup>1</sup> The Society of Saint Vincent de Paul is a lay Catholic organization whose mission is to serve the poor in any possible way. The Society tries not only to meet the needs of the poor, but also to correct situations that cause poverty. Established in Canada in 1846, the Society has over 9,000 volunteer members, active in all provinces, the North West Territories, and Nunavut. For more information: [www.ssvp.ca](http://www.ssvp.ca)

<sup>2</sup> An enquiry led by the HSBC Bank Climate Change Observatory in Canada, October 2009, reveals that 55 % of Canadians agree to a reduction of GHG emissions.

<sup>3</sup> Canada has established an objective of reducing its current GHG emissions at the level of 1990 by 2020; however, the Government has, so far, delayed the publication of regulations on its application. Developing countries are asking developed countries (like Canada) to reduce their GHG emissions by up to 40 % of the 1990 level.

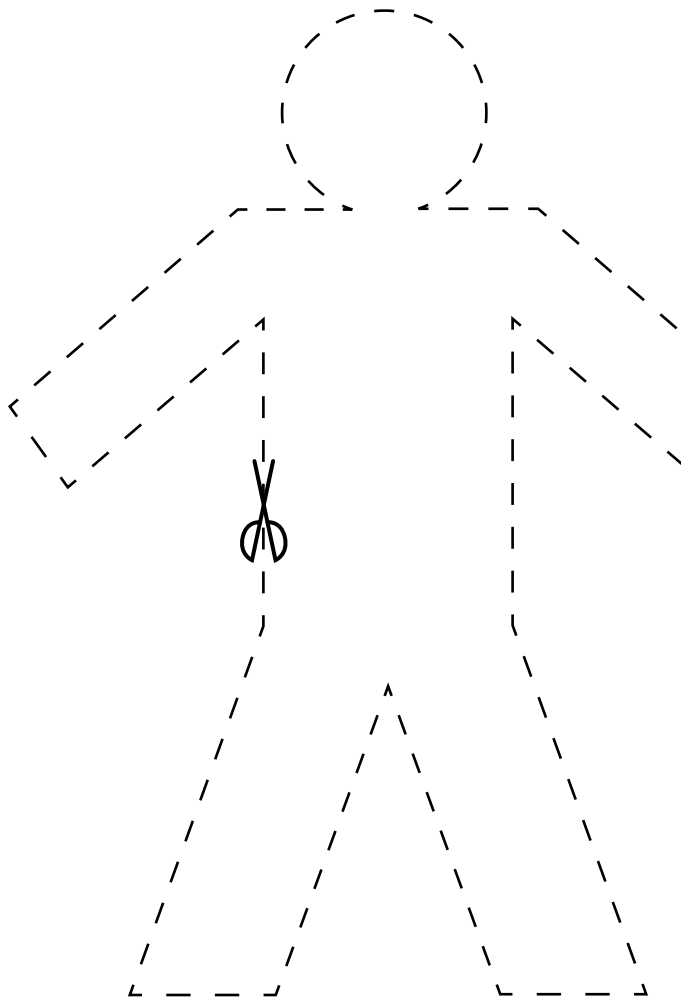
# Twining

## A PLANNED JAMAICAN PROJECT

One way that twinned conferences can help their twin is to support Vincentians who are able to make a substantive change for their community. This is through the support of twinning projects. If your receiving twin is able to find part of the funds needed to make a change, and has the manpower to make the project happen, you could support them with their plans. Guidelines suggested as possible projects include self help projects, training, employment-oriented programs, and housing of approximately 40 square meters.

A Canadian twin has an application in for helping their twin in this way in Jamaica (historical twin). The Canadian twin has started this process in early April, with a request from their twin, and an application to the National Twining Chairperson. Being considered is the building of a home for a family. The National Council of Jamaica has visited sites and chosen a mother with children and grandchildren, about 10 persons altogether. They are currently trying to ensure that the mother has legal rights to the proposed site before they go any further. The proposed property in rural Jamaica will need to be cleared, be ensured for proper sanitary conveniences, and then the building of two rooms can be started.

Canadian guidelines for projects give information about types of projects, the application process, the amounts possible, the approval process, timeline and reporting requirements. Your twin will need to be able to provide some of the funds and be able to support the project with their members. But you can help fulfil a yearning of their spirit for a more helpful change.



### **TWINNING**

We have some conferences waiting to be twinned with Canadian Conferences and Councils, from:

**PERU - 5 applications, from July 2009**

**COLOMBIA - 6 Conference and 10 Council applications, from April 2008**

**GUATEMALA - 2 applications, from February 2008**

**EL SALVADOR - 11 Conference applications and one Coordinator of Youth application, from February 2008**

**HAITI - 10 applications, from November 2006**

If your conference is interested, please fill in the application form available on our website: [www.ssvp.ca](http://www.ssvp.ca).

If you have an interest in a particular country with whom I hold application forms, please indicate it on your application form.

**Kathy Weswick at [twining-chair@ssvp.ca](mailto:twining-chair@ssvp.ca)**

## MERGING CONFERENCES

**By Pierre Hubert, Secretary  
Saint-Paul Particular Council (Orleans, ON)**

It happens that a conference running out of steam needs to merge with another conference. In the case at hand, the poor health of the two main figures of Vincentian work, and the probable closing of their parish church required action towards merging. Thus the Notre-Dame de Lourdes Conference (Cyrville district) merged with the Ottawa Saint-Sébastien Conference in September 2009. Ronald Leduc, President of the Saint-Paul Particular Council (Ottawa) piloted that merge towards a positive conclusion.

Last October 8, at a Council meeting, Clermont Fortin, former President of the Saint-Paul PC, paid tribute to Jeanne and Hubert Forget. Sister Jeanne was Conference President at the time of the merge. Clermont recognized them as two people devoted to the needy in their community for the past 25 years. He pointed out their resilience, their capacity to hold fast, sometimes against all odds. He revealed suspecting that at some times, the Forget couple used their own property to be able to meet the needs of the poor in their community. A couple who have their heart in the right place!

On behalf of the Particular Council and the National Council, Brother Clermont gave each one the medal issued at the beatification of Frederic Ozanam (August 22, 1997).

Brother Hubert addressed the Particular Council members in the following terms.



Jeanne Forget, Clermont Fortin, Hubert Forget

*Dear Vincentian Brothers and Sisters,*

*All that comes to us are thanksgiving thoughts. Yes, THANK YOU, Lord, for giving us the health to help your children in need.*

*We do not feel any pleasure in abandoning that responsibility that brought us so much joy and happiness, especially when we saw the spark in the eyes of small ones telling us, "I'm hungry". It was so comforting and encouraging to see to their wellbeing. Every time, it reminded us of Jesus' words when, taking a small child in His arms, He replied to the question: when did we quench your thirst and feed you? And the Lord answering, "Every time you did this to the smallest among my children, you did it to Me."*

*Dear Vincentian Brothers and Sisters, from the bottom of our hearts, we thank you for having come to our rescue. We will forever be most grateful. May the Lord bestow upon you His grace and blessings, and give you the strength, courage and spirit of self-sacrifice to continue the work of LOVE that you engaged in.*

*What you have done for us tonight, we accept it with humility and offer it to the Lord for His honour and His glory.*

*Courage and good luck, because the time has come to be brave!*

*Jeanne and Hubert Forget  
N.-D. de Lourdes (Cyrville), Ottawa*

# *Vincentian Life*

## **VINCENTIAN LIFE: LOVE AND HATE**

The idea of life for a Vincentian opposes love and hate: love for the poor, and hate towards poverty in all its manifestations. Vincentian work is free volunteer work consisting in helping, defending and protecting the poor in the spirit of Christ, presenting Himself as poor, born in a manger, never the owner of moveable or immovable property, without a fixed address during His public life (homeless), having no special clothes (only a tunic), no money, and no career (only a carpenter). He leaned over every poor of His time, such as prostitutes (Marie-Madeleine), the handicapped, the forgotten, the sick (leprous). He suffered rejection and lack of understanding (from His people), helped the stranger considered as an enemy, or unworthy, left no written word although He was a Man of words, acted peacefully and in all legality all of His life, but was sentenced to death.

Hate is the reverse side for the Vincentian: hate for suffering and injustice, in a few words, hate for poverty in all its manifestations. That is what prompts us to serve the poor, feeding and clothing them, but also extending our action to the public domain by becoming the voice that can be heard, and change things. It is also seeking common good and justice for everyone, in all respects. It is the root of our engagement to fight for human rights and equality, in spite of difficulties. Poverty, as much as sickness, is part of life; doctors take care of disease to cure it, Vincentians have the mission to take care of poverty to eliminate it. Jesus gave His life for the poor of this earth; let us imitate Him, doing our share; Vincentians and people that He touches will feel better from it. The Voice of the poor committees in your Councils and Conferences give you that opportunity.

**Clermont Fortin**  
**Vice-President**  
**National Council of Canada**  
**September 2009**



## FRANK CARRIERE, IN MEMORIAM

*I remember Frank's open smile and loving acceptance.*

Frank was born in Timmins, Ontario, where he wed Stella and started a family. Frank often talked of his experiences in the north. His career was spent in Iqaluit, Baffin Island, and Fort Smith, Northwest Territories. He went up to Baffin Island as an Administrative Officer for the Department of Education, and was promoted to Superintendent of Education for the Federal Government in the NWT.

Frank retired to Victoria, BC. It is there where he became passionately involve in the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul. He served the poor with his many cheerful and encouraging home visits, leaving people feeling better for his visit. He was not above giving fatherly advice, like the lady whom he told, "If you don't stop yelling at the boys, I won't be coming back!" He also served the Society as president of Victoria Particular Council, and vice-president of BC Regional Council. He supported Vincentians in their works, in his Conference of Saint Andrew's and as mentor to the next two PC presidents. He championed the development of the housing unit that VPC built in 2000. He was also an ardent participant of a theater group, Kaleidoscope.



Frank attended many National AGAs. He became affectionately known as "Father Frank" after a mistake in identity at an AGA in Saint Johns, Nfld. Then there is the story about riding in a shopping cart....

Frank was warmly greeted by his many friends from across Canada at the AGAs. He was a close friend of Michael Burke, recognizing him as member of the family of Vincentians, and endorsing his efforts for the Society in Canada and around the world. Michael remembers Frank as "the kindest and gentlest person that I ever met". He and Michael met at a Blue Jays game and their friendship was sealed for life. They traded driving duties when Michael came to stay at "Frank's B&B", and traded "war stories" of the past year in their birthday month of December, as well as talk about the latest for Michael's grandchildren and Frank's great grandchildren. They traded Christmas cards, "Frank's would always arrive before Christmas – mine to him would arrive a little after Christmas – I think it is something about the direction of the jet stream."

Frank talked about his family. He loved his children, and was proud and interested in his grandchildren and great grandchildren. A lunch with Frank was spent in hearing about the successes and struggles of the grandchildren, who were attentive and loving to him. But he was interested in one's efforts and family also, and would connect the career of a grandchild to one's family.

Frank's love came from a deep and abiding faith and an active prayer life.

As Michael Burke concluded, "I, like many people, was saddened to hear of his passing, but I will always cherish the memories of our times together and know that Frank is up there looking down at us smiling and always remembering us in his prayers."

**By Kathy Weswick, Michael Burke, Mary Spenser  
and Marie Willows**

# Council in Action

*Excerpt from the opening presentation at the conference/AGA held on September 26, 2009*

## **WORD FROM THE PRESIDENT AT THE OPENING OF THE 2009 CONFERENCE/AGA**

I would like to take a few minutes to introduce the theme of this conference, "Towards the Future".

In a recent letter, Father Yvon Laroche, svp, reminded us of Ozanam's words, quite appropriate with regard to our theme, "Charity must never look behind, but always ahead, because its benefits are always minimal, and present and future miseries that it seeks to alleviate are infinite."

We must look towards the future. We must believe in progress, we must hope for a capitalist world that would be less egotistical, more determined to share its wealth, oriented towards more rational consumption, a better protector of the environment, more peaceful and ready to help poor countries come out of their misery.

### **And what about us, Vincentians?**

How do we envision the future for our Society of Saint Vincent de Paul? In our present discussions during the conference, let us think about the future.

Let us not dwell too long on the past.

### **Who will be the members in the future?**

Will we prepare the way for them? Will we let them express their new ideas? Will we be ready to change our ways and adapt to new times?

### **How can we present a renewed image of our Society?**

How will we adapt our Vincentian spirituality to ensure that youths want to participate actively?

Young people believe in the values of our mission: love, justice, joy, respect, human dignity...

In order to attract them, we must demonstrate that our actions are inspired by those values.

Do we believe that the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul is a great movement of love?

### **Will tomorrow's poverty be similar to yesterday's poverty?**

Are we ready to understand it and act accordingly?

Are we ready to extend our activities to other types of poverty: loneliness of the elderly, of prisoners, of the sick... for example?



As active or auxiliary member, do I have any projects that can help facing the future?

Do I propose those projects at conference or council meetings, or do I prefer to remain passive? Am I generous enough to encourage my brothers and sisters' ideas?

Am I resistant to change?

Example of a change to consider: the Italian family conference project where all members of a family participate to Vincentian activities.

**Am I easily distracted by sceptics?**

Recently, Guy Laliberté wrote in La Presse, "I do not usually get distracted by sceptics. I always had sceptics around me, and I always will. However, just like mosquitoes, they make noise, they sting and after a few days, we forget about them. I find it difficult to understand and respect people who persist in restraining dreams."

In today's workshops, please participate actively.

Share your futuristic ideas with others.

Your idea might not be adopted, but it could be the spark from which other ideas will stem, giving birth to a project that will take our Vincentian actions to a level that will increase the wellbeing of our poor.

And may the spirit of Vincent and Frederic be with you, and help us learn how to love our friends the poor better.

Thank you for being here. Your love of the poor is a blessing from God.

**Jean-Claude Bienvenue**  
**President, Regional Council of Quebec**



## SIGNIFICANT INCREASE IN THE NUMBER OF REQUESTS TO THE SAINT VINCENT DE PAUL

By Daniel Richard, Hebdo Rive-Nord, November 6, 2009

*Christmas will be here soon and unfortunately, for some, that period feels more like a nightmare than a happy time. The reality is, we are not all equally fortunate during that period of the year.*

Having to deal already with an alarming increase in requests for assistance, the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul (SSVP) is afraid that trend will grow further as we approach the Christmas period. During July, August and September, the SSVP processed 157 requests and provided assistance to 350 needy people. More than \$12,350 was given to local underprivileged families and individuals, in the form of food vouchers, bags of groceries, clothing, furniture, household appliances, school supplies, after school care, glasses, bus tickets, etc.

Normally, the organization processes approximately 30 requests per month. In August, the number of requests rose to 63, and to 61 in September. "That increase is directly related to difficult economic times. Many people have exhausted their employment insurance benefits, and they appeal to us for help until they start receiving welfare benefits", says the President of SSVP in L'Assomption, Claude St-Jean.

The second factor behind the increase is the opening of the *Face à l'avenir* detoxification centre. Since last February, the SSVP gives \$20 worth of clothing to individuals who use the *Face à l'avenir* centre. "Several of them are completely destitute. They arrive at the centre without any clothes", notes Mr St-Jean.

Thirdly, the inauguration of a number of social housing projects on July 1<sup>st</sup> had a definite impact. "Several people who lived in very low rent apartments moved to the projects. The now empty low rent apartments attracted individuals who did not previously live in L'Assomption. Those people need our help", adds Mr St-Jean.

The problem is that, with Christmas approaching, requests are likely to increase exponentially. Every year, the expense incurred to put together approximately 125 Christmas hampers amounts to \$15,000. "Usually, we are able to respond with the contribution of various regional organizations and private donations, but we are afraid that those will not suffice this year. It is very important that people keep giving if we want to be able to meet everyone's needs", reminds Mr St-Jean.



### GUIGNOLÉE

Last November 22<sup>nd</sup>, Vincentians of the Sainte-Angèle Conference in Montreal accompanied by members of their families and friends as well as Knights of Columbus went from door to door in their parish to collect money and non perishable food in order to prepare Christmas hampers. On December 16<sup>th</sup>, conference members distributed the hampers and gift cards for groceries to 50 needy families.

Co-hosted by the Toronto Central Council and the Ontario Regional Council  
Wednesday, June 9 to Sunday June 13 2010  
Ryerson University, in the heart of Toronto

## **THEME: VINCENTIAN DISCIPLESHIP: HE HAS ANOINTED ME**

### **PROPOSED WORKSHOPS**

#### **Around the theme:**

Let your light shine

How to keep your lamp lit./ Sharing the flame.

Answering the Baptismal call.

Vincentian Discipleship today – The poor are your Lords & Masters

Recognizing the call “to Vincentian discipleship”

Blessed are the poor - How Vincentians see the poor, rather than a problem to be solved.

Come and See

Abide in Me

#### **Educational workshops:**

How to chair a meeting

How to take minutes

Treasurer’s workshop

Please think about workshops that can be provided that will develop this theme, which is so rich with possibilities! Please submit your proposals and requirements for workshops to the national office in Ottawa to the attention of the National Education Committee.

## **NATIONAL COUNCIL OF CANADA - 39TH ANNUAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

Please plan on attending this inspirational conference celebrating Discipleship  
A time for Vincentians to come together to pray, learn and share

### **Special Guest Speakers and Celebrants**

Archbishop Thomas Collins

Fr. Yvon Laroche

Monsignor Peter Schonenbach

Monsignor Samuel Bianco

Expanded workshops, training, leadership sessions, faith development,  
youth activities, good food, good fun and so much more!

Please watch your mail or visit our website at [www.ssvp.ca](http://www.ssvp.ca)  
Registration information is available December 1, 2009

## PROGRAM

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### Wednesday, June 9, 2010

9:00am 5:00pm Registration  
9:00am 5:00pm Free time

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### Thursday, June 10, 2010

7:15am 7:45am Mass and Rosary,  
Mons. P. Schonenbach  
7:30am 8:45am Breakfast  
9:00am 5:00pm Registration  
9:00am 10:30am National Council Board  
meeting, Nat. Council  
8:45am 10:15am Workshops  
10:15am 10:30am Break  
10:30am 12:00pm Workshops  
12:00am 1:00pm Lunch  
1:00pm 2:30pm Workshops  
1:00pm 2:30pm Committee meetings  
2:30pm 2:45pm Break  
2:45pm 4:00pm Workshops  
2:45pm 4:00pm Committee meetings  
5:30pm 7:00pm Dinner  
7:00pm 10:00pm Wine & Cheese Reception  
& Social

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### Friday, June 11, 2010

7:15am 7:45am Mass and Rosary, Mons. P. Schonenbach  
7:30am 8:45am Breakfast  
8:45am 9:30am Parade of the banners and official opening, Penny & Members  
9:30am 10:15am Spiritual Theme, Fr. Y. Laroche  
10:15am 10:30am Break  
10:30am 12:00pm Workshops  
10:30am 12:00pm President's Round Table with voting members, Penny Craig  
10:30am 12:00am Bilingual workshop or presentation in auditorium, Jean Claude Bienvenue  
12:00pm 1:15pm Lunch  
12:00pm 1:30pm Spiritual Advisors Luncheon, Mons. S. Bianco  
1:00pm 2:30pm Information from Revenue Canada in auditorium, Joe McCalmont  
1:00pm 2:30pm Workshops  
2:30pm 2:45pm break  
2:45pm 4:00pm Regional Meetings  
2:45pm 4:00pm Workshops  
5:00pm 10:00pm Meal & entertainment BBQ & Pub Night

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### Saturday, June 12, 2010

7:15am 7:45am Mass and Rosary, Mons. P. Schonenbach  
7:30am 8:45am Breakfast  
9:00am 10:00am Keynote Speaker, Arch. T. Collins  
10:00am 10:15am Break  
10:00am 12:00pm Youth activity  
10:15am 12:00pm Workshops  
10:15am 10:45am Regional Council Reports  
10:45am 12:00pm National Committee Reports  
12:00pm 1:00pm Lunch  
1:00pm 2:30pm Youth activity  
1:00pm 2:30pm Statutory Meeting  
1:00pm 2:30pm Workshops  
2:30pm 2:45pm Break  
2:45pm 4:00pm Presentation by 2011 Committee  
Address by National President  
5:00pm 6:30pm Mass and Commissioning at  
St-Michael's Arch. T. Collins, Mons. P.  
Schonenbach, Mons. S. Bianco  
7:00pm 10:00pm Closing Banquet, Marriott Hotel

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### Sunday, June 13, 2010

7:30am 9:00am Breakfast

## **WELCOME TO TORONTO, ONTARIO!**

The site of the 2010 Annual General Assembly of the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul is Ryerson University, located in downtown Toronto. Situated in the city core, Ryerson is within walking distance of St. Michael's Cathedral, the Toronto Eaton Centre, historic St. Lawrence Market, the Art Gallery of Ontario and a variety of fascinating neighbourhoods, shops and attractions. Visit: [www.seetorontonow.com](http://www.seetorontonow.com) for more information.

Ryerson University is located near Yonge and Dundas Streets in downtown Toronto, with accommodations, meeting rooms and events within walking distance from the corner of Church Street and Gould. (see map on reverse). The residences are located on Mutual Street north of Gould Street.

### **Alternate Accommodation:**

Bond Place Hotel [www.bondplace.ca](http://www.bondplace.ca) or 1-800-268-9390  
Delta Chelsea Hotel [www.deltahotels.com](http://www.deltahotels.com) or 1-817-333-5399  
Strathcona Hotel [www.thestrathconahotel.ca](http://www.thestrathconahotel.ca) or 1-800-992-2694  
or check with your favourite chain

### **Arriving in Toronto:**

Pearson International Airport – 45 minutes outside of Toronto,  
Contact [www.gtaa.com](http://www.gtaa.com) or Toll Free: 1-866-207-1690

Transportation to downtown Toronto available by Toronto Airport Express  
[info@torontoairportexpress.com](mailto:info@torontoairportexpress.com) or call 1-800-387-6787

Toronto City Centre Airport – Porter Airlines  
Contact [www.flyporter.com](http://www.flyporter.com) or Toll Free: 1-888-619-8622

Arrivals and departure area – 15 minutes from Ryerson campus

### **Union Station:**

Train and Rail service - 15 minutes from Ryerson Campus  
Via Rail – Contact [www.viarail.ca](http://www.viarail.ca) or Toll Free: 1-888-842-7245  
GO Transit - Contact [www.go transit.com](http://www.go transit.com) or Toll Free: 1-888-438-6646

### **Toronto Coach Terminal (Bus) – 10 minutes from Ryerson Campus**

Contact: [www.torontocoachterminal.com](http://www.torontocoachterminal.com) or call 416-393-7911

### **Local Transit – TTC, Toronto Transit Commission**

Contact: [www.ttc.ca](http://www.ttc.ca) or call 416-393-4636

# AGA 2010 Registration/Inscription

## NATIONAL COUNCIL OF CANADA 39<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY CONSEIL NATIONAL DU CANADA 39<sup>E</sup> ASSEMBLÉE GÉNÉRALE ANNUELLE

Wednesday, June 9 2010 to Sunday, June 13 2010 / Mercredi 9 juin, 2010 au dimanche 13 juin, 2010  
Ryerson University, Toronto / Université de Ryerson, Toronto

Early Registration deadline: April 15, 2010 / Date limite pour inscription à tarif préférentiel : 15 avril 2010

- Correspondence in English / Anglais  
 Correspondance en French / Français

Please print clearly / Prière d'écrire en lettres moulées

Name / Nom : \_\_\_\_\_  
email / courriel : \_\_\_\_\_  
Conference / Conférence : \_\_\_\_\_  
Council / Conseil : \_\_\_\_\_  
Address / Adresse : \_\_\_\_\_ Apt / App : \_\_\_\_\_  
City / Ville : \_\_\_\_\_ Province : \_\_\_\_\_  
Postal Code / Code postal : \_\_\_\_\_ Tel / Tél : (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_  
Voting Member / Member votant :  Yes / Oui  No / Non  
Will you have a Proxy Vote Letter / Aurez-vous une lettre de vote par procuration :  Yes / Oui  No / Non  
Contact in case of emergency / Personne à contracter en cas d'urgence :  
\_\_\_\_\_ Tel / Tél : (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_  
Spiritual Advisor / Conseiller spirituel :  Yes / Oui  No / Non

### Registration Fee / Frais d'inscription

Before April 15, 2010 / Avant le 15 avril 2010	\$ 225.00
After April 15, 2010 / Après le 15 avril 2010	\$ 250.00
Student rate / Taux étudiant :	\$ 150.00

This amount covers conference registration, wine and cheese, Friday Pub Night, banquet.

Ces frais couvrent l'inscription au congrès, le vin et fromage, le Pub Night du vendredi, le banquet.

Registration fee, per person / Frais d'inscription, par personne :	\$225.00
Additional banquet tickets / Billets supplémentaires pour banquet :	\$ 50.00
Additional Friday night pub night tickets / Billets supplémentaires pour le "Pub Night"	\$ 25.00
One day registration (7:00 am to 5:00 pm) / Inscription d'un jour (7h à 17h) :	\$ 50.00
One day student registration / Inscription d'un jour pour étudiant :	\$ 25.00

### Meal Request / Repas :

Lunch Only / Dîner Seulement : Price / Prix \$15.00 per lunch / par dîner

Thursday / Jeudi :  Yes / Oui Friday/Vendredi :  Yes / Oui Saturday / Samedi :  Yes / Oui

Special diet concerns/allergies / Avez-vous des allergies ou intolérances alimentaires :

Yes / Oui  No / Non Details / Renseignements : \_\_\_\_\_

Please note: We will provide options for Thursday dinner, there are many places to explore in our downtown area.  
Veuillez noter : Nous offrirons des options pour le souper du jeudi, il y a plusieurs endroits à découvrir dans notre centre-ville.



**Total Payment for Conference Registration Only (Accommodation arrangements to be made directly to Ryerson University)**

**Total des Frais d'inscription au congrès seulement (Pour hébergement, s'inscrire directement à l'université Ryerson)**

**Full registration / Inscription complète :**

Before April 15 / avant le 15 avril	___ X	\$ 225.00
After April 15 / après le 15 avril	___ X	\$ 250.00
Extra Banquet Tickets / Billets supplémentaires pour le banquet :	___ X	\$ 50.00
Extra Friday Pub Night Tickets / Billets supplémentaires pour le Pub Night	___ X	\$ 25.00
Total number of lunches / Nombre total de dîners	___ X	\$ 15.00
Total Payable / Total à payer		\$ _____

**Student / Étudiant :**

Registration / Inscription	___ X	\$ 150.00
Extra Banquet Tickets / Billets supplémentaires pour le banquet	___ X	\$ 50.00
Total number of lunches / Nombre total de dîners	___ X	\$ 15.00
Total Payable / Total à payer		\$ _____

Payment must be sent with completed application / Le paiement doit accompagner l'inscription

Make cheque payable to / Chèque à l'ordre de :

Society of St. Vincent de Paul, Toronto Central Council AGA 2010

240 Church Street, Toronto, Ontario M5B 1Z2

Tel: 416 364-5577 Fax: 416 364-2055 email to: aga2010@ssvptoronto.ca

Payment also accepted by Credit Card / Paiement par carte de crédit accepté :  Visa  Master Card

Credit Card # \_\_\_\_\_

Exp. \_\_\_\_/20\_\_\_\_

Name on Credit Card / Nom sur la carte : \_\_\_\_\_

*A confirmation of registration will be sent to you in May by email (or regular mail if no email address given).*

*Vous recevrez la confirmation de votre inscription au cours du mois de mai par Courriel (ou par la poste si vous*

*ne donnez pas une adresse Courriel). **Cancellation:** Please note, refunds for cancellations received 30 days prior to*

*June 9, 2010. Refund, less \$50.00 will be made for cancellations received up to 24 hours prior to arrival. No refunds*

*will be given for cancellations made without notice. **Cancellation:** Veuillez noter, Toute annulation signifiée plus de*

*30 jours avant l'arrivée donnera droit au plein remboursement. Pour une annulation reçue 30 jours avant le 9 juin.*

*2010, remboursement moins 50 \$. Aucun remboursement ne sera consenti pour une annulation sans avis.*

**Lodging on Campus/Hebergement sur le campus**

**Room Type/Type de chambre**

Room with private washroom – queen sized bed, hot breakfast included – International Living Learning Centre. \$81.00 + tax per night (please note, the price is per room, not per number of people in the room).

Reservation # 887646

Chambre avec salle de bain privé – lit queen, déjeuner chaud inclus – International Living Learning Centre.

81\$ par nuit + taxe (notez que le prix est par chambre et non par le nombre de personne dans la chambre).

Réservation # 887646

Room with shared washroom – single bed, continental breakfast included - Pitman Hall Residence \$50.00 per night + tax. Réservation # 783655

Chambre avec sale de bain partager – lit simple, déjeuner continental inclus - Pitman Hall Residence 50\$ par nuit + taxe. Réservation # 783655

Please reserve directly with Ryerson University at 416 979-5296 or toll free at 1-866-592-8882 or on line at [www.ryerson.ca/conference/accomodations](http://www.ryerson.ca/conference/accomodations). Vous devez réserver directement à l'université Ryerson au 416 979-5296 ou sans frais au 1-866-592-8882 ou en ligne au [www.ryerson.ca/conference/accomodations](http://www.ryerson.ca/conference/accomodations)