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CLICKABLE!



World Day of the Poor



November 18, 2018

Thanks to the National AGA 2018 Steering Committee: Phonse Leonard, Lorraine Gillespie, Shirley Freake, Mary Byrne, Con & Sandra Milmore, Judy Peddle, Louise Moores

ATLANTIC REGIONAL COUNCIL EDITION

MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR



November 18 is fast approaching!

What is happening on November the 18th? It is the World Day of the Poor, an invitation by Pope Francis in his apostolic letter *Mercy and Peace* (*Misericordia et misera*).

The Society of Saint Vincent de Paul is in a perfect position to promote the World Day of the Poor. That special day is also a great opportunity for the Society to:

- increase the visibility of SSVP activities,
- make known the mission of the SSVP,
- foster closer ties between Vincentians and parishioners during Eucharistic celebrations, to live the message of the Gospel together by serving Christ through the poor with love, respect, justice and joy,
- recruit new members and
- conduct campaigns to raise fund or collect non-perishable food items in support of Vincentian work.

Campaign documentation is available for you on the National website at www.ssvp.ca and by email, through your regional president, including as well campaign blueprints to be used by your conference, store or outlet.

The picture selected for campaign ads is representative of a person in need of assistance. Poverty goes well beyond inadequate income; poverty is also food insecurity, social exclusion, inadequate housing and lack of access to transportation and other services.

Have a great campaign!

*Richard Pommainville, Executive Director
National Council of Canada*

Customizable poster,
available via National
Council's website:
www.ssvp.ca

Please donate on
November 18,
World Day
of the Poor.
www.ssvp.ca/donation

Society of Saint Vincent de Paul

In Canada, 1.9M families struggle to make ends meet. Poverty is more than just low income:

- food insecurity
- social exclusion
- inadequate housing
- lack of access to transportation and services
- and more...

Source: Government of Canada, Towards a Poverty Reduction Strategy, Discussion Paper.

The Society of Saint Vincent de Paul is active throughout Canada, providing assistance to the less fortunate. Each year, our 15,000 Vincentian members give over 1,600,000 hours of their time in volunteer work, making about 250,000 home visits and helping more than 350,000 people across the country. They do this with love, respect, justice and joy.

In recognition of this World Day of the Poor, Vincentians will ask for financial donations and for non-perishable food items in their parishes and communities.

To make a donation, please contact us:

SPIRITUALITY

GOD'S LOVE FOR US

I am an older man who, through the grace of God, has lived through many joyful events and some that were terrible. I was not always a good Catholic. I doubted my faith as a teenager, and in my twenties I was an angry, confused young man.

What brought me back to the Church was the SACRAMENTS and the COMMANDMENTS. The sacrament of penance gave the blessing of being much calmer. It gave me the inner peace that left me able to embrace the other sacraments. I love the Blessed Sacraments.

Thanks to my love of the sacraments and the strength they give me, my faith remains as solid as before. Our world and our Church are presently going through difficult times, and the best tool we have to fix all this is prayer. We have a set of rules to follow that were given to us by God himself through Moses.

You shall love the Lord your God and serve him only.

You shall not take the name of the Lord in vain.

Keep holy the Sabbath.

Honour your father and mother.

You shall not kill.

You shall not commit adultery.

You shall not steal.

You shall not bear false witness.

You shall not covet your neighbour's wife.

You shall not covet your neighbour's goods.

Imagine all the misery that could be avoided if we all just lived by these ten nuggets of life-giving wisdom. Think for a moment on all suffering that is caused because humanity has been unwilling to adopt a pattern of behaviour and social structure that celebrates the wisdom of our Lord.

We must always remember that, when stormy seas and the huge waves of life toss us around and our tears flow like rain, Jesus is in the boat with us. Reach out to Him and He will calm the storm.

May the love of God always be with you, no matter what your personal storm may be.

*Parnell Kelly, National Spirituality Committee
Atlantic Regional Council*

IN MEMORIAM

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

Robert (Bob) Peel

St. Mary's Conference, London, Ontario

May 23, 2018

Gérard Lord,

Sainte-Anne-de-la-Pocatière Conference, Quebec

May 31, 2018

Leomay Dewling,

St. Pius X Conference, Brantford, Ontario

June 5, 2018

Brenda Jessica Jessome

Holy Family Conference, Cape Breton, Nova Scotia

July 29, 2018

Marcelle Breton-Dubreuil

Saint-Léonard Conference, Montréal, Quebec

September 8, 2018

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

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

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

Let us keep them in our prayers.

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

SOCIETY SET FOR BIG ROLE ON NATIONAL STAGE

NEW DIRECTOR PUTS CANADA-WIDE FOCUS ON ADVOCACY FOR POOR

*By Michael Swan
The Catholic Register*

The umbrella organization for hundreds of St. Vincent de Paul councils in parishes across Canada is getting ready to step into the national spotlight.

“We want to bring the Society (of St. Vincent de Paul) up from the church basement,” joked new national executive director Richard Pommainville. “It’s no longer just doing charity that is required. It’s fairly well accepted that we actually have to look at the root causes of poverty. That transition is actually happening.”

With a full-time, national executive director in place, the Society expects to become more active in political advocacy.

“We’re actually looking at partnerships with other organizations as well,” said Pommainville. “They (politicians) pay a lot more attention when there are a lot of groups who are actually looking at this”.

Pommainville steps into his new role after a long career as a telecommunications engineer and, for the last three years, as a member of the Development and Peace national council.

The Canadian move is mirrored internationally, where Vincentians have increasingly been looking back to the life and work of St. Vincent de Paul Society founder Frederic Ozanam. He led University of Paris students into the slums to meet and serve the poor, but at the same time he was never shy about using his position and prestige as a professor to influence governments and institutions.

For national St. Vincent de Paul social justice committee chair Jim Paddon, a new start in advocacy is going to come down to making choices – finding key issues where Vincentians can be effective on behalf of the people they serve.

At national meetings in October, Paddon hopes Vincentians will choose to concentrate on two possibilities: basic income schemes that would replace the complex and patchwork of welfare programs, and reconciliation with Indigenous people, the Canadians most likely to live in poverty.

On basic income, that means researching and encouraging the basic income experiments already underway in Ontario, Paddon said.

“It’s something we can really get behind and collaborate with other organizations,” said Paddon.

As a member of the Guadalupe Circle co-ordinated by the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops, Paddon thinks of advocacy in terms of persuading and informing ordinary people, especially his fellow Catholics.

“I feel like our membership and Canadians in general, it’s more a matter of ignorance of the issues – of what Indigenous people have faced through the years – rather than prejudice,” Paddon said.

Through the next few months Canadian Vincentians will be defining a process by which they will come up with advocacy topics and carry forward well defined campaigns, said Pommainville.

“You want to make sure in the end that people feel comfortable around the topic and that they’re well equipped,” he said.

THE CATHOLIC REGISTER

AGA 2018... A “TIME” IN ST. JOHN’S, NEWFOUNDLAND

It was more than three years in the planning and then, all of a sudden, it was here. The meetings, decisions, friendships, arguments, hiccups, etc., along the way, were being put to the test. And there were hiccups! Did we make the right decisions? What if this happens? What if it’s foggy and flights get cancelled? How are we going to get all those delegates picked up at the airport, and at such outlandish hours? And an even bigger feat, how are we going to get them all back to catch their flights home? Well, needless to say, the weather did not cooperate on our main pick-up and drop-off days. Sheets of rain poured out of the heavens. We’re still looking for signs we erected on campus that Tuesday. They may show up by the time St. John’s hosts another AGA. I think the Rennie’s Mill River may have swallowed some of them up.

Thank God, the day of the guided tour was a little better, not warm, but not wet! Unfortunately, one of the buses got a flat tire and the tour was delayed by about an hour and a half! OK, so not too serious -- and beyond our control! In the end, a great time was had by all. Truth be told, I could have sold to the highest bidder the couple of tickets that were not picked up, for whatever reason. They were in big demand by those who had not pre-booked. I felt like Willie Wonka holding the Golden Ticket to the Chocolate Factory! The only complaint I heard following the tour was “too much food”. Word of advice to delegates -- if a tour is offered and you want to take it, book early!

Although conference events do not normally start until Thursday, early delegates found that there was not enough signage to get around campus. Due to our windy nature, some signs blew away. That’s when we depended on our “Green Shirt” volunteers to direct delegates until they were more comfortable. It usually takes a day to find your way around. By the time you leave, you have it conquered! The green shirts were a big hit, and delegates wanted to purchase them to bring home.

Although I never got to attend workshops, I understand from the evaluations that they were very well received. The meetings went well and there were no technical issues. Breaks were exceptional, with catering to all dietary concerns and an abundance of choices, including fruit. The meals were good, albeit mostly cafeteria style. The music was good. Transport of delegates with mobility issues was a little tricky. Only four stated it on the registration forms, but there were far more and this required some juggling.

All in all, I think the AGA was a great success. Thank you to all who attended! Our mission was to have you leave our province having had the best experience possible and the desire to come back. I think we accomplished that very well!

As long as you have a group of good, dedicated, dependable volunteers, as I did, the sky is the limit on what you can accomplish!

Judy Peddle, Chair of the 2018 AGA Committee



AGA 2018 volunteer team



Vincenzians attending a workshop

SSVP HALIFAX PARTICULAR COUNCIL

SOCIETY OF SAINT VINCENT DE PAUL – HALIFAX PARTICULAR COUNCIL EXECUTIVE

The Halifax Particular Council is welcoming a new executive. Rick Butler, a member of St. Patrick Parish and a Vincentian for some 10 years, will serve as president. Retired from the Nova Scotia Public Service, Rick is also the Co-Chair of St. Patrick's Church Restoration Society and volunteers at Hope Cottage, one of the Special Works operated by the Particular Council. The new vice-president is Ken McClintock. He is a member of St. Ignatius Parish in Bedford, is past president of St. Ignatius Conference, and has been a Particular Council member for three years. Ken is a retired engineer, having spent the past 20 years working internationally on energy projects. Michael Roughneen, also a member of St. Ignatius Parish, is the new secretary. He has been a member of the Particular Council for five years, initially while serving as president of St. Ignatius Conference. Retired now, his career was spent largely in health and university administration. Michael was also a Board member and Chair of the Metro United Way and volunteers weekly at Hope Cottage. Joining the Council as treasurer is Peter Browne. Recently retired as financial administrator for the Archdiocese of Halifax-Yarmouth, he also serves as treasurer for Chalice, an international Catholic charity, the Metro Branch of Fung Loy Kok-Taoist Tai Chi, and the Chisholm House Foundation.

CONFERENCE FOR THE CONFERENCES

In 2016, conferences under the Halifax Particular Council met to review the National Society of Saint Vincent de Paul 2015-2020 strategic plan. One of the resulting five recommendations was to hold an "all-conference session to gather and exchange information and ideas related to operations, practices, home visits, and service."

On November 4, 2017, 44 Vincentians from 15 of 18 conferences came together for the first Conference for the Conferences. *After viewing No Time Like Now: The Life and Times of Frédéric Ozanam*, participants reflected on the history, vision, and practice of the Society and its original founders, and discussed their relevance for Vincentians today. The conferences then completed surveys about their operations and service, shared responses, and identified areas they wanted to develop further. The day concluded with a commitment to hold another gathering in six months.

The second Conference for the Conferences, held May 26, 2018, was attended by 43 Vincentians from 12 conferences. Members gave presentations on a range of topics. Initially, those gathered watched a play adapted from *Apostle in a Top Hat* by James Derum that depicts two of the Society's co-founders, Frédéric Ozanam and Auguste Le Taillandier, carrying out the first home visit. Conference members considered the services offered by those early Vincentians, including their response to immediate needs, their help to access community resources, and their assistance with long-term initiatives to address the root causes of the family's poverty and transform their lives, and compared them to present-day practices. A panel of four talked about the value of home visits. An essential message was that

Vincentians are visiting Christ when they go into homes and, through building relationships, can more fully understand and respond to needs. The Advocacy Committee Chair asked participants to define social justice and identify how the particular council and conferences could be involved. After learning about the history and work of the Advocacy Committee and initiatives of the National Social Justice Committee, members completed a survey identifying priority advocacy areas. One conference that has successfully applied for and received major grants shared a sample promotional PowerPoint presentation developed to solicit funding from the local town, municipality, and United Way. The final presentation on youth and young adult recruitment reminded Vincentians to be supportive through mentorship, offer opportunities for fellowship, and show flexibility in assigning tasks or projects to accommodate education or work schedules and shorter-term membership.

The Conference for the Conferences will become an annual spring event. The members appreciate the opportunity to come together to share and learn. In the words of Frédéric Ozanam, when Vincentians reflect on their experiences, they come to an "internal spiritual knowledge of themselves, others and the goodness of God..." and transform "their concern into action and their compassion into practical love."

*Rick Butler, President,
Halifax Particular Council*



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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