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COVID-19 VACCINATION: GOOD PROGRESS IS HAPPENING!

We now have over 25% of the Canadian population who have received at least one dose of a vaccine; you can track the progress at [COVID-19 vaccination in Canada](#). I was fortunate to receive my first dose, Pfizer-BioNTech, on Wednesday, April 14.

But we are far from having sufficient vaccinations to relax and ease restrictions, especially with the variants being more contagious and virulent, which explains several new Public Health restrictions being applied across the country.

As we have been stating since the beginning of the pandemic in early 2020, precaution and prevention have been a focal point to protect persons in need whom we serve, our volunteers and our staff. Besides vaccinations, following Public Health recommendations have been key:

- practice physical distancing, 2-metres (six feet);
- wear a mask, indoors or when maintaining physical distancing is difficult;
- wash your hands often and well;
- avoid close contact with people who are sick;
- stay at home and away from others if you are feeling ill.

In some provinces, food bank volunteers and staff have now been included in the priority list for vaccination. Check with your local Public Health authorities, as eligibility changes continuously.

To encourage Canadians to get vaccinated, the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops (CCCB) published on March 11, 2021:

1. Catholics are invited to be vaccinated, both in keeping with the dictates of their conscience and in contributing to the common good by promoting the health and safety of others.
2. The CCCB Note of 9 March 2021 simply restates the position outlined by the Holy See in its [Note of December 21, 2020](#) regarding the use of vaccines.
3. All COVID-19 vaccines that are medically approved by the relevant health authorities may be licitly received by Catholics.

You can read additional information on [Vaccines for COVID-19](#).

Richard Pommerville
Executive Director

MOBILIZING FUNDS DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC, A DIFFICULT BUT NOT IMPOSSIBLE TASK

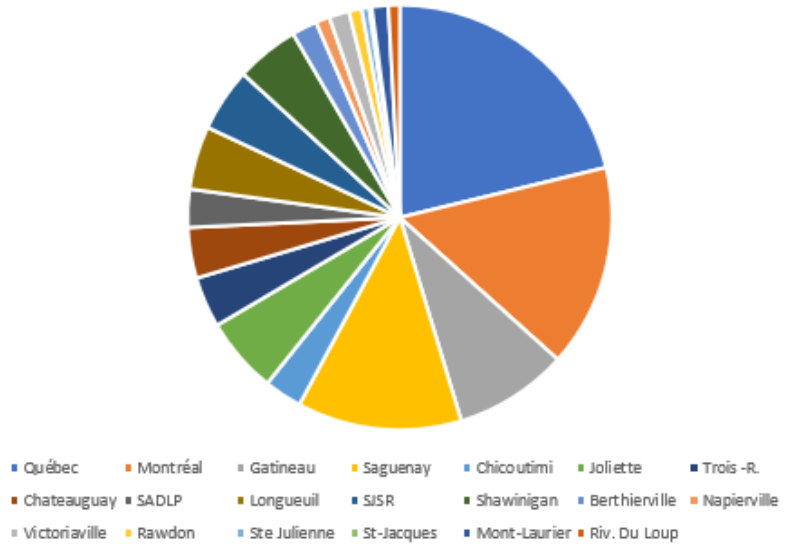
Like so many other organizations registered with the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA), the SSV in Quebec and its members have always relied on the donations of Quebecers and other Canadians, legal entities and/or individuals, to carry out their charitable activities. Unfortunately, the crisis caused by COVID-19 has put many families in a difficult financial situation, to the point that the impact was felt immediately and continues to be felt in our fundraising campaigns. The crisis has also affected our ability as a charitable organization to conduct person-to-person fundraising activities, which are the foundation of our fundraising strategy. Faced with this harsh reality, the SSV Quebec Regional Council was fortunate to receive double support, financial and technical, from the Fédération des caisses Desjardins and La Ruche Québec, a crowdfunding platform, in the organization of the 2020 edition of its *guignolée*, an annual Christmas food drive. For four weeks, messages soliciting the generosity of Quebecers were relayed and the response was phenomenal.

Close to \$500,000 was raised and redistributed to the 19 of our members who participated in the campaign, and the sum made available to them allowed them, in turn, to meet the food needs of thousands of people struggling with the socio-economic impacts of COVID-19, particularly seniors, whose dietary needs were adversely affected by the measures put in place to prevent transmission of the coronavirus.

However, it should be noted that the unknown in this process was the volume of work that the regional council would have to manage in order to issue tax receipts to the 3,000 Quebecers who, in an unprecedented surge of generosity, had responded favourably to our campaign. Thanks to his computer skills, the Chairman of the Board of Directors, Michel Olivier, professionally managed this aspect of the work. All the receipts were produced and sent to the donors during the income declaration period set by law. This experience led us to plan to provide the regional council with the material and equipment needed for future large-scale campaigns.

*Baudouin KUTUKA MAKASI, Coordinator
Quebec Regional Council*

Almost \$500,000 distributed to members



NATIONAL FUND DEVELOPMENT

National Council of Canada is putting a call out for members interested in serving on the new National Fund Development Committee. The objective of the National Fund Development Committee is to identify, solicit, and steward fund development initiatives at the National level to assist with communications and fundraising initiatives at the multiple levels of the Society in Canada.

This Committee was created after hearing from members across Canada that we need to identify different fund development opportunities and identify initiatives to support our Mission. This is an exciting opportunity to participate in the growth and wellness of the Society, and we look for your expertise in this endeavor.

If you are interested and have the following skillset, please contact National at national@ssvp.ca by May 31 at latest.

- Fund development expertise and experience
- Fund development communication strategies
- Donor engagement and stewardship expertise
- Knowledge in identifying foundations and government programs, and skills in proposal and grant writing

Thank you for your interest in serving as a member of this Committee.

*Linda Dollard, Chair
National Fund Development Committee*

NICARAGUA TWINNING PROJECT - CONSTRUCTION OF BATHROOMS

This project entailed the construction of 19 bathrooms in the rural community of El Tule, Chinandega Department, Nicaragua. It was planned and executed by a local community organization, FUNDACCO, in collaboration with the National Council of Nicaragua. FUNDACCO is linked to Roots of Change, a Catholic charity from Alberta.

Due to difficult economic conditions and poverty, most people in the community did not have a bathroom for private personal needs and hygiene practices. People were forced to bathe at the communal well, or in the river located some distance away from the village. The project consisted of building 17 bathrooms to benefit 86 people from 22 families. It also included the construction of 2 public bathrooms near the communal well to meet the needs of 28 people, members of 7 families, who wash clothes and clean themselves at the well.

The project was submitted to the National Council of Canada by the National Council of Nicaragua and FUNDACCO in the summer 2018. Total cost of this community endeavour was \$6,200, which was financed by the Hamilton West Particular Council (Ontario) and seven local conferences. The planning and execution of the project were a joint effort by FUNDACCO and community members who participated in the construction and supply of some material (sand and water). The construction of the bathrooms improved the living conditions of these families who have no access to electricity or public transportation.

The project was completed in November 2018. Subsequent visits to the community by the SSVF President Montenegro and FUNDACCO Project Manager Maria Araica, confirmed the joy and gratitude of beneficiaries for the new facilities.

I encourage all conferences and councils to support such projects, which improve permanently the living conditions of beneficiaries who proudly take ownership and safeguard the new installations.

*Clermont Fortin, Chair
National Twinning Committee*

“Water has come, I will not have to go to the river to bathe”.

Juan, beneficiary, Nicaragua



“We are happy to tell you that the beneficiaries of the project are very happy with the benefits received. We want to tell you that it is an honour to work with the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul in projects that are changing the living conditions of the inhabitants of different communities.”

Maria Araica, Project Manager, Nicaragua

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Q: Is it appropriate for a parish priest to ask a conference for funds to pay parish expenses during this COVID-19 pandemic?

A: The Rule is very specific. The resources of the Society must be used by our members for their works of charity and not given to other organizations, no matter how good the cause and even during these unprecedented COVID-19 times. This includes the local parish. However, some conferences pay the parish a monthly stipend or fee for the use of the parish facilities, such as meeting space, pantry space, utilities, etc. Those are valid expenditures that do not fall into the category of donations to outside organizations.

Q: Section 1 of the Rule (2.6) indicates that non-Catholics can serve as officers (secretary or treasurer); under what circumstances is that applicable?

A: In section 4 of the Rule, under 6.5 (PRESERVING THE CATHOLIC CREDO AND ETHOS), we can read “The president, vice-president and spiritual advisor should, therefore, be Roman Catholic.” When necessary, other members can be entrusted with special duties. It is possible to name a secretary and treasurer who are not members of the Society. However, in such cases, those persons are appointed by the president because of their expertise and can take part in the deliberations in a meeting but do not have voting rights.