

# Vincenpaul-Canada

The Magazine of the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul  
National Council of Canada  
Volume 39 No. 1 - Winter 2013

## THE LIGHT OF CHRIST

# 1813 - 2013 Bicentenary of the birth of Frederic Ozanam

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The Society of Saint Vincent de Paul is a worldwide Christian community, founded in Paris in 1833, by a group of young Catholic lay people.

Membership is open to men and women, young and old. The SSVP asks that members accept fully the Christian ethos and are committed to express their love of God through personal service to their neighbours in need. The service provided by a conference is usually concentrated on home visits, the person-to-person contact with the needy. This is a fundamental part of the Society's mission. However, activities may include "Special Works", which serve people in a wider area or provide specialized service to those living in poverty.

In Canada, more than 8,200 volunteers are serving about 450,000 people each year. Where appropriate, members offer material or other type of assistance to serve those in need overcome crises, and develop with them long-term solutions to their problems.

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## HELLO, MY DEAR VINCENTIAN FAMILY!

### The Light of Christ

As you will remember, this year's theme is "the light of Christ". This is our calling and our vocation, both as Christians and Vincentians. It is hoped that the spiritual reflections provided by the Spirituality Committee on the web-site have provided some food for thought in helping us to grow in this mission of charity.

### 2013 AGA and the 200<sup>th</sup> Birthday Celebration

We will soon be looking forward to the 2013 AGA in late June. I know the Ottawa Gatineau planning committee has been working very hard to make it a memorable occasion for all.

I certainly look forward as always to welcoming everyone to the AGA to be held in Ottawa in late June 2013. Especially because we will have much to celebrate.

As you may remember, we had the honour of having the President General, Jose Ramon Torremocha with us in 2008 to celebrate the 175<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the birth of the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul.

The light of Christ will be burning ever so brightly during the 2013 year because, as a family, we will celebrate the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of our principal founder Frederic Ozanam's birth on April 23rd.

The whole world network of Vincentians is celebrating this event in many different ways. In Canada, we are inviting the President General, Michael Thio and his wife Rosalind to Canada to help celebrate with us. Michael is a president who truly understands the spirituality of the Society and all that it means for us a "lights of Christ".

**Let Us Once More Come Together As A Family!!**

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



### 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 in anyone who suffers
- come together as a family
- have personal contact with the poor
- help in all possible ways

# International Council General

## PRESIDENT GENERAL'S MESSAGE FOR CHRISTMAS 2012 AND NEW YEAR 2013



My dear fellow Vincentians,

May the Peace and Love of Jesus be with you.

Christmas is always a special occasion for people around the world and more so for Christians and especially us Vincentians. We hold very dear to our hearts the celebration of the birth of the baby Jesus which to us Christians bears a special significance.

The birth of the child Jesus brings Hope and Joy in the Salvific mission of God. Jesus coming into the world is giving us the opportunity of a renewal of life, to be able to have, experience and share the Love of Christ with our loved ones and especially with the poor and needy we so faithfully serve as Vincentians.

During this period of Joy and Merriment let us be thankful to God for the many blessings He has given to us and our family. However, during this time of good cheer, let us serve those under our care with Jesus's Love in our hearts and give them happiness and comfort during this season of Christmas.

Let us not forget the many underprivileged people who are uncared for. The many who are abandoned and suffering from hunger, disease, cold and loneliness and especially the children and the elderly. Let us pray that the Divine Child Jesus will show mercy and compassion on them and alleviate their suffering.

As Vincentians we must continue to bear witness to Christ through our mission and vocation in serving Christ in the poor and needy and bring relief and change in the life of those we assist. As we commit ourselves faithfully to His call we shall endeavour to provide a better future to those we serve.

Let us rejoice in the greatness, love and compassion of the child Jesus as we welcome Him into our hearts this Christmas. With this Love of Jesus in our hearts we look forward with Hope and Confidence towards the New Year of one of fulfillment and peace for the betterment of those we assist and also for our family and us. It is a pleasure for me as your President General in celebrating with all of you this wonderful feast of Christmas and also in welcoming the New Year 2013.

On behalf of Council General International, I wish to thank all of you for the wonderful Vincentian work you have done during the year in serving those in need and please continue with this marvelous deed in bringing happiness and hope to them.

My wife, Rosalind, joins me in wishing all Vincentians and their family a Joyous and Blessed Christmas and a Spirit-filled, Cheerful and Peaceful New Year. Let us be united in prayer with Jesus, Mary and Joseph in our hearts. God bless you all.

Yours appreciatively,

**Dr. Michael Thio**  
**President General**

# Teachable Moment

## THE SECRET COLLECTION

Many have seen the “Black Bag” on the web site and asked what the black bag collection is all about.

The Secret Collection, as it is more properly called, is one of our most steadfast traditions within the Society.

In the book, *Apostle in a Top Hat*, James Patrick Derum provides a wonderful description as to how this tradition came about at one of the first meetings of the little Conference. He writes:

“I suggest that we pool our charitable contributions. And use the money to buy food tickets from Sister Rosalie,” continued Frederic. “If we pool our donations, each can draw from a common supply of food tickets as many as he needs on any visiting day.”

“I’m for that, said Devaux emphatically, and there was general assent.

“Then, Jules”, asked Frederic, turning to Devaux, “will you take up our first collection?”

“Do you supply a collection plate?” asked Devaux.

“Yes – a capacious one,” returned Frederic, pointing to Devaux’s hat reposing with the others on the flat-topped railing. “That will do!”

“So it will”, agreed Devaux, reaching for it.

With fine consideration, he then held the hat behind him and, walking backward, made the rounds.

The students laughed, but they appreciated Devaux’s thoughtfulness.

“An excellent idea!” cried Frederic. “No one excepting God and the giver will know who gives five sous and who gives five francs. Let us take up a collection this way every time.”

This method of taking up the weekly collection at Society of Saint Vincent de Paul meetings has become a traditional and a universal practice.

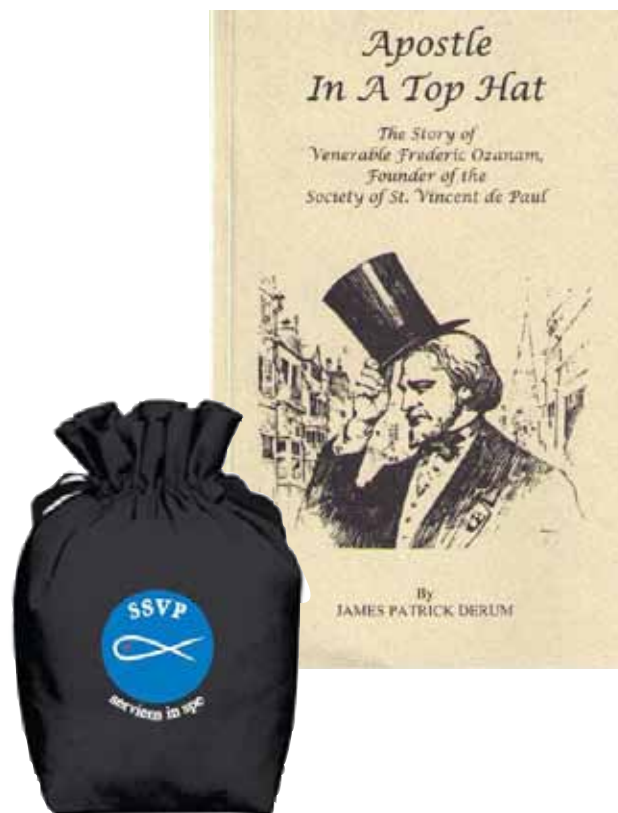
The spirituality of the black bag collection is really a symbolic tradition about sharing ourselves and our gifts as Vincentians. As well, it represents giving of what ever of our resources we can give to help the needy. As

our Vincentian prayer reads.... “Help us to be generous with our time, our possessions and ourselves, in this mission of charity.” One may immediately think of the biblical story of the Widow’s Mite. But always, what we do, we do in the name of charity.

The monies from the black bag can be devoted to a particular project, twinning, youth activities or simply put into the main coffers of either the conference or council.

The secret collection or black bag collection is a tradition well worth preserving as a reminder that it is not so much about how much we give, but with the intention that is done. As Frederic stated, “Only you and God will ever know’ whether you gave five cents or five dollars or nothing at all!

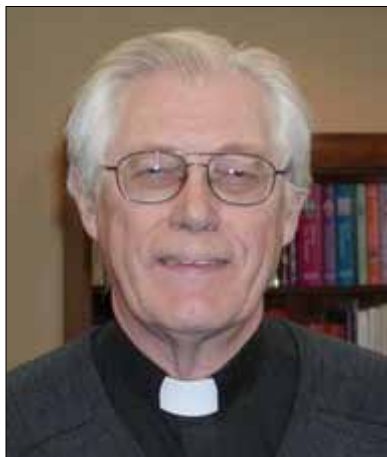
**Penny Craig, President  
National Council of Canada**



See our online catalogue to order those articles, and several others, by visiting our website at [www.ssvp.ca](http://www.ssvp.ca). You may as well order by phone at 1 866 997-7787.

# Spirituality

## HUMAN FABLABS



In the November December issue of Foreign Affairs, Professor Neil Gershenfield of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology wrote a most interesting article entitled How to make almost anything. In 2003, he and his colleagues wondered how to make available, especially the work of 3-D Printers. They put together a package for around \$50,000 that would permit fabrication of small items. This package became known as Fabulous Laboratory or FabLab. They are distributed worldwide and interconnect. The following paragraph from the article will provide some color to this matter.

*Rather than employing people in remote factories needs are met locally. This last observation inspired the FabCity project, which is led by Barcelona's chief architect, Vincent Guallard. Barcelona, like the rest of Spain, has a youth unemployment rate of over 50%. An entire generation has few prospects for getting meaningful jobs. Rather than purchasing products far away, the city with Guallard, is deploying FabLabs in every district as part of the city's infrastructure. The goal for the city is to be interconnected globally for knowledge, but self sufficient for what it consumes.*

We marvel at this technology but should we not marvel even more at the FabLabs created when the Lord made human beings and when, through Christ's coming, he

enhanced the human FabLabs, so that their products will have eternal implications.

As noted, the FabLabs include a 3-D printer. We, through baptism, were anointed in a 3-D way as followers of Christ, Priest, Prophet and King. Following these charisms we produce well-rounded deeds that are what helps us build the Kingdom of God. FabLabs talk to each other and we are a community people with a built-in link to the Holy Trinity. The professor notes that local operators value-add to the FabLabs. We also through study and experience enrich our potential

Vincentians are grateful that God has made our FabLabs able to bring to the marginalized, the downtrodden and the neglected not only bodily substance but also the grace of renewal of spirit and meaning.

All of this has deep relevance to the Year of Faith that we are in and the recent Synod on the new evangelization. To clarify this last expression the following definitions are helpful:

**Conversion:** the work to bring a non-baptized person to belief in the Living Lord and to baptism

**Pastoral maintenance:** the work to help the baptized practicing Catholic to a deeper relationship with Christ

**New evangelization:** the work to rekindle the embers among the many baptized who are de-facto non-believers.

**Msgr. Peter Schonenbach**  
National Spiritual Advisor



YEAR OF FAITH 2012  
2013

## THE LIGHT OF CHRIST



The call for all Christians is to walk in the life-giving light of Christ. As Vincentians we often see a kind of darkness where hope is almost absent and He asks us to bring the radiant Light of Christ into the darkness. Each of us makes our own decision to accept the gift that He is offering us and that means choosing to walk in the Light of Christ.

What does it mean to walk in the Light of Christ? What are we required to do if we live in the Light of Christ? We must love as He loves, listen as He listens, and serve as He served. Wash the feet of our brothers and sisters as He washed the feet of His disciples. We are human beings and we will falter, but we must continue to get up and try again. We are given strength to try again; we do not walk alone because His light is with us.

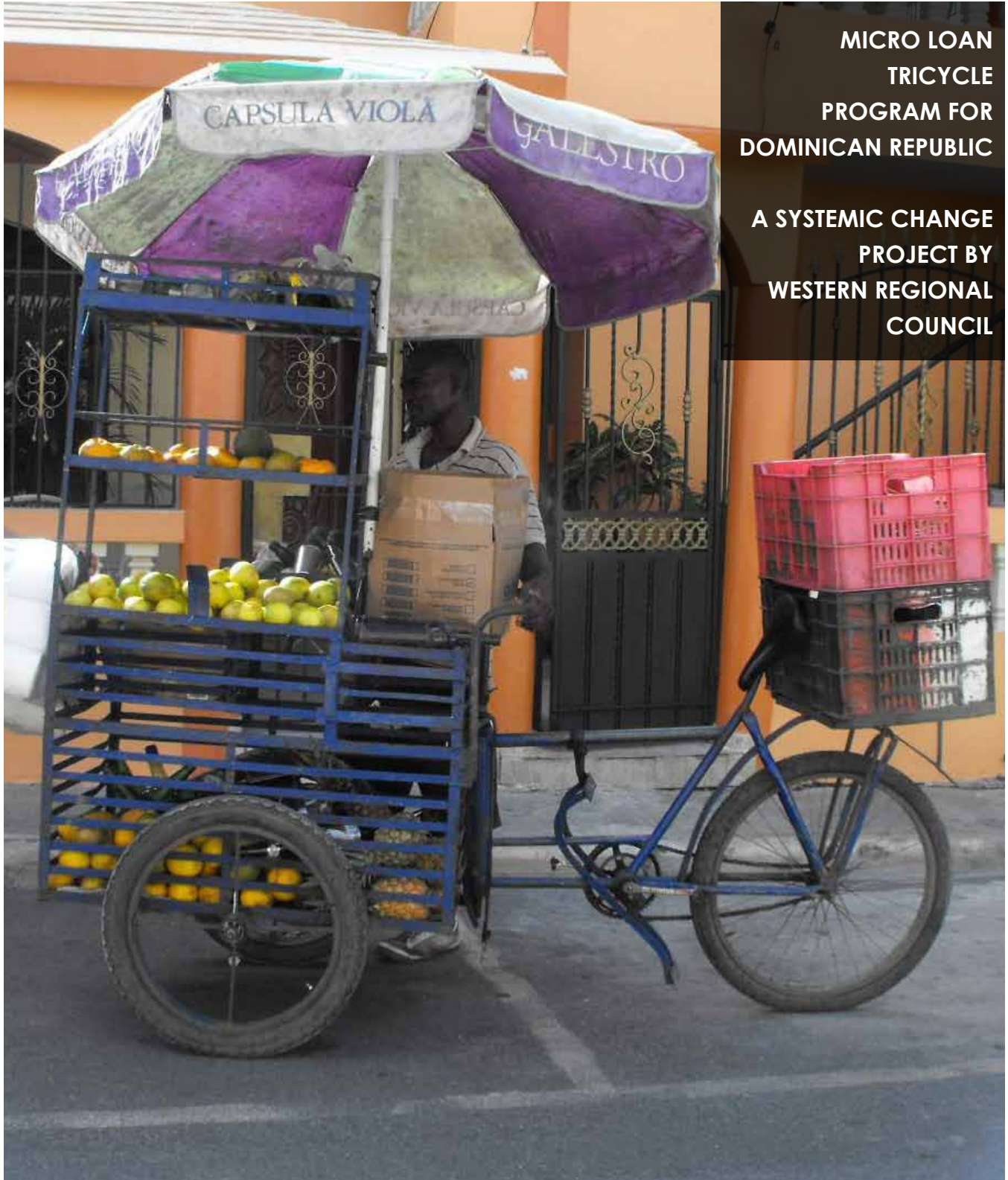
We are surrounded by light, both the natural light of the sun and the moon, as well as, by the artificial light and we would not be able to survive on earth without light. So too we would not survive spiritually without the Light of Christ. The Light of Christ helps us see the beauty in all that He has given us, and helps us to respond to the darkness that often surrounds ourselves, as well as, our brothers and sisters.

As Vincentians we seek to serve the Suffering Christ who is most visible in the poor. Matthew 25 tells us “just as you did it to the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.” Matthew 5 tells us “You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hidden. No one after lighting a lamp puts it under the bushel basket but on a lamp stand and it gives light to the whole house. In the same way, let your light shine before others so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.” As Vincentians we are called to be that light to those who live in poverty. We must constantly pray that we are alert and attentive to the various needs around us and we must be willing to use the gifts that we have been given to help in all possible ways. We must be the light to the hungry and the lonely and the misunderstood and the broken in spirit. We must not forget that all of us have experienced poverty and we must be open to the possibility that the poor that He is calling us to serve may be the partner with whom you are making a home visit. In order to be the light for those in need, we must also be the light for one another. Jesus did not leave us alone to deal with this. He promised us and sent the Holy Spirit to be our guide. We must live prayerful lives both individually and in community so that we are able to hear and understand where He wants to guide us in order to serve His poor.

As Christians and as Vincentians we are a community which walks together in the Light of Christ. The Word became flesh and lives among us and the Word is the lamp that illuminates our path and guides us along the way. God is light and in Him there is no darkness so let all His children walk in that light.

**Maureen MacIsaac**  
**National Spiritual Committee**

# Systemic Change



**MICRO LOAN  
TRICYCLE  
PROGRAM FOR  
DOMINICAN REPUBLIC**

**A SYSTEMIC CHANGE  
PROJECT BY  
WESTERN REGIONAL  
COUNCIL**



# Systemic Change

Western Regional Council is twinned with Zona Santo Domingo Este Council. We have contributed in the past to a building project for seniors and of course send prayers and financial support regularly.

The Tricycle project is new to us; however many are hearing and implanting or introducing systemic change projects across Canada and the Vincentian World.

We believe in this project because it is giving a hand up along with the hand out. It will give men and women in the Dominican Republic a sense of pride in owning their own business.

## How will it work?

- Now that we have found the need and have raised awareness, we are raising the money.
- Educating the Vincentians on what a “Micro Loan is in DR has been taking place and will be ongoing. Everyone involved must be committed and prepared to do their part.
- The project that we are presenting consists of the purchase of 38 tricycles to enable those in need to become independent owners selling products of the basic daily diet of the Dominican population such as foodstuff, fruits, vegetables, bread, and coconuts to residents and tourists.
- The tricycle will be given to the selected operator after completing a business course and signing an agreement of repayment. This will be his/her business.
- Those accepted will form a business group or association, and have regular meetings with each other and Vincentians heading the programme. These meetings will help the operator overcome obstacles and share with other the owners’ success stories, as well as, learning from each other.
- The goods will be selected and sold by the owners.
- Repayment will be on the signed agreement according to sales.

The wrinkles are still being ironed out and I’m sure will continue as in most businesses. It will be their business, but overseen by Society Saint Vincent de Paul in Dominican Republic. The programme will be monitored and reports will be given on a regular basis.

The most exciting news for me as I was following the trial tricycle is that it will help the whole family. For example “tricycle one” was a young man needing to help his family. The mother grew vegetables and he paid his mother for the vegetables and sold them to others. He also bought baskets and woven items from an aunt and sold them to the tourists. He is a success and while building his business he helps others in poverty. Based on this example, we feel others will want the same success.

Many who will be joining the programme have nothing and live on the streets often eating garbage. This will be a tremendous hand up for those who will be earning from their own business and supporting their family. The goods will be purchased from those who are struggling when possible and some of these details will be clearer later.

Please pray for this project that the “Light of Christ” will shine on all those who are involved and consider starting your own project with a twinned country.

Blessings,

**Lynn L’Heureux**  
**Chair of Tricycle Project**  
**Western Regional Council**

# Twinning

## “A LINGERING LABOUR OF LOVE”

*My introduction to twinning by the previous National twinning chairperson, June Hart, was highlighted by her phrase to describe twinning as “A lingering labour of love”.*

Through this phrase, she emphasized the need of our love for the poor of the world, of correspondence that was steady but feels slow and intermittent, and of the trust that we must have of Vincentians in other countries of the world. Lingering labour of love has been my guide to twinning.

There is no doubt in the minds of most of us, of the need to help the poor in the countries with which we twin. Often the poor in these countries, the Vincentians, are those who are helping the ‘very poor.’ They understand the even greater need of those with less than they have. Their empathy is an understanding that, but for the grace of God, there they go. They have less to protect, less to covet. They need us to not live in fearfulness, in worry about the future without the trust in God’s providence, but instead, to help them in ways that are open to us.

We are so fortunate to have a country of peace and good order. But the countries we help, the people and members in these countries, have to deal with obstacles that we cannot comprehend or fathom tolerating. The conflicts, regional or even country-wide, limit the help available to the most vulnerable within the conflict, the poor and marginalized. They are the ones displaced by fighting factions, the ones who have the water cut off to their area as a means of control, the ones whose children are influenced by the ideals or ideas of the factions. An example is from a letter from Sri Lanka, 31 May, 1996, to the Canadian twinning chair, Heidi Minuti, “At the moment, our country is in the grip of a very serious strike by the electricity workers. There is no power and water supply throughout the country, and commercial life and business activity are almost grinding to a halt. The situation is truly grim and we are praying that matters will be resolved soon. Please pray for us.” Peace is a dream, just as we dreamed of a Saviour.

Good governance systems and services are something that we take for granted. But lack of care for the elderly or the means to educate their children, lack of a functioning postal service, or the lack of respect for the workers of the society, all contribute to the burden that our

beloved poor shoulder every day. There are no systems of support when the job finishes, when the breadwinner is injured, when the mother is incapacitated. Twinning funds are meant to ease the burden, as best they can, as they go through the systems of the receiving countries.

Then when we are twinned, we ask of them the basics of a relationship, of relating through correspondence. We ask that they write to us, and even this is a challenge, with challenging postal systems and internet that is available at a much higher cost, for example, \$20 for 2 minutes. Many struggle to know what to write, or even to be able to write. The poor Vincentians write in their own language, and trust that we are ‘rich’ enough to find translators in our own parishes. They are helping us with our poverty of the need to trust in our twinning relationship.

“Lingering labour of love” encourages us in our efforts for twinning. It is passed on to those twins who are meeting obstacles and frustrations that are often a part of the twinning relationship. It can also encourage those of us who are not yet twinning. We can hope to change their world with our prayers, our aid, and our focus on giving a hand up. What is the work of twinning if not an act of love of our poor of the world, of Christ in the world?

**Kathy Weswick**  
**Canadian Twinning Chairperson**

**“We should love one another now and ever,  
far and near, from Conference to another,  
from town to town, from nations to nation.”**

**Original Rule 1835**

## LET US WALK FOR OUR YOUTH!

**Within the framework of the 2013 Annual General Assembly, you are invited to participate in a fundraising activity named “Sleep Walk”.**

Sleepwalk is a nationally sanctioned event as of 2004. While its initial purpose was to be a national fundraising event to raise funds for the purchase of beds, cribs and mattresses in local areas of the Society, **its purpose for the AGA 2013 will be to financially assist young Canadian Vincentian participants to the 2013 FamVin/World Youth Days.**

From July 18 to 28, the FamVin days and WYD will take place Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. In order to allow a greater number of young Canadian Vincentians to participate, the National Council proposes to raise money by organizing this morning walk-a-thon.

The event will take place next June 29, 2013, around 6:30 a.m. AGA participants who wish to contribute to the cause will walk together in Ottawa streets, covering approximately 1.5 km. A snack will be served before the event to energize everyone, and breakfast will be served upon completion. The activity will take place rain or shine: be prepared and bring a raincoat just in case!

On the day of the activity, everyone can bring the funds collected among sponsors, who will encourage you to get up early for a good cause! You can ask your local family, friends, clubs eg CWL or K of C’s, or small businesses to give \$20, \$50 or \$100\$ for your upcoming performance. Donation receipts will be provided for donations of \$20 or more. **You will find on the Canadian SSVP website a letter template to help you approach sponsors.** After the activity, you will have access to pictures of the event via the National Council website, so that you can show your sponsors how successful the event was!

**Donations can also be sent by mail, if for example you cannot be present in Ottawa for the event but still want to support this worthwhile event.** In all cases, we invite you to keep a copy of the form filled by your sponsor, and to join a copy of it with the payment made to the National Council.

The money collected will be managed by the National Council who offers financial support to the young pilgrims. Caroline Gilbert, Youth Representative of the National Council Board of Directors, is in charge of collecting the names of future participants, in order to assess financial needs, and unite the Canadian Vincentian delegation. You may contact her by e-mail at [carolinegilbert@live.fr](mailto:carolinegilbert@live.fr).

For additional information on the FamVin/World Youth Days, you are invited to visit the Youth section of the National Council of Canada website. More information on the functioning of the “Sleep Walk” will be available upon your arrival in Ottawa for the 2013 AGA.

**Caroline Gilbert**  
National Youth Rep



World Youth Days 2011

# Canada's Council in Action

## ATLANTIC REGIONAL COUNCIL

### Hunger Count 2012

Dear Readers,

I just finished reading the document "Hunger Count 2012". Highlights for me include the following.

882,188 persons used food banks in Canada in 2012; a 2.4 % increase over 2011 and a 31 % increase over 2008.

In Nova Scotia food banks served 23,561 persons in 2012

In Prince Edward Island 3,406 persons used food banks in 2012

In NFLD 27,044 persons used food banks in 2012

Food banks came into existence thirty years ago. They provide about five days' worth of food to a population equal to the entire Province of New Brunswick.

In 2011, 14% of food banks ran out of food and 55% cut back on the amount of food handed out to households.

#### Which groups are using food banks?

- Working people with low salaries, making under \$17,000.00 a year. 11% of Canadians in the work force earn less than \$17,000.00 a year.
- One parent families
- Seniors
- Children and youth
- First Nations
- Social Assistance recipients

#### In relation to these groups we see that:

- Children and youth make up 21% of the population and that 38% of those using food banks are children and youth.
- One quarter of Canadians spend more than 30% of their income on housing.
- Households receiving social assistance in Canada are 10% of the population and yet they make up 52% of those using food banks.
- Single parent families account for 16% of Canadian households. They account for 25 % of food bank usage.
- First Nations persons account for 4% of the Canadian population and 11% of food bank usage.

#### What are the factors leading to this food bank usage increase since 2008?

- The rising cost of food, energy and housing
- The loss of manufacturing jobs in Canada. Since 1991 the number of manufacturing jobs dropped by four hundred thousand. In 1991, 16% of our population held manufacturing jobs. Now only 10% hold manufacturing jobs.

# 2013 Annual Report Forms

To overcome this problem the report says that we must:

- Build affordable housing so people do not need to choose between paying rent and buying food.
- Improve school breakfast programs.
- Increase the GIS for seniors.
- Increase Social Assistance payments across Canada.
- Raise tax benefits for working persons.
- Increase investment in education and training.

In 2012, over 912,000 meals were served by soup kitchens and other agencies across Canada. Their use has gone up by 23% since 2011, and 27% since 2008.

The increase in use of soup kitchens started before the recession of 2008-2009.

In Canada fifty million meals will be prepared and served to needy persons in 2012.

What do you think?

**Dennis McCormack , President  
Atlantic Region**

Time has come again to prepare your conference and council Annual Reports. These are the Activities and Financial Reports for the year 2012. Both reporting are important to provide to the National Council and reporting councils at other levels, an accurate account of the scope of service provide by the Society in Canada to those living in poverty on an annual basis. It also enables National Council to provide an informed accountability report to the International General Council and to speak with some authority about the Society's before any interested groups.

Both reports have been revised this past year for the purpose of expanding reporting requirements a little bit and to make them more user friendly. Some of the new features include the ability to fill the Annual Reports electronically, revamped Guides and automatic additions of numbers, where appropriate. Forms can be found on the National Council web site at: <http://www.ssvp.ca/Forms>

I strongly encourage every conference and council to make a serious effort to complete the reports and to submit them to your reporting council as soon as possible in 2013. Regional Councils must send their comprehensive reports to the National Council by March 31st, 2013. If you have any questions, please contact Josée Lemieux, Administrative Assistant, National Council (Tel.: 613.837-4363, e-mail: [national@ssvp.ca](mailto:national@ssvp.ca))

May the spirit of Bl. Frederic Ozanam and of our Patron Saint Vincent de Paul continue to nourish your Faith and inspire you this coming year.

**Penny Craig,  
National President**

# Canada's Council in Action

## QUEBEC REGIONAL COUNCIL

### In Trois-Rivières, a Successful Fundraising Concert on Behalf of the Trois-Rivières Society of Saint Vincent de Paul

On Sunday, November 27, 2011, for the first time in Trois-Rivières, Franciscan Brother Guylain Prince presented the *Chorale Gospel de Joliette* (Joliette Gospel Choir). During the holiday season, it was a wonderful way to collect funds for the Saint Vincent de Paul. The organization provides assistance to needy people in the area. More than 23 boxes and bags of non-perishables were collected, and on site, more than \$1,700 were received in donations. The hall was full, the music was great, and the fundraising goal was achieved: a full-fledged success!

The Chorale Gospel de Joliette, under the direction of Franciscan Brother Guylain Prince, participates regularly in fundraising events on behalf of social or church works. We can almost say that it is becoming a specialty for the choir, that sings in English, French and Creole.

The concert was a unique event. Indeed, the choir is used to more sophisticated lighting and instrumentation. In Trois-Rivières, the concert was rather in “acoustic” mode: one piano and a few microphones for the soloists. Without artifice. The public seemed entirely conquered.



# Canada's Council in Action

## QUEBEC REGIONAL COUNCIL

### Saint-Jean SSVP: once again very dynamic

#### 2012-2013 fund-raising campaign: several dates and activities planned

The financial objective of the 2012-2013 fund-raising campaign of the Saint-Jean Society of Saint Vincent de Paul is to collect \$425,000 among individuals and corporations, an increase of \$75,000 from last year. The organization is not subsidized and the members of the Saint-Jean SSVP hope that donators will be present as they were the previous years. The theme this year is based on food: *“Those plates are empty. They should not be.”* Several activities are planned.

A postal solicitation campaign was launched on November 1<sup>st</sup>. Two new fund raising activities are also added to the calendar. On one side, employees of the Banque Nationale hope to raise \$20,000 by organizing a draw across three branches for five \$500 gift certificates, to exchange in three different businesses. The tickets will be on sale from November 6 and the draw will take place on December 12. The Chœur à neuf, a vocal ensemble of 9 men, will unite their voices and talents on November 11, for a benefit concert. All profits will be given to the St-Jean SSVP. Transport Bourassa contributes significantly by donating \$10,000. The traditional Guignolée will take place on December 2, once again under the chairmanship of Colonel Guy Maillet, Commanding Officer of the St-Jean MRC. All supplies and money collected during that activity will go to the preparation of more than 1000 Christmas hampers, to be distributed at a great family fair that will take place on December 16. Following last year's success, the Seafood Feasts will be back for a second year on May 11, 2013, with an objective of \$25,000. It is also impossible to ignore the unavoidable Celebrity Tournament taking place this time at the Vallée des Forts golf club, on May 16, 2013, under the honorary chairmanship of the very generous Fernand Lachance, pharmacist and owner of the local Jean Coutu drugstore. Thanks to a unique formula, participants can complete their foursome by playing with a pro of the AGP, the Quebec professional golfing association. There will also be a brunch, a gourmet dinner, an auction and several draws. The

financial objective of the day is to raise \$60,000. Finally, we also have the 100 Club, aiming to bring together 100 people who will commit to give \$500 a year for five years to the organization, therefore making all the difference. Under the chairmanship of Renel Bouchard and Richard Boire, that Club emeritus is always growing.

#### The Saint-Jean SSVP in numbers, in 2011-2012

- 13,000 food assistance
- 2,800 people helped, among them 1,900 adults and 900 children
- 350 people helped monthly through distribution of perishable surplus
- 28,000 hours of volunteer work

#### Food, for a value of 1 million dollars

- \$475,000 in value for food given by Moisson Rive-Sud
- \$325,000\$ in value for food given by local grocery stores
- \$250,000 in value for food bought by Saint-Jean SSVP

Our special thanks go to: the local media, the Corporation du Fort St-Jean as well as RMC student officers, local grocers, Serge Gagné who accepted to chair the Celebrity Tournament, Gilles Pinard, Mr. Robert Paquette for the honorary chairmanship of the 1st edition of the Seafood Fest, Colonel Maillet for the honorary chairmanship of the Guignolée, Michel Éthier of Maison Éthier, as well as the members of the Royal Canadian Legion.

[www.ssvpstjean.org](http://www.ssvpstjean.org)

# Canada's Council in Action

## QUEBEC REGIONAL COUNCIL

### Vincentian Fashion Show





# Canada's Council in Action

## ONTARIO REGIONAL COUNCIL

### Partnership with Muslim Community for Christmas Hamper Program

It was a first for both the London Catholic Church and the London Mosque. In a partnership built on the true spirit of giving, members of the London Muslim Mosque helped a Roman Catholic Church drive gather enough food to help nourish more than 100 families this Christmas season.

Moe Lacerte, President of the St. John the Divine Conference, reached out to the Muslim Community after making a home visit to help a Muslim family where language was a barrier. He made a number of inquiries to see how our Catholic organization and the Muslim community could work together to help our friends in need. The result is that a beautiful partnership has been formed which will continue to grow.

Moe was extremely pleased and grateful when he looked around the room and saw the many boxes of food that had been collected to help families in need.

Most of the 30 boxes of food donated were collected by children at the Islamic School. Donations were also collected by members of the Western University's Muslim Student Association filling a pick-up truck and a van.

This was the first year Moe had reached out to the Muslim community. He said, "We all want the same things: peace and respect, and I see this as the beginning of working together."

Mosque members welcomed the request with joy, said Ali D. Chahbar, who helped organize the drive with Zeba Hashmi, head of the Outreach Committee.

"To us, the spirit of Christmas is the spirit of brotherly love, and why wouldn't we want to be a part of it?" Chahbar said he noticed the spirit in December as he left a shop with items for his daughter to make a gingerbread house. "It is so nice. People are really different. They are nicer and you notice it," he said. "I wanted to get a megaphone and shout 'Can we keep this going all year, people?'"

"We are not Christians and don't celebrate Christmas but we are engulfed by the spirit and any time there's

a jubilant harmonious feeling, whatever creed it is under, we thrive on it," he said.

It is interesting to note that the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue issued Vatican messages for the end of Ramadan in 2010, 2011 and 2012.

The Muslim community who helped collect food donations were very aware of this Vatican message; however, many Catholics do not seem to be aware of this Vatican message. The 2012 message was entitled "Educating young Christians and Muslims for justice and peace". The message can be found at <http://tinyurl.com/9k7r9ys>.

This story is truly an inspiration for how we can all reach out to different faith communities to see how we can partner and work together to help the poor.

**Linda Dollard, President  
London Particular Council**



Mike Brannan, a Vincentian with St. John the Divine Conference in London, loads boxes of food onto a cart which were donations made from the London Muslim Mosque and students from the London Islamic School

# Canada's Council in Action

## ONTARIO REGIONAL COUNCIL

### Saint Vincent Place – “A Labour of Love”

St. Vincent Place was created in 2003 by the Society of St. Vincent de Paul in response to a call by the community for an entity to implement a shelter for homeless men. Jim Paddon, currently Chair of the Ontario Region was the founder and chaired the first Board of Directors. Start-up funds were made available through grants from Human Resources Canada, Skills Development Canada, District of Sault Ste. Marie Social Services Administration Board and the Trillium Fund.

Emergency food, available after hours, was identified as a gap in Sault Ste Marie's Community Plan on Homelessness. So the Society included an after-hours emergency food bank, a soup kitchen and thrift store along with the shelter to meet the other basic needs of the homeless and the poor of the community.

To house these services a building at 222 Albert St. E. was purchased with funds provided by a local benefactor. The two-story building with a capacious parking lot and at one time the local Catholic Centre, contains offices, bedrooms for 24 residents, a large hall and a kitchen with appliances suitable for serving food for 200 people and the Thrift Store. It is ideally located on a busy street in the center of the downtown area close to the bus depots.

Over the next two years, three Society Conferences were formed as a support mechanism. Two of these, Mother Theresa and Pope John Paul II Conferences are still functioning, each with more than a dozen members. They provide a core source of volunteers, food and funding. In fact, St. Vincent Place is the main focus of their charitable efforts.

The St. Vincent Place Mission is: *“Embracing the way of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul we serve the homeless and poor of our community by unified actions that provide them with shelter, clothing, food, household essentials and compassionate attention through a dedicated group of volunteers and staff.”*

Our Vision: *“Saint Vincent Place, an outreach agency of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, will be well known and respected in the community for its unified operation of a men's shelter, food bank, soup kitchen and thrift store.*

*Characterized by its: benevolence and charity; respect and compassion for its clients; steady progress towards financial sustainability; extensive and committed core of volunteers; well-trained, highly motivated staff; cooperation in a vibrant partnership of colleague agencies; and good governance.”*

The organization is an incorporated charitable institution and is governed by a Board of Directors of between 9 and 13 members. At least 2 of the directors must be Vincentians.

The General Manager, Nat Chiccelli, is responsible for the Shelter, building operations and the Thrift Store and is the “face” of St. Vincent Place in the community. He manages a staff of 8 including a bookkeeper-receptionist, Thrift Store and Shelter Supervisors, 4 full-time attendants and a cook.

The food services operations are contracted to the Society's local Sault Ste Marie Particular Council. Most of the local Vincentians are engaged at the food bank and Soup Kitchen and form the core of the over 100 volunteers who contribute over 8,000 hours of service annually. These include teams from local Catholic, Presbyterian, Anglican, Lutheran and Bible Chapel churches who work together in a common spirit of caring contribution.

The Shelter is open 24/7 all year for an average of 10 men per night. Annually, over 500 homeless men are accommodated. The cost of shelter operations is partially offset by daily and monthly per diems paid by Ontario Works.

The food bank operates Wednesday evenings from 6-8 p.m. and Saturdays 1-3 p.m. to assist an average of 20 families with a 3-day supply of food items. Since this is an emergency food bank, clients cannot get further aid for 2 months unless they have a reference from a local social agency. Many are repeat visitors. In fact, there are over 6,000 client families currently on file. Cash and food donations, food drives and grants from the local Social Assistance Board fund the necessary supplies.

The Soup Kitchen serves a free full dinner to about 120 people from 5-6 p.m. each Wednesday and on Saturdays serves soup and sandwiches from noon -1 p.m. for

# Canada's Council in Action

about 90. The team serving the meal pays the cost of its ingredients.

Annually 3,600 people, including 1,100 children receive assistance from the food bank and over 10,000 people are fed at the soup kitchen. The needy are assisted free of charge on referral by local agencies.

The Thrift Store is open from 11.00 a.m. – 3 p.m. Monday to Friday. It offers a wide range of good-quality donated items and its annual \$26,000 in revenue is a key component of the St. Vincent Place budget.

Like most charitable organizations, securing sufficient funding is a constant struggle. Government programs and donations from charitable foundations are always a crucial source of the necessary funding. Fund raising events and food drives are regularly organized. Corporate, parish and individual cash donations make essential contributions to our finances. The reputation of the Society brings great credibility to our requests.

Considered by many volunteers as a “labour of love” St. Vincent Place is a vibrant example of faith in action and evidence of the benevolent influence of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul.

Learn more at our website [vincentplacessm.ca](http://vincentplacessm.ca)



# Canada's Council in Action

## ONTARIO REGIONAL COUNCIL

### Educate to Escape the Cycle of Poverty

*The ONRC – Ozanam Education Fund has been established to help provide educational funding for those trapped in poverty enabling them to obtain a decent job*

We operate in a knowledge based world where knowledge and key skill sets are essential in obtaining a decent paying job. Many of us have been able to obtain sufficient skill training to participate in this knowledge based world; however many others face insurmountable barriers in being able to do so. Many are trapped in poverty because they do not have the educational means for breaking out of the cycle. The main obstacle is the lack of financial resources. Funds are required for tuition, course fees, computer equipment, tools, accommodation, food, transportation, day care, previous debt payments, etc. Any combination of these can present barriers that will continue to prevent the person from ever being able to obtain the education or training they need to obtain a decent job. With a low paying or part time job or no job at all they will continue to scrape by with a mere existence trapped in a world of poverty.

ONRC has recognized that fundamental systemic change is required in these cases to break out of the cycle and has decided to direct some of its funds to help in the way of a new program called “The Ozanam Education Fund”. The objective of the program is simply “to provide funding to our friends in need to help them escape the cycle of poverty”.

The program works on a referral basis. Our Vincentian members identify situations where individuals are struggling to obtain further education or training needed to obtain a decent job. This may be expenses for attending University, College, Trades training or other skills training. The expenses may be in the form of tuition, course fees, requisite equipment, tools, accommodation, food, transportation, day care, or other expenses needed to get the training. The program promotes taking an overall review of the personal funding capability for the person in need. The Fund application and the associated worksheet are laid out to assist in this assessment.

The applications are submitted by the Vincentian to the Fund committee for review. Review is made by the committee on a periodic basis making awards to the applicants as best as they can with the limited funds available. When awards are made the funds are “passed down” to the appropriate SSVP Conference for local administration of the funds (paying bills).

Although the program is new and just got formally launched in the Fall of 2012 there is a great enthusiasm for the program and we feel it is an ideal fit with our SSVP Systemic Change work, providing high impact results. Our Vincentians working with our Neighbours in Need are in a good position to understand their situation and their needs for education and can collaborate with them in making the fund applications. Our SSVP organization has a structure and process that allows funding to be passed between Councils and Conferences enabling funding to be directed to where it is needed. This same structure allows donors/ Conferences/ Councils to donate funds to the Ozanam Education Fund.

The program is coordinated by our ONRC Systemic Change Project Committee and operates within the existing Council/Conference framework in Ontario. Investing in peoples' education/ training in order to get them out of poverty is one of the best investments we can make and is certainly a worthwhile systemic change for the individual involved.

For any further background information on this program contact our ONRC (Ontario Regional Council) Systemic Change Project Committee at [systemicchange.ssvp@ssvp.on.ca](mailto:systemicchange.ssvp@ssvp.on.ca).

# Canada's Council in Action

## ONTARIO REGIONAL COUNCIL

### Twinning

Windsor Essex Central Council (WECC) recently completed the formal twinning process with Central Council - St. John Basseterre in Antigua. We are very proud to announce that Canada's most southerly council has twinned.

Communications with our new twin are starting albeit slowly, but we expect improved two way sharing to continue and to increase. One of our first undertakings is to show the Vincentians in Antigua our Canadian Vincentian spirit. We are attempting to flood their mailbox with Christmas cards from Canada. We are asking every conference and council in our WECC region to send a card, and also as many individuals as possible to help overwhelm them with our spirit.

We remember them in our prayers at all our meetings and we offer regular financial assistance to help meet their needs. We expect to grow in our knowledge of how to be a good Vincentian through our twin relationship. We urge all conferences to consider this very "Special Works" of our Society and apply to twin with other conferences beyond our borders.

**Michael Chomyshyn, Twin Coordinator**  
Windsor Essex Central Council

### Ottawa SSVP Store 2012 Scholarship

In 2010, the Board of the Ottawa SSVP store created two \$5,000 scholarships. Offered to students from Ottawa's French-speaking and English-speaking Catholic school boards, the scholarships are called the "Saint Vincent de Paul Scholarship" and the "Saint Vincent de Paul Bursary". The 2012 recipients of those scholarships have now been selected.

On the French-speaking Catholic side, eligible candidates must show aptitudes for work, capabilities leading to tangible academic success, stimulating social implication, and a desire to pursue post-secondary graduate studies, in a context of obvious financial need. This year, there are two French-speaking recipients: **Kimberly Brazidio**, graduated from the Franco-Cité secondary Catholic school (Ottawa), who will pursue her studies at the University of Ottawa (Nursing), and **Brooke Clark**, of the Académie catholique Ange-Gabriel (Brockville, ON), who will pursue her studies at Cité collégiale (Social Work).

No scholarship was awarded this year to the English-speaking side.

**Pierre J. Hubert, Secretary**  
Corporation of the SSVP Store, Ottawa



# Canada's Council in Action

## WESTERN REGIONAL COUNCIL

Zarko Fatovic



**There are days that Zarko Fatovic goes to jail, twice**

The journey from the acreage home he built in Springbank to the Calgary Remand Centre, Spy Hill Jail and the Calgary Young Offender Centre is relatively short. The distance between Fatovic's life experience and those of the inmates he visits, however, is virtually unfathomable. And that's okay. A lifelong Catholic who escaped communist Yugoslavia at the age of 27, this octogenarian believes in miracles. He also believes his prison ministry, which spans more than 30 years, is in step with what Jesus asked his followers to do in Matthew 25:36:

**"I was naked and you gave me clothing.**

**I was sick, and you cared for me.**

**I was in prison, and you visited me."**

"Zarko does what many in the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul are compelled to do as followers of Jesus Christ, help the most dispossessed among us," says Vincentian Byron Price, a friend and admirer of Fatovic. "Zarko is a holy man."

### Answering the call

An accomplished carpenter and cabinet maker, Fatovic is also a self-described workaholic. He and his wife, Vilma, also a native of Croatia, raised five children in Calgary. When Father Pat O'Byrne, brother of long-time Calgary Bishop Paul O'Byrne, started a prayer group at the remand centre (where he was chaplain), he asked people from a St. Luke's prayer group to join him. Fatovic answered the call. On the cusp of retirement, he was looking for new ways to practice his faith and had already chosen Mother Teresa as the example he wanted to follow.

More than 30 years later, Fatovic's vocation continues.

Every second Sunday, Fatovic leads separate lay Catholic services with male and then female inmates at the Calgary Remand Centre. He then drives to Spy Hill Jail, also known as the Calgary Correctional Facility, and does the same thing. On Mondays, he goes to the Calgary Young Offender Centre where he shares that Sunday's mass readings with young people. Half-an-hour later, he's back at the remand centre to pray the rosary; "and that is beautiful", says Fatovic.

To teach Christ's story in relation to their own lives, Fatovic uses the mysteries to help prisoners learn to pray for what they really need. If praying the first Joyful Mystery, The Annunciation, for example, Fatovic talks about the sacrifices of the holy family and the friendship between Mary and Elizabeth. He then leads a prayer for the inmates' mothers and their good friends.

He admits the work is trying. As a father and grandfather, Fatovic says it is difficult to listen to young men boast of how soon they'll take drugs after their release. He also knows he cannot trust what inmates, often repeat offenders, tell him. "These people are trained to lie."

# Canada not-for-profit corporations act

Fatovic has no illusions about the reality of prison life, where no door opens without someone pressing a button. While he encourages inmates to talk, he understands the rules of their situation. Spending time with other criminals, convicted or not (“remanded” prisoners are awaiting trial), demands a certain silence. “Most of the time they are afraid of each other.”

Called to walk in Christ’s footsteps, Fatovic insists he’s never been afraid, even when left alone in the cell of a man convicted of heinous crimes. His willingness to give released inmates a hand up on the outside has been tempered by experience, since it didn’t always work out. Vilma is more specific. After one inmate moved into their home, they got threatening phone calls from imprisoned men seeking retribution on the prisoner. “It came to the point where I said, Okay, them or me”, says Vilma, who laughs as she shares the story.

## **Pray and listen**

How does Fatovic manage the conflict between wanting individuals to change their lives and knowing many of them will not? First and foremost, his prison ministry is based on an abiding faith that transformation is possible. While he has seen evidence of great change, his ministry is about faithful witness, not measured success.

Following the lead of a priest who used to accompany his visits, “I pray and I listen”, says Fatovic. He is humbled by how often inmates’ prayers include entreaties for Fatovic himself. Determined not to judge, Fatovic says, “I go there as one of them. This could be me in there; this is how I look at it ... so I sympathize with them”.

**Joy Gregory**

**Entered into force on October 17, 2011, the Canada not-for-profit corporations act changes the rules concerning non-profit organizations, among which is the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul.**

**The provisions of this Act apply only to Councils, Conferences and special works that are incorporated under federal law. The Act states that non-profit corporations have until October 17, 2014 to obtain a certificate of continuance in order to continue to operate.**

**Organizations that do not abide by the prescribed deadline will be deemed inactive, and dissolved.**

**You may obtain relevant information on Industry Canada website, at [www.ic.gc.ca](http://www.ic.gc.ca). Forms to fill are number 4002 and 4031.**

**You may also obtain information by telephone at 1-866-333-5556.**

**Marcel Tremblay, Chairperson  
National Finance Committee**

# Canada's Council in Action

## WESTERN REGIONAL COUNCIL

An Experience North of 60



*For the past two summers, I have been travelling to the little hamlet of Tuktoyaktuk NT. I stay with Sister Fay Trombley, a nun who has been there for several years and whom I heard about 3 years ago when she came down to Edmonton to discuss the needs in her new Community.*

*Working with the St. Vincent de Paul Society in my town and hearing Sister Fay's stories inspired me to pursue mission work.*

Andrea Wan and two little girls from Tuktoyaktuk



# Canada's Council in Action

Tuktoyaktuk, or Tuk for short, is located just on the edge of the Beaufort Sea and the Arctic Ocean. The community is populated with just over 1,000 people, the majority of them being young kids and elders.

In the Northern parts of Canada there are many majestic sights to be taken in; the loud crashing of the ocean on the rocks, the fish being brought onto shore from the nets, feeling the rays of the 24 hour summer sun and the northern lights on a cold winter's night. While God gave us all these wonderful things to witness, my favourite part about Tuktoyaktuk are the people. I have enjoyed the greatest pleasure of being able to work with a variety of people in Tuk, but the majority of my time is spent with the children. I am now a person in their lives. A person who they can have a healthy relationship with, someone they can talk to about anything; someone that can help them create a closer bond with Jesus.

I spend my days doing a number of activities with kids ages 3-13, mostly outdoor activities such as biking around town, playing in the park or skipping rocks on the ocean. Being in Tuk with a multitude of kids all smiling, laughing and having fun around me, fills me with a joy that makes me realize that God created each and every one of us unique, gifted, special and He has given our lives a purpose. Even though I am only a 16 year old high school student from a small town in Alberta, I have been told many times that I have a passion and desire to help the less fortunate, and that has given me the drive to push through the difficult times so that I can better help the lives of others. Tuktoyaktuk and the people there mean so much to me, which has not only led me to join the SSVP Western Region North of 60 Committee but also to take on the role of secretary.

The North of 60 Committee is a group of people from all over western Canada trying to accomplish a big task of helping various Northern Canadian Communities.

These committee members have had experience with helping at Tuk and they are extending this knowledge to other Northern Communities. Thus far we have decided that our best approach would be to send a construction site trailer to each of three Northern Communities, full of items that they need or want. Clothes, sewing machines, household items, bedding, construction materials (for conversion of the trailers into permanent homes) and non-perishable food are just a few items we would be shipping to the North.

The North of 60 Committee has decided to focus attention on the Communities of Paulatuk, Gjoa Haven and Tuktoyaktuk as our main areas of distribution.

To assure that the items presented in the trailers are appropriate for each of these communities, a mentoring program has been put in place. A Vincentian at a Conference in the South is partnered with a Vincentian in the North. Communication is maximized. The Community's specific needs are identified, right down to the number of new born children that may need clothing.

We are making a commitment to these Communities that we are there for them and that their children will not go hungry again.

The North of 60 Committee needs the support of all Vincentians across the country. Donations of time and skills to assist those who have little and need our help are welcomed.

By Andrea Wan, High School Student in Leduc, AB and Secretary to the North of 60 Committee, SSVP Western Regional Council.

Email Andrea at [andreatuk@gmail.com](mailto:andreatuk@gmail.com) to offer what you can.

# Canada's Council in Action

## BC & YUKON REGIONAL COUNCIL

### 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the presence of the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul in British Columbia

The 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the presence of the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul in British Columbia was held on September 22, 2012 and brought Vincentians from around the Greater Vancouver Area together for an evening of fun. About 380 people attended the Dinner Dance fund raiser. Archbishop Michael J. Miller of Vancouver gave a brief word of thanks and encouragement to the assembly and offered the blessing for the meal. Regional President Nora Criss and Vancouver Central Council President Ivan Douglas, as well as, many of the Regional and Central Council Board Members were present for the evening.

A delicious roast beef dinner was followed by raffles, door prizes, and dancing. Souvenir Ad Books featured articles from Conferences and Councils around the Province, providing a brief but interesting history of the progress of the Society in BC. All of the funds raised through the event are earmarked for the Central Council Outreach Program, which brings food to the needy on Vancouver's East Side three nights a week, 52 weeks a year. The Outreach Program costs about \$15,000 annually. The 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary event raised over \$13,000 with another \$1,250 in donations given directly to Central Council on behalf of the Fund Raiser. On an interesting note, our desserts were donated by a local pastry chef. Chef Christophe Kwiatkowski is originally from a village in France where St. Vincent de Paul had lived many centuries ago.

The success of the event was due to the goodness and generosity of Vincentians throughout the Province. The call for history ads from the Conferences resulted in contributions from 15 Conferences, including several from the interior (Kamloops, Kelowna, and Penticton), from the Island (Courtney, Sidney, and Victoria), and from all across the Vancouver Central Council district. The Victoria, Okanagan, and Vancouver Particular Councils and the BC/Yukon Region Council also submitted articles, outlining their role in growth of the Society in the West. In addition to doing all of the research, the Conferences made a cash contribution to the fund-raiser. Thanks to their generosity, and that of

the many individuals and businesses who contributed ads, the book brought in close to \$5,000 in revenue.

Vincentians from all three Particular Councils in Vancouver (Vancouver, North Fraser and East-West Fraser) helped to sell cash raffle tickets. With 2,500 tickets for sale (minus the winnings), the Cash Raffle brought in over \$4,000 for the event. Members of these Conferences also sold dinner tickets and came out in great numbers to celebrate the evening and our 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary together.

A special note of praise goes to the Conferences which worked so hard to organize the event. Christ the Redeemer Conference from North Vancouver took care of the bar and kitchen clean-up. St. Mary's provided the floral arrangements for the tables and took care of the 50-50 raffle. Our Lady of Perpetual Help was on duty for the Raffle Baskets, and St. Anthony's helped with the Door Prizes. St. Stephen's coordinated the entertainment, and St. Jude's helped with receiving guests at the door and seating. A very special work of thanks goes to St. Patrick's parishioners (the host Conference, since the first Conference started at this parish 100 years ago). Conference members were joined by parish volunteers (CWL, Knights of Columbus and the very active St. Patrick's Senior's Group) to do the Hall set-up, help with food preparation, man the buffet service lines, clear the tables, and coordinate the Hall clean up after the event. St. Patrick's Conference also prepared the Souvenir Ad Book and coordinated the Cash Raffle.

Of course the evening was not without glitches, but the true Vincentian spirit reigned. Help was always ready in coming, and guests were patient and forgiving as the bumps were smoothed out. It was an evening of fun and provided a wonderful opportunity for us all to reconnect with our Vincentian brothers and sisters from all the many Greater Vancouver area Conferences. A heartfelt thank you goes out to all who attended and who helped to make the evening a success.

**Sr. Rhonda Brown**

# Canada's Council in Action



# Canada's Council in Action

## BC & YUKON REGIONAL COUNCIL

*This is a sermon preached by Father Pat Monette, pastor of St. Charles Garnier Parish, Kelowna, on the 30th Sunday in Ordinary Time, 2012. Fr. Pat Monette, has a long association with the Society. As a youth he would accompany his father on calls to the needy in his Toronto conference. Pat has served as Chaplain to the BC Regional Council over a five year period, conducted a number of Provincial Retreats for Vincentians, and has been a strong advocate for the work of our Society in Penticton and Kelowna. He was a keynote speaker at the 2007 National AGA. The last Sunday in each month is Saint Vincent de Paul Sunday in our parish.*



A representation of the world's Bishops is just now wrapping up their Synod in Rome. The purpose of the Synod is to revisit the Council of Vatican II, which is celebrating its 50th anniversary this year, and to establish the framework of what is being called the New Evangelization. The primary purpose is to reignite the faith in the hearts of those who believe.

Since this is Saint Vincent de Paul weekend I thought that I would quote what the Bishop said about those who struggle with poverty and the good that our service to them does for us.

We must recognize the privileged place of the poor in our communities, a place that does not exclude anyone, but wants to reflect how Jesus bound himself to them. The presence of the poor in our communities is mysteriously powerful: faithfulness to the poor changes us more than discourse does, they teach us fidelity, they make us understand the fragility of life, and they inspire us to prayer: in short, an openness to the poor brings us to Christ.

I paraphrased it a little bit for clarity sake, but the point is made. Jesus continues to suffer with His people and especially the poor who suffer for no fault of their own. "The presence of the poor in our communities is mysteriously powerful".

The poor are not meant to be seen as a burden to us but as a means to our salvation. For when we help the poor we are helping Jesus.

Think if it this way; if Jesus suffers with the poor then He prays with them also. Which means that when we take time to lessen the sufferings of the least of our sisters and brothers, we are actually answering the prayers of Jesus.

That is why the poor among us are "Mysteriously Powerful". How can you go wrong by answering the prayers of Jesus? If we answer Jesus' prayers don't you think He would be more likely to answer ours in a way that satisfies us? I don't mean to knock the Bishops but it really isn't that mysterious.

And our Society of Saint Vincent de Paul works to extend the reach of this parish into the homes and into the lives of the least of sisters and brothers in our neighbourhoods and in our city and we can expect to reap the graces of this work if we support it.

It is just about November which means that it is just about Christmas and we need to be sure to include Saint Vincent de Paul in our giving and in our service hours.

What makes Saint Vincent de Paul "Mysteriously Powerful" through their great work is that when they deliver a food hamper in our name, they do not just knock on the door and then run away.

They encounter the person. They look them in the eye and they convey to the person a sense of their dignity in Christ. The fact that a person of faith is at their door

# Vincentian's initiative

## “PEOPLE OF THE WATER AND THE TOWEL”

and in their home, being a witness to their plight says to the person that; “Hey, your suffering does not make me question my faith in a loving and compassionate God”.

It is the same with people who visit the sick. And it is the same when we reach out to people who are mourning. If their struggles do not make us question our faith, then we in actuality are inviting them to seek the Lord of their creation, to not be afraid to ask for God's help. We are saying that our faith includes them, even as they are moved to tears.

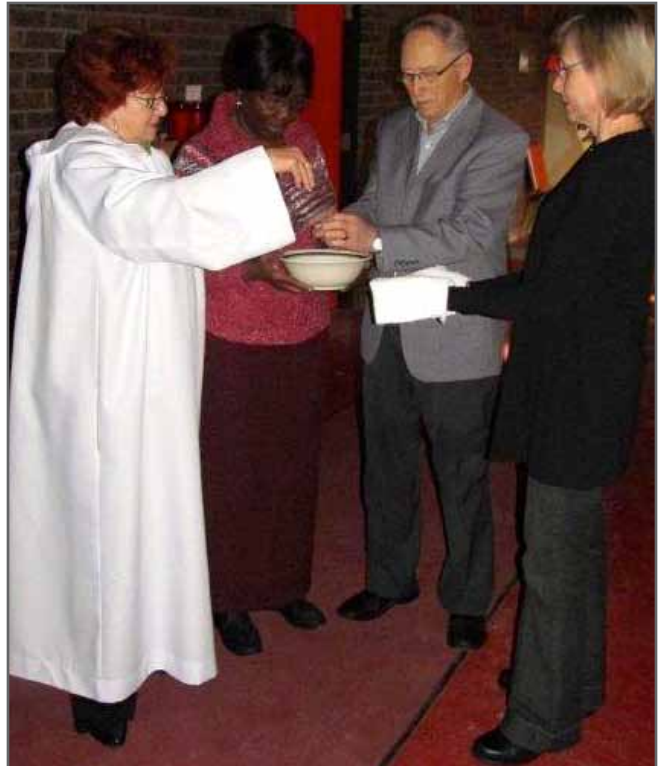
St. Vincent had a clear understanding of the importance of good works, he said; “Charity is the cement which binds Communities to God and persons to one another.” Why, because to do charity means to turn our attention to the other and that is an act of respect that God can build on.

St. Vincent went even further as to the importance of service when he said; “When you are called from your prayers or the Eucharistic celebration to serve the poor, you lose nothing, since to serve the poor is to go to God. You must see God in the faces of the poor.”

We'll take a moment and ask God to bless this New Evangelization and to heal those hurt by the Church. And we'll ask the Spirit to teach us how to recognize Jesus in each other, so that we will be sure to follow Him to the life that lasts forever.

As people who want to be a source of God's healing love, we'll stand and profess our faith with one voice.

**Father Pat Monette**  
Pastor of St. Charles Garnier Parish, Kelowna BC



For Holy Week, the members of Montreal's Sainte-Angèle Conference suggest the following symbolic gesture that illustrates that they are “People of the water and the Towel”.

On Holy Thursday, as parishioners arrive for mass they are greeted by Vincentians who pour water on their hands and say to them: “Serve one another as Jesus did”.



# In Memoriam

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

**Joe Coyle**, St. Pius X Conference, Charlottetown, PEI, March 2, 2012

**Bernadette Bergeron**, St. Rodrigue Conference, Quebec QC, June 15, 2012

**Pierre Gagné**, St. Louis-de-France/St-Yves Conference, Quebec QC, August 29, 2012

**Paul-Émile Côté**, St. Pascal de Maizerets Conference, Quebec QC, August 31, 2012

**Éliette Pouliot**, St. Jean Baptiste Conference, Quebec QC, September 5, 2012

**Dora Boschman**, St. Augustine Conference, Brandon MB, October 7, 2012

**Fernand Filliatreault**, St. Angèle Conference, Montreal QC, October 24, 2012

**Claude Hubert**, Trinity Conference, Orleans ON, January 1, 2013

**Bernard Rodrigue**, St. Angèle Conference, Montreal QC

They were our brothers 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](mailto:editor@ssvp.ca)*

*Nothing can change  
the most embittered hearts  
more than gentleness.  
Respect and gentleness  
were recommended  
by our Lord among  
all other virtues, when he said:  
“Learn from Me  
that I am meek and humble.”*

St. Vincent de Paul



The reliquary of Saint Vincent de Paul was installed in 1830, in the chapel of the Lazarists, 95 rue de Sèvres, in the 6th arrondissement of Paris.

# AGA 2013 - Workshops

## LET US PUT OUR FAITH INTO ACTION *Blessed Frederic Ozanam*

### Proposed Workshops

**Secretaries:** More than just taking minutes, confidentiality – annual reports –an important part of keeping the conference running.

**Treasurers:** Where does the money come from? Whose money is it? Annual reports, Vincentian stewardship- Don't let the ship sink! The tax man.

**Spiritual Advisors:** What is the role? Are we using them? They play a valuable part in our family. Do you have one? How to get one.

**Vincentian Prayer/Vincentian Spirituality:** It is the master that leads us and we need the guidance of our prayer and that of others.

**Systemic Change:** If it's to be, it's up to me! Make it work in my community. Let's help those living in poverty to lift themselves from their situation.

**The Poverty Game:** What our friends in poverty really go through. We will reenact a life in the day of living in poverty and dealing with it all. *Presentation will be by Atlantic Canada.*

**Advocacy:** When we can help. We walk along side of those in poverty, teaching them the way. *Presented by Clermont.* Updates.

**Communication:** Getting our information to our Vincentians is one thing. If we can't do that, how do we get it to the public? Public Communication, making it work to our advantage. *Presented by Western Regional Council*

**Succession:** Who's Next? Take that seat. Grooming a leader for the future, the role belongs to all of us. The excitement of Leadership - *Lynn L'Heureux*

**Where's the Beef? What do you want to Know?** Question and answer time. We plan to have someone from each level on this Q&A. Prepare your questions in advance.

**Starting a new Conference:** What you need to know? What steps to take. Forms and more. Education Committee.

### Please fill form to present workshop

Title of Workshop: \_\_\_\_\_

Length: \_\_\_\_\_

Language Presented: English \_\_\_\_\_ French \_\_\_\_\_

Presenter Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Biographical Data: : \_\_\_\_\_

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\_\_\_\_\_

Topic Content Summary: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

How does the topic tie into the AGA theme?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Handout Materials:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Required Room size/type

\_\_\_\_\_

Required AV Materials

\_\_\_\_\_

Associated Costs if any

\_\_\_\_\_

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Approved by National Council Education Committee:

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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# AGA 2013 - Program

**LET US PUT OUR FAITH INTO ACTION** *Blessed Frederic Ozanam*

## **WEDNESDAY, JUNE 26** ACTIVITY

- 9:00 AM - 9:00 PM Registration & Hospitality
- 9:00 AM - 4:00 PM National Council Committee Meetings
- 1:00 PM - 5:00 PM Tours & Visits
- 5:00 PM - 6:30 PM Supper
- 7:00 PM Regional Meetings  
Evening on Your Own

## **THURSDAY JUNE 27**

- 7:30 AM - 8:30 AM Breakfast
- 8:00 AM - 9:00 PM Registration & Hospitality with sales table
- 9:00 AM - 10:30 AM National Council Board Meeting
- 8:45 AM - 10:15 AM Workshops
- 10:15 AM - 10:30 AM Break
- 10:30 AM - 12:00 PM Workshops
- 12:00 PM - 1:00 PM Lunch
- 1:00 PM - 2:30 PM Workshops
- 1:00 PM - 2:30 PM National Council Committee Meetings
- 2:30 PM - 2:45 PM Break
- 2:45 PM - 4:15 PM Workshops
- 2:45 PM - 4:15 PM National Council Committee Meetings
- 4:30 PM - 5:15 PM Rosary - Memorial Service - Mass
- 5:30 PM - 6:30 PM Supper
- 7:30 PM - 9:00 PM Wine & Cheese Reception and Official Welcoming

**NEW : You can now register online for the National Council AGA. Go to :  
<http://www.ssvp.ca/GeneralAssembly/Registration>**



# AGA 2013 - Program

## FRIDAY JUNE 28

### ACTIVITY

7:30 AM - 8:30 AM	Breakfast
8:00 AM - 9:00 PM	Registration & Hospitality with sales table
8:45 AM - 9:30 AM	Parade of the Banners - Official Opening
9:30 AM - 10:15 AM	Keynote Speaker - Mgr Paul-André Durocher - Archbishop of Gatineau
10:15 AM - 10:30 AM	Break
10:30 AM - 12:00 PM	President's Round Table (with voting members)
10:30 AM - 12:00 PM	Workshops
12:00 PM - 1:00 PM	Lunch
12:00 PM - 1:30 PM	Spiritual Advisors' Luncheon
1:00 PM - 3:00 PM	Plenary - Michael Thio, President of the International Council General
3:00 PM - 3:15 PM	Break
3:15 PM - 4:30 PM	Regional Reports & National Committee Reports
5:00 PM - 5:45 PM	Rosary - Mass
6:00 PM	BBQ

## SATURDAY JUNE 29

7:30 AM - 8:30 AM	Breakfast
8:00 AM - 1:00 PM	Hospitality and sales table
8:45 AM - 9:15 AM	Spiritual Reflection on the theme - Msgr. Peter Schonenbach
9:15 AM - 10:15 AM	National Committee Reports cont'd
10:15 AM - 10:30 AM	Break
10:30 AM - 12:00 AM	Statutory Meeting
12:00 PM - 1:00 PM	Lunch
1:00 PM - 4:00 PM	Statutory Meeting cont'd - Presentation Next AGA
4:00 PM	Refreshments & Free Time
5:30 PM	Mass & Commissioning - St. Joseph Cathedral, Gatineau
7:00 PM	Banquet - Gatineau City Hall

## SUNDAY JUNE 30

7:30 AM - 8:30 AM	Breakfast
	Tours & Visits
	Possible Youth meeting or Committee meetings

# NATIONAL COUNCIL OF CANADA 42ND ANNUAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY

To register online please go to: <http://www.ssvp.ca/GeneralAssembly/Registration>

Wednesday, June 26 to Sunday, June 30, 2013, Ottawa ON & Gatineau QC

Early Registration deadline: April 30, 2013

Please print clearly

Name :		Tel :	
Address :	Apt:	Email:	
City:	Prov:	Postal code:	
Conference:	Council :		
Contact in case of emergency:		Tel :	
Spiritual Advisor :	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		
Arrival date & time:	Departure date & time:		
<input type="checkbox"/> Bus	<input type="checkbox"/> Car	<input type="checkbox"/> Plane	
Arrival number:	Airport and Carrier:		
Departure number:	Airport and Carrier:		

Would you like a volunteer to meet you at the airport, train or bus station?  Yes  No

(From Tuesday to Sunday)

Do you require transportation back to the airport, train or bus station on **Sunday** ?  Yes  No

Do you have any special mobility needs ? \_\_\_\_\_

## REGISTRATION FEE

**Before April 30, 2013:** \$ 250 Student rate: \$ 175

**After April 30, 2013:** \$ 265 Student rate: \$ 175

*This amount covers conference registration, Wine and Cheese, Friday Bar B.Q. and Saturday Banquet.*

Registration fee, per person : \_\_\_\_\_ x \$250 / \$ 265 = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Youth Registration fee, per person: \_\_\_\_\_ x \$175 = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Additional Wine and Cheese tickets: \_\_\_\_\_ x \$ 45 = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Additional Bar B.Q. tickets: \_\_\_\_\_ x \$ 45 = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Additional banquet tickets : \_\_\_\_\_ x \$ 70 = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Total A** \$ \_\_\_\_\_

## One Day Registration Fee

Registration fee, per person, per day: \$ 60

\_\_\_\_\_ days x \_\_\_\_\_ person x \$ 60 day= **Total B** \$ \_\_\_\_\_

## MEALS

Do you have any dietary concerns or allergies? Please specify :

### Select desired meals:

	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun	Number of meals			
Breakfast	---	\$ 8,50	\$ 8,50	\$ 8,50	\$ 8,50	_____	x	\$ 8,50 = \$	_____
Lunch	---	\$ 12,50	\$ 12,50	\$ 12,50	\$ 12,50	_____	x	\$ 12,50 = \$	_____
*Dinner	\$ 16,00	\$ 16,00	---	---	---	_____	x	\$ 16,00 = \$	_____
								<b>Total C</b> \$	_____

\* Please note that we must have a minimum of 50 reservations in order to provide a supper buffet between 5 to 6:30 pm on Wed. and Thu..

### TOTAL PAYMENT:

(A + B + C) = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

### Payment by cheque only

If you choose to **register on line** a confirmation will be provided. Please print out a copy of the confirmation and mail it in with your check to address below. If you choose to **mail your registration form**, (print it off and mail the completed form along with your check to the address below.

**Make cheque payable to: SSVP AGA 2013**

#### Mail to:

Society of Saint Vincent de Paul  
Ottawa Central Council AGA 2013

1273 Wellington Street, West, Ottawa ON K1Y 3A6

Tel: 613-722-7166 Ext 10 - Fax: 613-722-6505 - Email: [ssvp.aga.2013@rogers.com](mailto:ssvp.aga.2013@rogers.com)

**PLEASE NOTE:** A **confirmation** of your registration will be sent to you by email (or regular mail if no email address is provided). **Cancellation:** Please note, that refunds are possible, minus \$50, for cancellation.

No refunds will be granted for cancellations made without prior notice.

### ACCOMMODATION ARRANGEMENTS TO BE MADE DIRECTLY WITH OTTAWA UNIVERSITY:

To book accommodation on line go to <https://www.aborg.net/~ottawarw/cgi-bin/ccsubmit.pl> and fill in the form. A reservation agent will contact you to confirm availability. Or, for immediate assistance, please call toll free. 1-888-564-4545 (ext. 45054).

**Reservations must be made at least 30 days before the event. Check in: 4 p.m., check out: 10 a.m. Parking is \$15.00 a day with booking.**

To reserve **suites** you must mention the Group Conference name: *Society of Saint Vincent de Paul National AGA 2013, Registration No: 261511* to obtain special rates.

At 90 University, each suite-style unit includes **two separate bedrooms** – each with a **double bed**, air-conditioned – a large kitchenette equipped with microwave, fridge, table and chairs, and a private washroom with shower. Each suite costs \$99.00 per night plus 13% HST for a total of \$111.87.

Each suite can accommodate up to four persons (cost per person would be \$27.97 tax included). If two persons wish to share a suite, each bedroom would be \$55.94 or any other combination. In order to take advantage of this type of combination booking must be made under one name only.

To view the suite go <http://web5.uottawa.ca/mcs-smc/virtualtour/residences.php> to and click on Suite Type Residence (on the right side).

To reserve **conventional single or double bedroom** you must mention Group Conference name: *Society of Saint Vincent de Paul National AGA 2013, Registration No: 261512* to obtain special rates.

Each single bedroom unit has one single bed – must share a communal bath with five shower stalls. Each single room costs \$35.00 per night plus 13% HST, for a total of \$39.55.

If two persons wish to share a double bedroom (two single beds) the cost per room will be \$70.00 plus 13% HST for a total of \$79.10. The double bedroom booking must be made under one name only.

To view the conventional single or double bedroom unit go to <http://web5.uottawa.ca/mcs-smc/virtualtour/residences.php> and click on Conventional Style (on the right side).

# What's New ?



*Back of card:*

In addition to the usual assistance, the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul offers several projects to help youth, among others: Operation Bonne Mine, the Marginal Caravan, scholarships, Christmas for children, and summer camps.

## NEW ITEMS

New cards are now available:

- two cards for any occasion
- one thank you card

All three cards are without text inside.

The price is \$2.00 per card, or 12 cards for \$20.00. Those new cards can be mixed with the old ones to make 12-card packages.

See our online catalogue to order those articles, and several others, by visiting our website at: [www.ssvp.ca](http://www.ssvp.ca).

You may as well order by phone at 1 866 997-7787.



*Back of card:*

The members of the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul provide comfort to the elderly who are homebound, sick and nearing the end of their life.



*Back of card:*

Rice farm  
Society of Saint Vincent de Paul project  
in the Dominican Republic