



Society of Saint Vincent de Paul  
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## In this issue:

- Message from the National President
- 175 Years: ... Keeps Going and Going and Going...
- Commemoration Mass
- Marguerite d'Youville, Patron Saint of SSVp in Canada
- Webinar: National Housing Campaign
- Webinar: Treasurer: Role and Responsibilities, and Annual Reports
- La Dépannerie: Your Neighbourhood Solidarity Grocery Store
- Gérard Lemay, First National President
- Together We Heal - Learning to Be Trauma-Informed
- The Importance of Reconciliation
- Social Justice News
- Address of Pope Francis to the Participants in the World Meeting of Popular Movements
- Question & Answer

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## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Here we are again midway through the Fall Season and all of nature seems to be preparing for dormancy. Fall colours are ablaze everywhere in various shades of yellow, orange and red. Flora and fauna alike are preparing to be passive for the winter in preparation for the deep freeze and the reawakening in the spring.

Is it any wonder that the Church has designated the month of November as the “Month of the Dead”? This is especially poignant on November 1<sup>st</sup> the Solemnity of “All Saints” a day to honour all the saints and martyrs, known and unknown, and November 2<sup>nd</sup> “All Souls’ Day” The Commemoration of All the Faithful Departed.

“There is no saint without a past, and no sinner without a future.” - St Augustine

We are encouraged throughout this month to stop, reflect on and pray for those who have gone before us especially for members of our family, our friends and our neighbours. How appropriate, especially considering our northern climes where all of life seems to pause in its near frozen state.

Does this not remind you of your own mortality? Rightly so, it should give you pause to examine your life in the light of your faith and of the immortality which you aspire to. Take a moment to reflect on the Gospel of Matthew Chapter 16: 24 – 26.

Let us also take time to pay our respects for all the brave men and women of our armed forces who have given their all, in defense of the life and liberty that we hold so dear. November 11<sup>th</sup> is also a day to remember all the armed services personnel who have served past and present.

Many have returned from conflict or peacekeeping severely damaged in mind and body, soul and spirit. Brave men and women so traumatized that many have lost their way. Veterans are some of the souls we encounter as we respond to a call for assistance from a homeless person or a family without sufficient means to support themselves.

Have we as a nation and a people forgotten and abandoned them in their hour of need?

The Royal Canadian Legion advocates for the care and benefits for all who served Canada, regardless of when or where they served. Their major source of income to provide this service comes from the Poppy Fund. I encourage all Vincentians to pick up a Poppy at their local Legion Branch or a commercial establishment near you. Poppies are available without cost. Free will offerings are always gratefully and greatly appreciated.

This year take time to thank a veteran. We Will Remember Them.

Let us pray for peace and for an end to armed conflicts.

*Joseph Claude Bédard, President  
National Council*



## 175 YEARS: ... KEEPS GOING AND GOING AND GOING ...

We've all seen the Energizer bunny commercials with the underlying message "... keeps going and going and going ..." It is the ultimate symbol of longevity, perseverance and determination that Energizer is communicating.

These symbols of longevity, perseverance and determination are also applicable to the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul, now celebrating its 175<sup>th</sup> founding anniversary in Canada.

It is also a pleasant coincidence that the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul in Canada is celebrating its 175<sup>th</sup> anniversary in conjunction with the [November 14 World Day of the Poor \(WDP\)](#) on the 33<sup>rd</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time. In this year's WDP message, Pope Francis calls us to action; he sets the context with:

*The poor will always be with us, yet that should not make us indifferent, but summon us instead to a mutual sharing of life that does not allow proxies. The poor are not people "outside" our communities, but brothers and sisters whose sufferings we should share, in an effort to alleviate their difficulties and marginalization, restore their lost dignity and ensure their necessary social inclusion.*

Pope Francis raises the bar with:

*There seems to be a growing notion that the poor are not only responsible for their condition, but that they represent an intolerable burden for an economic system focused on the interests of a few privileged groups. A market that ignores ethical principles, or picks and chooses from among them, creates inhumane conditions for people already in precarious situations. We are now seeing the creation of new traps of poverty and exclusion, set by unscrupulous economic and financial actors lacking in a humanitarian sense and in social responsibility.*

followed by:

*Serving the poor effectively moves us into action and makes it possible to find the most suitable ways of raising and promoting this part of humanity that all too often is anonymous and voiceless, but which has imprinted on it the face of the Saviour who asks for our help.*

The question that Pope Francis is ultimately asking:

*What path of justice must be followed so that social inequalities can be overcome and human dignity, so often trampled upon, can be restored?*

This ultimate question is very much what Blessed Frédéric Ozanam was focused on. Pope John Paul II stated, at the August 22, 1997 beatification ceremonies for Frédéric Ozanam:

*Frédéric observed the real situation of the poor and sought to be more and more effective in helping them in their human development. Charity and justice go together.*

*Frédéric had the clear-sighted courage to seek a front-line social and political commitments in a troubled time in the life of his country.*

The 2021-2024 National Strategic Plan approved by National Council this past June is anchored in Pope Francis' message, and in Frédéric Ozanam's vision of charity and justice.

[https://www.ssvp.ca/sites/default/files/eng-ssvp\\_strategic\\_plan\\_2021-2024-ext\\_final.pdf](https://www.ssvp.ca/sites/default/files/eng-ssvp_strategic_plan_2021-2024-ext_final.pdf)

For the 175<sup>th</sup> of the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul in Canada, it was voted to place the Society in Canada under the holy protection of Saint Marguerite d'Youville, Mother of Universal Charity. Saint Marguerite d'Youville is a woman of action, the example of someone who drew from the very Heart of God and made it visible through the care given to the persons in need regardless of age, sex, nationality or religion.

*Richard Pommainville, Executive Director  
National Council of Canada*



## COMMEMORATION MASS

A commemoration Mass of the 175th Anniversary of the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul in Canada and the Consecration of our Society to Saint Margueritte d'Youville will be held on November 13; **this mass will be broadcast live on our Facebook page on Saturday November 13 at 5:00 PM** Eastern Time (US and Canada).

## PATRON SAINT OF THE SOCIETY IN CANADA

My Dear Friends in Christ,

The National Spirituality Committee invited members to submit nominations of Canadian Saints to be considered the Patron Saint of the Society in Canada. Four wonderful nominees were put forward and members made the decision by ballot.

Thank you to all who participated in this process. We are pleased to announce that the Patron Saint of the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul in Canada is Saint Marguerite d'Youville.

It is the intention of National to hold the consecration to the Patron Saint at our Fall Board meeting in Québec City in conjunction with the celebration of the 175th anniversary of the Society in Canada.

The biography of this truly remarkable woman is available on our SSVP website:  
[Marguerite d'Youville Bio](#)

Discover all stages of Marguerite d'Youville's life in pictures: [Illustrated Story on Her Life](#)

May God bless us all and the poor we serve.

Yours in the Service of the Servants of the Poor,

*John Carey, Chair  
National Spirituality Committee*



## WEBINAR

The National Finance Committee will be holding a webinar for treasurers and/or those involved in completing financial reports, at conference and/or council level entitled “Treasurer: Role and Responsibilities, and Annual Reports”.

Topics to be covered:

1. Review of Rule 2.6.1.3 Duties of Treasurer
2. Planning how to keep your records to simplify annual reporting
3. Examples of how to record various revenues and expenses
4. Completing the SSVP Annual Financial Report (9.3 Section E1)
5. Completing the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) T3010

When: December 4, 2021, 01:00 PM Eastern Time – ENGLISH

December 4, 2021, 10:30 AM Eastern Time – FRENCH

Register in advance for this meeting:

ENGLISH: <https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZcsf-GvpjkrHNzdrVOVGK-jld18QdhLvwi->

FRENCH: <https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZ0ucOqvrDIqGNA9KHcVKi5-Rw0VvsCV2hoq>

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting.



## NATIONAL HOUSING CAMPAIGN

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 20<sup>TH</sup> 1.00PM (EASTERN)

Our national housing/homelessness subcommittee is inviting you to a webinar on housing and homelessness across Canada. This webinar is for all involved in our social justice network or are interested in learning more about housing and homelessness issues and its relation to persons in situation of poverty.

There will be two speakers. Garth Brown on the topic of secondary suites, an option available in many of our cities; Garth brings years of experience in this area and will provide an extensive overview of the value of secondary suites. Michele Biss from the National Right to Housing will provide us with valuable information and recent news regarding housing in Canada.

Please note that Monday November 22 is National Housing Day in Canada.

There will be a question & answer time after these two presentations.

When: Nov 20, 2021 01:00 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada).

Please register in advance for this zoom via this link: [Register here](#)

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting.

*Jim Paddon, Chair*  
*National Social Justice Committee*



## LA DÉPANNERIE: YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD SOLIDARITY GROCERY STORE

### What is a solidarity grocery store?

In our case, it is:

- A **complementary option to food assistance**.
- An **access to a low-cost grocery store** for local residents.

A solidarity grocery store is a store where you can find healthy and varied food offer. It promotes physical and economic access to fresh fruits and vegetables.

More than a simple food store, the solidarity grocery store stands out for its social integration of users who have free choice of products, based on their income. It is a place of meetings and exchanges that promotes the social participation of households who buy their supplies there. Citizen involvement and volunteering are also ways of supporting this social inclusion project.

Our first solidarity grocery store, **La Dépannerie**, will open in January 2022 and will be located in the Ville-Marie borough in Montréal, Center-Sud district, within the Société de Saint-Vincent de Paul de Montréal's building.

### Why this solidarity grocery project?

- Following a consultation with users of our services, we noted that they often leave with the same type of non-perishable food. **Lack of easy access to fresh food** has been mentioned several times: this is how our solidarity grocery project emerged.
- The Société de Saint-Vincent de Paul de Montréal wants to develop **innovative projects** and offer **additional options** to traditional methods of food assistance.
- We hope to promote the **notion of choice** which is essential to us. We believe in **empowering** our users with **dignity** and toward **social inclusion**.
- One other fundamental objective is to **break isolation**. In our solidarity grocery store, it will be possible to meet, discuss, participate in educational and awareness-raising workshops related to healthy eating habits, all in an inclusive environment.

[MAKE A DONATION](#)

**Learn more...**

# PROJECT TIMELINE

## STEPS OF CREATION OF OUR SOLIDARITY GROCERY STORE

### STEP 1: WINTER 2021

Project definition  
Meetings with managers of  
existing solidarity grocery stores  
Search for suppliers and partners

### STEP 2: SPRING / SUMMER 2021

Definition of operations and  
economic model

### STEP 3: FALL 2021

Store work and layout  
Volunteer recruitment

### STEP 4: WINTER 2022

Communications around  
the opening

INAUGURATION OF THE  
SOLIDARITY GROCERY  
STORE EARLY 2022

### **How does La Dépannerie works?**

In order to contribute to the proper functioning of the solidarity grocery store and to guarantee its inclusiveness, **access is open to all**.

To become a member, you must purchase your **membership card from a \$ 6 contribution**. For a contribution over \$ 20 in cash, a **tax receipt** may be issued to you. There is not tax receipt for volunteer time.

Your membership card, valid for one year, allows access to member's price as well as to the activities offered at La Dépannerie such as popular education workshops, kitchen workshops, coffee corner, etc. (Upcoming programming).

### **Who can come to La Dépannerie?**

The project is set up to meet the needs of people having economic difficulties, but the grocery store is open to all types of households (single people, single-parent families, large families, etc.) regardless of their economic situation.

### **Our goals**

- Increase physical and economic access to quality products for people living in poverty.
- Improve the quality and diversity of the food offer in the Center-Sud district.
- Offer food safety awareness activities.
- Improve consumption habits and allow food purchases with dignity.
- Encourage people's autonomy.
- Promote volunteer and citizen involvement.
- Fight against food waste.
- Develop and strengthen partnerships with businesses involved in food in the neighborhood and in the Montréal region.

### **Our partners**

- [Caisse Desjardins du Quartier-Latin de Montréal](#)
- [Bouffe Action de Rosemont](#)
- [Les Cyclistes Solidaires](#)
- [La Table de concertation CIGAL Centre-Sud](#)
- [L'Éco-quartier de Saint-Jacques](#)



## GÉRARD LEMAY - FIRST NATIONAL PRESIDENT - 1969-1972



Mr. Gérard Lemay was born in Québec City in 1908 and died in Québec City in 1991.

He studied at the Séminaire de Québec for his classical courses, where he was a member of the Youth Conference. He studied law and was admitted to the Bar in 1933 and practiced law in Québec City. He was appointed a Provincial Court Judge in 1955.

In 1965, he was appointed Vice-president of the Conseil central de Québec and in 1969, he became President of the Conseil national. Judge Lemay was the first President elected to the National Council by the ex officio members, in accordance with the new Rule.

At the beginning of his mandate, he appointed eight vice-presidents, four of whom were English-speaking and four French-speaking: the meetings of the National Executive were more frequent and many problems were solved in harmony. Mr. Lemay's familiarity with the English language greatly contributed to the strengthening of fraternal relations between members across the country.

Under his leadership at the National Council, Mr. Lemay who was also President of the Québec City Central Council, decided to celebrate the 125th anniversary of the Society in Canada in 1971 and invited the entire Vincentian family to the celebration on the campus of Laval University in Québec City. The response from Vincentians was enthusiastic. Not since the Society's golden anniversary in Canada (in 1896) had so many Vincentians been seen together.

In addition to the unification of the Society in Canada, Judge Lemay's main work was the Maison Painchaud, first promoted by Judge Tremblay at the end of his term.

The social reintegration program of La Maison Painchaud was designed to help individuals who have been in conflict with the law to reintegrate into the community and remain law-abiding citizens.

This work of social integration of ex-prisoners still continues its activities today in Québec City, but it is under the authority of an autonomous board of directors of the Society. It has been operating without interruption since its founding and is recognized and financed by the Government of Canada.

In 1982, Judge Lemay was named a member of the Order of Canada for his commitment to the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul of Canada.

*(Source: Vincenpaul-Canada magazine, 1988, August, pages 7 to 11 - Ceux qui ont bâti la Société au Canada, Gérard Lemay, by Éric Gosling)*



## TOGETHER WE HEAL – LEARNING TO BE TRAUMA-INFORMED

The TRC Call to Action # 59 asks church groups party to the Settlement Agreement to develop ongoing education strategies to ensure that their respective congregations learn about their church's role in colonization, as well as the history and legacy of residential schools.

Realizing the area of education is a role the Star of the North Retreat Centre could play, we decided to transform the monthly Twilight Retreats we were conducting into monthly dialogue circles to bring Indigenous and non-Indigenous people together to learn from each other and journey forward together. Edmonton-based Indigenous lawyer Catherine Twinn offered to help us organize and facilitate these sessions. She is currently participating in the Compassionate Inquiry series offered by noted psychologist Gabor Maté, giving her even more tools to offer this initiative which we have entitled *Together We Heal*.

Our first session took place on Thursday, September 16<sup>th</sup>, with Morningstar Mercredi as the main presenter. Wanting to connect this session with the National Day of Truth and Reconciliation, as well as Orange Shirt Day, Sr. Mariángel Marco Teja created a ritual involving a Knower's Chair. After smudging and prayer led by Gary Gagnon, we celebrated the ritual by taking a monarch's crown off the chair, a symbol of colonialism, and replaced it with Indigenous articles symbolizing the people we wanted to see and hear from that chair. Most telling was an orange shirt that was draped over the chair with the words "Every Child Matters" printed on it.

Morningstar, author and filmmaker, spoke forcefully about the devastating impact of the intergenerational trauma of the residential school on her, her family and her people; how the colonial powers systematically separated children from their mothers as a way to destroy the culture, break down the nations and impose its own values. Her book, *Morningstar – a Warrior's Spirit*, is a must-read and a powerful description of the horrific violence imposed on the Indigenous peoples, which she related to us with great restraint. Catherine responded to her presentation, reminding us of the importance of being trauma-informed, and how individuals, families and whole communities often unwittingly respond to events out of an unconscious base of undealt-with-trauma.

In a preparatory meeting with a presenter of an upcoming Together We Heal session to take place on November 18<sup>th</sup>, 2021, actress and filmmaker Georgina Lightning taught me how devastating trauma can be when it is not addressed. Gifted and talented, Georgina escaped to the United States with her three children after two failed marriages, and enrolled in the American Academy of Arts and Sciences in Los Angeles. While she excelled there with awards and honors, lived in a gated community and raised her children in a healthy environment, her body suddenly started to fail. She was finally diagnosed with a failure of her endocrine system, after suppressing and not addressing her trauma for years. Her body had become like that of a 90-year-old woman! Now she is on a healing journey and regaining her health.

According to Gabor Maté, trauma is not about what happened to us – it is about what happens inside us as a result of what happened to us. Part of that trauma is the isolation of victims who can't talk about what happened to them and to thousands of other victims of that trauma.

The feeling I have is that we are on the cusp of a huge learning curve, just beginning to wake up to the magnitude of the trauma inflicted upon generations of Indigenous by the colonial residential school system. We are looking forward to the next presentation by Lewis Cardinal, Georgina, and many others as we move through this coming year. As the sessions are both in-person and virtual, anyone can participate. Simply go to the Star of the North Website and click on Together We Heal. And please pray for us as we move forward with this initiative.

*Archbishop Emeritus Sylvain Lavoie OMI*  
*National Spiritual Advisor*

<https://www.starofthenorth.ca/register/browse/programs-2/event/together-we-heal-238/>



## RECONCILIATION AND VINCENTIANS

I was able to watch and listen to Prime Minister Trudeau's very sincere and humble apology to the Innu peoples which was followed by the equally emotional acceptance by Toby Abed of the residential school survivors. As I listened and shared a tear with these two men, I tried to imagine the pain and life-long effect the residential school system has had on our fellow Canadians. In addition, there has been so much pain while the Innu waited patiently for this apology. What an incredible moment it must have been for these families to hear this apology.

I have reflected on the recent actions our Society of Saint Vincent de Paul have undertaken related to the Inuit peoples we have met and partner with in our North of 60 program. I have also reflected on what reconciliation means within our own Catholic faith. Reconciliation is so important to us as Catholics that it is one of our sacraments. If we use this as the basis of how we consider the importance of reconciliation to Indigenous peoples, we should be able to better understand how critical it is to Indigenous peoples if we are to be successful in our continued efforts to develop a strong and long-lasting partnership of sharing and caring with them.

As a lay Catholic organization our words and actions are a direct result of our own faith tradition and can provide us with the unique ability to speak and act as members of the Catholic faith in Canada. I would remind you that since the Catholic faith tradition is such an integral part of any actions and words we do and say as Vincentians, we should also have an understanding of the rich and deeply spiritual faith traditions of Indigenous peoples. In my experience there is a great deal we can and should learn about the spirituality of Indigenous peoples. Please consider the opportunity to include this education as part of any activities you undertake related to Indigenous peoples. Why not invite an Indigenous person to speak at future meetings? Reconciliation is only the beginning of a better future for all Canadians. I hope and pray that we may all consider this in our future actions and words as Vincentians.

*Jim Paddon, Chairperson  
Social Justice National Committee*



## SSVP SOCIAL JUSTICE NEWS

I'd like to thank the following subcommittees for their efforts to expand our work on several specific topics. All of these subcommittees welcome your support, interest and involvement.

1. National Housing/Homelessness campaign: February, 2022, will mark the first anniversary of the campaign launch. Please consider getting involved at your regional or local council/conference level. There is lots of helpful information at our national website. ([www.ssvp.ca](http://www.ssvp.ca)).
2. Advocacy Circle is our advocacy subcommittee which continues its work towards the development of a mandate and goals for their efforts. We need to find ways persons living in poverty can have a voice and where needed be their voice.
3. Our Multicultural Diversity subcommittee is also developing a mandate and goals. A positive approach to our rich cultural diversity in Canada should be celebrated and enjoyed by all. SSVP can also grow by becoming more diverse in our membership and volunteers.
4. Prison Ministry: We have held one zoom meeting with another scheduled this month as we examine how we may form a national network for prison ministry. SSVP is well positioned to do more in both inside the prison walls and especially with inmates upon release. There are many victims of crime that we can help.
5. Indigenous Lives matter: We held a very successful zoom on Sept. 29 with a couple of follow up meetings coming this month. We hope to be able to develop recommendations to the national council on how SSVP members can learn more about Indigenous history, culture and faith traditions. This understanding will help us in our efforts to work with Indigenous People on issues of poverty and systemic racism.

*Jim Paddon, Chair  
National Social Justice Committee*





## ADDRESS OF POPE FRANCIS TO THE PARTICIPANTS IN THE WORLD MEETING OF POPULAR MOVEMENTS

Old Synod Hall  
Tuesday, 28 October 2014

*Housing.* I said it and I repeat it: a home for every family. We must never forget that, because there was no room in the inn, Jesus was born in a stable; and that his family, persecuted by Herod, had to leave their home and flee into Egypt. Today there are so many homeless families, either because they have never had one or because, for different reasons, they have lost it. Family and housing go hand in hand. Furthermore, for a house to be a home, it requires a community dimension, and this is the neighbourhood ... and it is precisely in the neighbourhood where the great family of humanity begins to be built, starting from the most immediate instance, from living together with one's neighbours. We live nowadays in immense cities that show off proudly, even arrogantly, how modern they are. But while they offer wellbeing and innumerable pleasures for a happy minority, housing is denied to thousands of our neighbours, our brothers and sisters including children, who are called elegant names such as 'street people' or 'without fixed abode' or 'urban camper'. Isn't it curious how euphemisms abound in the world of injustices! A person, a segregated person, a person set apart, a person who suffers misery or hunger: such a one is 'urban camper'. It is an elegant expression, isn't it? You should be on the lookout – I might be wrong in some cases; but in general, what lurks behind each euphemism is a crime.

We live in cities that throw up skyscrapers and shopping centres and strike big real estate deals ... but they abandon a part of themselves to marginal settlements on the periphery. How painful it is to hear that poor settlements are marginalized, or, worse still, earmarked for demolition! How cruel are the images of violent evictions, bulldozers knocking down the tiny dwellings, images just like from a war. And this is what we see today.

You know that in the crowded slums where many of you live, values endure that have been forgotten in the rich centres. These settlements are blessed with a rich popular culture where public areas are not just transit corridors but an extension of the home, a place where bonds can be forged with neighbours. How lovely are cities that overcome unhealthy mistrust and integrate those who are different, even making such integration a new factor of development. How lovely are cities that, in their architectural design, are full of spaces that unite, connect and foster recognition of the other. So the line to follow is neither eradication nor marginalization but urban integration. Moreover, not only must the word "integration" replace all talk of eradication; it must also supplant those projects that aim to varnish poor neighbourhoods, prettify the outskirts and daub make-up on social ailments instead of curing them by promoting genuine and respectful integration. It is a sort of cosmetic architecture, isn't it? And it is the trend. So let us keep on working so that all families have housing and so that all neighbourhoods have adequate infrastructure (sewage, light, gas, asphalted roads); and I go on: schools, hospitals or first aid clinics, sports clubs and all those things that create bonds and unite; and as I have already said, access to health care and to education and to secure tenancy.



## QUESTION & ANSWER

- Q:** Does a Conference need to have insurance if the Parish/Church has it? My understanding is that each Conference must have Insurance as well as the Council.
- A:** As reflected in the Rule and Statutes, under section 3.16:  
The Society has a legal and ethical obligation to protect its members while they are involved in mission activities on behalf of the Society in Canada. Conferences, councils and special works, at all levels, should take steps to purchase general liability insurance for all their members and staff. The risks covered should include all those specified by the National Council. Insurance coverage must be renewed as long as the need for it exists.