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Message from the President

Psalm 20¹

*⁶ Now I know that the LORD will help his anointed;
he will answer him from his holy heaven
with mighty victories by his right hand.*

*⁷ Some take pride in chariots, and some in horses,
but our pride is in the name of the LORD our God.*

*⁸ They will collapse and fall,
but we shall rise and stand upright.*

I wish you all a Very Happy and Healthy New Year as we enter into the third year of the current pandemic. The whole world is looking to and hoping for an end to COVID. Are we placing all our faith, hope and trust in science and technology to ultimately provide the answers and to deliver the solution?

We are grateful for the benefits to humanity that scientific and technological research and development provide. Creation appears to be an ongoing process, what never existed in previous ages is now taken for granted. I see no conflict between reason, research and development and faith. In fact, scientist and researchers need our prayers. Prayer can in no way obstruct but only enhance their work. We should all pray and ask God to enlarge our scientific and technical knowledge and to augment their skills.

“For if the movement of the universe were irrational, and the world rolled on in random fashion, one would be justified in disbelieving what we say. But if the world is founded on reason, wisdom and science, and is filled with orderly beauty, then it must owe its origin and order to none other than the Word of God.”

Saint Athanasius, Bishop (c. 296 – 373)

Try changing two words in verse 7 above and then spend a moment in prayer and meditation. Replace the words “chariots” and “horses” with the words “science” and “technology”.

1. What is God’s role in bringing an end to the COVID pandemic?
2. Will prayer and penance help to bring an end to the pandemic?

God is the progenitor and source of all knowledge and wisdom. Science and technology are not an end in themselves but only a means to an end. God is our first and only primary end. I beg you, pray and do penance that God may quickly bring an end to the pandemic.

As Vincentians we are intimately aware of God’s providence in our lives and in our work as servants of the most vulnerable, the poor, marginalized, oppressed and forgotten in our midst. We must remain ever cognizant of God’s providence in the lives of the persons and families that we serve. We are eyewitnesses to the fact that God’s grace is active and effective in our

everyday lives and environment. As witnesses thereof, we must have the courage to profess our faith and to share with others what we know and have seen.

Vincentians, elected and appointed members, staff and volunteers, thank you for your selflessness and willingness to venture forth during these trying times to assist persons and families in need and for boldly serving where most now fear to tread.

Are you familiar with the story of Saint Geneviève? Perhaps we can learn from the example of our ancestors.

SAINT GENEVIÈVE https://www.catholic.org/saints/saint.php?saint_id=120
Virgin (c. 422-512)

Paris experienced proof of Geneviève's intercession on many occasions. The most famous occurrence was the miracle of Des Ardens, or the burning fever. In 1129, a violent fever swept through the city, and doctors couldn't stop the people from dying. The shrine of Geneviève was carried in a procession to the cathedral, and during the ceremony, those who touched her shrine were healed by the power of the Lord. Throughout the whole town, no one else became sick, all the ill recovered and only three people died.

St. Joseph. Pray for us.

St. Marguerite D'Youville. Pray for us.

St. Geneviève. Pray for us.

JMJ

Serviens in spe,

*Claude Bédard, President
National Council of Canada*

Let the world be in upheaval. I hold to his promise and read his message; that is my protecting wall and garrison. What message? "Know that I am with you always, until the end of the world!" - Saint John Chrysostom, Bishop (344 – 407)

Note:

1. Bible quotation taken from the New Revised Standard Version - Catholic Edition



2021: A Year Full of Challenges and Opportunities

Council General International

Despite the international health crisis, this year devoted to co-founder Jules Devaux, has been very fruitful in terms of achievements and on-site and virtual activities undertaken by the Council General International (CGI).

As for formation and training, the highlights were as follows: the Circular Letter was published in February 2021; the fifth volume of *Vincentian Chronicles* was launched in May; two webinars on the pandemic, poverty and the future were held; and a book, written by co-founder Felix Clavé, on various poems was unveiled. Cities in southern France related to Felix Clavé were visited, and a historic Board meeting was held in Lyon, with a pilgrimage made to places where Ozanam lived.

As far as spiritual growth is concerned, the CGI launched a campaign for Ozanam's canonization on the 23rd of each month, where members were urged to fast, as well as a novena prayer in memory of Ozanam, which is annually celebrated from September 1 to 9. The canonization process is in full swing with another miracle being analyzed by medical experts at the Vatican. Father Giuseppe Guerra has been monitoring the whole process. At the end of the year, the Christmas Message was recorded and was addressed to all the brothers and sisters worldwide.

Regarding governance and management, the CGI set up a Governance Department, and analyzed the adoption of good practices related to risk management. In 2021, two other useful documents were produced to undertake international activities: Updated Terms of Reference for all international services and missions and a reviewed strategic planning for Renato Lima's remaining term, until September 2023.

Concerning communication, news are published on a weekly basis on the CGI's website (www.ssvpglobal.org), three issues of *Ozanam Network* webzine were published, two Talk Shows with the President General were broadcasted, and the work carried out by the Logo Commission was completed.

In September, the CGI's Annual Meeting was held in Madrid in hybrid format. During the 4-day meeting, the Charity in Hope Medal was awarded to Aid to the Church in Need (ACN), a cooperation agreement was signed with Misevi (Vincentian Lay Missionaries), and three brochures were launched: *Guide for Creating Youth Conferences at Universities*, *Vincentian Reflection on the World Day of the Poor*, as well as the SSV Plus Project's Operations Manual. At the beginning of the year, the final version of the *SSVP Safeguarding Protocol for the Most Vulnerable* was published to be used by Superior Councils.

As regards youth, progress was made on several issues: excellent results obtained from the census (30% of young adults, youth and children at our SSV, up to 35 years old). The International Vice Presidency thereof has worked relentlessly and taught different online courses, namely, Digital Salamanca, which brought together participants of a 2018 meeting and current national youth coordinators. On July 4th, two motivation letters addressed to young people were published and the International Network of Friends project was launched. *The Seven Founders* contest in French, English and Italian was also successfully led by the youth.

It is worth mentioning significant Vincentian dates commemorated by the CGI worldwide: July 4th, the SSVP's Youth Day; July 21st, the foundation of the CGI; and August 14th, the International SSVP Women's Day. In addition, five ordinary Board meetings were held, numerous training and formation sessions were organized and ITVP meetings were arranged. Moreover, the President General received the title of honorary citizen in Taubaté (Brazil) and participated in the solemn session of the Vincentian Day in Brasilia, his city.

With respect to international events, the pandemic negatively affected the Society for the second year in a row, restricting social gatherings at various forums and activities. Even so, seven countries were visited (Gibraltar, Mexico, Spain, Brazil, Portugal, France and Paraguay), and Cape Verde became a new Vincentian Territory, thanks to the SSVP Plus project. Furthermore, the CGI participated, virtually or in person, in several UN sessions to discuss issues such as the environment, poverty, homelessness and migration. At the Vatican, the President General was appointed member at the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development, and the CGI actively took part in several meetings related to children, migrants and refugees.

Relations with the Vincentian Family were exceptional. In addition to the annual fee sent by the CGI to the International Office located in Philadelphia, a significant amount was donated to renovate the conference auditorium at the Motherhouse of the Congregation of the Mission (CM), which will now be called "Ozanam Hall." The Vincentian Family officially declared its support for Ozanam's canonization and published a resolution about the lack of vaccines to eradicate Covid-19, the latter at the proposal of the SSVP. The CGI attended all the meetings promoted by the Vincentian Family in 2021, especially those of the International Executive Committee, in addition to several virtual events regarding formation, spirituality and homelessness (13 Houses Campaign).

As for international solidarity, figures are impressive. The Commission for International Aid and Development (CIAD) sent 300,000€ to 30 countries, benefiting 100 social and humanitarian projects. On the CGI's website, the CIAD launched the Appeal of the Month initiative, which has obtained numerous financial donations for projects. The Twinning Department has supported 50 countries (around 1 million euros).

In a nutshell, despite the restrictions of the health crisis, all these activities and initiatives have been carried out. Hence, we thank God for the strength, courage and energy that have kept the Council General in full charitable action. We wish to thank the 153 Superior Councils making up our Confederation, the staff in Paris and the members of the International Structure for their full support during this term of office. For this year 2022, we kindly ask members to pray for a ministry delivered with efficiency, love and devotion at the Confederation.

Brother Renato Lima de Oliveira, 16th President General
On behalf of the Board



2021 FINANCIAL AND STATISTICS ANNUAL REPORTS

The Annual Report document is designed to provide a consistent reporting format that will accomplish three things:

- provide a template that will lend itself to assisting the members of the National Council of Canada to speak with some authority and knowledge regarding the activities of all conferences and councils in Canada;
- provide a template for conferences and councils to measure the scope of service according to the Rule and Canadian Statutes;
- enable a comprehensive annual report to be prepared for the International Council General.

To assist in completing the financial report, you can access support material from the resources available in the Member repository at <https://ssvp.ca/members/training/>

- Financial Handbook for conference treasurers
- Webinar Recording - Treasurer: Role and Responsibilities, and Annual Reports

You can access the annual report template from the Operations Manual, or directly through the Forms repository:

<https://ssvp.ca/members/forms/annual-reports/>



Webinar

Driven by the belief that safe, secure and affordable housing is a human right, the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul launched its national housing campaign on February 7, 2021, the feast day of Blessed Sister Rosalie Rendu. On February 12, 2022, we invite housing champions, social justice advocates, and all Vincentians who have witnessed the struggles of persons in need of having a decent roof over its heads. At this event, we'll hear about the work in Victoria (BC) with their residences, and in St. John's (NL) with their supportive living housing.

When: Feb 12, 2022 01:00 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Register in advance for this meeting:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZlscemgqTgqHdyasVxciqnbn9YRVq6kcIBR>

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



Fund Development Committee

The Fund Development Committee was created in June 2021. Our objective is to identify and develop communications and fund development strategies to be used by the multiple levels within the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul in Canada. The Committee has been busy creating resources on different fund development opportunities to diversify revenue sources, and to identify initiatives to further support our Mission. We plan to hold a webinar on Saturday February 26 to share these resources with you. More information will be shared about registering for the webinar in the near future.

We want to hear from you should you be interested in joining our Committee and you have fund development expertise or experience with fund development communication strategies, donor engagement/stewardship, or identifying and approaching foundations/government programs. Please contact [Linda Dollard](#).

This is a great opportunity to identify ways to raise funds by the multiple levels of the Society to carry out our Mission!

*Linda Dollard, Chair
National Council Fund Development Committee*



The True Story of Lanier Phillips

My dear Vincentian sister and brothers, I would like to tell you the true story of Lanier Phillips. He was a young sailor in the US Navy during the Second World War. In a ferocious storm in February 1942, his ship and another (the Truxton and Pullox) foundered off the south coast of Newfoundland. It is quite a tale – the sailors who managed to get to shore alive were on a narrow rocky beach with a sheer icy cliff face to their backs in a howling wind which lashed them with the cold ocean spray. To add to their misery, they were all covered in fuel oil from the ships which made them sick. Their struggles to survive, the intense soaking wet cold in the howling cold wind, and taking in the oil fumes with every breath had weakened them to the point that they would perish without assistance.

The people from the nearby small town of St. Lawrence were alerted to the unfolding catastrophe and they came to help. The sea was too rough to approach the beach in boats so the townspeople pulled the sailors up from the beach with ropes and harnesses, took them to their homes, cleaned them up, and nursed as many as they could back to health. Two hundred and three men died that awful night, but 186 were rescued. To show its gratitude, the US government built and maintained a hospital there, which was greatly appreciated by the poor fishermen and miners of St. Lawrence.

Mr. Philips was one of those saved; indeed, he was the only black sailor to survive. He had been born in Georgia in the 1920s and he knew the burden of racism in some of its most unpleasant forms. The KKK, Jim Crow laws, and the threat of lynching were just part of day-to-day life as he knew it. At 18, he joined the navy. In those days, the only job a black sailor was allowed to have in the US navy was to be an officer's steward – the officer's servant. It was segregation, but it was better than Georgia. He talked about how he particularly enjoyed when they were at action stations and he was one of the gun's crew like the rest of his gun's crew.

When he found himself near death on that beach, he was surprised that a man helped walk him around to keep him alive and made sure he was pulled up over the cliff – a white man. It confused him because he thought they would have saved all the other white men first but then it occurred to him that they were all covered in oil so they all looked the same. He thought that if he kept quiet, he might just get rescued by mistake.

He came to in a warm tub of water with a bunch of women scrubbing the oil off him. You have to do that to avoid chemo pneumonia from the oil fumes. He was terrified because he thought once they found out that he was a black man, naked in the presence of all these white ladies, they would surely beat him up or lynch him like back in Georgia. He heard one of the ladies' comments that she could not get the oil off him. "It's like it's worked right into his skin," she said. He told her that it would come off as it was the colour of his skin. He recalled that the ladies were all relieved, not distressed and upset as he thought they would be. Then he lost consciousness again.

The next day he woke up in a bed. One of the ladies who was scrubbing him earlier cradled his head to keep it upright and said "Swallow, dere ya go, swallow." She was feeding him soup to help him recover his strength. He was amazed that this lady treated him with such loving compassion – it certainly would not have happened back home. As he found out later, he was treated like the other survivors – lovingly nursed back to health. The shock to him was that a white lady did this for him. He later referred to that event as an "epiphany" that "wiped the hatred from my heart." It was a land without the prejudice he

thought was normal, just part of the way things are. He resolved to tell everybody he could about his experience.

He went on to deal with and break through the oppression within the Navy and become the first black sonar technician in the US Navy. After he left the Navy, he worked as an oceanographer. Inspired by Dr. Martin Luther King and his memories of “the good people of St. Lawrence” (as he often referred to them), he joined the civil rights movement. He spent a lot of time with that movement and he spent his later years telling people in schools, colleges, churches, and meetings about his experience. He told people on radio, television, and anywhere people would hear him about “the good people of St. Lawrence” and how they saved and changed his life.

Violet Pike, the woman who nursed Mr. Phillips back to health, thought she saved a life through her loving compassionate action – and she did. Unknowingly, she also changed that man’s perception of the world and changed his heart and soul. She unknowingly, in a small way, helped in the ongoing struggle to cure the soul of an entire nation. St. Vincent de Paul once said, “God makes use of the humblest instruments for the extraordinary operation of His grace.” You do not know what effect your compassionate acts may have on others, but make no mistake, it is all part of God’s salvation plan.

*John Carey, Chair
National Spirituality Committee*



Assistance to a Vincentian – Antigua, W.I.



Our Lady of the Assumption Conference, Stoney Creek, Ontario is twinned with St. Francis of Assisi Conference in St John's, Antigua, West Indies. In 2021, Conference members approved a special contribution to help the President of our twinning partner in Antigua with treatment for a major eyesight problem. This is a resume of this event.

Since the outbreak of COVID-19, St. Francis of Assisi Conference had to make some changes to their activities. Many in the community were out of work as the major industry in Antigua, tourism/hospitality, suffered immensely. Also, during the hurricane season, there was severe flooding.

Our Conference, in order to help, sent additional funds and these pictures show how the recipient conference members got together and provided food baskets for the community. Their President, Sister Karen Crawford, is a dedicated and compassionate leader who was a major force in the organization of this activity.



Karen herself was laid off work because of COVID-19. When she was called back to work, it was on a part-time basis and there was no financial help when there was no work. Karen is a single mom with a daughter who is a first-year college student.

During the summer of 2021, when Karen returned to work and turned on her computer, she was unable to read the screen. This happened suddenly and she was diagnosed with "Macular Edema" which is a buildup of fluids at the back of the eye over a period of time. She suffered blindness. Major cause, stress!

The optometrist prescribed eye glasses which she purchased on a pay-later plan. She still couldn't see and had to seek help abroad since there was no specialist on the island who could help. Her sister helped her to get to New York where the diagnosis was confirmed and she received treatment and, over time, her eyesight improved.

However, she was faced with bills for the treatment, eye-glasses and in 2022, will need follow up treatment. Our Conference was sympathetic and voted unanimously to help with some of the cost. \$1,000 was therefore sent to assist with the payment for glasses.

She is thankful for our prayers for her recovery and also the financial help: Quoting some of what she wrote:

"So now I am taking it one day at a time and trying to avoid stress as much as possible. God has been sooo good to me and I am eternally grateful to you all for the significant part you played in my recovery process.

May the Dear Lord continue to shower you all with his blessings!"

Dawne Jeffrey, Twinning Representative

Our Lady of the Assumption Conference, Stoney Creek, Ontario





Social Justice Award

On the Fourth Sunday of Advent the 2021 Ontario Provincial Council of the Catholic Women's League of Canada Social Justice Award was presented to Penny Craig of Our Lady of the Atonement CWL Council, Windsor for her many years of exemplary service as a member of the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul of Canada.

Penny has served Christ and the needy with love, respect, justice and joy through the parish conference, at the Windsor Central Council and for many years she served on the National Council, including 6 years as the National President of the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul of Canada.

Penny is a born leader, she serves the Lord with her calm strength, positive attitude, gentle ways and her strong faith, to do what is right and just, in our communities.

We were very pleased to present Penny with the Ontario Provincial Council of the Catholic Women's League of Canada, the 2021 Social Justice Award.

Congratulations!



From left to right: Penny Craig, Marie-Theresa Lamphier and Caroline Ngui



The Society of Saint Vincent de Paul in Shawinigan celebrates seven volunteers

Shawinigan, November 30, 2021 – COVID-19 did not prevent us from rewarding volunteers who are very important for the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul in Shawinigan.

Five SSVP Shawinigan members received the Lieutenant Governor's Medal for Seniors from the office of the Lieutenant Governor of Quebec, the Honourable J. Michel Doyon. That medal recognizes the volunteer work of people 65 years of age and older. It is awarded to people who have made a substantial commitment to social or community work, which began or continued beyond the age of 65, and who have contributed to the well-being of their community or to the achievement of the mission of the SSVP of Shawinigan.

Micheline Flageol was presented with two certificates, one provincial and one national, for her 15 years of volunteer work.

Daniel Brousseau received the prestigious award of the provincial SSVP, the MÉRITE FRÉDÉRIC OZANAM 2020-2021.

For more information on the SSVP in Shawinigan, you can contact the President, Alain Boisvert, at (819) 539-5911.



Martial Arvisais, Claude Boucher, Fernande Dubé Vigneault, Huguette St-Arneault and Fernand St-Arneault.
Missing from the picture: Aline Perron



Alain Boisvert, President, SSVP Shawinigan and Micheline Flageol.



Question and Answer

Q: We have received funds from CanadaHelps. How to I represent these in the annual financial report?

A: Since CanadaHelps is a registered charity with CRA (896568417 RR 0001), CanadaHelps issues the tax receipts to the donors and then, under the premise of qualified donees, transfers the net to the recipient entity, via an electronic transfer, or by issuing a cheque (which they prefer to avoid due to the manual handling). Associated with the CanadaHelps T3010 annual filing with CRA, in its T1236 submission, they reflect the funds transferred to over 31,000 registered charities in Canada.

The conference/council would receive the net from CanadaHelps in their bank account. The conference / council may be setup to receive an email notification when a donation is received (usually a round number), and, a few days later, would receive another email with the actual deposit, which would be the net. In the SSVP annual financial report, the net would be reported in line 2002 (funding from other registered charities).

CanadaHelps is charging 4.0% for one time donation and 3.5% for monthly donations.

<https://www.canadahelps.org/en/why-canadahelps/our-fees/>

For comparison, if using the SSVP National infrastructure, National negotiated with Paysafe, its financial clearing house, bringing the cost at 3%.