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### In this issue:

- Indigenous Reconciliation Fund
- Upcoming Events
  - 2022 Annual General Assembly
  - Vincentians Social Justice Webinar
- Spritual Reflection - Vincentian Discipleship – He Has Anointed Me
- Fund Development Resources
- Twinning - Guatemala
- Retired Lawyers Can Return to Practice!
- Question & Answer

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## INDIGENOUS RECONCILIATION FUND

In January 2022 the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops (CCCB) contacted the National Office of the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul (the Society) to enquire about our willingness to sit as a Member of the Corporation for the Indigenous Reconciliation Fund (IRF). The IRF is a Not for Profit Society registered with the Canada Revenue Agency.

The CCCB created the IRF Bylaw 2022-1 to oversee and manage donations to the IRF. The vast majority of donations will come from individual dioceses although the IRF is open to receiving individual, private, public or corporate donations.

The 3 Members of the Corporation (Members) are appointed, one from each organization, by the Knights of Columbus, Supreme Council New Haven Connecticut, The Society of Saint Vincent de Paul National Council of Canada and the Catholic Women's League of Canada.

The Members' primary responsibility is to ensure that the slate of the Board of Directors is appointed and replenished from time to time and to approve any changes to the Bylaws of the Corporation.

The Board of Directors of the Corporation (Directors) is presently fixed at 3 members. Said membership may be adjusted from time to time depending on the need or workload. The duty of the Directors is to review project submissions, approve said projects and authorize the distribution of funds for the prospective projects. All funds for prospective projects must be received by and managed under the auspices of a registered Not for Profit Society.

To date we, the Members and Directors, have met on several occasions to review and approve the bylaws and operational and committee guidelines. During the last meeting on July 15<sup>th</sup>, we approved the [1<sup>st</sup> project submission](#) for the Archdiocese of Regina.

Please keep the IRF, its goals and objectives, in your prayers. Let us hope and pray that the Lord heals the wounds inflicted on survivors during their time spent in an Indian Residential School and for the extended family members' ongoing suffering from the effects of generational trauma.

*Claude Bédard, President  
National Council of Canada*



## 2022 ANNUAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY

We are pleased to invite you to the Annual General Assembly of the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul - National Council of Canada.

The AGA will be held virtually, via Zoom, on Saturday, September 17, from 1:00 to 3:00 pm.

Please register before Thursday September 15: <https://ssvp.ca/events/annual-general-assembly/>



## WEBINAR ON VINCENTIAN SOCIAL JUSTICE

The Rule plainly states that it is our Vincentian responsibility to identify the root causes of poverty and to contribute to their elimination. In order to bring about a more equitable society, it is important that we educate our local communities about the poverty in their midst and to suggest meaningful and practical ways of alleviating the suffering it causes.

To help us undertake this important aspect of our mission of charity, the Advocacy Circle, representing Vincentian social justice representatives from across Canada, is inviting all Vincentians to participate in an informative Webinar on Vincentian Social Justice. This will take place on Saturday September 10<sup>th</sup>. Participants will gain a better understanding of what the Church's 'preferential option for the poor' actually means. In addition, we will offer suggestions as to how we might engage our fellow Vincentians, friends, parishioners and decision makers in the task of eliminating the poverty we bear witness to as Vincentians.

Please join us for this opportunity to learn and engage with your fellow Vincentians.

[Register here](#) or through the website: <https://ssvp.ca/events/vincentian-social-justice-webinar/>



## VINCENTIAN DISCIPLESHIP – HE HAS ANOINTED ME

When we are baptized, we are called to enter into a very special relationship with the Father, the Holy Spirit and with Christ. We are called to be Christ's disciples. It is a blessed and unique relationship that does not make us any better than others - it just makes us more responsible. Responsible to do what?

In John we are told “And now I give you a new commandment: love one another. As I have loved you, you must love one another. If you have love for one another, then everyone will know that you are my disciples.” (Jn 13 34-35). To be a disciple of Jesus, we are called to try and love as He loved. Our humanity prevents us from fully loving the way He loves, but we must try to emulate that love.

All Christians are called to love. Christians, knowing we are loved by God, and that He lives within each of us, must be constantly open to hearing God's voice so that we may carry out His work and spread the Good News to others. This requires that we respond to people and situations with compassion, empathy, patience, justice and love.

Vincentians are Christians with a very special vocation as we are called to be servants to His poor. We cannot see Christ in human form, but we believe that the suffering Christ is most visible in the poor He wants us to serve. Our call to love and service is no different than that of all other Christians, but it is whom we are called to serve that makes our vocation a unique and special gift from Him.

In this massive world of ours, there are a variety of excellent organizations who respond to the needs of the poor and work tirelessly to provide help to those in need. A good friend once said: “Vincentians don't have a monopoly on serving the poor” and the friend is correct- we don't- but the driving force behind that service to the poor is different than that of other organizations.

There is no doubt that the call to serve as a Vincentian is a vocation. Not all Christians are called to serve His poor; His poor who are so hurt and broken. We, as Vincentians, understand that brokenness because we all have been there ourselves. He has healed us or is currently healing us and He wants us to bring that healing to the poor in the same way that He is healing us. He reaches out and touches us with His love and He wants us to do the same to His poor.

The task He has chosen for us is not always easy. There are times when it is difficult to see Christ in those we serve, but He is there in that person; we sometimes just have to look a little harder to find Him. To do this, we must ground ourselves in prayer and the Eucharist so that we are open to seeing the face of Christ in those we serve. Solitary prayer is helpful but we must also pray together so that we can build up the Body of Christ to better enable us to do His work.

He has anointed us to carry out His work and He will provide us with what we require to carry out this service to those in need. All Vincentians can share their stories showing how Christ “found” the money or food or shelter just when we thought there was no way we could provide the help. This providing, my dear Vincentians, is no accident. If we are open to His voice, He will show us the way and lead us to a solution that will enable us to respond to a request for help.

When we knock on that door, it is the Christ in us that is responding to the Christ who needs our help.

If we are able to remember that, we will be better able to serve with love and compassion. We

must always remember that our face may be the only face of Christ the poor see. Some time ago, two Vincentians were making a home visit and a little boy told them, "Jesus doesn't come to our house, but St. Vincent de Paul does". This is what He has anointed us to be- His servants for His poor.

What a wonderful gift He has given us, to use us to be His hands, His heart and His voice to serve and love His people. What a marvellous way to be used- as His face to the poor. Thank you, Jesus, for giving us such a privilege and gift.

*Maureen MacIsaac, Chair (2007-2013)*  
*National Spirituality Committee*



## FUND DEVELOPMENT RESOURCES

The Fund Development Committee continues to work on creating resources to help share successful initiatives for your SSVP community.

We recently created the Fund Development Toolkit, sharing promising practices that have worked for some Councils/Conferences across Canada, which can be found at [Fund Development - Society of Saint Vincent de Paul - National Council of Canada \(ssvp.ca\)](#)

Should you have any questions or other successful initiatives to raise funds that can be shared across Canada, please reach out to me at [l.dollard@rogers.com](mailto:l.dollard@rogers.com).

It is important to look at various ways to raise funds to carry out our Mission of helping people in need in all possible ways.

*Linda Dollard, Chair  
Fund Development Committee*



## TWINNING WITH THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF GUATEMALA

The North Fraser Particular Council, Coquitlam, BC, is twinned with the National Council of Guatemala. The Canadian council received a report and photos following a visit to conferences by National President Patricia Hidalgo and members of her Council. The photos show a visit to the Good Samaritan Conference in Quetzaltenango (northwest of the country). This conference, twinned with the St. Ambrose-de-la-Jeune-Lorette Conference, Québec, runs the Misericordia Home for the Elderly.

This twinning is the result of a collaboration between the North Fraser Particular Council and affiliated conferences. Sr. Susanna D'Souza, President of the St. Francis de Sales Conference, acts as a contact person with the Council of Guatemala. Regular communications are maintained between the two partners, especially by WhatsApp.

I encourage all councils to follow this example of working with conferences to expand twinning partnerships helping more brothers and sisters in emerging countries.

*Clermont Fortin, Chairperson  
National Twinning Committee*





## RETIRED LAWYERS CAN RETURN TO PRACTICE!

Did you know that in Quebec, Non-Profit Organization (NPO) will soon be able to obtain free legal advice from retired lawyers with decades of experience? The project initiated by, among others, Benoît-Marc Boyer, priest and retired lawyer, a Montreal Vincentian.

For info:

<https://www.droit-inc.com/article41801-Les-avocats-retraites-peuvent-reprendre-du-service>  
(Retired lawyers can return to practice!)

By: Emilie Laperrière | 2022-06-29 10:15 | [DROIT-INC](#)

### **Retired lawyers can now return to work.**

The man who brought this measure about explains:

Bill 34, which aims to improve access to justice by increasing the availability of free or low-cost legal services, is a welcome development for retired lawyer **Benoît-Marc Boyer**.

And for good reason: it makes it possible to obtain legal advice and to be represented before the courts free of charge or at a low cost by lawyers or notaries practicing within non-profit legal entities (PMSBL).

Most importantly, it allows retired lawyers to provide legal advice within those organizations. Until now, their authority was limited to swearing documents.

Benoît-Marc Boyer worked as legal counsel - and priest! - for the Corporation of the Diocese of Montreal for over 30 years before becoming a retired lawyer last April.

He maintains that Bill 34 will better equip citizens who will consult PMSBLs, such as the Rosemont Housing Committee. It will also be beneficial for the organizations that will be better advised.

### **Six years of effort**

The retired lawyer, who was [appointed Emeritus Lawyer in 2013](#), has helped advance this cause close to his heart over the years. "I was the official pusher of the file, the 'pest' on duty," he agrees with a laugh.

He recalls that the Bar had initiated the discussion in 2016, to better utilize retired lawyers. "I sent in my suggestions at the time," he recounts.

The BOD passed a unanimous resolution on the matter in February 2017. "We had to push for it to finally be filed with the Office of the Professions on June 10, 2019."

Next, it was necessary to raise awareness among elected officials. "I then started pushing again, but this time with the members of the National Assembly," says the retired lawyer.

The Minister of Justice tabled the famous bill last April. After a quick review in the Parliamentary Committee, the National Assembly officially adopted it on June 9.

The event was followed closely by Benoît-Marc Boyer, who finally saw his efforts rewarded. "It was as exciting to watch as a Game 7 of the Stanley Cup Finals tied in the third period," he says.

### **What is next?**

The Quebec Bar now has six months to prepare an implementing regulation. This includes ensuring that retired lawyers are covered by liability insurance for the notices they give.

If all goes according to plan, the 1425 holders of the title of retired lawyer, and the thousands of others who have retired without keeping the "Me" in front of their name, will be able to resume their practice.

Benoît-Marc Boyer will be among them. "I'm just waiting for the settlement! I decided to become a retired lawyer because I was hoping for this law."



## QUESTION & ANSWER

**Q: We are trying to raise the visibility of our Conference work in our parish. Some relatively new, but very effective Vincentians have suggested that we publish our monthly statistics in the parish bulletin: how many individuals and families helped, etc. Do we have a rule that governs this?**

**A:** It has been the recommendation by the Society for conferences to share a summary of their activity to the priest and to the parishioners at a minimum annually. Using the parish bulletin to do this is appropriate. Note that providing detailed assistance information to the donors / parishioners more than four times a year is usually too much. If space is available in the parish bulletin, it may be better used by having regular bulletin announcements about the Society and the work it does, being as well an opportunity to recruit.