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In this issue:

- Message from the President - 6th World Day of the Poor
- 2022 Financial and Statistics annual Reports
- Questions & Answers Regarding Annual Reports
- Formation - Leadership
- Simple Spiritual Reflection by Jose I. Torres -
Getting Back the Measure You Give
- Vincentian Activities - You Scared Hunger

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6th ANNUAL WORLD DAY OF THE POOR

The world hungers for food not only for the body but for the soul. Our Society is well equipped to provide for both.

Our mission is to bring relief from poverty in all its aspects: material, psychological and spiritual. We can only marvel at the benefits received from a friendly smile and greeting to one who feels abandoned and forgotten on our lonely streets in the midst of a busy and hectic city life scape.

If I want to meet a street person, I have to go on the street to meet and greet a street person with the same dignity and respect that I demand for myself. I try very hard not to avert my eyes from a street person standing on the street begging for my attention. Although I must confess my guilt and my failures for the many times I just passed on by with little or no acknowledgement as other issues were pressing upon me, I was too callus to be bothered or I was afraid that all they wanted was my money. I rationalized that they would only misuse it on drugs or alcohol. Is this what Jesus would do? I dare to say emphatically, NO!!

We must be able to recognize Christ in every person without judgement. I can only judge by outward appearances. I am in no position to pass judgement on anyone. Only Jesus who knows the heart can judge rightly with mercy and justice.

My challenge, and yours, is to take the time to stop when approached by someone begging on the street, greet him/her with a smile, exchange your given name and chat for a moment even if you have nothing else to offer. After all that is what Peter and John did when they were approached upon entering the temple.

Acts 3: 6a - Peter said "I have no silver or gold, but what I have I give you;"

You may be surprised from time to time with what you can give with an open and prayerful heart.

Yours in a unity of prayer and service.

*Claude Bédard, President
National Council of Canada*



2021 FINANCIAL AND STATISTICS ANNUAL REPORTS

Great news!

Members can now access the new online annual reports and the Members Portal!

All 2022 annual reports should be entered online through the Members Portal by an administrator.

To access the reports, each conference and council must assign a member to be an administrator. Administrators will then complete the online form to request an account to access the Members Portal.

Request an account here: <https://forms.office.com/r/0pT9m3qR63>

The Members Portal is an online National Membership Database with restricted access that requires a login for access, it is located at: <https://members.ssvp.ca>

[CLICK FOR MORE INFORMATION](#)



QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

1. If I'm not comfortable with computers/using the portal, what should I do?
 - a. Contact your Higher Council Treasurer and ask them to insert the data for you.
 - b. Please work with your Higher Council representative, and avoid sending the report (document) to anyone else.
2. Who should be set up as an Administrator?

Anyone who is responsible for completing the financial or stats report.
Presidents should be set up as members, so that they can view and endorse the report contents.
3. What should I do if my SSVP portfolio list is not accurate?
 - a. Contact [Josée Lemieux](#), ask her to make the required changes.
4. What should I do if I forget my ID or password?
 - a. Contact your Council Administrator, or Treasurer if you don't know your Administrator.
 - b. Please avoid contacting Josée.



LEADERSHIP

The Formation Committee is back at work, looking ahead to 2023. Our focus for this year is *Leadership* and we will culminate the theme in the 2023 ANF to be held again in Ottawa at Carlton University on June 7 and 8, 2023.

The subject of leadership is broad and complex. There are many variables with regard to the type of leadership that is a best fit for an organization, a movement, or a government. The conversation has been evolving since the beginning of human interaction. But...there is one thread that keeps emerging in current literature as sustainable for all groups and types. The approach is **values-based leadership** which begins with an underlying essential respect and includes vision, trust, integrity, listening, authenticity, hope, and most of all addressing the true needs of all involved. “Values-based leadership is an attitude about people, philosophy, and process.” (O’Toole, J. 1995)

The Rule *defines* the leadership role for the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul as *servant leadership*. If we look closely at the definition of servant leadership in the broader literature, we see the embedded design of values-based leadership. A review of the role of a president, as stated in the Rule & Statutes, begins with “As a servant leader, a president must take an active interest in the welfare of the members”. In other words, the needs of others must take precedence. This can often take the form of leading from behind, a key position for a servant leader. This is the role of facilitator, encouraging partner, supportive leader and mentor. Another statement in the description of the president role is “Avoid autocratic behaviour.” There is no “top down” in servant leadership. It is inclusive and there is equity without exception. An SSVP president must “Never claim special privileges or distinction” and must “Act with a considerable measure of humility.” Listening is a guiding principle in servant leadership and the direction to listen underlies the Rule. Presidents must meet with members to understand their needs and their barriers.

- *A servant leader is a servant first.*
- *A conscious choice brings the servant to aspire to lead.*
- *Servant leaders ensure other people’s needs are being met.*
- *Servant leaders ensure their choices/actions will benefit (or at least not further deprive) the least privileged in society.*

This past year, we published the 3-year strategic plan for National Council. This document reflects the thoughts and experiences of Vincentians across Canada which was captured in 19 pages of responses received by the Committee. The preamble identifies that Vincentians believe that we have an obligation to enforce human dignity, nourish the spiritual life of Vincentians, address organizational culture to include growth and change management, to communicate clearly with each other.

One objective in the strategic plan was “To facilitate the development of effective leadership strategies within all levels of the national Society.” The recommended action in the plan is to initiate leadership development programs. This includes developmental initiatives that focus on most promising governance practices. A clear message in the feedback was that effective leadership has an obligation to manage the work of the Society by minimizing risk to Vincentians and the persons served. It is necessary to incorporate risk management strategies in all activities of the Society, large and small, as a tool in maintaining “The uninterrupted pursuit of the work to which much effort has been devoted.” The Rule identifies that succession planning is an essential role of leadership to maintain the works of the Society.

A lack of succession is a risk to continuity and we are at a place in SSVP where succession is largely a missing piece. We need to address this gap as quickly as possible. If we look at the framework of values-based leadership, we may choose to shift from a dominant role of president to a focus on “executive team”. Teamwork is the most useful approach to leadership, especially from a servant leadership perspective where inclusion is a value and a Catholic moral value.

In the beginning and in the end, our example for leadership is Christ.

Christ with me and before me. Christ behind me and within me. Christ to the right of me, Christ to the left of me. Christ above me. Christ beneath me. Christ in the mind of everyone who thinks of me. Christ in the eye of everyone who sees me. Christ in the ear of everyone who hears me. I bind myself to the strong virtue of Christ.

(St. Patrick’s Breast Plate)

The Formation Committee is establishing a **Leadership Roundtable**. The purpose of this is to have a conversation about Leadership in SSVP moving forward. The concept is one of a “think tank”. **It is not a deficit model**. If you have an interest in bringing your ideas to the table for discussion and forward momentum, please contact me at [Deborah Joyce](#). *Details to be decided by group participants.*

*Deborah Joyce, Chair
National Formation Committee*



SPIRITUAL REFLECTION

Simple Reflections by Jose I. Torres

We will be presenting a series of five reflections over the next newsletters. These reflections offer insights on how our human journey converges with our hope-giving faith journey. They invite us to contemplate on how day-to-day conflicts, grievances and other burdens are mended by our faith in our eternal God's mercy and caring for others' dignity.

Central to these reflections is the theme of sisterly and brotherly love, and service to others, including "listening with our hearts", fostering deep relationships with those in need, sharing our gifts with them and growing our spirituality.

Conference and Councils may consider using them in their future regular meetings.

REFLECTION 2 - GETTING BACK THE MEASURE YOU GIVE

"For the measure you give will be the measure you get back." (Luke 6:38)

Pope Francis writes in "The Joy of the Gospel" that accepting God's invitation to receive His love and to love Him in return with the very love which is His gift, brings forth in our lives and our actions a fundamental response to desire, seek and protect the good of others. He points to the absolute priority of "going forth from ourselves toward our brothers and sisters" as one of the two great commandments, which ground every moral norm and as the clearest sign for discerning spiritual growth in response to God's completely free gift of love.

Reflection Questions

1. How does your genuine faith in God who is kind and merciful help you to be sensitive to the sufferings and sorrows of our sisters and brothers? Do you seek to show your love and serve Him in your service to our neighbours-in-need?
2. How has your involvement in lay organizations of caring for and service to others helped you grow spiritually? Have your interactions with those you serve moved you to a deeper life of faith?
3. When was the last time you prayed for your neighbour-in-need? How often do you pray for them?

Jose I. Torres

St. John of the Cross Conference, Mississauga, Ontario



YOU SCARED HUNGER

On behalf of myself and the SSVP Brant volunteers, we would like to thank the Assumption College staff, students and community from the bottom of our hearts for all of their amazingly successful efforts on their food drive, We Scare Hunger!

Below is a picture of our food shelves taken Friday October 28 in the morning at the Thrift Store, 143 Wellington Ave. (Yes, pretty much bare!)



The economic fallout of COVID-19 followed by the war in Ukraine is having devastating effects on a great number of individuals and families in our community.

The committee, staff, students, and your entire community have gone a very long way to help alleviate a lot of the pain that many individuals are suffering.

Your collective positivism, energy, enthusiasm, and industry are a beacon to those who have all but lost hope. Despite all the doom, gloom, and negativism constantly portrayed on news and social media, the success of your campaign speaks loudly to the fact that there is a lot of goodness, support and love out there! All it needs is a spark to unleash it ...



You have been the spark! Kudos!

Rosewood House has already served up the fresh eggs, bread, naan and orange juice that we passed onto them from you, on the weekend.

We will use the \$880+ donated to buy grocery store gift cards for our neighbours in need to purchase fresh food.

The Brantford Food Bank would also like us to thank you on their behalf for the 1350 lbs. (612kgs.) of food that we brought them from your donations.

Our neighbours in need will benefit greatly for many months from the 11,960 lbs. (5,425 kgs.) of food you have given us.

Yes, the total adds up to almost 7 tons (6,037kgs.)!!!

Yes, you have collectively definitely made the world a better place to live in!

Please pass on our heartfelt congratulations to your committee, the administrators, staff, students, and community members!

You all are AWESOME!!!

*Peter Giordano, VP Youth
SSVP Brant*

