

**Société de Saint-Vincent de Paul**  
**Conseil national du Canada**



**Montréal**  
**175<sup>th</sup> anniversary**  
**1848-2023**

**By Madeleine Lafrance and  
Séréna Chapon**

**May 2023**

# History

## The four major periods

- **1848-1900:** The beginnings
- **1900-1945:** The First World War, the Spanish flu and the great depression of 1929
- **1945-1980:** The golden years
- **1980-2023:** The present times

# 1848-1900

The beginnings

# Doctor Joseph Painchaud

On his return from a training trip to France, Dr. Painchaud founded the **first conference in Quebec City in 1846.**

It was also the **first conference** in Canada.





# First conference in Montréal - 1848



On his return from France, Bishop Ignace Bourget sets up the **first conference in Montreal** in **1848**.

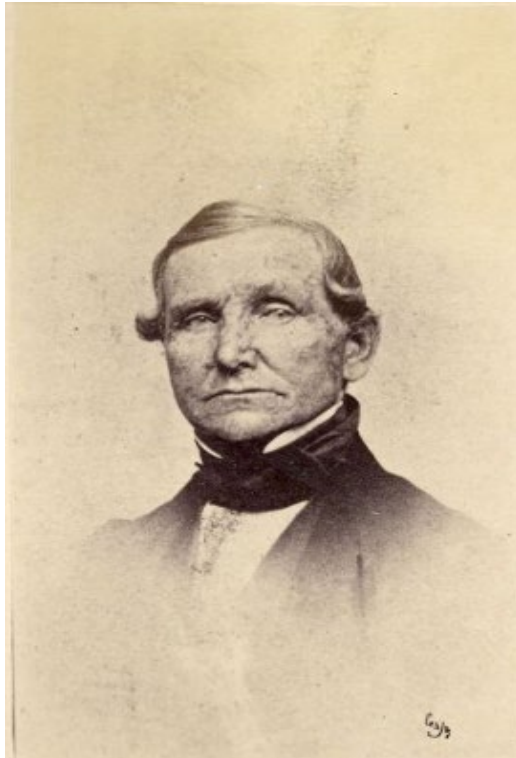
# The St-Jacques Cathedral



La **première conférence** se tient à Montréal.

Mr Hubert Paré est **élu premier président**. Marchand et philanthrope, il est également associé à Alexis Painchaud (oncle du Dr Joseph Painchaud) dans le commerce maritime.

# Mr Hubert Paré – First Président of the Montreal Conference

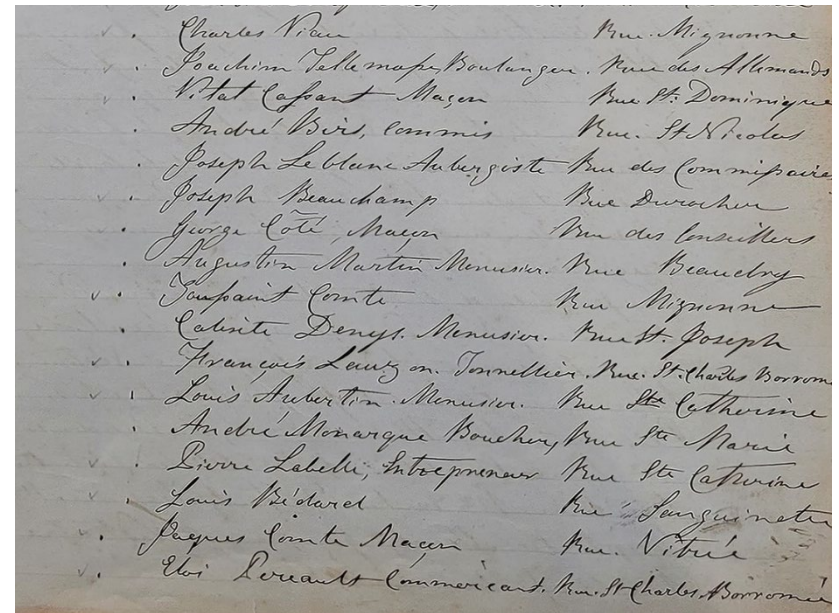
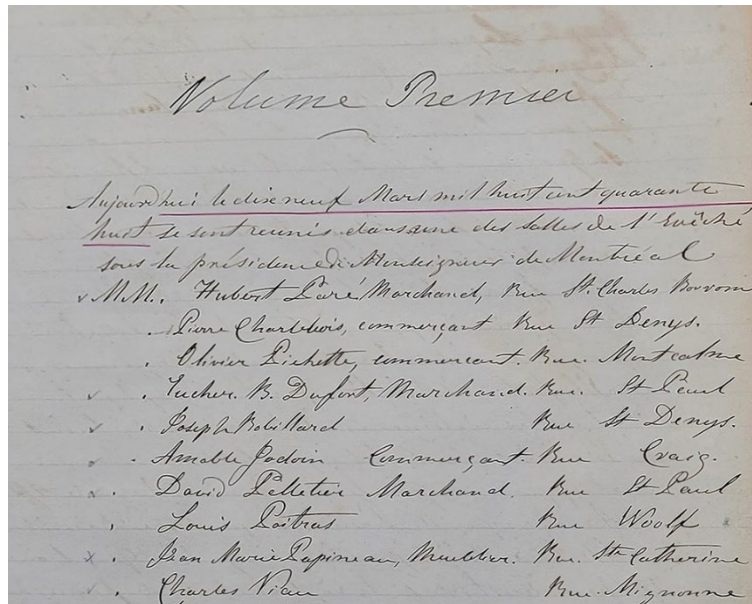


Hubert Paré



House of Hubert Paré in  
Old Montreal

# List of people attending the March 19, 1848 meeting – 30 members



“Today, the nineteenth of March, one thousand eight hundred and forty-eight, met in one of the rooms of the bishops palace under the chairmanship of the Bishop of Montreal, Sirs Hubert Paré, merchant, St-Charles-Borromée St... (names following).”



# March 19, 1848 meeting (continued)

- “Sirs JBte Desrochers, Tavernist, St-Urbain St
- Joseph Lapierre, St-Paul St
- Nazaire Mercier, merchant, Visitation St
- Toussaint Desnoyers, gentleman, Sanguinet St who, with the permission and approval of His Grandeur, who have formed an association or conference of Saint Vincent de Paul to assist the needy members of the Temperance Society and do all the charitable works in their power to draw God's blessings upon the said Temperance Society...”

30  
 M<sup>rs</sup> Desrochers, Tavernist, St-Urbain St  
 Joseph Lapierre, St-Paul St  
 Nazaire Mercier, marchand, Visitation St  
 Toussaint Desnoyers, gentleman, Sanguinet St  
 qui avec la permission et de l'approbation de  
 sa grandeur se sont constitués en association  
 au tempérament de Saint Vincent de Paul  
 dans le dessein de porter secours aux Membres  
 nécessiteux de la Société de Tempérance,  
 et de faire toutes les œuvres de charité en  
 leur pouvoir, pour attirer les bénédictions  
 de Dieu sur la dite Société de Tempérance.  
 Il fut résolu 1<sup>o</sup> que l'on adopterait  
 tous les règlements de la Société de Saint  
 Vincent de Paul, telle qu'elle existe en France.  
 L'approuvé par M<sup>rs</sup> Denis Auguste Affre  
 Archevêque de Paris, le quatorze Décembre  
 Mil huit cent quarante cinq. 2<sup>o</sup> que l'on  
 procéderait de suite à l'élection des principaux  
 Officiers, afin que la dite Société fût  
 immédiatement organisée. 3<sup>o</sup> qu'après  
 que telle élection aurait été faite, le Président  
 écrirait au Président général de la Société  
 résident dans la dite ville de Paris, pour  
 demander au nom de la Société une agrégation  
 régulière à l'Association mère.  
 On procéda de suite à l'élection d'un Président  
 et de deux Vice-Présidents, d'un Secrétaire,  
 d'un Trésorier et d'un Gardien du Vestiaire.  
 A l'unanimité des suffrages, furent élus,  
 Président, M<sup>rs</sup> Hubert Laroche, Vice-Présidents  
 M<sup>rs</sup> Lierre (Charles) et M<sup>rs</sup> Olivier Richette,  
 Secrétaire, M<sup>rs</sup> Eucher Dupont, Trésorier M<sup>rs</sup>  
 Joseph Robitaille, Gardien du Vestiaire  
 Amable Padoin.

# Engagement in the first conference - 30 members

- Visiting the poor
- Prison committee
- Shelter for the poor
- Establishment of a dispensary
- Low-cost stoves

# Fire Relief Committee

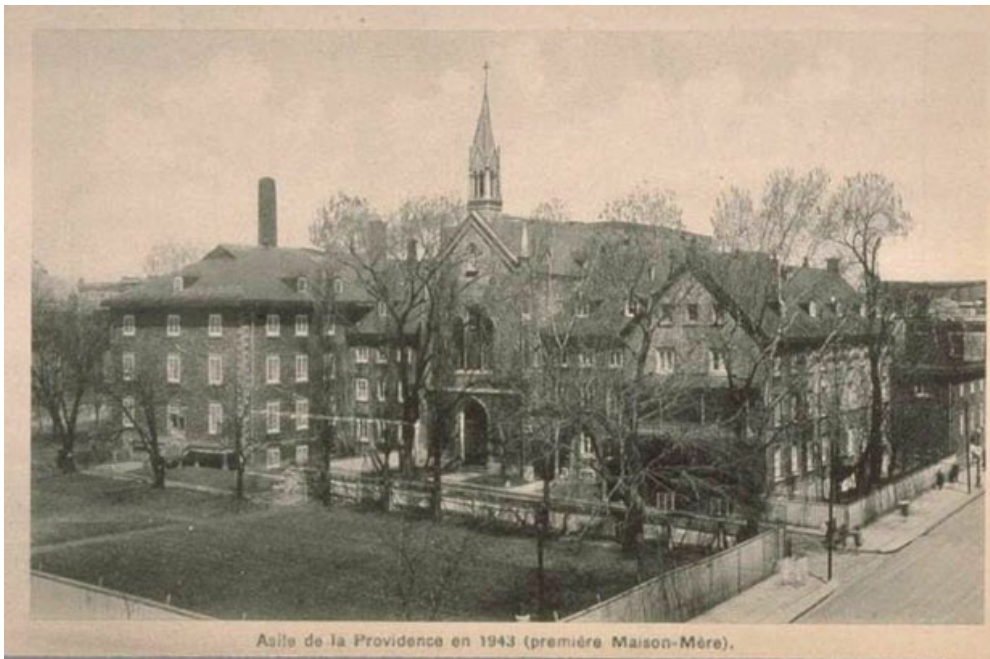


1850 – Canadian Parliament



1852 – Faubourg Québec  
➤ Over 9,000 people affected

# Asile de la Providence



The Asile de la Providence is the **second site** of the St-Jacques conference. Convent of the Sisters of Providence. It is located behind the cathedral.



# Hospice St-Vincent de Paul



The Hospice St-Vincent de Paul, under the **direction of the Particular Council**, provides care for the "destitute elderly" and is run by the **Brothers of Charity**.

It is also located behind the cathedral.

# Mr Raphaël Bellemare - Second President of the SSVPM – 1860-1896



Raphaël Bellemare, a **learned and eminent Canadian journalist**, was a member of the SSVP from 1850 to 1903.

At the time of his departure, the SSVP included :

- 22 conferences
- 2230 members

# First Guignolée, instituted by the SSVP in 1861



# The Accueil Bonneau

jointly administered by the Sulpicians, the Société of Saint Vincent de Paul and the Grey Nuns

The **Accueil Bonneau**, formerly known as Hospice St-Charles, was **founded in 1877** by the Grey Nuns. Under the guidance of Sr Bonneau, it became "**Le vestiaire des pauvres**" and developed greatly.



It was renamed "Accueil Bonneau" in **1977**.



# 1900-1945

First World War, Spanish Flu and Great Depression of 1929

- Living conditions in 1900
- Spanish flu
- The crisis of 1929
- Partnerships
- The secretariat

# Miserable Living Conditions in 1900

## Rural exodus to Montreal

- As the farms could no longer feed their families, **people moved to town** to work and survive.
- This leads to **overcrowding** in homes and much **promiscuity**, with many houses being slums.



# Miserable Living Conditions in 1900



**Hygiene conditions are difficult.**

There are no sanitary appliances in the houses.

Public baths are **reserved for men and children.**

# Miserable Living Conditions in 1900

## Children:

- One child out of four dies before reaching the age of one in Montreal.
- Children **aged 12 and over can work in manufactures.**
- Tuberculosis wreaks havoc.





# Miserable Living Conditions in 1900

The only work available is in **manufactures**.

Most jobs are **low-paid** and workers often **work 60 or more hours a week**.

Safety at work is **non-existent**.



# Foundation of the Montreal Central Council in 1911

Paris SSVP recommends to Montreal the **creation of a Central council**.

In 1900, there are **3 particular councils**:

- P.C. North, north of Sherbrooke St.
- P.C. East and P.C. West, on either side of St-Laurent St.

In **1914**, particular councils grow from **3 to 9**.

# Foundation of the Montreal Central Council in 1911

Composition of the three particular councils:

- 22 French-speaking conferences
- 2 Irish conferences
- 2 ethnic conferences
- 20 youth conferences

# Central Council in 1915



In 1915, the **Central Council moves to** the Patronage des apprentis de St-Vincent, 647 La Gauchetière East.



# The SSVP joins forces with other charities

## Goutte de lait dispensaries - 1904



“Montreal had the **highest infant mortality rate** after Calcutta, India. The milk containers were not sterilised and were transported at room temperature. The Goutte de lait dispensaries were created to improve this **tragic situation.**”

Source: Radio Canada



# The SSVP joins forces with other charities

Financial support and active collaboration.

The SSVP is associated with:

- Orphelinat St-Arsène in 1906
- Patro Le Prévost



**Orphelinat Saint-Arsène, rue Christophe-Colomb.** Fondé en 1906, l'orphelinat est nommé en l'honneur du bienfaiteur, M<sup>re</sup> Arsène Pierre Dubuc. Les Frères de Saint-Gabriel y accueillent des enfants de six à 15 ans.  
(Non datée. Photo: Frères de Saint-Gabriel)

# The SSVP joins forces with other charities

## **Grèves de Contrecoeur Summer Camp in 1910**



# 1914-1918 Great War

- The City of Montreal **donated \$56,700** to the Society of Saint-Vincent de Paul for **distribution to the poor**.
- It also provided **monetary aid** to **countries devastated by the war** in 1919.



# 1914-1918 Great War



**Parcels are sent to  
soldiers at the front.**

# 1914-1918 Great War

The SSVP provides **assistance** to conscripts:

- Local help for conscripts to **socialise**.
- A **presence** at train departures.
- **Moral support** by providing them with what they need to **write to their families**.



# 1918 Spanish Flu



The city **gives the SSVP \$100,000** to redistribute to the poor, orphans and widows.

Spanish flu claims **3,500 lives** in Montreal.

# Refuge Notre-Dame de la Merci - 1925

The **Refuge for the Elderly**, created in 1915, was experiencing **difficulties**.

Under the leadership of **Olivar Asselin**, a well-known journalist at Le Devoir, the shelters secretary and an active member of the SSVP, the **Central Council** took charge of the shelter in 1925.

After the fire, it was **rebuilt in Ahuntsic in 1932**.



459, rue Saint-Paul Est  
Le refuge Notre-Dame de la Merci, en 1925.  
*L'Ordre Hospitalier de Saint-Jean-de-Dieu au Canada, 1947, p.77*

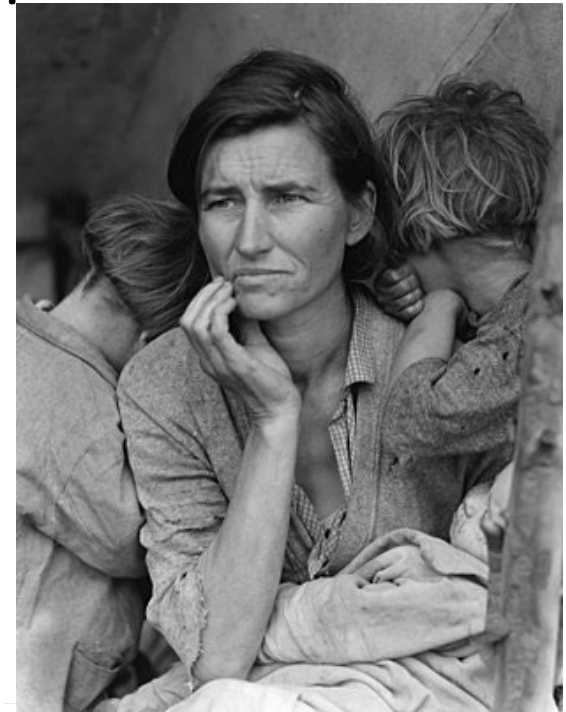


# 1929 Great Depression

The city donates \$100,000 in aid to be redistributed.

In 1929, the Central Council comprised:

- 10 individual councils
- 70 conferences



# 1930s Crisis

As the crisis worsened, the Society of St Vincent de Paul provided assistance in 1929:

- August: 2824 families - 15396 people
- November: 5150 families - 28079 people
- February 1930: 12,000 families - 64,000 people

In 1930, the federal, provincial and municipal governments created "Direct Assistance", which later became "Employment Insurance".



# 1930s Crisis

SSVP to distribute **special grants to the unemployed.**



**Œuvre de la Soupe 1930 – 500,000 meals per year.**

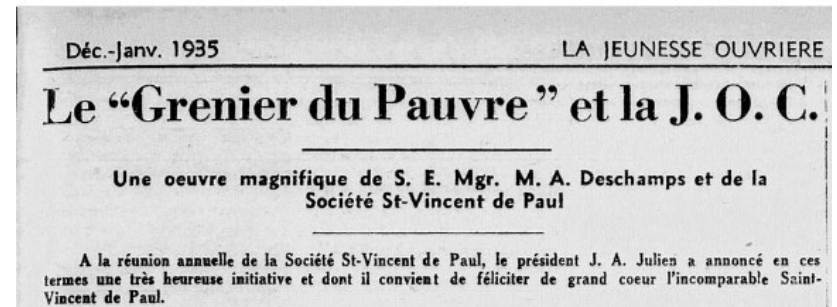
# 1930s Crisis



**Distribution of milk in schools in 1931** with the financial participation of the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul.



# Foundation of the Grenier du Pauvre in 1934



In a building at 3436 Hôtel-de-Ville  
(donation).

The secretariat also sets up its  
offices there.

Members of the Jeunesse ouvrière  
catholique (J.O.C.) volunteer there.

# Guignolée in the St-Louis-de-France parish in the 1930s



# Joining Forces to Help

Membership in the **FÉDÉRATIONS DES ŒUVRES DE CHARITÉ  
CANADIENNES FRANÇAISES EN 1934** (1930-1972)

That federation will later become:



**Centraide**  
**du Grand Montréal**

# City Subsidies



- 1936 – \$50,000
- 1937 – \$58,000
- 1941 – \$120,000 for the unemployed
- 1946 – \$115,000 for distribution to the poor

# City Representative



1937

Delegate representative of the SSVP on the **Unemployment Commission**, which in 1941 became the **BIEN-ÊTRE SOCIAL DE MONTRÉAL**.



# Collaboration between SSVP and CECM in 1940

The SSVP asks the **Montreal Catholic School Board** to refer poor children.

- Distribution of clothing and shoes.



# 1945-1980

The good years

- Cooperation with the city
- New secretariat 1959
- Grenier du Pauvre
- 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary

# Guignolée in 1946



# Cooperation with the city

In 1946, the city of Montreal gave the SSVP \$115,000 to set up a **social service for the deaf.**



# General Assembly - 1956





# New Secretariate - 1959

The **Fédération des Œuvres de Charité** rents this building at **1930 rue de Champlain** to the SSVP for the symbolic sum of **\$1** a year.

The photo dates from 1955, when it was still the Biscuiterie David et Frères, where the first Maple Leaf cookies were made.



# Grenier du Pauvre in 1959





# Grenier du Pauvre in 1959



# 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary 1848-1972

Plaque at St-Jacques church





# General Assembly - 1973





# Store in the 1970s



# Disaster Relief - 1974

In 1974, during the **Red Weekend**, which devastated the block formed by Wolfe, Amherst, Ontario and Sherbrooke streets, 75 buildings were destroyed.

The SSVP took part in major disaster relief operations.



# Volunteer Celebration in the 1970s



Basement of the Notre-Dame du Rosaire church

# 1980-2023

## Present Times

- Purchase of the 1930 Champlain
- 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary: 1848-1998
- Our activities since then



# Purchase of the 1930 Champlain - 1981

In 1981, the Society of Saint-Vincent de Paul bought the building at 1930 rue de Champlain for **\$150,000**.

You can still see the chimney marked "DAVID".





# First year of awarding certificates - 1981

**Certificate** of merit for members with **25 years** of service or more.

Souvenir **medallions** for members who have volunteered for more than **50 years**.



# Dîner des Rois - Accueil Bonneau

All presidents are invited to celebrate the Three Kings' dinner on January 6, each year.

A number of VIPs attend the event.



# Traditional Old Times Guignolée St-Benoît Conference



# Summer Camp - 1990





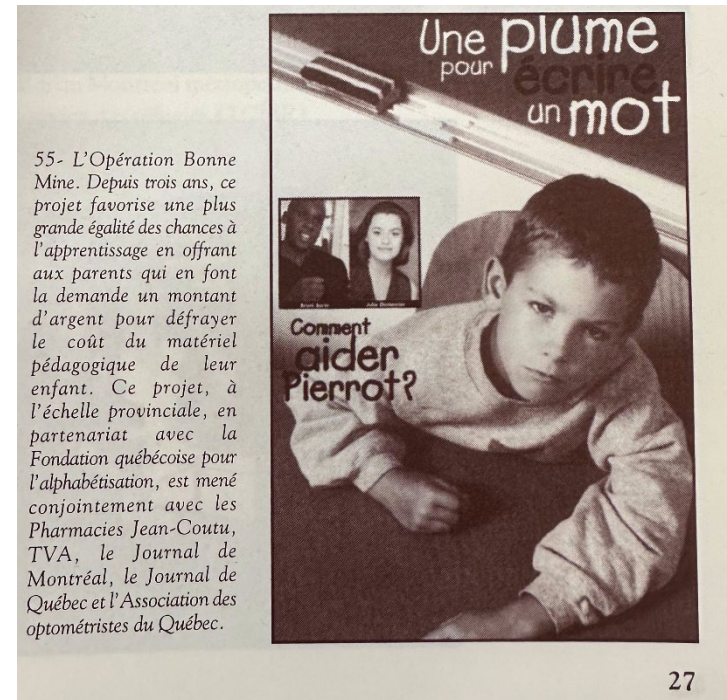
# Furniture Workshop - 1990





# Creation of the Opération Bonne Mine Program - 1994

In 1994, the Society of Saint-Vincent de Paul set up the **Opération Bonne Mine** school retention programme to provide **practical help** to children and young teenagers in need, and to help break the cycle of exclusion and poverty.



Opération  
Bonne  
Mine

150 ans d'action charitable dans le paysage du Grand Montréal - 1998

# Creation of the Opération Bonne Mine Program - 1994



*Opération Bonne Mine allocution 1995. De gauche à droite:  
Mme Pierrette Moisan, M. Bernard Voyer porte-parole et Mme Marie-Claude Clermont à droite.*



*Opération Bonne Mine - Gala des bourses 2004.  
Mme Élise Gullbault porte-parole.*



*Opération Bonne Mine - Gala des bourses 2014*

A programme that has flourished over the years

# Firefighters and Christmas Hampers



*Paniers de Noël des pompiers 1994  
Entrepôt des paniers de Noël*



*Gaiguiole 94 :  
Base Longue-Pointe 1994  
Remise des jouets réparés par les militaires aux pompiers.  
Véhicule militaire décoré et personnel militaire.*



# The Longue Pointe Garrison and Repaired Toys



The **repaired toys** are transferred to the firefighters' training centre and will be added to the Christmas hampers for large families.



# The Society's 150<sup>th</sup> in 1998



*François-Jean Côté, président de la Campagne de financement,  
Pierrette Molan, présidente du Conseil central, et Mgr André Rivest*



*Membres du bureau de direction :  
André Bélanger, Richard St-Pierre, J-Claude Bohrer,  
André Molan, Pierrette Molan présidente, Gérard Couture,  
François Sallier aumônier, Louis Parreault et Claude Roy*



*Chorale de l'Arcueil Bonneau*



*Vue d'ensemble des participants au brunch-retrouvailles  
dans la salle Pichette de l'Oratoire St-Joseph*



# First Guignolée des Médias - 1998



Guignolée des médias 1998.  
M. Réjean Tremblay (à la gauche) accompagné de pompiers et de bénévoles pour recueillir les dons.



Guignolée médiatique 1998.  
Au centre, Mme Francine Marneau et à droite, M. Michel Beaucage.



# First Guignolée des Médias - 1998





# Fashion Show - 2000

Creation of models by disadvantaged local women



Défilé de mode - 2000.  
À droite, Mme Pierrette Moisan.



Défilé de mode - 2000.  
À droite, Mme Pierrette Moisan.

# Dîner des Rois Accueil Bonneau - 2002





# Annual Fête de l'Amitié – February 14



*Fête de l'amitié 11 février 2001. Debout, MM. André Bissonnette (2e personne à gauche) et Claude Roy à droite.*

We visit our old friends and entertain them for **Valentine's Day**.

# Sewing Workshop - 2003



# Cocktail Concert Place des Arts - 2004



Cocktail concert du 10 mai 2004. De gauche à droite:  
M. Yannick Nézet-Séguin et Mme Élise Guilbault.



Cocktail concert du 10 mai 2004. En arrière-plan, au centre  
M. Gérard Dion et à droite, M. François-Jean Coutu.



# Harvesting Tuesdays - 2011





# Setting up corporate volunteering - 2012

Since 2012, many companies have been coming to do **corporate volunteering** throughout the year.

It's an activity that **makes all the difference!** The programme includes sorting donations, but that's not all. Some groups also contributed to the painting of premises, renovations, the Media Food Drive and the Traditional Food Drive.

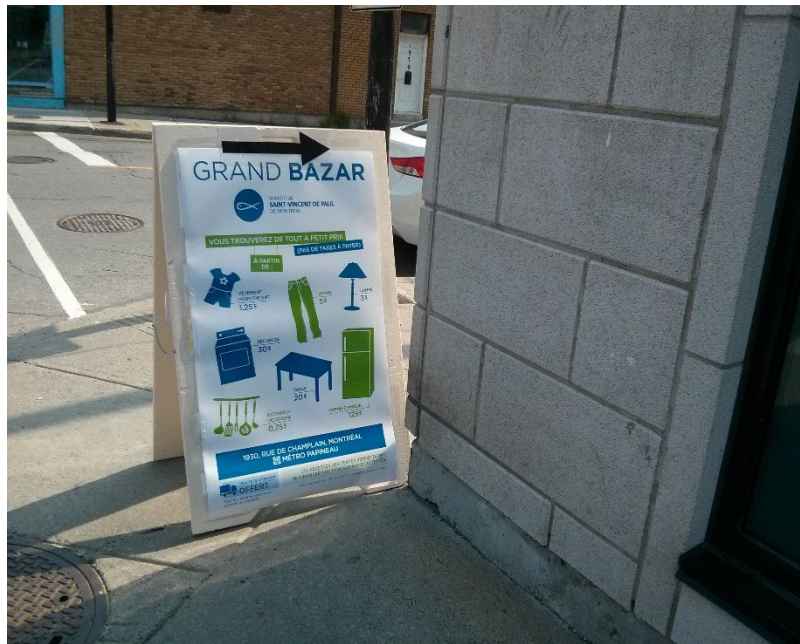


# High Tea at Marché Bonsecours - 2013





# Bazar at 1930 Champlain - 2014



# SSVPM 165<sup>th</sup> - 2014



**165e Signature du livre d'or Hôtel de ville de Montréal 2013. De gauche à droite:  
MM. Micheal Applebaum, Pierre Portelance et Mme Lucie Alègre.**



**165e Signature du livre d'or Hôtel de ville de Montréal 2013. De gauche à droite:  
MM. Gérard Dion (3e pers.), Micheal Applebaum (4e pers.), Pierre Portelance (5e pers.) et Mme Lucie Alègre (6e pers.).**



# Fripes en Fête 2014-2015-2016



# SSVPM 170<sup>th</sup> - 2019



# Food aid during Covid



The Society of Saint-Vincent de Paul did not stop during Covid - quite the contrary. The pandemic caused an explosion in the number of requests for food assistance, **from +30% to +300%** in some neighborhoods. Thanks to you, in 2019, the SSVPM carried out **53,521 acts of assistance** (distribution of foodstuffs, food vouchers, Christmas hampers, back-to-school vouchers).

And today?



# Food Aid

## Numbers in 2021/2022:

- Number of acts of assistance: 26,978
- Value of assistance: \$2,000,042
- People helped: 20,179\* including 9,635 children
- Profile of families helped:
  - 59% single people
  - 24% couple families
  - 17% single-parent families



# Food Aid





# Fridge Sharing

We inaugurated our very **first fridge-share** at the chalet in **Parc du Pélican**, in the Rosemont-la-Petite-Patrie borough, in September 2021.



# Opération Bonne Mine School Retention Program



For almost **30 years**, the OBM program has continued to continue to help **young people stay in school** through 3 main areas: **art therapy, student retention bursaries** and **back-to-school assistance**.



Marie-Evelyne Lessard  
Program spokesperson



# Art Therapy

To support young people in their personal development and equip them to persevere, the Opération Bonne Mine program sets up **art projects in schools**, supervised by art therapy professionals.



*« Mon identité en symbole :  
un défilé dans mon quartier »*

CENTRE GÉDÉON-OUIMET  
(SAINTE-MARIE)

# Art Therapy



*« Je bouge, je crée, je me transforme, je suis 2.0 »*

ÉCOLE CALIXA-LAVALLÉE  
(MONTRÉAL-NORD)

These workshops encourage young people to express themselves through **painting, drawing and sculpture**, as well as **dance, yoga and theatre**.

The workshops enable students to:

- Express themselves and get to know each other better
- Feel calmer
- Develop their social skills and language
- Persevere at school



*« gamino »*

ÉCOLE SAINT-JUSTIN  
(MERCIER-HOCHÉLAGA-MAISONNEUVE)

# Student Retention Grants



The scholarships recognise young people with **atypical educational backgrounds** and multiple **challenges**, who stand out for their **hard work** and **achievements** in order to succeed at school.

As well  
during the  
pandemy.



# Student Retention Grants

This year, 50 bursaries will be awarded at primary level (worth \$250) and **60 bursaries** at secondary level (worth \$500).



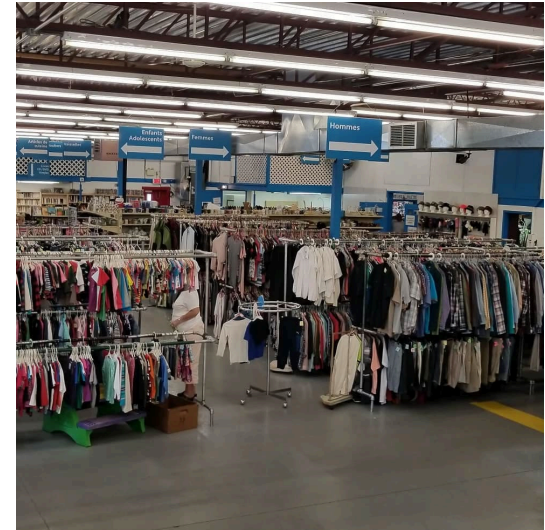


# Back-to-school Assistance

Opération Bonne Mine provides **financial support** to families in financial difficulty for **school-related expenses**: school fees and childcare, teaching materials, school supplies, transport, etc.



# Our Stores

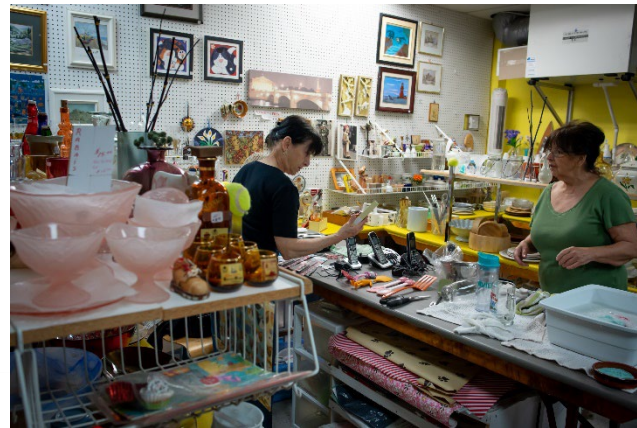


Today, we have **16 stores** to serve you. New and used clothing, fashion items, homeware, sporting goods, books, toys, furniture and more.

# Our Stores



The shops operate largely thanks to the **many volunteers** who **sort the donations** and put them on racks. Whether you're a volunteer for a day or a lifetime, a corporate group or a group of friends, everyone is welcome to lend a hand.





# Traditional Guignolée



**Guignolée de Verdun**





# Traditional Guignolée



# Guignolée des Médias





# Firefighters and Christmas Hampers

Every year, the firefighters **collect donations** and then put together baskets of food and gifts for people in need. They then distribute them directly to people's homes.

In 2022, more than **\$220,000** was collected by Montreal firefighters.





# Spokesperson

In November 2022, we welcomed artist **Gabrielle Destroismaisons** as **spokesperson for the organization.**



“I come from a large family and we had few financial resources. For many years, we've had to rely on emergency food food banks and I know just how much it can help it can be. I'm delighted to be able to get involved and help the Society of Saint-Vincent de Paul de Montréal raise awareness of the importance of giving to others for the cause”.

# Thanks to You!



**Sainte-Croix Conference**



**Saint-Michel Conference**



**Verdun Conference**



**Verdun Conference**

# Thanks to All Conferences

St-Émard St-Paul      St-François-de-Sales      Ste-Dorothée

Saint-Claude      St-Martin      Verdun

François de Laval

St-Elzéar

Ste-Rose de Lima      Bon Pasteur

St-Vincent-de-Paul      St-Noël-Chabanel

St-Ferdinand      St-Léopold      St-Théophile



# Thanks to All Conferences

Comm. Jean-XXIII

Notre-Dame-d'Anjou

Hochelaga-Rosemont

St-Conrad

Saint-François-Solano

Ste-Louise-de-Marillac

St-François-d'Assise

St-Enfant Jésus/Grenier Ozanam

St-Justin

Transversale

Ste-Maria Goretti

Ste-Claire

Notre-Dame de la Salette

# Thanks to All Conferences

St-André Apôtre

Cartierville

St-Pascal Baylon

Jean-Paul II

St-Paul de la Croix

Conférence L'Assomption

L'Épiphanie

Ste-Croix

Ste-Odile

St-Gérard-Majella

Conférence Repentigny

St-Paul- l'Ermite

St-Joseph de Bordeaux

Ste-Claire

Sts-Simon et Jude/ Charlemagne

# Thanks to All Conferences

St-Léonard

Ste-Colette

St-Jean Baptiste

St-Antoine de Marie Claret

St-Isaac st-Jogues

St-Grégoire le Grand/St-Alphonse

St-Barthélemy

Santa Cruz

Sacré Cœur de Jésus



# Presentation of Trophies

<b>Fernande Robillard</b>	Saint-Alphonse Conference	<b>40 ans</b>
<b>Hélène Bouchard Côté</b>	Saint-Conrad Conference	<b>40 ans</b>
<b>Claude Roy</b>	Saint-Grégoire le Grand Conference	<b>40 ans</b>
<b>Yolande Larrivée</b>	Saint-Jean Paul II Conference	<b>40 ans</b>
<b>Ellen Schryburt</b>	Saint-Léonard Conference	<b>45 ans</b>
<b>Micheline Ouimet Beauvais</b>	Saint-Conrad Conference	<b>45 ans</b>
<b>Julienne Beaulieu</b>	Saint-Paul l'Ermite Conference	<b>45 ans</b>
<b>André Boyer</b>	Émard-Saint-Paul Conference	<b>60 ans</b>