



## A Truly Blessed New Year

At the time when we put the past year in the rear-view mirror, economists and business experts with their prescience give us a front-row seat of what may likely happen. Hence, the frenzy of forecasts for the new year: moderate economic growth, falling inflation and interest rates, gradual growth in gross domestic product (GDP) per person, and improved consumer and business confidence.

Among these predictions, we may ask: What will the new year bring to our spiritual growth? How do we grow in spiritual wisdom – in word, thought and deed – and enrich our faith? Do we see a pathway forward to greater, more far-reaching discernment?

**Self-renewal.** In the epicentre of new year's uncertainties, challenges and changes, do we renew ourselves, realizing that in the fullness of God's plan for each one of us as steward there are gifts we still need to harness? How could we *personally* increase and animate confidence in our faith? Do we have to reset priorities or engage in a spiritual makeover to truly hear the call echoing deep in us to understand our role as children of God in the lives of other human beings? Do we persist to find bold ways to be in the joyful service of the Lord God, and caring relationships with those around us – family members, work colleagues fellow parishioners and complete strangers? Do we open doors to and embrace the weakest among us, insulated from biases and emboldened with outreach most may not discern well?

Amidst our share of burdens and trials, the Lord speaks to each one of us, where any means He knows to direct our attention to a journey of seeking Him. Are we still looking for more unique tokens from Him...His handprints to ponder upon...footprints to follow Him?

Are we missing opportunities to come more quickly to Christ, to be in a closer personal relationship with Him, to act more like Him? "Come to me..." is an all-season, weather-proof invitation.

What do we hear? What do we need to do now?

**Vincentian check-up.** For Vincentians, the beginning of the year may invite us to be involved in introspection. Have we listened to our neighbours-in-need with our hearts? Have we earned enough of their trust such that they freely express their situations, experiences and aspirations? Do they feel confident we can help them see and commit to ways of moving forward or rebuilding their lives?

Have we approached uncharted issues with over-caution? Have we focused on issues that most concern our neighbours-in-need day-to-day and forged ahead with good works with urgency? Have we followed through our commitments to them?

As conference or particular council president, how have you shown humility, leading fellow Vincentians without the burden of self-importance? How have your views modelled broad-mindedness, opening yourself and your team to new possibilities and nurturing an environment of fresh ideas and best practices? Does your leadership continue to inspire and shore up support by many members and non-members alike? How do you make advocacy relevant to your conference or particular council and drum up support for a host of social justice issues? Do you pay lip service to succession planning? Are you committed to sharing and passing up resources? Are you consciously targeting both high-potential and young prospective members to imprint on Society's renewal effort?

As conference member, have you been in the shadows for too long? Do you feel compelled to step up to steer your conference to a more responsive direction? How do you work on gaining a deep knowledge of

the Society, our signature service of home visits and the Catholic Social Teaching, among others, and also promoting the Vincentians' *esprit de corps*?

**Conclusion.** Around us, we see the growing poverty of many and the indifference that is troublingly taking hold perhaps in just as many; our actions and our lives as Vincentians matter. Every one of us has a clear role.

As members of the community of faith and as Vincentians, we can make 2025 a truly blessed year.

*May the Lord our God warm our hearts with greater introspection, discernment and steadfastness on many days of this new year, and always.*

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For those interested in contributing spiritual reflections, please email [jose.torres@rogers.com](mailto:jose.torres@rogers.com). Also, for reflections that may be used in group meeting's spirituality segment, please check out: [Monthly Reflections - Society of Saint Vincent de Paul - National Council of Canada](#)