WORLD DAY OF THE POOR

November 15, 2026

Be a refuge of HOPE!



"The Lord is the refuge of the poor." — Psalm 14:6

Society of Saint Vincent de Paul

2026 CAMPAIGN GUIDE

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PRESENTATION OF CAMPAIGN

The Society of Saint Vincent de Paul (SSVP) provided material help such as non-perishable food, clothing, accessories, and furniture to more than 590,000 of our neighbours in need last year. This included assistance to the homeless, refugees, immigrants, and to residents of northern communities.

Be a refuge of HOPE!
SSVP CANADA'S CALL TO ACTION FOR WORLD DAY OF THE POOR

"The Lord is the refuge of the poor." — Psalm 14:6

On November 15 this year, the SSVP will participate in the ninth national campaign for the World Day of the Poor (WPD).

In his **message**, Pope Leo XIV reminds us that poverty is not simply about material deprivation. Too often, those experiencing poverty are also deprived of a voice, a place in society and the dignity of being seen and heard.

The Holy Father challenges us to do more than speak about poverty. He calls us to listen to people experiencing poverty, to stand alongside them and, ultimately, **to become a refuge for the poor**.

This call speaks directly to the heart of the mission of the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul.

For more than 180 years across Canada, Vincentians have answered this call by going where people are hurting, listening to their stories and offering practical assistance, friendship and hope. Through home visits, food assistance, emergency support, housing assistance and countless acts of compassion, our members remind our neighbours in need that they are not forgotten and that they do not have to face difficult circumstances alone.

From listening to action

Pope Leo reminds us that the poor of our time can be among those who are most easily overlooked — people who may be deprived not only of material necessities, but also of "a voice and a face."

For Vincentians, this is an invitation to look more closely at the people we encounter.

- Who is being left behind in our communities?
- Whose voice are we not hearing?
- What can we do to ensure that every person we encounter is treated with dignity, respect and compassion?

Our response cannot be limited to providing material assistance. We are called to build relationships.

A food hamper can help feed a family. Help with rent can prevent an eviction. Assistance with a utility bill can keep the lights on. But a conversation, a visit and a genuine human connection can also remind someone that they matter.

This is the Vincentian difference: **we do not simply serve people; we accompany them.**

BECOMING A REFUGE - A NATIONAL CALL TO VINCENTIANS

As we prepare for the World Day of the Poor, SSVP Canada invites every Conference and Council to turn Pope Leo's message into action.

Being a refuge means creating a place where people feel welcomed rather than judged.

Listen

Take time to hear the experiences, concerns and hopes of the people we serve. Their voices should help shape our response.

See

Look beyond statistics and labels. Every person experiencing poverty has a name, a story and inherent dignity.

Welcome

Make our Conferences places where people feel safe, respected and valued.

Respond

Continue providing practical assistance to meet immediate needs — food, shelter, clothing, transportation, utilities and other necessities.

Accompany

Where possible, walk alongside our neighbours beyond the immediate crisis, helping connect them with resources, opportunities and longer-term support.

Advocate

When we see patterns of poverty and injustice, let us have the courage to speak up for change.

Invite others to act

Encourage parishes, families, donors, volunteers and community partners to join us in creating communities where no one is invisible.

PUTTING OURSELVES IN THEIR SHOES

Our founders understood that charity begins with a personal encounter. The person in need is never simply a recipient of assistance. They are our neighbour — someone deserving of friendship, respect and dignity.

Today, the challenges may look different, but the call remains the same.

Across Canada, people are facing rising housing costs, food insecurity, isolation, homelessness and other pressures that can push individuals and families to the margins of society.

Our response must be both compassionate and courageous.

BE A REFUGE OF HOPE

The World Day of the Poor is an opportunity for every Vincentian to renew our commitment to those who are most vulnerable. Let us answer Pope Leo XIV's invitation with action. Let us be a refuge where:

- people are seen.
- people are heard.
- dignity is restored.
- hope can begin again.

Because when we open our doors, listen with our hearts and walk alongside our neighbours in need, **we are not simply responding to poverty — we are living the Vincentian vocation of Compassion in Action.**

CAMPAIGN TOOLS

This event represents a great opportunity:

- To educate the public about the needs of those the SSVP helps in our communities.
- To increase the visibility of the SSVP's mission and activities.
- To mobilize current and recruit new Vincentians, and
- To collect funds and/or non-perishable goods to ensure the long-term viability of our good works on behalf of our neighbours in need.

This guide provides the available tools as well as campaign models that can be used by your conference, store or counter. We encourage you to distribute them widely and share feedback (stories, videos and / or pictures) on your activities with **editor-editeur@ssvp.ca**.

You may use this material as is or adapt it according to your needs. Available with this guide:

- Campaign blueprints, for a conference or store/outlet;
- Text for a parish speech;
- Text for a parish bulletin;
- Press Release.

Available electronically and distributed with this guide:

- Poster:
    - letter format (8 ½" x 11")
    - legal format (8 ½" x 14")
    - tabloid format (11" x 17")

  In PDF format: to print, adding your contact information, or to order from the National Council, who will add your contact information on the PDF document and send it to your selected printer. (We suggest Staples / Bureau en Gros.)

- PowerPoint presentation about the campaign with animation in a loop.

CAMPAIGN BLUEPRINTS

Adapting the campaign in each conference or council is very important, to reflect local realities. Following are two basic blueprints for a successful campaign.

ACTIVITIES IN A PARISH

- Determine what actions to undertake in your parish/parishes:
  - Fundraising (using envelopes placed in church pews)
  - Collection of non-perishable food items
  - Organize a friendly meal to explain the activities of the SSVP
- Coordinate with particular or central council to place an ad in local newspapers or on local radio.
- Organize a meeting with the pastor.
- Print the campaign poster (from National Council).
- Identify where to display campaign posters.
- Print collection envelopes for fundraising.
- Place a notice in the parish bulletin.
- Plan for a SSVP member to address parishioners after masses.
- Place envelopes on benches and/or add containers to collect non-perishable food items.

ACTIVITIES IN A STORE AND /OR IN THE COMMUNITY

- Determine what actions to undertake in the store(s) / community:
  - Fundraising
  - Collection of non-perishable food items
  - Door-to-door collection
- Coordinate with particular or central council to place an ad in local newspapers or on local radio;
- Identify where to display campaign posters;
- Print the campaign poster (from National Council);
- Promotion near cash registers;
- Set up a computer with a presentation (PowerPoint in loop mode);
- Print relevant or relayed documents to customers/clients to take home (leaflet, collection envelope, etc.)

TEXT FOR PARISH SPEECH

Father _____, and my dear friends in Christ. My name is _____ and I am very pleased to be able to talk to you today, on behalf of the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul, for the _____ Conference. I wish to thank our priest, Father _____, for allowing us this opportunity to address you, our faith community.

In his letter of June 13, Pope Leo invites us to celebrate the World Day of the Poor, on the 33rd Sunday in Ordinary Time. This year we will celebrate this day on November 15. The theme this year is "***Be a Refuge of HOPE***" (*cf. Ps 14:6*).

One in 10 Canadians lives below the poverty line. Thanks to the generosity of parishioners, the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul has fought the symptoms of poverty caused by the housing crisis and distributed Christmas baskets or organized community meals. Such gestures of solidarity help these people to come out of their isolation and allow them to experience wonderful moments of joy. By taking the time to welcome our sisters and brothers in Jesus Christ, we not only give food, but we also share as equals with humans.

In the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul, our tradition is to avoid judging and to serve people with love, respect, justice and joy. In response to Pope Leo's appeal, we invite you to work with us and lend a hand, by participating in our collection of food supplies. In this very busy period, we always need volunteers and, of course, financial support is always appreciated. This year, we need your help more than ever. You can obtain more information, and you may donate to the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul team in our community, or directly at ssvp.ca/donate.

Thank you for your attention! I wish all of you a very nice Sunday.

TEXT FOR PARISH NEWSLETTER

November 15, the 33rd Sunday in Ordinary Time, is the World Day of the Poor. Your Society of Saint Vincent de Paul invites you to help our less fortunate brothers and sisters, especially at this uncertain time. We encourage you to lend a hand by participating in our collection of food supplies. In this very busy period, we always need volunteers and, of course, financial help is always appreciated. You may donate to the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul team in our community, or directly to the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul at **https://ssvp.ca/donate/.**

PRESS RELEASE

With the cold weather approaching, charities across Canada prepare for the busiest time of the year. The Society of Saint Vincent de Paul (SSVP) in Canada is marking The World Day of the Poor, as declared by Pope Leo. Established in 2017 by Pope Francis, the day is held annually on the 33rd Sunday in Ordinary Time. On November 15, we are encouraged to consider those less fortunate than ourselves and to give generously what we can.

Established by Pope Francis, the day serves to encourage the Catholic Church and all Christians to be a visible sign of Christ's love for those in need and to foster a culture of encounter rather than discard.

Canadians in need struggle to buy their children winter clothing and afford the increased costs of heating their home. Every year more people turn to organizations like the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul for help. Some people who may be too proud to ask for help are forced to by all the added stress of winter and year's end. The desire to provide for their family causes them to humble themselves and seek help. We live in a country where a winter coat is not a luxury and where persons in need may have to choose between food or warmth.

In the coming weeks the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul invites you to consider your own good fortune and how this good fortune allows you to assist persons in need; with a donation of money, clothing, household goods, or time you can help us make a difference in the community. SSVP strives to treat everyone with dignity and respect regardless of personal creed or background; we ask you to do the same. Encourage others to donate. Take a moment to speak with a needy person. Buy a coffee for a person shivering on the streets.

In [City/Town Name] X people live in poverty and, of these people, X are children. Each year the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul: [Council/Conference] works year-round to combat the poverty caused by the housing crisis, by helping feed, clothe, and console our neighbours. We hope that you will consider donating and volunteering not just in honour of the World Day of the Poor, but year-round to help your neighbours in need

To donate, volunteer, or learn more contact [Preferred Local Contact Method].

To make an online donation directly to your local SSVP or to National, visit http://www.ssvp.ca/donate or call 1-866-997-7787 to learn more about donating to the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul.