



OZANAM NETWORK

International General Council - Society of St Vincent de Paul



The Fund for International Solidarity, the need for sharing

Porto, the venue for the CGI Annual Meetings

Page 5

Film Festival
“The Seven Founders”

Page 17

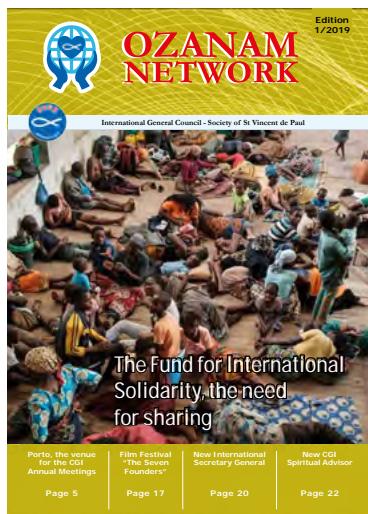
New International Secretary General

Page 20

New CGI Spiritual Advisor

Page 22

Summary



Chairman:

Carlos LAFARGA

Head of English Language:

Mary Whilssy CANDELARIA y Karl HILA

Head of Spanish Language:

Carlos LAFARGA

Head of Portuguese Language and Graphics:

Markinhos PERASSOLI

Head of Social Media:

Mary Whilssy CANDELARIA

SSVP Representative – Famvin Int.

Communication Department:

Karl HILA

Ozanam Network Graphics:

SSVP Spain

Acknowledgements to our Translators' Club for their work:

Dalila Alegria

Rachael Barton

Geovana Cervantes

Eneida Fernandez

Clermont Fortin

Cleiton Gomes

Domingo Lopez

Marguerite McMillan

Charles Plock

Antonio Sebastian

Gilson Timoteo

Joanna Waller

EDITORIAL	3
THEMATIC YEAR OF PAUL LAMACHE	
○ International Competition for writings on Paul Lamache	4
INTERNATIONAL ACTIVITIES	
○ Porto, the venue for the CGI Annual Meetings	5
○ Annual Planning and Evaluation Meeting American Region #3	7
○ SSVP at the United Nations	8
○ CIAD ANNUAL REPORT	10
○ International Twinning Commission Meeting	16
VINCENTIAN HISTORY	
○ Film Festival "The Seven Founders"	17
THE SITUATION OF THE CHRISTIANS IN SYRIA: A LONG WAIT...	18
PGI CIRCULAR LETTER	19
APPOINTMENTS	
○ Bertrand Ousset, the new International Secretary General	20
○ Fr. Motto C.M., New CGI Spiritual Advisor	22
○ Juan Manuel B. Gomez, the new Coordinator for Group 3 of Europe I	23
COMMUNICATION/SPREADING	
○ SSVP joins the Global Catholic Climate Movement	24
○ Handbook for Conferences	25
SPIRITUALITY	26
VINCENTIAN FAMILY	
○ Annual meeting of the Vincentian Family Executive Committee in Philadelphia, USA	28
○ A View from India, Famvin Homeless Alliance	30
○ First Communication Meeting of the Vincentian Family	31
SSVP PLUS	
○ The SSVP established on the Cayman Islands	32
○ The Conferences in Cyprus, a Growing Trend	33
WORLD NEWS	
○ Re-entry Programs for Former Prisoners, a New Chance	34
○ Childhood poverty in Ireland is everybody's challenge	35
○ Argentina held the 9 th meeting of ENAVI 2019	37
○ Sri Lanka. Educating young people in the virtue of Charity	38
○ Brasil: Encuentro nacional de formación	40
○ Australia: Claire Victory, the new national president	41
○ 175 th Anniversary of SSVP in England	42
SOLIDARITY	
○ Mozambique disaster	43
YOUTH	
○ The Commitment of young people in Senegal	44
○ The IMVY and WYD Experience	45
INSTITUTIONAL VISITS	
○ President General Visits United States	47
IN MEMORIAM: BRO. AMIN DE TARRAZI: A LIFE WELL LIVED	49
CGI BOARD	50
STRATEGIC GOALS 2016-2022	51

Editorial

Two Essential Conditions to Become a Good Vincentian

Renato Lima



Dear brothers and sisters, we all know that, in order to be considered a “good Vincentian”, we need to fulfil certain conditions, such as following the Rule, joining a Conference, taking part in spirituality events, and practising charity with those who are suffering. There are two elements, however, which take priority on the Vincentian path: **time and love**.

Having sufficient time is one of the greatest challenges for people at the moment, and so it is one of the hardest things to deal with in any social or professional context. The modern world absorbs all our time, with the multitude of affairs which occupy us in our personal, family, student or working lives. It is common to hear the words “I don’t have time”. In order to practice charity, we have to set aside time in our personal lives so that we can devote it to those who need a helping hand and support from us. **A Vincentian without time is only half a Vincentian.**

The second fundamental element for charitable work, in order to go smoothly and be effective, is love. Without love, charity is not real (“Without love, I am nothing” - 1 Cor 13, 2) and it will not produce results (as St Thomas Aquinas said). This kind of artificial, loveless action is reduced merely to philanthropy or welfare. Without the love of Jesus Christ, it is simply a kind of “mechanical charity”, traditionalist and focused only on supplying material goods, without compassion, service and solidarity. In order to promote real charity, we must be flooded, heart and soul, with love. **A Vincentian without love is a “fake” Vincentian.**

So, dear brothers and sisters, time and love are basic conditions for becoming a “good Vincentian”. These qualities must be primary requirements for those who are in the process of learning about our organisation.

Renato Lima de Oliveira
16th President General



Council General launches the International Competition for writings on Paul Lamache



As a way of further promoting the “International Year on the Theme of Paul Lamache”, the Council General of the SSVP launched the International Literary Competition on “The First Conference” on 8th February.



The procedures, with the rules and the appendix for this competition, are available on the CGI website (www.ssvpglobal.org). The written entries must be no more than 20 pages long. Cash prizes will be awarded for the three best entries (1000, 750 and 500 euros, respectively). The SVP Conferences to which the winners belong will also receive a cash award to the same value, to be spent on behalf of the families and individuals they help, or on Vincentian works.

Entries may be submitted in one of five languages: Portuguese, Spanish, English, Italian and French. The closing date for sending in dissertations / studies will be 8 July 2019. The organizing committee will announce the final result on 9 September 2019, and the prizes will be sent to the winners immediately afterwards.

This competition was announced in the 16th President General’s programme for his term of office, which instituted the “themed years” in order to spread knowledge of the life, work and legacy of the founders of the first Vincentian Conference in 1833. Council General hopes that many Vincentians, especially young people, will take part in the Lamache competition.

So come on! Let’s ask Superior Councils to help CGI spread news of this competition to the Conferences and Councils in every country, as well as to Vincentian schools and colleges, and to Catholic universities.

For more information:
cgi.formation@ssvpglobal.org
www.ssvpglobal.org



Council General International Annual Meetings Oporto - Portugal - June 2019



Porto will Host the Annual Meetings
of the International General Council
in 2019

The meetings will take place from June 11th to 15th
at the Diocesan Seminary of Vilar.

THE INTERNATIONAL GENERAL COUNCIL (CGI) OF SSVP WILL PROMOTE ITS INTERNATIONAL ANNUAL PLENARY SESSION FROM JUNE 11TH TO 15TH, IN PORTO (PORTUGAL). THE SESSION WILL CELEBRATE THE GENERAL COUNCIL'S 180TH ANNIVERSARY.

All the activities will take place in the Diocesan Seminary of Vilar, a religious place belonging to the Diocese of Porto, with all the infrastructure and logistics to host such a significant event.

The plenary session is composed of several meetings held by the segments making up the General Council. In the first two days, there will be a workshop with twelve Territorial Vice-Presidents and twenty-three Area Coordinators, responsible for managing the SSVP structure across the globe.

Furthermore, a meeting will be held by members of the General Council board, a workshop on the Vincentian thrift shops, which offer low-priced, second-hand goods to the general public, will be organised, an excellent initiative that helps to strengthen the Councils' financing by allocating the resources received for the benefit of the poor. The countries that own these Vincentian thrift shops will show their good practices.



The Permanent Section and the International Executive Committee (CEI) meetings will be held on the last two days of the plenary session. The Permanent Section is like a “board of management” of the General Council. The Section approves the CGI’s budget, projects, accounts, letters of aggregation as well as other decisions. As provided in Article 5.1.1 of the International Rule, the Permanent Section “helps the President General to provide a better international service to the members and the poor”.

The CEI is made up of countries with over 1,000 active and aggregated Conferences (there are currently nine countries), and five nations taking part by free election of the President General. Together, these countries account for 85% of all Vincentians in the world. The decisions taken in this Committee (as a result of this high percentage) have full force, validity and representativeness. According to article 3.16.1 of the Rule, the CEI “is the Vincentian body closest to the President General, which advises him on all problems” and defines strategies.

During the event, there will be two special lectures: “History and Action of the Religious People of Saint Vincent de Paul”, delivered by father Bertin Sanon (superior general); and “The Role of the Layman in the Church of Pope Francis” presented by Guzmán Carriquiry (Pontifical Commission for Latin America, Vatican).

In addition to all these events, the annual Plenary of the General Council will also feature the launch of the song “The Seven Founders”, the publication of the book “Vincentian Holiness”, the presentation of the Medal “Charity in Hope” to the Scouts and the signing of an international collaboration agreement with the religious people of St. Vincent de Paul (RSV), a branch of the Vincentian Family with a common heritage and roots with our SSVP (taking into account that Jean-León Le Prevost was part of both entities).

All these activities will be broadcast live on Ozanam TV, thus increasing transparency in the management of the international SSVP. We ask for your prayers for the success of the annual meetings of the General Council.

INTERNATIONAL ACTIVITIES



Annual Planning and Evaluation Meeting American Region #3

THE INTERNATIONAL TERRITORIAL VICE-PRESIDENCY FOR THE AMERICAN REGION #3, TOGETHER WITH THE COORDINATION TEAM FOR THIS AREA, MET IN SÃO PAULO (BRAZIL) ON 15-16TH NOVEMBER 2018. THIS ANNUAL PLANNING AND EVALUATION MEETING TOOK PLACE AT THE TRAINING CENTER OF FRÉDÉRIC ANTOINE OZANAM (A WORK OF THE SSVP'S METROPOLITAN COUNCIL) IN THE CITY OF OSASCO.

The following members were meeting attendees:

- **Júlio César Marques de Lima** (Regional Vice-President – Brazil)
- **Margarita Henao Mejía** (Coordinator of Zone 1 – Colombia)
- **Sebastião Ribeiro de Silva** (Coordinator of Zone 2 – Brazil)
- **Francisco Velasco** (Coordinator of Zone 3 – Chile)
- **Renata Mancini** (Formation Coordinator – Brazil)
- **María Rosa Corral** (Special Projects Coordinator – Ecuador)
- **Josmary Palencia Centella** (Youth Coordinator – Venezuela)

The agenda items included the following:

- a. Evaluation of the 2018 activities;
- b. 2019 Work Plan;
- c. Planning for the areas of training, youth and special projects;
- d. Ideas with regard to the III Regional Meeting of the SSVP in South America which will take

place in Aparecida (Brazil) during the month of April 2019.

- e. Evaluation of the work carried out by the National Councils in the American Region #3.

The Territorial Vice-President, Júlio César M. de Lima, regards the annual meeting of the regional team of the CGI as essential with regard to planning the General Council's activities in the continent and identifying the National Councils' needs. He stated: "During the annual meeting, in addition to planning various visits and projects that are to be developed, we identified the SSVP's strengths and weaknesses in each country in order to provide support to the National Councils and help them develop in a manner that will enable them to coordinate their work on a national level."

The next meeting of the VPTI team for the American Region #3 will take place at the end of 2019 and will be held in the city of Cuenca (Ecuador).

INTERNATIONAL ACTIVITIES

SSVP at the United Nations

AT THE UN OUR SOCIETY COLLABORATES WITH THE LADIES OF CHARITY, THE DAUGHTERS OF CHARITY, THE CONGREGATION OF THE MISSION, AND THE SISTERS OF CHARITY FEDERATION TO FORM THE VINCENTIAN FAMILY AT THE UN. THIS COALITION HAS HELPED US INCREASE OUR VISIBILITY, GAIN ADDITIONAL STATUS AND MADE AVAILABLE TO US TALENTS AND EXPERTISE OF OTHER BRANCHES OF THE VINCENTIAN FAMILY. TOGETHER WE ARE BRINGING THE FACE OF GLOBAL POVERTY TO MEMBER STATES IN A QUIET VINCENTIAN WAY.

As Vincentians we hear the cry of those living in poverty daily, as we visit with them in their homes, or in homeless shelters, even as we chat with them on the street of our hometowns and cities.

Most Vincentians have learned how to tune in, without passing judgement on those we serve. We know their suffering, and we completely understand. In the Untied States, members of Congress and the Senate are willing to listen to us when we talk about poverty, because they know we have a unique view of poverty in America. We are “Boots on the ground” as they say.

Sister Teresa Kotturan, the representative of the Daughters of Charity; and Pattie Hughes, the representative of the SSVP at the United Nations



Often, we're faced with conflict, knowing the people we're visiting are not to blame for their poverty, yet it persists even with our well-meaning programs and assistance. How can people of good faith allow this injustice to continue? How do we right it? One way is to fight on behalf of our voiceless sisters and brothers through political means. And that's what we do at the United Nations.

The past two weeks at the UN were extremely busy, as the Commission on the Status of Women, CSW63, took over the United Nations. CSW is the second largest event each year at the UN, behind the General Assembly. There were women and girls from all corners of the earth present. More than 9,000 people attended the two-week commission! Discussions were around every aspect of being a woman in todays world.

The theme of CSW63 was Social Protection, Access to Public Services and Sustainable

Infrastructure. Participants also asked member states to discuss issues of gender equality, education, health, immigration, and peace, especially as they apply to women and girls.

This year CSW63 began in sadness, with the announcement of the tragic plane crash in Ethiopia. On that plane were 21 members of the United Nations family. Secretary General Antonio Guterres opened the first Session with a respectful minute of silence. The flags of the Member States usually waving so beautifully and proudly on First Avenue were not raised on Monday morning, and the flag of the United Nations was at half-staff. It was a solemn start to an important Session.

As your representatives we attended many meetings and events during CSW63, I'd like to highlight a couple for you.

An Irish based organization, GBV.ie presented a discussion on global

gender-based violence, during this conversation we were reminded several times to be sure we're truly working on behalf of those in need by asking them what it is they need from us, how can we be of assistance? I heard my Vincentian sisters and brothers in these comments. How can we help if we don't ask what's important to those we're helping? We were reminded by Ambassador Geraldine Byrne Nason, Permanent Representative from Ireland, to hold our politicians accountable. Every Member State that has signed on has a responsibility to uphold their end of the bargain, those of us in "Civil Society" have a responsibility to hold their feet to the fire. She further stated that we are the missing link, as voters and payers of taxes, we must make sure that what have decided will be made into law in our countries. She challenged us to "Shake the cages" of our respective governments. We were also reminded by Dominic McSorley that changing language and culture is a "Long game." So true.

Another Side Event of interest was a screening of several documentaries highlighting the power of women during times of war. One such film is *Pray the Devil Back to Hell*, in it the women of Liberia are heroic! They used their maternal power to make change and insist their voices be heard by those in power. It was very moving indeed.

As Vincentians, we are quick to introduce ourselves as members of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, and members of the Vincentian Coalition at the UN. We feel part of our job is to bring SSVdP into the conversation as a reminder of who we are and who we represent.

While CSW63 was rich and exciting, I'd like to mention the session that took place just before CSW63, that was CSocD57.

CSocD is held each year at the UN. This year CSocD57 was in session from February 11th through February 21st. The theme was, "Addressing inequalities and challenges to social inclusion through fiscal, wage and social protection policies." Like CSW it's an exciting time at the UN, with representatives from many parts of the world in attendance.

This year held special importance to members of the Vincentian Family. As we all know, homelessness was the agreed upon theme of the Vincentian Family in 2018-2019. The Vincentian Family at the UN decided to bring our collective voices to the UN by starting a working group addressing global street homelessness. In October 2018 we invited other NGOs to join us, and quickly became a viable working group. Within a year we were a strong enough group to present a side event and submit a paper to the UN during CSocD57.

We decided to take a leap of faith, and as the Vincentian Family at the UN we lobbied Member States to consider using homelessness as the theme for CSocD58, to be held in 2020.

And, we were successful! Next year, CSocD58 will be using Homelessness as the theme for the session. Thanks to the efforts of ALL the Vincentian Family at the UN we were able to gently push the underserved population of street homeless sisters and brothers from the shadows to the world stage.

Truly this is not only Blessed Frederic and Blessed Rosalie, but also St. Vincent, St. Louise, and God our Father at work through us.

God Bless our combined efforts for those we serve.

Ed Keane and Pattie Hughes.

Go to www.un.org to read more about the United Nations.

INTERNATIONAL ACTIVITIES

THE CIAD (COMMISSION FOR INTERNATIONAL AID AND DEVELOPMENT) IS A COMMISSION OF THE SOCIETY OF SAINT VINCENT DE PAUL'S COUNCIL GENERAL INTERNATIONAL THAT EXAMINES FUNDING REQUESTS FOR THE SOCIETY'S PROJECTS THROUGHOUT THE WORLD. ITS ACTION FOCUSES ON EMERGENCY AID, REHABILITATION AFTER DISASTERS, DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS, AND THE EXPANSION AND STRENGTHENING THE SOCIETY.



Annual Report

The CIAD consists of 8 of the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul's volunteers, from every continent, supported by a staff member.

Its action is funded by donations from National/Superior Councils, mainly in response to appeals after major catastrophes and, more rarely, by outside donors. The CIAD does not raise funds directly from the general public since this funding source is reserved for National/Superior Councils.

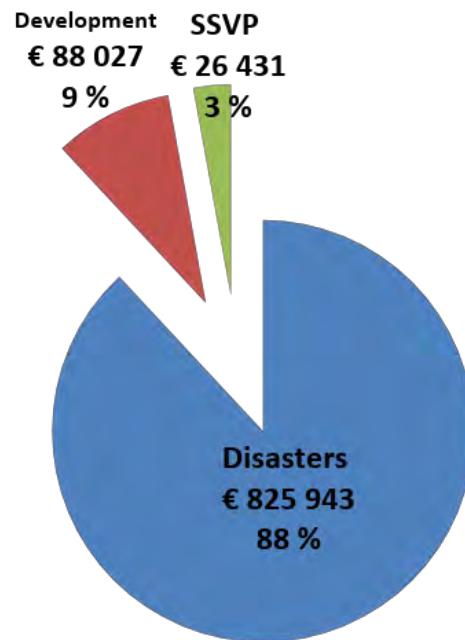
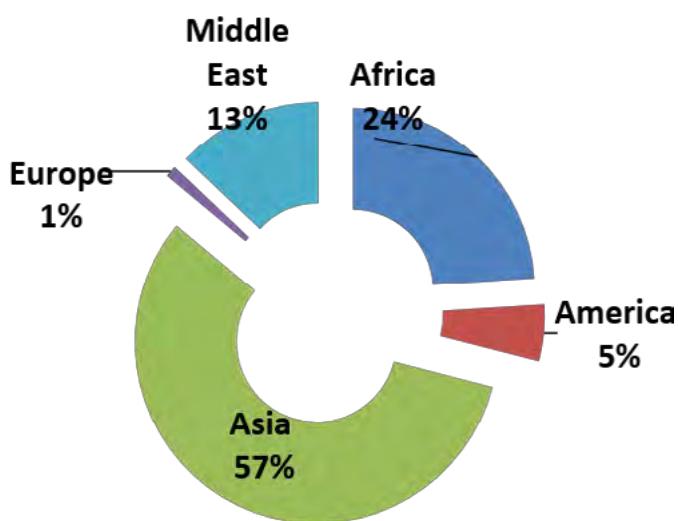
It provides emergency help in situations of humanitarian crisis and funds recovery programmes (after a natural disaster for instance), as well as development work. It is also responsible for monitoring the use of funds allocated to these projects around the world.

A Few Figures – 2018 balance

€ 940,40

52 interventions

31 countries



1.- DISASTERS (NATURAL OR MANMADE)

a) Emergency (€ 44,862 – 5 %)

CIAD emergency actions are small interventions aimed at bringing support to victims in the immediate aftermath of a disaster, taking advantage of the local presence of Vincentians, who usually provide emergency assistance such as food, medicines, water or clothing, blankets or tents. They are limited to € 3-5,000, as emergency is not Conference's speciality.

In 2018, this was done 14 times :

- Floods in Bolivia, Ivory Coast, India, Laos and France.
- Earthquake in Indonesia
- Volcano eruption in Guatemala
- Cyclones in Madagascar, Philippines and USA
- Victims of terrorism in Burkina Faso, Central African Republic and Burundi



b) Rehabilitation (€ 781,081 – 83%)

Long term rehabilitation projects are the way for SSVP to 'bring people back to a normal life' through education, professional training, reconstruction, etc.

PHILIPPINES

'Rebuilding Lifes – Programme (year 5) - € 131,800 in 2018.

This M€ 1.3 5-8 year programme started in 2014 to alleviate the suffering of victims of super-typhoon Haiyan, covering several fields such as:

Education (school fees, material, food and accommodation for **800 pupils** in High School, College and Vocational).

Reconstruction of 200 houses.

Health (2 medical missions and campaigns in 2018)

Livelihood (launch of a Cooperative to create small businesses and micro-credit to 500 people).



INTERNATIONAL ACTIVITIES

Commission for International
Aid and Development (CIAD)



NEPAL

Earthquake reconstruction (€ 391,304 in 2018). After the tremendous earthquake that took place in 2015, SSVP started an ambitious reconstruction programme in 2016 together with Caritas. The **300 houses** planned were finished in 2018.



LEBANON

Refugee Assistance – (€ 98,768). Lebanon, a 4M inhabitant's country, is hosting 1.5 M refugees from Syria, and Iraq living in great poverty.

SSVP Lebanon, with the support of CIAD, is offering bi-weekly meals to elderly refugees, and offering full scholarship to refugee children.



MADAGASCAR

Assistance to Cyclone Victims – (€ 51,000).

Madagascar is one of the poorest countries in the world and is hit every year by cyclones.

With CIAD support, the Vincentians have been able to bring **material assistance** to thousands of people and **rebuild 25 houses**.



CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

Assistance to war/terror victims - € 38,950.

The poorest country in the world is suffering an extremely violent turmoil. SSVP brings assistance to thousands of displaced people, fleeing violence or getting back home.

With CIAD, 4 missions have been organized to distribute food, hygiene and household items and clothing.



Other projects...

Medical mission in IDPs camp in South Sudan - € 8,500.

Homes repairs in Rwanda after torrential rains - € 19,033.

Basic food assistance to Venezuelan economic crisis in both **Venezuela and Brazil : € 26,795.**

Food and crop for floods/dry-spell victims in Malawi - € 11,976.

Shoes and books for hurricane affected children in Dominica - € 5,888.



2- DEVELOPMENT

Ethiopia

In prison professional training - € 4,300.

With the extra benefit of re-establishing SSVP in Ethiopia, a Conference working in a Prison in Ambo has purchased a welding machine and a woodwork machine to allow prisoners to receive training, work and make some benefits to earn their living.

Mozambique

Poultry farm / professional training- € 10,000.

This farm will allow poor people to receive professional training and start working for their own benefit.

INTERNATIONAL ACTIVITIES

Commission for International
Aid and Development (CIAD)

BENIN

Equipment for SSVP Medical Centre - € 14,265.
With the help of SSVP France and the support of local Church, SSVP Benin has created a medical centre in a lakeside area with no medical facility. CIAD has funded the purchase of medical material. This will give a 200,000 people area an access to healthcare, which is an exceptional success.



SOUTH SUDAN

Be in Hope Orphanage - € 15,000.
Whereas it is not its vocation, CIAD is helping cover the **running costs** of an orphanage which provides all needs (accommodation, meals, access to education) to **20 street children**.



LEBANON

Catering project - € 17,377.
CIAD has supported the creation by a Conference of a cooking/catering workshop which participates in **local development** through the purchase of local agricultural production, **job creation and income generating** activity for both workers and the Conference.



Support to basic Conference activities in Russia - € 7,850

Christmas presents for refugees in Lebanon - € 4,235.

Set up of a farm in South Sudan - € 15,000.



3- SSVP

a) SSVP Plus

'SSVP Plus' is CGI's programme to set up or re-establish SSVP in countries where it is not. After Liberia and Albania in 2017, we have reached this results in Cayman Islands and Cyprus in 2018 .

b) SSVP strengthening

To help develop or strengthen SSVP in countries where it is weak, CIAD has supported the funding of elections in DR Congo, Conference visits in Uruguay, and training for members in Nepal.

If you wish to support CIAD through the Fund for international Solidarity (FIS)... get in touch with your National Council or with CGI!



FIS: Fund for International Solidarity for Emergency, Development, SSVP PLus and SSVP Strengthening.

Account owner:

CONFEDERATION INTERNLE STE ST VINCENT DE PAUL CONSEIL
GENERAL.

Bank Name:

CIC - CREDIT INDUSTRIEL ET COMMERCIAL – CIC PARIS BAC

Branch: CIC PARIS BAC

Address: CIC PARIS BAC – 2 boulevard Raspail – 75007 Paris – France

BIC: CMCIFRPP

Bank code: 30066

Branch code: 10041

Account number: 00010581206

IBAN : FR76 3006 6100 4100 0105 8120 614

INTERNATIONAL ACTIVITIES

From left to right: Terry Brow (Europe), Dunstan Dominic (Asia), Josephine Obomighie (Africa), Arthur Schultze (Oceania), Tony Muir (Twinning Coordinator), Kathryn Weswick (America), Joseph Pandian (CGI)



International Twinning Commission Meeting

THE INTERNATIONAL TWINNING COMMISSION MEETING WAS HELD LAST MARCH, IN KUALA LUMPUR. ON THE AGENDA WAS THE NEED TO IMPROVE PROCEDURES AND GENERATE RESOURCES TO HELP THE TWINNING WORK, BY EXPANDING, IF POSSIBLE, THE COORDINATORS' NETWORK.

The meeting began with a contribution from Joseph Pandian, the Vice-president general, who attended the meeting as the representative of the CGI. Our dear fellow member spoke to the Commission about the global importance of twinning and the role the SSVP plays in assisting disadvan-

vantaged countries, and he read a message from our IPG Renato Lima de Oliveira expressing his appreciation for the work of this Commission.

The first day's work was spent mainly on the amendments to the Policies and operational Procedures Manual, which will be translated into four languages and distributed to all countries as soon as possible.

The Commission then considered the importance of communication and training for national twinning coordinators, highlighting the need for International Coordinators to be trained as well, with the suggestion that it would be good for there to be a Twinning Coordinator on every National Council.

Commenting on the financial management of twinning, there is a need for a fast response, since the SSVP's philosophy is to avoid build-

ing up funds, but, instead, to put them to use as soon as possible for the specific twinning purposes.

With the aim of improving twinning, the following points were also considered:

- Encouraging greater participation by donor countries and those receiving assistance;
- Recommending that National Councils keep an updated database of their twinning arrangements, to provide reliable information of the work going on around the world;
- Considering twinning if both parties belong and are aggregated to the SSVP;
- Enable visits between the parties twinned.
- It is essential for the International Territorial Vice-presidents (VPTIs) to be involved with the Twinning Coordinators from the various countries, and with the International Twinning Coordinators, so that by working together, they can provide clearer information.



Film Festival “The Seven Founders” celebrates the 180th anniversary of the Council General International

The festival, launched by the Council General International (CGI) of the SSVP, aims at stimulating the knowledge and research, in a playful and talented way, about the origin of the SSVP and the main role of the seven founders: Antoine Frederic Ozanam, Auguste Le Taillandier, Jules Devaux, Paul Lamache, François Lallier, Félix Clavé and Emmanuel Joseph Bailly de Surcy.

The festival is part of the celebrations for the 180 years of existence of the Council General International, founded on **July 21, 1839**.

Only the active Vincentians in the conferences can participate in the festival. The videos or films presented can be produced in three formats: short film (up to 40 minutes), medium-length film (from 41 to 69 minutes) and feature film (more than 70 minutes).

The deadline for the submission of videos or films to the General Council is **15th July 2019**. The audio-visual works will be evaluated by a special commission and the announcement of the winners will take place on **9th September 2019**, date of the liturgical feast of Ozanam. The awards range from 1,000 to 2,000 euros.

“We hope that there will be very interesting productions, set in the Paris of 1833, when those seven visionaries had, under the inspiration of the Divine Providence, the brilliant idea of founding the Society of St. Vincent de Paul. The seven of them, without exception, were instrumental in the establishment of this important charity, which today provides relevant services to mankind”, stated the fellow brother Renato Lima, 16th President General.

Visit www.ssvpglobal.org to know the rules of the festival. Take part! Do not miss this historic opportunity.



The Situation of the Christians in Syria: A long wait...



1.- Neither PEACE... nor WAR:

This situation where there is neither peace nor war in Syria has become intolerable. Any reconstruction has been frozen until further orders. The shortages of basic sources of energy have made the winter months unbearable, even life-threatening for children, the elderly people and many homeless people. The escalating value of the dollar against the local currency has not improved the life of people, who are trapped by the blockade of simple necessities.

2.- THE ALARMING EXODUS:

In the lastest general meeting of families, only 4 couples were less than 50 years old. The ageing of Christian families has increased at an alarming rate. According to recent counts, the Christians in Syria have lost 50-77% of their people... In 2009 they were 4,7% of the population, how many are there today? What future is there for this little flock? They are faced with a big challenge, both socially and pastorally; an ageing minority now faces uncertainty.

3.- A COMBAT which is not lost:

Since 2010 Pope Benedict XVI encourages us to immerse ourselves in the social teaching of the Church, in every possible way, as we push for renewal. By signing a historic pledge of human fraternity with the Grand Imam of al-Azhar on 4th February 2019, Pope Francis has opened new perspectives of a fraternal living together, dialogue and hope.

Although it is now a minority and much enfeebled, the Church in Syria rests on the sacrifices of its martyrs, strengthened and encouraged by the fire of the Spirit and the Light of the Gospel and will continue to guard the faith of Peter and hold to the route which allows them to progress further along the road to salvation.





CIRCULAR LETTER 2019
President General Renato Lima de Oliveira
www.ssvpglobal.org

The cover of the Circular Letter 2019 features a portrait of President General Renato Lima de Oliveira in a suit. To his left is the SSVP logo (a blue fish with the letters 'SSVP' above it and 'serviens in spc' below it). In front of him are two pages of the letter, which are also shown in the background.

In his new Circular Letter, the President General invites the Vincentians worldwide to seek holiness

ON 31ST JANUARY 2019, THE FELLOW MEMBER RENATO LIMA DE OLIVEIRA, 16TH PRESIDENT GENERAL OF THE SOCIETY OF SAINT VINCENT DE PAUL, PUBLISHES HIS THIRD CIRCULAR LETTER, DOCUMENT IN WHICH THE PRESIDENT COMMUNICATES DIRECTLY WITH ALL THE VINCENTIANS IN THE WORLD, MEMBERS OF THE VINCENTIAN CONFERENCES.

The Letter is structured in five parts: "Introduction", "General Council News", "Recommendations to the Vincentians", "Thematic Year 2019 (Year of Lamache)" and "Conclusions". In addition to the letter itself, the text contains 25 footnotes, with additional information that enriches the global understanding of the chapters.

"The Circular Letter is an excellent opportunity for the General Council to address the Vincentians worldwide, inviting them to reflect on various topics," stressed the brother Renato Lima. The Letter of this year focuses on the 180 years of the General Council and on four strategic aspects of the SSVP: communication, training, youth and expansion to new countries.

In one of the parts of the letter, the President Renato urges, "the vincentian should be light to others. The vincentian should be an example of tolerance among the

members themselves and among the assisted persons. The vincentian should seek holiness and promote the culture of peace. At the end, our President leaves some questions for reflection, including, "what do we need to start doing to improve the efficiency of the Conferences' work? And what do we have to stop doing?"

The Circular Letter is a tradition of the General Presidents. The first of them was written by the co-founder Emmanuel Joseph Bailly de Surcy, 1st President General, on 14th July 1841. Since the beginning of this mandate, in 2016, the Letter is being written in Arabic, Italian and Chinese, in addition to the other four official languages (English, French, Spanish and Portuguese).

Since it is a relatively long document, it is suggested to reflect on the Circular Letter as a spiritual reading in the Conferences and the Councils, in two or three parts. The comments about the Circular Letter of 2019, in addition to the suggestions of topics for the 2020 edition, can be sent to the e-mail address: cgi.circularletter@gmail.com.

Comment, forward, give your opinion and reflect on the content of the Circular Letter. To read the Circular Letter visit www.ssvpglobal.org.



Getting to know Bertrand Ousset, the new International Secretary General

AT THE BEGINNING OF HIS MANDATE, THE PRESIDENT GENERAL, ON THE RECOMMENDATION OF AMIN DE TARRAZI, ASKED ME TO TAKE UP THE POSITION OF SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE CGI. AT THE TIME, I WAS NOT FAMILIAR WITH THE FUNCTIONING OF THE INTERNATIONAL SSVP AND I DECLINED THIS OFFER, PROPOSING TO MAKE MYSELF USEFUL IN OTHER MISSIONS FOR THE CGI, SO I AGREED TO JOIN THE CIAD AND THEN THE COMMISSION ON THE CANONICAL SITUATION OF THE SSVP VIS-À-VIS THE ECCLESIASTICAL AUTHORITIES.

At the beginning of his mandate, the President General, on the recommendation of Amin de Tarrazi, asked me to take up the position of Secretary General of the CGI. At the time, I was not familiar with the functioning of the International SSVP and I declined this offer, proposing to make myself useful in other missions for the CGI, so I agreed to join the CIAD and then the commission on the canonical situation of the SSVP vis-à-vis the ecclesiastical authorities.

When the terms of office for the members of the Bureau were renewed, and as Julien Spiewak wished to hand over the role of Secretary General after 6 years, I agreed to Renato's proposal, with the encouragement of several members of the Board. I hoped that the CGI would benefit from my professional experience and my French Vincentian commitment.

I am 73 years old, and throughout my lifetime, providence has been very generous to me, giving me very rich professional opportunities and volunteer commitment that I want to put at the service of the CGI to strengthen the momentum that its President General has been building for two years.

First of all, my professional experience will be of great help to me in the role of Secretary General in three areas: project management, managing a team of staff, experience in international negotiations. Indeed, I have learned a lot in 40 years spent building a major new city: Marne La Vallée (350,000 inhabitants, 15 kilometres from Paris, with 27 municipalities) based on three major objectives (social mix, balance between housing and employment, sustainable development) in a multidisciplinary team of 150 employees that I managed for 10 years.

APPOINTMENTS

Getting to know Bertrand Ousset,
the new International
Secretary General

Then my 20-year Vincentian commitment has marked me deeply: ten years' experience on the ground with "Jeunesse Saint Vincent de Paul", a neighbourhood association designed to promote the integration of young people from disadvantaged backgrounds in a Parisian neighbourhood. Ten years with the national leadership team of the SSVP France, including four years as President of the National Council. During this term of office, I guided the merger of two competing National Councils, introducing new statutes, the bicentenary of Frédéric Ozanam, the adoption and implementation of an charitable project to bring the Vincentian commitment into the 21st century, the creation of a foundation to finance projects for street people and to promote Frédéric Ozanam's thinking and finally the implementation of the fraternal approach which aims to include the most vulnerable in society and to "let us be evangelized by the poor", as recommended by Pope Francis.

Finally, for the past 2 years, I have been doing my apprenticeship with the CGI, by chairing the CIAD, which has allowed me to explore the international dimension of Vincentian solidarity, and by chairing the canonical commission, which has helped me to a better understanding of the charism itself.

In the two months since I took up these new functions as Secretary General, what are my missions, and what are my objectives in taking on these new responsibilities?

The Secretary General's mission is to run the international secretariat which:

- Manages human, financial, material and logistical resources
- Organizes institutional meetings, sets agendas and prepares minutes
- Ensure compliance with the Rule and the laws in force

The Secretary General assists the International Secretariat in carrying out the 6 missions of the International Confederation of SSVP:

- It is the guarantor of the International Rule and its application
- It is the platform for exchanges between member countries and between volunteers
- It supports international Vincentian solidarity
- It promotes the worldwide development of the Society
- It ensures the institutional representation of the Society
- It forms the Society's internal database for the world

I proposed three objectives to the President General for these new functions to contribute to the influence of the CGI within the SSVP, the Church and the world of the 21st century:

- in terms of governance: introducing more internal democracy, more institutional rigor, a more effective international structure. I am counting on the Commission for revision of the Statutes and the Rule, which has been formed to enrich and contribute to this objective,
- on the financial level: the sale of our current headquarters should make it possible to free up additional regular financial income to support ambitious Vincentian projects,
- in terms of the place of the SSVP in the Church and in the world, it seems to me very important to deepen our message and our action to give full scope to Frederic Ozanam's prophetic vision, which echoes Pope Francis' recommendations:
 - "go to the margins"
 - let us be evangelized by the poor
 - the priesthood of the laity in a renewed Church.

NB: The PGI, Renato Lima de Oliveira, on behalf of the CGI, would like to express his gratitude to Julien Spiewak for his work as Secretary General, as well as for his devotion and commitment to our beloved Society of Saint Vincent de Paul.

APPOINTMENTS

Fr. Motto C.M., New CGI Spiritual Advisor

SINCE MARCH 29, 2019, THE SSVP'S COUNCIL GENERAL INTERNATIONAL (CGI) HAS A NEW SPIRITUAL ADVISOR, FR. ANDRÉS ROMÁN MARÍA MOTTO C.M., WHO SUCCEEDS FR. ROBERT MALONEY. ALL CGI MEMBERS WANT TO THANK FR. ROBERT MALONEY FOR HIS DEDICATION AND CONTINUOUS WORK.

We have interviewed the current CGI spiritual advisor, Fr. Motto, to get to know him a little more, not only as a priest but about his thoughts and way of life. Fr. Motto has a long history of serving alongside laypeople, he has profound love and dedication to education and training, and he is always mindful of the most vulnerable.

Fr. Motto, where are you from?

I was born in Luján, a very Marian city. Therefore, my dear homeland is Argentina.

Besides being the current Spiritual Advisor SSVP, what other projects or responsibilities do you carry out?

I have devoted much of my Vincentian life to teaching. I have a PhD in Moral Theology from the Pontifical Catholic University of Argentina and I graduated in Philosophy from the University of El Salvador, also in Argentina.

I have been a professor and director in several universities: The Catholic University of Argentina, the National University of Lanús, the Catholic University of Salta National Gendarmerie Sub-site, the University Institute of the Federal Police, the Franciscan Theological Institute "Fray Luis Bolaños", the faculties of Theology and Philosophy Jesuits of the Maximum, the National School of Museology and at the Marist Higher Institute of Buenos Aires.

I have also taught a series of lectures, seminars and courses in several Latin American countries and I have studied 2 years in Madrid, Spain. These experiences have helped me open my mind. In addition to teaching, I enjoyed group research. I can remember some of these groups: 1) "Santa María" who carried out studies on Social Ethics at the Catholic University of Argentina.

2) "Amerindian". We were doing research on the promotion of neglected sectors of the society:



natives, blacks, women, and marginalized populations in both the countryside and the city. 3) The Bioethics Committee of ProCREATE. Also, I chaired for 10 years the Department of theologians of the Argentine Conference of religious men and women.

Have you published some books?

Another of my passions is publishing books. Some of the books I have published are: The Social Issue and the Teaching of the Church. A contribution to hope; Believing in God: Invention, custom or conviction? The Morality of Virtues in St. Vincent de Paul; The Dialogue of Truth. The debate of Faith and Reason in Late antiquity; Christianity and its link to peace, human rights and ecology; and Life of Philosophers and Philosophy in the Renaissance. But I always encompassed my teaching vocation with pastoral action as a vicar in shrines and poor chapels, as a prison chaplain, and doing some missions in poor areas of northern Argentina. And for two years, I have been living in the Lazarist Mother House of Paris as Director of the International Center for Vincentians Studies (CIF).

What does it feel to be appointed International SSVP Advisor?

To tell you the truth... I am a bit frightened but also joyful to be able to work side by side with you supporting the poor. It is also a huge responsibility, so I ask you to pray for me so I can do a good job.

APPOINTMENTS

Fr. Motto C.M., New CGI
Spiritual Advisor

What plans or actions would you like to launch from this position?

I come first to listen and gain knowledge about the way the members of the General Council coexist and work, so I don't step blindly into this position. I am well acquainted with the current management and I acknowledge their efforts to improve the SSVP. I want to work as a team with Fr. Tom Mohammad and Renato Lima de Oliveira listening to their suggestions. However, I strongly believe in the method proposed by Pope Francis of working as synodal groups where suggestions become solutions. I know it is not an easy task, but we must follow this evangelical path. Lastly, I am a firm believer that training, and development is essential to guarantee the highest level of service. And since my specialty is in all that is Vincentian, I will be able to provide my guidance on that area.

What does the Vincentian charism mainly offer to the world today?

Sometimes, these simple questions are the most difficult ones to answer. The first followers of Vincent de Paul were extremely loyal and dedicated individuals who saw him as an elder brother and father. He was truly a positive leader because he was a man who deeply loved God and the poor. Under his guidance, his first followers were priests, brothers, sisters and laity who became servants of the excluded. They were concerned about the poor while encouraging each other to take care of them. Under his direction, their awareness of God's presence in their lives increased and they learned to trust in the Divine Providence.

It is our responsibility to continue exemplifying the Vincentian charism in the various cultures and circumstances where the SSVP is located. As well, we need to recognize that our Charism could become a source of conflict. Defending the poor requires us to have a critical attitude...and being a promoter of social justice is a nuisance.

What is your favorite SSVP quality?

Fraternity, a faithful spirit, and the enormous and extensive service to the poor.

How would you describe Frederick Ozanam?

In my Vincentian Seminary in San Miguel, Argentina, nobody talked about the Vincentian laity and we did not even work with them; however, after reading about St. Vincent, I realized that his first followers had been, in fact, laypeople. This is the main reason

behind my work advocating for the Great Vincentian Family, rather than supporting the unfair concept of the dual Vincentian family. After much research, I recognized in Blessed Frederick Ozanam an extraordinary example of Social Charity and Justice who amalgamated thought and action. I am very excited to affirm that the Vincentian theology has evolved over the years and we must continue this legacy rather than repeat what has been done in the past. In other words, Frederick Ozanam made the Vincentian theology evolve into a more prophetic tone while encouraging social criticism, something previously absent in the Vincentian philosophy.

What St. Vincent de Paul quote do you always remember?

I like to remember what St. Vincent says about the spirit of Christ: "It's a spirit of perfect charity" (Volume XI, page 411). This means that we, clad in Christ by baptism, must give new fruits of life. That for us, Vincentians, stands for social charity and radical justice.

Juan Manuel B. Gómez, the new Coordinator for Group 3 of Europe I

LAST MARCH, THE NATIONAL PRESIDENT OF SSVP SPAIN, JUAN MANUEL B. GÓMEZ, HAS BEEN APPOINTED COORDINATOR FOR GROUP 3 OF EUROPE I.



This position involves the coordination of the following SSVP territories: Belgium, France, Gibraltar, Italy, Luxembourg, Malta, Monaco, Portugal, Turkey, Albania and Spain. On a day-to-day basis, he will work closely with László Könczöl, the International Vice-President for Europe I.

This new position, taken over by Juan Manuel B. Gómez, adds up to the one he is already holding at the International General Council (CGI) as President of the SSVP Historical Research Commission.



GLOBAL CATHOLIC CLIMATE MOVEMENT

SSVP joins the Global Catholic Climate Movement

SSVP HAS JOINED THE GLOBAL CATHOLIC CLIMATE MOVEMENT (GCCM) IN RESPONSE TO POPE FRANCIS' CHALLENGE TO 1.2 BILLION CATHOLICS AROUND THE WORLD, AND TO ALL PEOPLE OF GOOD WILL, TO TAKE URGENT ACTION AGAINST THE INJUSTICE OF CLIMATE CHANGE AND THE ECOLOGY CRISIS, AND TO PROTECT THE MOST VULNERABLE PEOPLE AND FUTURE GENERATIONS.

In June 2015, Pope Francis released his encyclical called *Laudato Si'* on the "Care of Our Common Home". In this letter, he addresses "every person living on this planet" and urgently invites them to start a new dialogue to transform our hearts and communities to combat climate change and curb greenhouse gas emissions in order to combat the climate crisis.

Now is the time to act, and the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul is joining this large movement to be part of GCCM's global campaign to raise awareness about the message contained in the encyclical and to encourage all Catholics to take the urgent action needed to fight climate change.

All of us involved in this large movement want to take care of our common home, the Earth, based on a long history of Catholic teaching, by creating a strong movement to respond to Francis' appeal based on three principles:

- Pray for and with creation;
- Live simply;
- Advocate to protect our common home.

The GCCM developed very quickly and now has more than 400-member organizations and thousands of Catholics who are taking action through innovative campaigns to bring *Laudato Si'* to life, because, "Living our vocation to be protectors of God's handiwork is essential to a life of virtue; it is not optional or a secondary aspect of our Christian experience." Pope Francis, *Laudato Si'*, 217.





*THE VICE-PRESIDENCY
FOR TRAINING OF
THE INTERNATIONAL
GENERAL COUNCIL
(CGI) PRESENTS THIS
BRIEF GUIDE OF
CONFERENCES SO THAT
ALL VINCENTIANS CAN
BETTER GRASP AND
HELP THE SSVP.*

Handbook for Conferences

This Guide has been drawn up taking into account not only the Rule, but also different texts regarding the Society, its founders and general presidents, as well as the Vincentian tradition, history and soul compiled by all member countries belonging to the Confederation.

Our fellow member, Marisa Téllez, the Vice-President for Training, has commented on the document: "This guide aims to inform the Conferences all over the world on Vincentians' day-to-day life, their role as baptized Christians, the importance of visits and daily prayer, in addition to the good practices which should be priority at the heart of our Conferences".

**Handbook
for
Conferences**

International General Council
Society of St Vincent de Paul

The Guide consists of a collective work fostered by this International Vice-presidency in which the members from the CGI Board took part, and it has been enhanced with suggestions and contributions by members from different countries. "This Guide is a first approach. It is an open document which, in the near future, can be improved according to the spirit of the Rule and the Statutes governing the Confederation", pointed our fellow member Marisa Téllez.

For the 16th General President, the fellow member Renato Lima, training is a top priority for the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul. "Training is so important for the CGI that it is ranked first among the top 10 priorities listed in the strategic plan – 'Lifelong Training and for all members'" -. It is thanks to the good Vincentian training that fellow members will be able to accomplish their mission: the personal sanctification as well as making life better for others, through the practice of charity. Without adequate training, none of these dimensions could be achieved.", concluded the General President.

For further information: www.ssvpglobal.org/
<https://bit.ly/2HZNQpr>



Young People, the “Now” of God

AT A MEETING OF THE SOCIETY'S LEADERS IN 1847, FREDERIC OZANAM STATED, "... IT IS ESSENTIAL FOR THE SOCIETY TO RECRUIT ITS MEMBERS AMONG THE YOUNG. FOURTEEN YEARS AGO, THE SOCIETY WAS BORN: IT MUST NOT GET OLD AS ITS FOUNDERS GROW OLD AND CHARITY BECOMES A ROUTINE PRACTICE. YOUTH ARE HELPFUL FOR THEIR AUDACITY, EVEN FOR THEIR IMPRUDENT ACTS, FOR THE NEW IDEAS THEY BRING, FOR THE INITIATIVES WHICH WE HAD NOT THOUGHT OF."

By no means did Frederic undervalue the contribution of older members. He realized that he and other longtime members brought experience, wisdom and time-tested skills to the Society. He urged his peers to remain in the Society, and he encouraged them to end their lives in battle (they were not really that old – Frederic was only 34!) rather than in repose. He echoed Vincent de Paul's words to his followers, "It does not matter whether we die sooner or later, provided that we die with arms in our hands." (CCD: XI:366)

But Frederic, as co-founder of a vibrant Society, recognized the importance of the ongoing presence of the young so that the Society might maintain its vitality.

Today, writers often state that young people are the future of the Church; they will surely be alive when most of us have passed on. But, recently, on Jan. 27, 2019, in his final homily at World Youth Day in Panama, Pope Francis modified that statement. He spoke stirringly to those who had gathered from around the world, "Dear young people, you are not the future but the now of God, and God invites you and calls you in your communities and cities to go out and find your grandparents and elders; to stand up and, with them, to speak out and make real the dream that the Lord has dreamed for you." He urged them to "realize that you have a mission to fall in love; that will decide everything ... We may possess everything, but if we lack the passion of love, we will have nothing."



P. Robert Maloney C.M.

He appealed to them, "Let us allow the Lord to make us fall in love!"

Pope Francis explained that "the now of God" becomes present in Jesus. "It is a merciful love that does not wait for ideal or perfect situations to show itself... It is God's time that makes every situation and place both right and proper. In Jesus, the promised future begins and becomes life." He warned the young against thinking that "your mission, your vocation, even your life itself, is a promise far off in the future, having nothing to do with the present. As if being young were a kind of waiting room, where we sit around until we are called."

As you, the current leaders of the Society, gather in Porto, I encourage you to reflect on the following questions:

- Do we promote Vincentian youth groups in all the countries where the Society exists? Do we reach out to the young in nearby universities (the birthplace of the Society) and in parishes?
- Are we good mentors to the young? Do we know how to speak with young people simply, humbly and enthusiastically? Do we witness to them, by our lives, the importance of the poor in the Kingdom of God and invite them to join us in serving the marginalized? Do we really partner with them, so that the experience of years and the energy of youth combine harmoniously?

SPIRITUALITY

- Do we encourage young people to discern their individual vocation, to listen each day to God's call, to choose their own future, to become involved in programs of service and evangelization on behalf of those who are poor, and to take on roles of leadership?
- Do we, as Frederic implied in the citation above, allow young men and women to make mistakes and learn from their experience without being over-protective and authoritarian?

•
•
•
•

Frederic pointed out that young people have drive and enthusiasm, imagination and spontaneity. They bring new horizons to communities. They have the capacity to envision new solutions. They often feel free from rigid categories or structures that have become encrusted over the years. They are willing to "dream the impossible dream." They find it easy to identify with the words of Vincent de Paul that "love is inventive even to infinity." (CCD:XI:131)

Prayer for the Canonization of Blessed Frédéric Ozanam

Lord, you made Blessed Frédéric Ozanam a witness of the Gospel, astounded at the mystery of the Church.

You inspired his struggle against poverty and injustice, and gave him tireless generosity in the service of all who suffer.

In his family, he was an exceptional son, brother, husband and father.

In the world, his burning passion for truth illuminated his thinking his teaching and his writings.

Within our Society, which he founded as a universal network of charity, he instilled the spirit of love, courage and humility, inherited from Saint Vincent de Paul.

His short life was marked throughout by his prophetic vision of society, together with his many virtues.

For these many reasons, we thank you Lord, and if it is your will, grant the grace of a miracle, (.....) through the intercession of Blessed Frédéric Ozanam.

May the Church proclaim his sanctity, so providential for the present times!

We ask you this through Our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

A daily prayer

Blessed Frédéric, we ask your intercession for (.....) our continuing commitment and for all our commitments: may they be paths to holiness for us.

Blessed Frédéric, we ask your intercession for all our projects: may we undertake them with a good and gentle heart, allowing the Lord to lead us where he wishes, strengthened by the Spirit.

Blessed Frédéric, pray that we may have the courage and the will to live a life nourished by the sacraments and by prayer.

Blessed Frédéric, pray that always and everywhere, people of good will are loving neighbours to those in distress, and find ways to relieve their suffering. Amen

SSVP actively participated in the annual meeting of the Vincentian Family Executive Committee in Philadelphia, USA

BETWEEN 14TH AND 16TH JANUARY, 2019, AT THE HEADQUARTERS OF THE VINCENTIAN PRIESTS IN PHILADELPHIA (USA), THE MEETING OF THE VINCENTIAN FAMILY EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE (VFEC) WAS HELD, FORMED BY THE MAIN VINCENTIAN BRANCHES, SUCH AS THE CONGREGATION OF THE MISSION, THE DAUGHTERS OF CHARITY, THE INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF CHARITIES (AIC) AND OUR BELOVED SOCIETY OF SAINT VINCENT DE PAUL (SSVP).

Renato Lima (16th President General) and Ricardo Tavares (responsible for the Department of the Vincentian Family within the CGI) represented the Council General International (CGI) during these meetings. Father Tomaz Mavric, Superior General of the Congregation of the Mission, presided over the works, and Father Joe Agostino, CM, presided over the dynamic secretariat works.

On each day, there were liturgical celebrations and prayers with different intentions of the Vincentian Family. Included were prayers for the soul of our dear brother Amin A. de Tarrazi, 12th President General, who passed away around this time.

Each branch in attendance made a brief presentation of their achievements for 2018, in addition to presenting their work agenda for 2019. The SSVP highlighted the 180-year anniversary of the Council General, the thematic year of Paul Lamache and the film festival "The Seven Founders".

Remaining were the approvals of the 2018 report and the budget of the working committees for 2019. Approved, was the promotion of a great meeting with the Vincentian leaders in Rome in January 2020 entitled, "FAMVIN 2020: walking with Vincent". The



VINCENTIAN FAMILY

• Vincentian Family Executive Committee in Philadelphia



Representing the SSVP: Ricardo Tavares, Edmund Keane, Pattie Hughes and Renato Lima.

Presidents and General Superiors of approximately 150 Vincentian branches of the world are expected at this meeting.

During the three-day meeting in Philadelphia, themes that addressed the following aspects were presented and discussed: the homeless, communication, refugees, finances, aging of our branches, new structure for the Vincentian Family, vocations and Vincentian sanctity. An evaluation was made about the positive impacts of the “Finding Vince 400” Film Festival and the elaboration of an annual calendar consisting of all the Servants of God, Venerables, Blessed and Saints who come from the Vincentian Family.



Renato Lima, P. Tomaz Mavric and Ricardo Tavares

On the last day of the meetings, the Vincentian Family team responsible for the institutional work developed at the United Nations in New York made a rich presentation on what is being done and the issues in focus. In that group, called the “Vincentian Coalition”, the SSVP is present through brother Ed Keane and sister Pattie Hugues.

“For us in the SSVP, belonging to the Vincentian Family is a gift from God. Together we are much stronger and we can do even more for the needy. In close collaboration, we live our charisma and our common heritage, looking to the future with charity and hope. In addition, strengthening the Vincentian Family and actively participating in it is one of the strategic planning points of the Council General International until 2022”, emphasized our President Renato Lima.

During the events in Philadelphia, brothers Renato and Ricardo, accompanied by brother Dom Visco, also attended the meeting of the Conference of Our Lady of Hope, located in the parish of the same name, where they were able to share with the USA Vincentians the actions which are undertaken by the Council General. It was a very pleasant night spent with the Vincentians of Philadelphia!

The next VFEC meeting will be, God willing, in January 2020, in Rome.

A View from India.

The Society of St Vincent de Paul, the Daughters of Charity and the Institute of Global Homelessness

THE COORDINATOR OF THE FAMVIN HOMELESS ALLIANCE (MARK MCGREEVY) VISITED INDIA LATELY. THE FOLLOWING IS ONE OF THE REFLECTIONS ON THE WORK THE VINCENTIAN FAMILY IN INDIA IS UNDERTAKING IN THE FIELD OF HOMELESSNESS AND IN PARTICULAR IN CELEBRATION OF THE 400TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE VINCENTIAN CHARISM BY INVOLVEMENT IN THE 13 HOUSES CAMPAIGN. THIS PIECE FOCUSES ON THE WORK OF THE SOCIETY OF ST VINCENT DE PAUL AND THEIR WORK WITH THE DAUGHTERS OF CHARITY.



We arrived in the city of Bangalore and were greeted by the District President of the Society of St Vincent de Paul, Mr. G. Francis Victor, and members of his council. The work of the SVP in Bangalore is truly impressive with a focus on visitation of poor and support for young people in education – often paying the school and university fees for families that would otherwise go without.

One other work of the charity at the planning stage is to take part in the 13 Houses Campaign and rehouse 13 of the poorest families living in slum accommodation in Bangalore, we had the privilege of visiting these families and hearing their stories at first hand. These houses will allow families to live a life of dignity and escape poverty in which they are trapped. This project is also supported by the Congregation of the Mission and the Daughters of Charity pictured during our visit.

In addition to this scheme, we met with Dr. Tommy Varghesse of the SSVP who told us about the plans the Vincentian Family have in the northern provinces of India to build a homeless village comprising 22 houses in Kandhamal in the district of Odisha. This area was badly affected by recent inter-religious riots in which many people were killed. The aim of this project is to show in practice that all faiths can live together in peace and harmony. Again this project is designated to celebrate the 400th anniversary of the Vincentian Charism and will be part of the 13 Houses Campaign.

The SSVP and the emerging Vincentian Family are very powerful witnesses to the Vincentian call to action. It was a joy to share some time with them and to understand and celebrate their works. The Vincentian mission is alive and well in India.

Mark McGreevy
Coordinator Famvin Homeless Alliance
homeless@famvin.org

First Communication Meeting of the Vincentian Family

**THE FIRST MEETING OF THOSE
RESPONSIBLE FOR COMMU-
NICATION IN THE VARIOUS
BRANCHES OF THE VINCENTIAN
FAMILY TOOK PLACE ON 17TH
MARCH 2019 AT THE HEAD-
QUARTERS OF THE SOCIETY OF
SAINT VINCENT DE PAUL LOCAT-
ED IN MADRID, SPAIN.**

Those present at this meeting included representatives from the Congregation of the Mission, the Company of the Daughters of Charity, the Vincentian Marian Youth, the International Association of Charity, Vincentian Lay Missionaries, the Holy Family of Urgell, the communication director for the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul, Carlos Lafarga; and the communication director for the Vincentian Family, Karl Hila.

This gathering was promoted by the International Office of the Vincentian Family (Father Joseph Agostino, CM) and by the International Coordinator of Communication (Javier Fernández Chento) who led and moderated the meeting.

After some words of welcome by the National President of the Society in Spain, Juan Manuel B. Gómez, the participants began to discuss several points on the agenda: the work of the Vincentian Family's International Office presented by Father Joseph Agostino; the structure and functions of the Vincentian Family's Communication Commission: its three-year plan which includes goals and objectives conducted by Javier Fernández Chento; and finally, the definition of communication measures aimed at getting greater collaboration between the branches of the Vincentian Family, thus conjuring up a clearer and more powerful image of the Vincentian Family.

Before concluding this meeting and as a first approach with regard to the Vincentian Family's joint communication, and in view of the aforementioned need to be close to those who suffer, it was agreed to make a manifesto and a solidarity campaign for the Venezuelan people.



SSVP reaches one new area: Cayman Islands (155th)



The New Year 2019 got off to a good start with the formation of the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul (SSVP) in a new place: the Cayman Islands. As a result, the Society has an active presence in 155 territories.



Marie-Rose, Mike, Merle and father Suresh

Headed by sister Merle McGann, a parishioner of St. Ignatius Parish in George Town (capital), the Society received official government approval in January 2019. She has recruited a Treasurer and Secretary; and other people are interested in joining in. The Society has received the blessings of Bishop Auturo Cepeda, and pastor Suresh Rajaian.

America 1 Coordinator, sister Mary-Rose Knight, and ITVP America 1, brother Michael Nizankiewicz, both members of the Council General International (CGI), met with Merle and Fr. Suresh in October 2018 to outline the plans for the new SSVP Conference, and to present him a copy of The Rule and other documents of formation.

At the end of January, Fr. Suresh undertook to talk about the Conferences before the end of the celebrations in order to invite more members. The initial plans for the new Conference are to do home visits

and to assume responsibility of the food pantry, which has been a part of the parish.

Cayman Islands, being a three-island archipelago discovered by Christopher Columbus on May 10, 1503 during his fourth voyage to America, are an archipelago in Caribbean zone, belong to the United Kingdom. Today, statistics show that 15% of the population in this territory is Catholic.

"We are very proud of the great advances that the SSVP Plus Project has brought to the expansion of the Society around the world. We had already set up Conferences in three nations (Cyprus, Albania and Liberia), and now we come to the Cayman Islands thanks to our Vincentian leaders' work and commitment, the essential support of the Catholic Church and local government approval. We are very pleased", commented the President General, brother Renato Lima.

The Conferences in Cyprus, a Growing Trend



The two existing Conferences belonging to the recently established SSVP Cyprus, the Holy Virgin Mary of Nicosia and Saint Joseph of Larnaca, took part in an institutional training session.



Ella Bitar, the International Territorial Vice-President, conducted an institutional training session where Cypriot Vincentians explored in depth, among other matters, the need to live according to the Vincentian spirituality, the importance of holding regular Conference meetings and the fact of encouraging new members to join in.

Using examples and testimonies, Ella Bitar spoke with the Vincentian attendees about the different ways to help in the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul (SSVP): it is not only about providing goods and financial support but it is also about reaching our key goal consisting of making the presence of God part of our lives and being disciples of Christ.

In addition to these important issues on the functioning and the mission of the SSVP, there was a dialogue that led to a deeper understanding about the commitment and service offered by the Vincentians. On this regard, we should persevere, especially in light of those activities that we carry out on behalf of those who are most vulnerable: homeless individuals, families in need, sick people, children and teenagers who are at risk...

At the end of this gathering, the Vincentians experienced both joy and responsibility with respect to their mission: their commitment to give themselves to Christ in the person of those people who are most in need.



Conference of the Holy Virgin Mary of Nicosia



Conference of Saint Joseph of Larnaca



USA

Re-entry Programs for Former Prisoners, a New Chance

Source: CatholicPhilly.com



As the Society of St. Vincent de Paul (SSVP) in the United States continues to evolve into an organization that asks why the people it serves are poor, one unavoidable answer is imprisonment.



The SSVP learned that “30 percent of those going to food pantries in our service area are formerly incarcerated individuals, or families of formerly incarcerated individuals,” said Jim Wachuta of Des Moines, Iowa, the chair of the society’s national prison re-entry task force. That number, he added, is in line with national statistics. One more stark example Wachuta gave: “The Boys & Girls Clubs in Atlanta report that 50 percent of the single mothers of the children in their program have an incarcerated spouse.”

It is because of those kinds of figures that the SSVP is about to debut its Immersion re-entry program for former prisoners. The Immersion program has the following principles:

- Supporting healthy relationships at home and work; and providing a program with “a true national presence.”;
- Increasing the SSVP’s capacity to build a larger team;
- Focusing on dignity, work, service, faith; and helping returning citizens “reach their God-given potential at their own pace.”;
- Walking with former prisoners “as they break the cycle of poverty and reintegrate into their communities.”;
- Adhering to measurements to detail the success of the program; and supporting partnerships with other local agencies that support the same aims.

According to Wachuta, the federal Bureau of Justice Statistics puts the three-year recidivism rate at 69 percent. But among those helped by the Vincentian programs already in place, the recidivism rate is just 12 percent.

“The Immersion program is what some of our folks are already doing,” he said, “It’s an alternative sup-



port system. Many folks coming out of prison already have a support system. That’s wonderful. But many of them don’t.”

The Immersion program would dovetail with other SSVP’s initiatives, which has its own re-entry component. The SSVP in the United States is already in the top 10 provoking-housing to the homeless. They spend \$75 million just putting people into their beds. There’s probably no other rational charity that does more. If counting utility bill payment and rent subsidies to ward off eviction, the total would approach \$200 million.

“With the low U.S. unemployment rate, the national focus given to restoring voting rights to now-released prisoners who served time for felonies and the recently passed First Step Act for criminal justice reform, “the time is now” to put Immersion into practice.”, Wachuta said.

“I’ve made poor choices in my life here and there. Jesus said forgive people not seven times but seven times 70,” Wachuta said, “I know many of us have been given a second chance. I just ask that we give our brothers and sisters a chance.”



Childhood poverty in Ireland is everybody's challenge



The Society of St. Vincent de Paul (SSVP) in Ireland is committed to the fight against the increasing child poverty rates in the country. The SSVP also seeks to identify the different root causes of poverty, namely lack of food, homelessness and the challenges faced by lone parent families... To that end, we need to raise awareness on these social issues.



FAMILY NUTRITION:

According to recent studies developed by the "Economist Intelligent Unit" in 2017, Ireland is the world's most "food-secure" nation; however, statistics have shown otherwise. The number of people suffering from hunger has risen from 315,000 in 2009 (7% of the population) to around 537,000 (11.5%) in 2015, including 140,000 children under the age of 18.

In the aftermath of the recent economic crisis, social inequalities have increased; hence, poor families have greater problems when it comes to accessing a healthy and balanced diet. The SSVP has implemented programs such as the "Orchard Community Centre", which has been operating for around 20 months, to

improve the diet of over 90 families, by providing them weekly food hampers consisting of non-perishable foods such as canned goods, tea, coffee, pasta and cereals.

CHILDHOOD HOMELESSNESS:

Childhood homelessness is another indicator of children's well-being in Ireland. Child homelessness has become a very critical issue in recent years. A report developed by "Focus Ireland" claims that every five hours, one child becomes homeless in Ireland. 865 boys and girls were living in emergency homeless shelters in January 2015, and two years later this number increased to 2,400. There were 3,867 homeless children in Ireland in July 2018.

The impact of living in a hotel room or in B&Bs is detrimental to the children. These children are being deprived of a regular family life with the well established routines of playing, homework, school attendance, and friendship, which are essential for their well-being.

LONE PARENT FAMILIES:

According to a new report drawn up by the SSVP Ireland, the poverty rate in working lone parent families in Ireland has doubled in just five years since 2012, with their standard of living being one of the lowest in Europe.

This report, "Working, Parenting and Struggling", reveals that 1 out of 11 working lone parents lived below the poverty threshold in 2012. By 2017, this figure had increased to 1 out of 5.

Based on this study developed by the Irish Vincentians, the high cost of housing and child care combined with very low incomes are key factors determining the remarkable decrease in the standard of living. Lone parent families are five times more vulnerable to suffer from poverty than other families with children; and 84% of lone parent families mentioned that are unable to handle unexpected expenses.

Given this current situation in Ireland, many initiatives focused on children welfare have been jump-started to eradicate children poverty.



One of these initiatives is "[No Child 2020](#)", an initiative inspired on a pledge adopted one hundred years ago.

The pledge boils down to five basic rights that no Irish child should go without. They are as follows:

1. Health: it shall be the first duty of the Government of the Republic to make provision for children's physical, mental and spiritual well-being.
2. Food: no child should suffer from hunger or lack of nutritious food.
3. Shelter: no child should be homeless.
4. Education: every child will have access to proper education as citizens of a free republic.
5. Children should be regarded as "citizens": not citizens-to-be, or moulding material or bricks for a country under construction, but just citizens: full members of the Irish society here and now. The underlying promise is that every child shall have the right to be heard and their voices shall be given due weight. Their needs shall be given the same priority as those of other members of society.

Today, this pledge, 100 years later, is still a great commitment and a challenge for the Irish society. The Society of Saint Vincent de Paul, along-

side other organisations, advocates bringing awareness about children welfare so that child development in Ireland is regarded as a priority and an urgent issue for the society as a whole as well as for social policies in a country made for everyone.

The SSVP Argentina held the ninth meeting of ENAVI 2019

30

The ninth ENAVI National Vincentian Meeting was held in Unquillo (province of Cordoba, Argentina) from 3rd to 6th January 2019. Members of Vincentian Conferences from various parts of Argentina were in attendance.



The theme of the meeting was "Speak, Lord, your servant is listening". The programme consisted of presentations, working groups, celebrations of the Holy Mass and other spiritual activities.

The International General Council (CGI) of the SSVP was represented at the meeting by Julio Cesar Marques de Lima, the International Territorial Vice-President for the America 3 region, who gave a lecture on "Vincentian Conferences: History, Basic Principles and International Presence". The second CGI Deputy Vice-President, the fellow member Sebastián Gramajo, was also in attendance and gave a presentation on "The SSVP: The Road to Holiness and Friendship".

Furthermore, taking advantage of the great number of young Vincentians attendees, the young members, along with the Youth Coordinator for the America 3 region, took part in a videoconference which provided an opportunity to promote the initiatives of the SSVP's young members at a national level.

The SSVP Argentina is celebrating its 160th anniversary in 2019, having had its first meeting on 24 April 1859 in the Nuestra Señora de la Merced Church (Buenos Aires). The National Council of the SSVP Argentina, under the presidency of Vincentian fellow member Celeste Godoy, coordinates the work of 600 Vincentians in 40 Conferences, 6 Area Councils and 10 special projects.

...Aprendamos, ante todo,
a dar a nuestra FE
significado, a vestir
a su testimonio
a su pensar
a su sentir, reconocer
en

Sebastian Gramajo, CGI's 2nd Deputy General Vice-President; and Celeste Godoy, the National President of Argentina at the opening of the meeting.

Julio César Marques, the Territorial Vice-President for the American Region #3, along with the young people.



SRI LANKA

Educating young people in the virtue of Charity against the scourge of indifference



In this tiny country (65,610 m², about the same size as Lithuania) off the coast of India, we are setting out today to meet three Conferences made up of young people, in the North-West province. The Conferences are based in the towns of Katupotha and Kuliyapitiya, about one hour by road from Kurunegala, the provincial capital and former royal city, with a distinguished history. We are virtually in the centre of Sri Lanka here.

There are two conferences for children in Kuliyapitiya, with about 20 members: St Joseph's Conference, consisting of young children aged 10 years on average; and Holy Angels Conference, with older members, aged 14 on average.

Katupotha is almost one hour and a half by road. This is where we find St Mary's Conference, established in a school with around twelve young members aged between 14 and 16 years.

the most vulnerable groups in their community.

Young people from St Mary's Conference visit the elderly and the sick. When necessary, the members carry out household tasks themselves in the places they visit. The older children visit children with disabilities who cannot go to school, and pass on to them what they themselves have learned in class. They also teach them Religion, since these children cannot go to catechesis sessions.



File photo, visit of PGI,
Renato Lima, to Sri Lanka



In Kuliyapitiya, the two Conferences for children undertake activities supported by adult Vincentians or parents: visiting people in distress, collecting essential goods...

As well as the everyday work with people in need, these three Conferences have experienced some great moments in 2018:

- Visiting children at Maharagama hospital, a cancer-treatment centre, which distributes food packages and clothing.
- Training sessions, with the support from Conferences made up of adults, for mothers with newborn babies, who have no resources.
- Distributing school books for children without resources.
- Purchasing wheelchairs for disabled people.

From a very young age, our young members in Sri Lanka are well aware of the suffering and vulnerability around them. They keep on telling us that it is through simple actions that we can show our will-

ingness to follow Christ: through the gift of our time, resources, availability, and attention to others during our visits. They are an excellent example for us all, at the beginning of Lent, when Pope Francis invites us to “rediscover the joy of God’s plan for creation and for each of us, which is to love him, our brothers and sisters, and the entire world, and to find in this love our true happiness”, Lent Message 2019.

SRI LANKA IN A FEW FIGURES

Population: 21 million inhabitants

Religions:

Buddhism: 70.2%

Hinduism: 12.6%

Islam: 9.5%

Christianity: 7.4%

(Source: Wikipedia)

Society of Saint Vincent de Paul

366 active Conferences

3,000 active Members

(Source: National Council of Sri Lanka, March 2019)

SSVP Brazil held its 2019 National Training Meeting



"The Poor, the Lords and the Masters" was the pivotal theme of the meeting.

The National Council of Brazil held the National Training Meeting in Osasco (Brazil) on 8th, 9th and 10th March, 2019. The meeting gathered the Coordinators from the Training School Frédéric Antoine Ozanam of the SSVP Brazil's Metropolitan Councils, in order to discuss topics of interest for trainers, and to present the Vincentian training activities carried out throughout the territory of this South American country.

The motto of the meeting was **"To let oneself be trained to better serve our Masters and Lords"**. In addition to the main theme, there were talks on "The Action of the Vincentian in Social Networks",

"The Spirituality of the Trainer" and "The Poor: Our Masters and Lords". There was also a moment for the presentation of training activities in each of the seven regions of SSVP Brazil.

The International General Council (CGI) was therein represented by the Training Coordinator, the fellow member Renata Mancini, belonging to the Territorial Vice-Presidency for America 3, who presented a talk about "The International General Council's training work". The Coordinator explained to the attendees the training modules developed by the CGI's International Vice-Presidency for Training, and commented on the challenges of implementing them in the different countries where the SSVP is present.



Cris & Adriano
PhotoGrid



AUSTRALIA

Claire Victory, the first woman ever elected as SSVP National President



She has been a member of the Society since age ten and brings 25 years of experience serving and supporting the Society in various capacities, including extensive involvement in Vinnies Youth programs and eight years on National Council.



Claire has the honour of several firsts for this role. She is the first woman ever elected to the role in Australia; she is the first South Australian to fill this role; and she is the youngest President of the Society in the 165 years it has existed in this country.

In her new role, Claire stated she was looking forward to continuing and strengthening the Society's work towards building a more just and compassionate society. "In a context of persistent poverty and new forms of inequality, I look forward to supporting the Society in its role as a leading voice for social justice and change."

"A key challenge for the future of our organisation is ensuring the dynamism of our membership so that we can continue to respond with hope and love to those bearing the brunt of poverty and inequality". "We need to ensure that we are operating in the most effective way possible while retaining our mission at the heart of all we do", said the new National President.

Claire Victory succeeds Graham West as President: "On behalf of all of our members, I would like to personally thank Graham West for the dedication and commitment he has demonstrated in his role over the past four years". Claire will be leading the SSVP in Australia for the next four years.

175th Anniversary of SSVP in England



On 12th February, 1844, thirteen men met in the Sabloniere Hotel in Leicester Square, London and agreed to form a Conference of the "Society of St Vincent de Paul". Frederick Lucas was elected President, but declined and Charles Paglioni, (the hotel's owner) was elected as its first President. This followed earlier efforts made in London and Paris.

In 1840, Frederic Ozanam had returned from Lyon to the Sorbonne in Paris, where he gained a great following as a lecturer and in 1841 he met a student from the L'École des Beaux-Arts' named George Wigley, who was born in Manchester, but raised in Boulogne and educated there through a maiden Aunt.

Wigley asked Ozanam how he could form a Conference in London, and he was advised to use his contacts with the Catholic press. Knowing Frederick Lucas, the owner and editor of "The Tablet", a weekly Catholic

magazine, George sent him a translation of the Rule.

Meanwhile, an Anglican clergyman who in 1830 was converted to Catholicism, George "Ignatius" Spencer had become enthusiastic about the Society. He had been ordained a Catholic priest and had been appointed spiritual director of the seminary, St Mary's College, Oscott. His family was rich and aristocratic –being the great-great Uncle of Winston Churchill and great-great-great Uncle of Diana, Princess of Wales. While at Oscott he met M Baudon, then the International Society's General Secretary. On returning to Paris, M. Baudon sent him the first 1841 Annual Report.

In 1843, Fr Spencer wrote an article for the "Catholic Magazine" suggesting Catholics should form and join such the Society. This article was reproduced in The Tablet and further articles followed, probably written by Fr



Spencer, who has recently been declared a "servant of God" as a first step towards sainthood. This was the background to that meeting in London.

By the end of 1844 there were five Conferences in London and by 1850 throughout England there were 18 Conferences and 293 members. Today, in England & Wales, there are over 1,000 Conferences with 8,000 members.

After the Society's foundation in Paris in 1833, Conferences were formed in Italy (1836), Belgium (1842). Ireland followed England in 1844 with Scotland a year later.





Mozambique disaster



During the night of March 14, cyclone IDAI, one of the worst natural disasters ever recorded, hit the provinces of Sofala, Manica and Zambezia in Mozambique. Beira, the second largest city in Mozambique, was completely flooded, and the village of Dondo was destroyed.



Cyclone IDAI left a destructive and deadly trail. Over 1,500,000 people have been affected, and some 510 drowned or died from lack of medication and food. This number is growing as the water begins to recede. Several days after the cyclone, there were still flooded villages being helped and evacuated by air.

We have a Council with 5 Conferences in Beira, as well as a home belonging to the Daughters of Charity that was cut off for several days, with no electricity or telephone. Most of the aid has come through the representative of Mozambique's Red Cross, which is coordinated by the National Institute of Disaster Management.



Beira's Central Hospital was damaged and some thirty health centers are practically destroyed. The picture is grim. Road destruc-

tion is preventing the rapid distribution of supplies such as medicine, food and drinking water.

People need help in rebuilding their houses, as well as food, medicines, mosquito nets, sanitary kits, and seeds to restart planting.

If you would like to help Mozambique SSVP, contact your national SSVP, or the SSVP Fund for International Solidarity (FIS).

More information at:
www.ssvpglobal.org





Conference of Divine Mercy

The Commitment of Young People in Senegal

FOUNDED ONLY 2 YEARS AGO, THE CONFERENCE OF YOUNG VINCENTIANS FROM THE DISTRICT OF MBOUR, ON THE COAST OF SENEGAL, IS HELPING FAMILIES IN NEED, SUPPORTING CHILDREN SO THEY CAN RETURN TO SCHOOL, AND DEVELOPING A FARM SO THAT THEIR CHARITABLE WORK IS SUSTAINABLE.



This Conference, aggregated to the SSVP Council General International in 2017, is working closely with the parish of Sainte Marthe in Mbour, on the Petite Côte of Senegal.

The Conference has 20 young members, and meets twice a month for a friendly get-together, as well as for reading and the spiritual encouragement of its members. They work to serve those most in need in the town of Mbour and its surroundings, keeping in touch with teams of volunteers from the nearby town of Fatick, to help establish new Conferences in this area.

The current President of the Divine Mercy Conference is Jean Kabou Vital, who had the opportunity to represent Senegal at the recent Vincentian Youth meeting in Salamanca, Spain, in June 2018.



In addition to its charitable work, the Mbour SSVP works with children, supporting them to access school, and distributing school resources as needed. Over 40 children recently received sets of school resources.

Moreover, in order to help local families in a sustainable way, the Conference has followed the example of others in Africa, and

is planning an animal husbandry project. This is being made possible through the generous gift of a plot land of 300m², by Thomas González, a parishioner at the Church of Sainte Marthe.

In the first phase, the Conference wants to build a pigsty of 7m² to raise pigs, and also to complete the enclosure of the land. The aim would be to develop a larger farmstead, adding a poultry house as well. The profits from the sale of the farm produce will be used to fund the work of the Conference.



THE MONTH OF JANUARY 2019 WAS A VERY SPECIAL MONTH FOR YOUNG MEN AND WOMEN THROUGHOUT THE WORLD, BUT ESPECIALLY FOR THOSE FROM THE DIFFERENT BRANCHES OF THE WORLDWIDE VINCENTIAN FAMILY WHO PARTICIPATED IN THE VINCENTIAN YOUTH GATHERING (JANUARY 18-21) AND THE WORLD YOUTH DAYS (JANUARY 22-27), BOTH EVENTS HELD IN THE REPUBLIC OF PANAMA.

The International Committee for Youth for the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul was represented by the following:

Willian Alves: International Vice President for Youth (children and teenagers).

Edgardo Fuentes: Regional Youth Delegate for America #2

Josmary Palencia: Regional Youth Delegate for America #3

The Vincentian Youth Gathering and World Youth Day Panama, 2019

Youth: the “now” of God.

Vincentian Youth: the “now” of the Society of the Saint Vincent de Paul

Boipelo Mathodlana: Regional Youth Delegate for Africa #3

Leo Levin: Regional Youth Delegate for Asia #1

Luke Brouwer: Regional Youth Delegate for Oceania

In addition to the above-mentioned individuals, the International President, Renato Lima, also participated in these events.

The joy of being Vincentian was the theme of the Vincentian Youth Gathering and Behold the servant of the Lord, let it be done to me according to your word, was the theme of World Youth Day.

The General Council, represented by the fellow member William Alves, was actively involved in the organization of this event. They contributed \$15,000 to facilitate the many different activities of the Vincentian Youth Gathering and donated materials to promote Vincentian Youth. During the Vincentian Youth Gathering, the International Vice-president, Willian Alves, gave a presentation on Frederic Ozanam as a model for young people and also spoke about a project that is being done by the Vincentian Youth in Lebanon, a project called The transmission of Love (Said Safar from the Society

SSVP YOUTH

of St. Vincent De Paul is actively involved in this project).

Nearly 85 young SSVP Vincentians from different countries took part in the Vincentian Youth Gathering, with a total attendance of 450 young people from different branches of the the Vincentian Family. The gathering took place in the foster home San José de Malambo (Panama).

After the Vincentian Youth Gathering, the young men and women participated in the activities of World Youth Day (an event at which Pope Francis was present). Inspired by the Marian theme, the young people participated in catechesis, celebrations, pilgrimages and cultural events.

One of the highlights for the young participants of the International Committee was the time for prayer and sharing which was composed of prayer, a reflection on the gospel reading for the day, followed by reflections on various themes, for example, how to deepen the spirituality of the young members of the Society, how to communicate all that has been learned during these days in Panama to others in our country of origin. After the meeting, the committee participated in the welcoming ceremonies for Pope Francis.

One of the messages that Willian found most significant were the following words of the Pope: You, young people, must fight for your space today, because life is living for today. No one can make promises to you about a day in the future. Your life today is today. Your taking risks is today. Your space is today. How are you reacting

- Youth: the “now” of God.
- Vincentian Youth: the “now” of the Society of the Saint Vincent de Paul



to this? You, dear young people, are not the future. We like to say, “you are the future”. No, you are the present. You are not the future of God, you, young people, are the now of God (Homily of Pope Francis, January 27, 2019). According to Willian, when the Pope affirmed that young people are the “now” of God, he was affirming the importance of young men and women as protagonists in the history of the Church, in the history of their community and in the history of the many different lay associations (such as the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul). Vincentian Youth are the protagonists of the present and the future of the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul. The General Council has promoted various initiatives intended to strengthen the participation of young men and women in the Society.

The experience of World Youth Day has encouraged young people; especially our experience of community and sharing and accompanying one another and reaching out in love to others and

understanding that we are part of a Church that is on the move, as Pope Francis asks us to do.

Over the course of the days, there were various events that reminded us of our charism of service on behalf of those who are poor. This was especially evident when we offered our meal ticket to those living on the streets of Panama. During the celebration of World Youth Day, we were ever mindful of the Vincentian charism.

The next Vincentian Youth Gathering and World Youth Day will take place in 2022 in Portugal, in the city of Lisbon. The International Committee for Youth will very soon provide details with regard to the manner in which people can begin to organize themselves in order to participate in both events.

Willian Alves
International Vice-President
for Youth



National Council's meeting in the United States

President General Visits United States

LAST JANUARY, THE PRESIDENT GENERAL OF THE SOCIETY OF ST. VINCENT DE PAUL (SSVP), BROTHER RENATO LIMA DE OLIVEIRA, EMBARKED ON A 10-DAY TOUR, VISITING THE COUNCILS IN PHOENIX, ST. LOUIS, PHILADELPHIA AND THE NATIONAL COUNCIL.

Accompanied on his journey by Mike Nizankiewicz (International Territorial Vice-president for America 1), Oliveira's first stop was in Phoenix. There, they visited the Phoenix Council's dining rooms, aquaponics farm, thrift stores and their food reclamation and sorting warehouse. The visitors attended various meetings including one with the Council's technical staff and Vincentians at the SSVP head office (called "campus"), which houses a variety of different buildings offering a multitude of services to friends in need (affectionately called by our fellow members as "special guests").

*Source:
The USA National Council*

Our President, Renato, who was also a guest, had the opportunity to sit down and speak with one of the Phoenix Council's generous donors. While there, our President General was interviewed for an article in Phoenix Diocese Catholic newspaper ("The Catholic Sun") and for their radio show ("Bishop's Hour"). The first leg of his trip wrapped up with a reception dinner hosted by Phoenix Vincentians.

INSTITUTIONAL VISITS

- President General Visits
- United States



From Phoenix, Oliveira traveled to St. Louis where he was greeted with a major snowstorm! That did not stop him from taking in the wonderful Vincentian history that finds its home in St. Louis. He was welcomed to St. Louis with a reception hosted by the St. Louis Council. The next day, Vincentians from the St. Louis Council took Oliveira to Perryville, Mo. to visit the National Shrine of Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal.

Coinciding dates allowed Oliveira to attend the National Board Meeting while in St. Louis, where he was able to spend time with members of the board and Vincentians from around the country who help lead national committees. This offered a unique opportunity for the international president to see how the National Council operates. His final stops in St. Louis were the Cathedral Basilica ('the New Cathedral') and the Old Cathedral in downtown St. Louis, where the first ever SSVP Conference in the United States was founded.

"It was a true blessing to have Renato with us to share our SSVP St. Louis history, meet St. Louis

Council Vincentians and witness work they do for our neighbors in need", said John Foppe, executive director of the St. Louis Council.

The final leg of his journey took Oliveira to Philadelphia for the Vincentian Family Executive Committee (VFEC) annual meeting. While there, he also attended meetings where he met with local Vincentians to take part in the distribution of food and to discuss the work of the Society in Philadelphia. "Renato's visit was extraordinary", said Pat Walsh, president of the Philadelphia Council. "He spoke to my heart as he spoke about the importance of home visits. They need to be genuine. Our time with those we serve is far more important than the money we give".

From Philadelphia, Oliveira travelled to Panama City (Panama) to attend World Youth Day. It was a wonderful blessing to have International President Oliveira visit the United States and see what inspirational work Vincentians here are doing to help their neighbors in need. We thank all those Councils that hosted Oliveira and especially thank those individuals who organized his visit.



Bro. Amin de Tarrazi: A life well lived

His life is the Society. The Society was his life. He dedicated his life in the service of so many people in need.

He joined the SSVP 70 years ago, he was the Youth Representative at the CGI during the 1960s, the National President of the Council in France from 1967 to 1981, and the CGI President from 1981 to 1993.

His tenure of service as CGI President did not stop him from being an active servant in the society. Even in the smallest of work, he puts his heart into it. He is really a man ablaze with God's love, a love that fueled him to be a committed and passionate Vincentian.

Rest in peace now dear Bro. Amin. It is time to be in His presence and reap the fruits of your good works.

"His master replied, 'well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness.' (NIV) Matthew 25:21

The CGI, in homage and gratitude to Amin de Tarrazi, will name the current Ozanam's Canonization Commission "Amin de Tarrazi's Canonization Commission". Furthermore, the General President's office room in Paris is now known as "Amin de Tarrazi's office room".

The Society of St. Vincent de Paul would not flourish as it was during the past decades would it have been for Bro. Amin.

Amin de Tarrazi
*A life dedicated to the
Society of St. Vincent de Paul*

International Confederation
of the Society of St Vincent de Paul

SSVP
Service In Love

★ 1928
† 2019

CGI BOARD

(Statutes of the Confederation: 3.16 to 3.18)



1.- BOARD (according to the Rule)

(Statutes of the
Confederation: 3.16 to 3.18)

16th President General

International

Renato Lima de Oliveira (Brazil)

Vice-president General

Joseph Pandian Thomas (India)

Secretary General

Bertrand Ousset (France)

Treasurer General

Larry Tuomey (Ireland)

1st Vice-president

General Deputy

Joseph Makwinja (Botswana)

2nd Vice-president

General Deputy

Sebastián Gramajo (Argentina)

International Vice-president for Youth, Children & Teenagers

Willian Alves (Brazil)

Spiritual Adviser

Andrés Motto C.M. (Argentina)

2.- OTHER MEMBERS OF THE BOARD (invited by the PGI)

(Statutes of the
Confederation: 3.16.4)

International Vice-president for Formation & Training:

María Luisa Téllez (Spain)

International Vice-president for Structure & Special Projects

Maurice Yeung (Hong Kong)

International Vice-president for Institutional Relationship & Management

Carmela Addante (Canada)

Chairman of Concordat

Jean-Noël Cormier (Canada)

Chairman of the Strategic Department

Alfons ten Velde (Netherlands)

Chairman of IFAC

Graham West (Australia)



MISSION

**A NETWORK OF FRIENDS,
SEEKING HOLINESS THROUGH
THE PERSONAL SERVICE TO THE
POOR AND THE ADVOCACY FOR
SOCIAL JUSTICE.**

VISION 2022

**TO BE RECOGNIZED AS A WORLD
WIDE ORGANIZATION, WHICH
PROMOTES THE INTEGRAL
HUMAN DEVELOPMENT OF
THOSE MOST IN NEED.**

VALUES

- SERVICE
- SPIRITUALITY
- HUMILITY
- CHARITY
- EMPATHY

- | | |
|-----------|--|
| 1 | FORMATION
Ongoing process
for all members |
| 2 | YOUTH
30% of members
under 35 years of age |
| 3 | TWINNING
Build a global network of
spiritual and material support |
| 4 | EXPANSION
Presence in
all countries |
| 5 | VINCENTIAN FAMILY
Permanent and deep
collaboration |
| 6 | SOLIDARITY
International and local
partnerships |
| 7 | GLOBAL AID
Revamp fraternal aid
and development processes |
| 8 | COMMUNICATIONS
Renew with the use
of worldclass technology |
| 9 | IGC STRUCTURE
Constant search for
accountability and efficiency |
| 10 | NATIONAL COUNCILS
Support to maximize
effectiveness |



www.ssvpglobal.org

 **Ssvp-Conseil Général International**