Edition 3/2018

OZANAM NETWORK

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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

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Editorial

Christmas Message

Renato Lima

The new forms of suffering demand from all of us a new look at the society in which we are a part of and, consequently, a new way of attacking the causes and consequences of poverty.

My Dear Vincentians, Members of the Conferences of Saint Vincent de Paul, MERRY CHRISTMAS!

Congratulations to all the Vincentians around the world for the dedication, affection and zeal with which they deal on a daily basis with people who live some kind of material or spiritual need.

The new forms of suffering demand from all of us a new look at the society in which we are a part of and, consequently, a new way of attacking the causes and consequences of poverty.

Your presence in this world is a light for all, like Christ is the light of the world. As Vincentians, we act to offer those who suffer a better life, based on love for God and neighbor.

During this Holy Christmas time, we renew the ideals of solidarity, charity and love, which are the marks of every Christian and which constitute the legacy of our founders.

Where there are shadows, sadness and indifference, let us carry the love of Jesus Christ.

Where there is envy and vanity, let us carry the sweetness of Mary's heart.

Where there is lack of hope and love, let us carry the strength of Saint Joseph.

On behalf of the Council General International, the International Board of Directors and the staff in Paris, I wish you a MERRY CHRISTMAS!

We also wish 2019, (International Year of Paul Lamache and 180 years of the Council General), be for everyone a year full of achievements, especially in favor of the humblest. May God bless us and forgive our failures.

Praised be our Lord, Jesus Christ!

Members of the International General Council of the SSVP visit the tomb of François Lallier, one of the SSVP founders

November 16th. Will be an historical day for the SSVP, because it is the first time that the Board of the International General Council visits the tomb of François Lallier, one of the SSVP 7 founders.

The pilgrimage of the members was lead to the city of Sens, a town in which Lallier had his family and forged his professional career, where he also founded Conferences and where his body rests, after his death, in the cemetery of this city of France, two hours from Paris.

In front of the tomb, the members of the International General Council of the SSVP paid tribute to Lallier with flowers, with a moment of prayer and with a reading about his live and service to the SSVP.

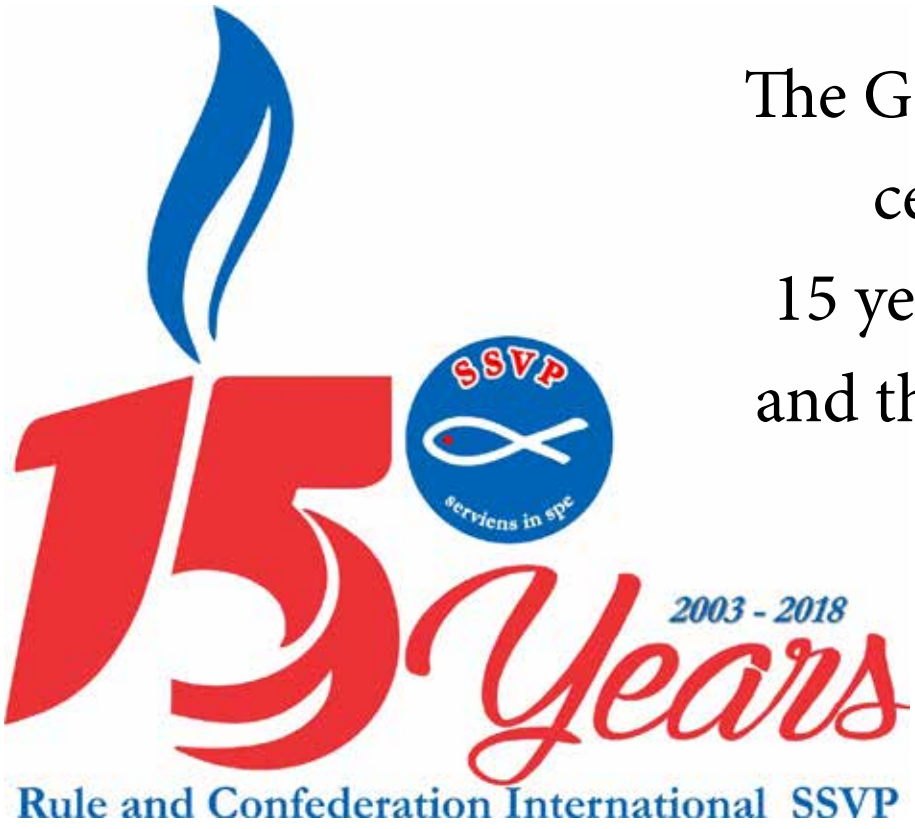
According to the XVI general president, Renato Lima, "this visit to the tomb of Lallier is a concrete activity of the annual Thematic Year, and being there, praying and visiting this city, is a great grace for all Vincentians". At the time of the tribute, brother Renato commented on the great friendship between Lallier and Frederico Ozanam.

After this event, the delegation visited the Cathedral of Saint-Étienne-de-Sens.

A plaque with the legend "the 1st Secretary General of SSVP, one of the founders of the institution on April 23, 1833, Paris, France", will be situated in Lallier's tomb.

Soon, the International General Council will give information about the address and location of Lallier's grave.

The General Council is celebrating a feast: 15 years with the Rule and the Confederation



On 18th October 2003, in Rome, an Assembly of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul was held where the network of charity that Frederic dreamt of became an International Confederation, with a modern Rule that we should know, take care of, love and follow.

Until 2003, the General Council was not legally an international entity, it was a French association, i.e., there was no legal link between the different Societies in the world.

The second part of the new Rule lays down the Statutes of an International Confederation as a French legal entity made up of various Superior Councils that voluntarily requested to join the Confederation and established their internal statutes according to the third part of the Rule.

This Confederation has borne plenty of fruit in these 15 years, and today we have a truly global entity, always close to the Vincentian Family, which helps those who suffer around the world through the Conferences, Councils, works and the twinning, as well as taking humanitarian emergency relief in cases of natural disasters.

All this is possible thanks to a prudent management and to the generous donations from the Superior Councils. The current mandate has generated countless innovations, such as transparency mechanisms, the creation of the auditor's service, the Thematic Years on the seven founders and the live broadcasts of meetings, among other achievements.

The Confederation and the Rule are today pleasant realities for the daily routine of the Vincentian Conferences and Councils, always "serving in hope". We are grateful to our predecessors, led by President Díaz-Torremocha, who modernized the SSVP through its new Rule and the creation of the Confederation.

May the Immaculate Virgin, our Patroness, St. Vincent de Paul and the Blessed Frederic Ozanam continue to protect our beloved institution!

Many thanks to all of you!

International Meeting of the Region Europe 1

From 21st to 23rd September, the SSVP countries of the region Europe 1 gathered in the city of Durham to discuss issues such as the development and the improvement of service and spirituality in the SSVP.

The countries of the region Europe 1 (England and Wales, Ireland, Scotland, Austria, Germany, The Netherlands, Italy, South Tyrol, Switzerland, Belgium, France, Spain, Italy, Luxembourg, Malta, Monaco, Portugal and Turkey) met from 21st to 23rd September at Ushaw College, near Durham City in the Northwest of England, convened by the international Territorial Vice-president Laszlo Könczol, from Germany, having also the attendance of some guests from the Region Europe 2.

The purpose of this meeting was that all the countries share their experiences and common ways to respond to new challenges: immigration from countries in Africa and the Middle East, the new poverties arising in a more and more unchristian and aged Europe. It was highlighted the increasing number of lonely people and neglected elderly, the crisis of values and the increase in dysfunctional families. They also informed about the programme Famvin Homeless Aliance, aiming at returning dignify to the people in need by providing them a home and a basic sustenance. An essential point in the meeting was devoted to the Vincentian spirituality.

The national Presidents also laid down, in an open debate, the various forms and initiatives in each of the countries to improve the presence of young people and the growth of Conferences, making better known the work of the SSVP in, for example, professional groups and centres of primary education. They also promote congresses and awards at universities, trade fairs and exhibitions to engage volunteers, promote social activities, etc. They presented initiatives to improve the funding and obtain resources for social programs. As an example, they mentioned solidarity campaigns towards different groups and the mini shops in England and Wales.

The fraternal meeting concluded with a visit to various Vincentian projects in Newcastle and a visit to Durham Cathedral.

South America: The SSVP is on the Move

The second half of the year 2018 has been very busy for the SSVP in South America, with many activities. The Team of the Territorial Vice-Presidency America 3 went to the countries of the region, participating in the meetings with presentations and coordinating meetings and activities.

BRAZIL

In August, the Coordinator of Zone 1, Margarita Henao, took part in the National Meeting of the Brazilian SSVP in the city of Osasco, Sao Paulo. In addition to reports on Vincentian projects and activities, the gathering tackled as main topic the review of various points of the SSVP Rule in Brazil.

URUGUAY

Also in August, a CIAD project of visits to the Conferences of this country took place, supporting an action of closeness of the National Council to the grass root fellow members of the SSVP. They were 4 days of visits to 10 conferences, bringing information and training to the members.

The Coordinator of Zone 3, Francisco Velasco, and the Coordinator for Special Projects, Renata Mancini took part in the visits, together with officials from the National Council of Uruguay.

PERU

In October, the CGI visited the SSVP in Peru, through the Coordinator of Zone 2, Sebastião Ribeiro. In addition to meetings with the officials of the National Council and visits to Vincentian works, the Zone Coordinator participated in a Meeting of Vincentian Training that brought together members of the Conferences of the metropolitan area of Lima, the capital of the country.

ARGENTINA

Also on October, the CGI visited the SSVP in Argentina to hold working meetings with the board of the National Council, which counted with the presence of the Territorial Vice-President, Julio Cesar M. de Lima, and the Coordinator of Zone 3, Francisco Velasco.

The main objective was to discuss with the Superior Council the service structure of the SSVP in the country and the growth prospects, especially the creation of Conferences in the provinces where the SSVP is not yet present. To this end, in addition to the meeting with the Superior Council, there were meetings with the two Zone Councils of the metropolitan area of Buenos Aires, and with members of a Conference.

BOLIVIA

In November, the CGI sent the Coordinator of Formation and Training for South America, Renata Mancini, to Cochabamba for a training session with the board of the Superior Council. The Coordinator also participated in the National Meeting of the SSVP in Bolivia.

On 15th and 16th December, the CGI's International Territorial Vice-Presidency team for America 3 was in Osasco, Brazil, for its annual meeting on strategic planning in order to analyse the situation of the SSVP in each country of the area, and to plan the activities for 2019.

First edition of the International Workshops on Training and SSVP Special Projects, held in Madrid, Spain, on 2nd and 3rd November 2018

THE FIRST EDITION OF THESE WORKSHOPS TOOK PLACE IN MADRID, SPAIN, ON 2ND AND 3RD NOVEMBER, PROMOTED BY THEIR OFFICERS, THE INTERNATIONAL VICE PRESIDENT FOR TRAINING, FELLOW MEMBER MARÍA LUISA TÉLLEZ, AND THE INTERNATIONAL VICE PRESIDENT FOR SPECIAL PROJECTS, MAURICE YEUNG. THEY WERE ATTENDED BY 12 TERRITORIAL DELEGATES RESPONSIBLE FOR EACH OF THE STRATEGIC AREAS OF SPECIAL PROJECTS AND TRAINING. AT THE EVENT WERE PRESENT THE MEMBERS OF THE BOARD, AS WELL AS THE INTERNATIONAL PRESIDENT GENERAL, RENATO LIMA DE OLIVEIRA, WHO CLOSED THE EVENT.

The chosen venue was the Centre "La Salle Arlep", in Madrid. The welcoming of the National President of the Spanish SSVP was followed by the debates and proposals. The organization of this first edition of the workshops allowed the participants, more than 40 fellow members from the five continents and other invited members, to have time to gather according to their area of service in the SSVP: Training or Special Projects. On the last day, all of them attended the presentation of our IPG "Looking forward vision of the General Council".

The intervention of our brother Renato Lima de Oliveira was very enriching, defining the targets set by the IGC for its mandate, the development of the SSVP Strategic Plan, the objectives achieved and the future expectations to take

our beloved Institution, with the support and commitment of each fellow member, to the path of holiness and service towards the neediest. This objective was pursued by the founders of the SSVP and this is a legacy and heritage that we must look after.

The President General thanked all the participants for fulfilling their international service and for their commitment to the SSVP.

From the speech of the IGP, we highlight:

Canonization: He spoke about the progress of the Commission for the Canonization of Blessed Frederic Ozanam, which is having a good pace.

SSVP Plus: The latest country to join the SSVP network of charity has been Cyprus, we are now 154. The incorporation was thanks to Lebanon's SSVP, and he had a special mention for our fellow member Ella Bitar.

Youth: He mentioned the development of initiatives for the young, as the II International Days of the Vincentian Youth in Salamanca-Spain and the decision to commemorate the International Day of the Vincentian Youth on 4th July, feast of Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati. A collection is organized on this day to support the projects of the young Vincentians, strengthen the Youth Conferences and promote Training.

Training: In the field of Training, he summarized the progress made, with new topics, books and documents. He announced some proposals to improve the search for information and the translations of Ozanam's legacy, in order to have a deeper and better knowledge of the fellow members.

Communication: He also announced the development of the communication area, among other things, with a commitment to new technologies, the modernization of the website and the magazine Ozanam Network, as well as envisaging to make a new institutional video.

Thematic years: He valued the initiative of the thematic years dedicated to the 7 founders of the

The President General during his talk to the Territorial Delegates for Training and Special Projects

Carmela Addante, 1st International Deputy Vice-president (right), takes part in one of the debates of the Training group

SSVP, which are resulting in a better understanding of them and, at the same time, in a better understanding of the spirit and the atmosphere that gave rise to the First Conference, acknowledging the work of the IGC's Historical Commission. 2019 will be the year of Paul Lamache and 2020 will be dedicated to Félix Clavé.

To conclude, our President Renato Lima, announced for the joy of all, that thanks to this contest, a Brazilian fellow member discovered after 185 years, an engraving of Félix Clavé, thus completing the Gallery of our founders' images.

Then, the International Vice President for training, the fellow member María Luisa Téllez and the International Vice President of Special Projects, Maurice Yeung, set out the reports of these Workshops and their conclusions.

REPORT AND CONCLUSIONS OF THE TRAINING WORKSHOP

There is a meeting in Madrid of the 12 territorial delegates for training, appointed by the International General Council along with the Vice President of Training, María Luisa Téllez and the 1st International Deputy Vice President, Carmela Addante.

On the morning of November 2nd, the Vice President of Training, through two presentations, set the objectives and functions of the delegates, and explained the reasons for the training topics that have been prepared and that can be accessed on the official website www.ssvpglobal.org

Immediately after, the delegates explained the Training plans existing in the countries they represented. These explanations were

Maria Luisa Tellez, International Vice-president for Training

Group of Special Projects

very enriching in order to know the current course of Training.

Our sister Carmela Addante, 1st International Deputy Vice President set up 3 linguistic groups for discussing the different topics: Spirituality, Youth, History, and the Tools for Training.

Marisa Téllez put forward the conclusions and pointed out as fundamental the coordination between the present delegates with the International Territorial Vice Presidents.

Spirituality: The participants reaffirmed the importance that the spirituality has for the mission of the SSVP. An incarnated spirituality, in which we must give space, in the same way, to God and to the people in need; a symmetric space from human being to human being, as equals.

In addition, it is essential to learn more about the spirituality of the SSVP's founders in the 19th century.

Sometimes we have problems among Vincentians because there is not a united community, as it must be in the SSVP, and this is due to the lack of spirituality and to the failure of following the Christian doctrine. We need to practice more the Vincentian virtues and cultivate joy, simplicity and boldness.

We must give a paramount place to prayer and contemplation, taking into account and celebrating the Vincentian festivities.

Youth: In some places, it is difficult for the young to be integrated in the SSVP. It was pointed out that this may be due to the model of society in which we live, a society with fewer values, less commitment, which is more secular, more consumerist and materialistic, a society of power, where wages are precarious and yet the greatest value is to have, rather than to be.

On the other hand, this model of society creates dissatisfaction in the young that are more closed in on themselves, more vulnerable to drug addiction, alcoholism, compulsive gambling and many other negative ways. Our obligation towards these young people is to be an example and a reflection of another way of life that focuses on the service to others, and on a cheerful and positive attitude.

History: All participants agree that there is a great ignorance of the biographical history of the SSVP as well as of its spirituality, despite existing an abundant documentation available, which can be easily accessed. Training should provide us the data and history about our founders, as well as about the people who were close to the foundation of the SSVP, and about our Holy Patron Saint Vincent de Paul and Sister Rosalie Rendu D.C.

This ignorance of its history, its spirituality and its Rule opens the door to situations where people or even Conferences not in line with the SSVP's original spirit could be incorporated.

In order to bring education to all, we must rely on audio-visual resources, suitable for the dif-

Vice-président International de Projets Spéciaux, Maurice Yeung

ferent stages of life (childhood, youth, adults), through videos, graphic books and documents.

Tools: We addressed several problems within the SSVP that are the result of its international nature: different languages, different cultures, and different political systems. Therefore, despite these difficulties, it is advised to appoint a Training delegate in each country, to prepare a budget for investing in training, and to promote an on-going training for all members. We should also promote the translations and reading of the most interesting texts concerning the Conferences written by our founders and others, as well as the knowledge of the basic documents governing the SSVP, for their correct and uniform application.

An essential aspect in the Training programmes is to know how to motivate the person that needs it, without forgetting that our example as Vincentians is essential to convey and instil the love for our beloved Society.

We tackled an aspect that we have somehow forgotten: from the Training, we should seek to know more and to spread Ozanam's thoughts about social justice and the defence of the weak, which is a more technical area that we have deepened less. The SSVP's members must therefore be well prepared to participate and spread more and better the principles of the Social Teachings of the Church, of which Frederic Ozanam was a forerunner. In the words of Ozanam, "charity is not enough. It heals the wounds but does not stop the blows that produce them. There is a huge poor social class that does not want handouts, but institutions."

REPORT AND CONCLUSIONS OF THE WORKSHOP ON SPECIAL PROJECTS

In his opening speech, the International Vice President for Special Projects, the fellow member Maurice Yeung, stressed that the working teams are extremely necessary. The Territorial Delegates are a team in its own and they are also part of the teams led by the International Territorial Vice Presidents (the ITVP) of the respective regions, and therefore it is essential to coordinate with them.

Throughout this training workshop, several presentations took place by the fellow member Joseph Makwinja, 2nd Deputy Vice President, by Maurice and by Bruno Fabre, responsible for the CIAD in the IGC, who spoke about topics of interest for the Territorial delegates, including the "terms of reference", "SSVP Plus projects", "CIAD projects" and "project management".

In addition to the presentations, we also shared experiences related to various aspects, such as the creation of new Conferences in Liberia, CIAD projects in Nepal, projects at country level, as was the case in South Sudan, etc.

Territorial delegates participated actively in the discussions and exchange of opinions after the presentations. This was very enriching and, at the same time, very useful for defining better the functions that they have to undertake and for getting the adequate knowledge about IGC projects, as well as for having their vision in line with the achievement of their objectives.

At the end of these workshops, the territorial delegates assessed their training to take forward their work. They agreed to collaborate to redefine and update the "terms of reference". They were also commissioned to compile the "manual of policies and procedures" for the delegates and the "project handbook" (separating the SSVP Plus projects and the CIAD ones) in a period of 3 months and 6 months respectively.

The fellow member Maurice Yeung also asked all territorial delegates to draft their action plans for the coming months, in coordination with the respective SSVP International Territorial Vice-Presidents (VPTI)

Juan Manuel Buergo, President of Spain's Superior Council and President of the International Commission for the Historical Research

WELCOMING SPEECH TO THE INTERNATIONAL OFFICIALS AND DELEGATES FOR TRAINING AND SPECIAL PROJECTS

Good morning:

Let me introduce myself, I am Juan Manuel Buergo, National President of the SSVP in Spain, many of you already know me from other meetings

First, I would like to thank you for your presence here and I welcome you to Spain on behalf of all the Spanish Vincentians. It is here in Madrid, the capital of Spain, where we will celebrate this international meeting of international territorial officials and delegates for Training and Special Projects, which, we hope, will be very fruitful. For the SSVP of Spain it is a huge joy to host this important meeting for the future and growth of the SSVP.

As you know, the main objective is to unify the knowledge, analyse the current situation in each area and propose projects and improvements for the future. But there are also other objectives, which consist in getting to know us more and better, in order to continue weaving the network of charity that embraces the world, the first one towards those most in need and the second, among us.

In recent statements, our international president Renato Lima, wishes us a great success for this meeting and hopes that the territorial delegates will return to their countries with more motivation, filled with new ideas, encouraged and more and more committed with the growth of the SSVP, in quality and in quantity. In short, to ensure that our small

grain of sand will improve the world and therefore ourselves, doing good and bringing the message of the Gospel to anyone in need, through our example, following the example of our patron saint Vincent de Paul and of our founders.

Motivation is one of the keys! In these few days, we will not be able to learn a specific recipe to better train, to improve projects, but we are going to know each other more, we are going to love each other more, we are going to feel that we are not alone. We are going to feel that we are part of a network of charity and that we must take the first step, we have to push forward, because we have an important commitment with our beloved Society, and only that will make us servants leaders, for the greater glory of God.

Motivation appears when we fall in love with what we do, when we are moved by putting into practice the Vincentian message when we see Christ in the needy, when we are excited as were those young people led by Frederic to fight against poverty and to promote social justice, when we are eager to learn and be better in order to be faithful to our founding principles, to preserve our heritage.

"Motivation appears when we fall in love with what we do, when we are moved by putting into practice the Vincentian message when we see Christ in the needy, when we are excited as were those young people led by Frederic to fight against poverty and to promote social justice, when we are eager to learn and be better in order to be faithful to our founding principles, to preserve our heritage."

This is the way we have to put it into practice, because the first founders had rules, principles, circular letters, but they did not have training schemes or special projects, they got together as we do now and travelled to know each other and to establish new Conferences. They taught charity through their example and thus, they could spread rapidly around the world. Quoting Abbot Noirot, who told Ozanam: "We only know one thing if we have been interested in it, if we have learned it by ourselves".

My dear fellow members, during these days we will have a little bit of everything, prayer, talks, discussions, entertainment and great brotherhood, which is the ingredient that our founder liked most. When he was deadly wounded in Pisa, he wrote: "my eyes are full of tears of joy whenever I find our small family so far away, always minute because of the darkness of its works, but large by the blessing of God. Despite having different languages, they always shake hands in the same way and there is among them the same fraternal cordiality so that we can recognize each other with the same signal as the first Christians, 'Look how they love one another!'"

The whole team of the Spanish SSVP Spain and myself remain at your disposal for anything you may need.

My fraternal greetings in Saint Vincent, Frederic and the Immaculate Virgin, our Patron Saint; may they guide us in this gathering.

Madrid, 2nd November 2018
Juan Manuel Buergo
XII National President of Spain's SSVP

The IGC's Commission of Aid to Development has supported, with more than 900,000 €, 51 initiatives in 31 countries

The IGC's Commission of Aid to Development (CIAD) has provided this year more than 900,000 euros in aid. The functions of the CIAD have expanded and now it not only dedicates its efforts to development projects or humanitarian aid across the SSVP countries or in emergency zones, but it also aims at supporting the spreading and development of our Institution and Conference groups across the globe.

Agricultural Project in Juba, Southern Sudan

Currently, it still dedicates most of the economic resources to humanitarian aid and rehabilitation projects in areas of emergency or suffering catastrophes. This kind of activity is, today, more than 80% of the assistance of the CIAD: around 800,000 €, of which about 60% go for projects in Asia, more than 20% to Africa, nearly 15% to the Middle East and 5% to America. However, the investment in projects SSVP Plus and projects of growth and development amount to 4% of the total of CIAD's aid.

Actualmente, todavía se dedica

Madagascar, rebuilding houses

Project with children and teenagers in Juba, Southern Sudan

The CIAD has always a strong need for funding since it relies heavily on subsidies it could receive from the SSVP Superior Councils or from external donations (which are quite unusual) and has many projects underway or that could be subsidized with the subsequent charitable and social profit and thus developing the SSVP in the area.

THE INITIATIVE TO FINANCE THE CIAD FROM THE SSVP IN PHOENIX - USA

Being aware of this need for financing, the SSVP in Phoenix-USA has conducted a pilot project to achieve the involvement of the SSVP members in the running of the CIAD. The project consists in informing the fellow members about the beneficial work carried out by this Commission and propose them specific projects that they could subsidize, offering the possibility that Conferences contribute a percentage of their budgets to the good running of these initiatives.

The result has been wonderful since the fellow members of Phoenix have been informed in depth about the CIAD and its activities and they have contributed around 62,000 $ to previously selected projects:

- Project of Agricultural Development
- Project of protection for street children
- Project of training for young people
- Reconstruction of Houses…

This initiative could be replicated in many places of the SSVP. Since the CIAD can put at the disposal of the Superior Councils all the necessary information about the initiatives and projects that can be supported by the fellow members and Conferences that request it.

For further information:
cgi.ciad@ssvpglobal.org

The film festival on the seven founders of the SSVP

The festival aims at stimulating the knowledge and research, in a creative and talented way, about the origin of the SSVP and the main role of the seven founders: Antoine Frederic Ozanam, Auguste Le Taillandier, Jules Delvaux, Paul Lamache, François Lallier, Félix Clavé and Emmanuel Bailly de Surcy.

Only 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 (70 minutes).

The deadline for the submission of videos or films to the General Council is 15th May 2019.

For further information: www.ssvpglobal.org
cinema-festival@ssvpglobal.org

Eduardo Marques Almeida
Coordinator of Strategic
Planning of the CGI

What a great idea of Pope Francis to set one Sunday a year for us to reflect on the situation of the Poor! In his message for this day, the Holy Father seems to make a reflection for the Vincentian Family. It is impressive what there is in common between his message and the Vincentian vocation.

II World Day of the Poor

"This poor man called, and the Lord heard him" (Psalms 34,7)
Message of Pope Francis

The Holy Father reflects on the situation of the Poor from the Psalm 34, "This poor called, and the Lord heard him". The Pope shows us, in a very Jesuit way, the need to think about three verbs included in this Psalm: "to shout", "to respond" and "to release".

First of all, the poor man calls. As for the Psalm 34, the papal message recalls the passage of the blind Bartimaeus (from the Gospel of St. Mark - 10, 46-52) who, when he was on the road begging, hears that Jesus is passing by and he shouts and repeats over and over "Son of David, have mercy on me!". And Jesus, despite the noise of the crowd which wanted Bartimaeus to be quiet, listens to him and heals him. How many times we are Bartimaeus and how many times we are Christ in our Vincentian life? It is true that we are seeking the salvation and dignity of the Poor, but sometimes we need to scream like him, so the Lord hears us. The Holy Father wonders "How is it that this cry that goes up to the presence of God, does not reach our ears and leaves us indifferent and impassive"? And he exhorts us: "on a day like this, we are called to make a serious examination of conscience, in order to understand whether we are truly able to listen to the Poor". And he adds: "we need the silence of listening in order to recognize their voice". It is not necessary to talk much, as Vincentians we are initially called to be silent, so that only the cry of the Poor could be heard.

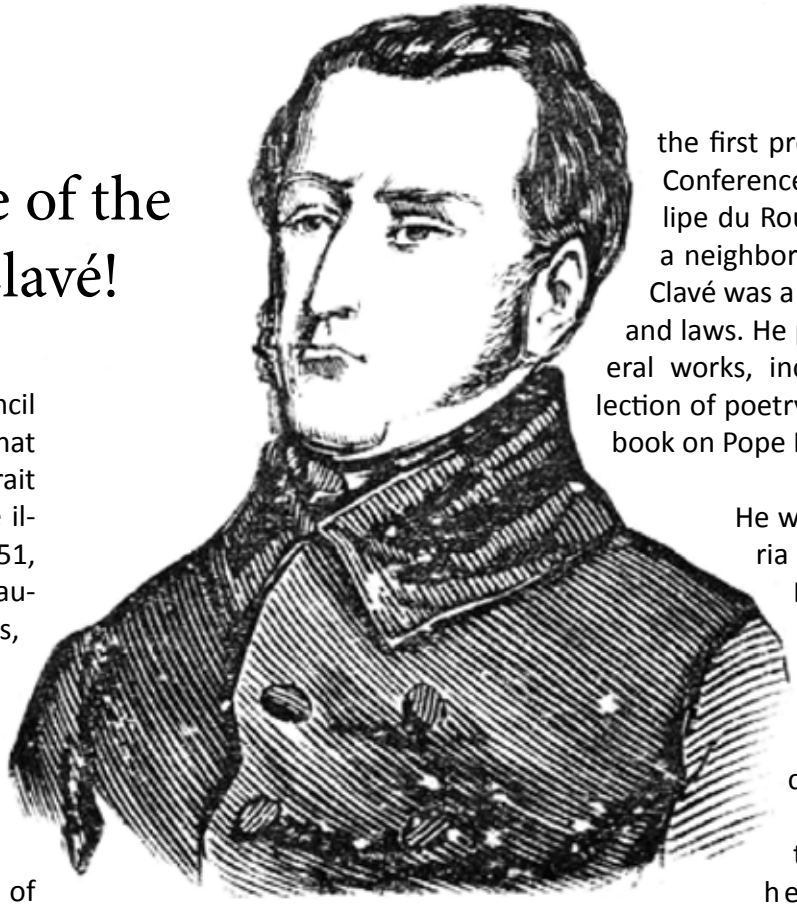
Secondly, the Lord responds. What does it mean to answer to the Poor? "The response of God to the Poor is always an intervention of salvation to take care of the wounds of soul and body, to restore justice, and to help recover a life with dignity." God's response is also an appeal so that whoever believes in Him could proceed in the same way, within the limitations of the human nature. The World Day of the Poor seeks to be a small response offered by the Church worldwide, which is addressed to the Poor of all kinds inhabiting the planet, so that they do not think that their cry remains unheard.

Finally, the Lord invites us, we and the Poor, to free ourselves. This is the great mystic of the Vincentian service to the Poor. The care to the Poor, as Pope Francis points out, should not consist in "neglecting what is inherent to us, i.e., to take everyone towards God and holiness". How to do this? The answer is given in a direct way: we are not the protagonists of the service, but it is God himself who works in us out of love. (...). For this reason, "before the poor, it is not about knowing who has the primacy of the intervention, but about humbly recognizing that it is the Spirit who provokes gestures that are a sign of the response and closeness of God." (...) The main actors are the Lord and the poor. Who is at their service, is an instrument in the hands of God to make recognize his presence and his salvation". It is why St. Vincent calls the Poor "our Lords": they are much closer to the Lord of Life.

"No one can feel excluded by the Father's love, especially in a world that often puts wealth as the first objective and makes people withdraw into themselves." Therefore, the necessary liberation for the combat against poverty serves also, and in particular, us who serve "our Lords".

May this Day of the Poor be an opportunity for us to share the joy that represents our Vincentian vocation!

We finally got a historical image of the founder Félix Clavé!



M. Felix Clavé.

With immense joy, the Council General International reports that we have just obtained a portrait of the founder Félix Clavé. The illustration is inside a book of 1851, written by the chronicler Maurice-Oscar Honoré de Bourzeis, from France.

Pierre-Emmanuel-Felix Clavé was born on July 8, 1811, in Toulouse (France), and died on November 9, 1853, in Pau (France). Clavé was one of the seven founders inspired by God to found the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul in 1833.

The Council General International wants to thank from the bottom of the heart the brother Adenilton Moreira, 30 years-old, resident of the city of Conselheiro Lafaiete (Minas Gerais - Brazil), for the discovery of the drawing of Felix Clavé. He is Vincentian since 1999, and currently participates in the Conference of Our Lady of Fatima.

"I was investigating Lallier's life, because I participated in the international contest, looking for the photos, drawings or images of the all founders, but I did not find anything about Clavé. Researching on the internet, using the appropriate keywords, I came to Bourzeis's book , which brings an image of our founder on page 24. From there, I got in touch with our brother Renato Lima, who was speechless", Adenilton explained.

The discovery of Clavé's portrait is a gift from God for the SSVP. "We are very happy at the discovery of the image of Clavé, the only founder of whom we did not have any illustration or drawing. I have no words to describe my joy, given us by Divine Providence, for the entire international Vincentian community, that true gift. Now, the photo gallery of the seven founders is complete", said Renato Lima.

Of the seven founders, Clavé is the least known. He went to live in Paris in 1831, when he met Ozanam and Bailly de Surcy, and belonged to the Conference of Charity. With the unfolding of the first Conference, Clavé was the first president of the Conference Saint Phillipe du Roule, created in a neighborhood of Paris. Clavé was a man of letters and laws. He published several works, including a collection of poetry (1836) and a book on Pope Pius IX (1848).

He worked in Algeria and Mexico. He married in 1847 in the Parish of Our Lady of Lorette (located a few meters from the current headquarters of the Council General International). He did not have children. His name was unjustly involved in a legal case, being the object of blackmail and false accusations, strongly affecting his reputation. Because of the arbitrariness that he suffered, his health was weakened, which contributed to his death unfortunately very early, at 42 years of age, just two months after the death of Ozanam.

Clavé was an honest person and never renounced his faith, despite all the insults and slander suffered. He will always be remembered, in the history of the SSVP, as one of the seven founders. In 2020, the Council General will declare the "International Thematic Year of Felix Clavé" and Vincentians from all over the world will have the opportunity to study and learn more about the life and work of this founder.

Interview with Raymond L. Sickinger

Mr. Raymond Sickinger is Professor of History and Chair of the Department of History and Classics at the Catholic University, "Providence College", Rhode Island, USA. In 2017, he published a book entitled Antoine Frédéric Ozanam, considered by some critics as the "definitive biography on Ozanam in English".

Professor Sickinger, your biography, Antoine Frédéric Ozanam has been commended by the critics, and the US National Catholic Press Association has awarded you first prize for your book. Have you made new discoveries about Ozanam, while writing this book?

Raymond L. Sickinger receives the SSVP emblem from the IPG, Renato Lima de Oliveira

Raymond L. Sickinger: There were a number of new discoveries. Let me mention five. First, the chapter on systemic change demonstrates that Ozanam thought in a systemic way even though he never used the term systemic change that is current in the Vincentian Family. This was evident from the time of his first home visit. He recognized that people can be trapped into poverty because of their circumstances and the policies of governments. Second, the chapter on solidarity (Catholic Social Thought) demonstrates that Ozanam was not just a forerunner of modern Catholic Social Thought, but his ideas embraced most of that tradition. Third, his work in the Society of St. Vincent de Paul was not just charity, as some have implied. Rather he saw and embraced the necessary link of charity and justice that the Church in the 21st century has again emphasized as essential. Fourth, Ozanam did not become a supporter of democracy overnight. It was during the home visits he made between 1833 and 1848 that he became aware of the fundamental goodness of those he visited and saw that they had the right to be able to share in the decisions that affected their lives. In that process of realization, he moved away from being a royalist in his youth to a supporter of Christian democracy. The book outlines that process. Fifth, the book also suggests that the Catholic Worker Movement led by Dorothy Day was influenced in positive ways by Ozanam's thoughts. Day read Ozanam and was deeply moved by his example. Finally, for most Americans, Ozanam is someone they do not know. There has been no comprehensive biography in English on Ozanam is a long time. The book was intended then not only for scholars and Vincentians,

but also for readers who want to encounter a man of deep faith and principles. They can discover Ozanam in a meaningful way. Some critics have said the book will be the "definitive biography on Ozanam in English." Only time will tell if that is true.

Tell us about Ozanam's spiritual life. What place did he give to prayer in the course of his day?

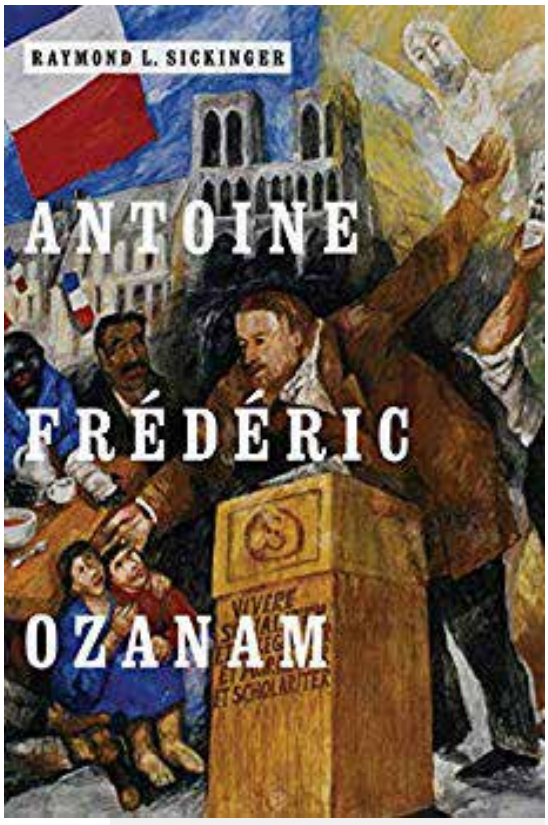
Raymond L. Sickinger: Ozanam's life was a profound forty-year long spiritual journey. He understood that everything he did as a person, teacher, scholar, husband, father, and friend had a spiritual dimension and could bring him, and others, closer to God. In my research, and while reading his letters, it became evident to me that prayer was essential to him. He began each morning by praying and by reading scripture (preferably in Greek). His devotion to the Blessed Mother is evident from his youth in Lyons to his death on her feast day. It was her kindly love he turned to when his own mother died. The Society of St. Vincent de Paul was a means for him to pray in action. By serving others, Ozanam knew that he could see the face of Christ more distinctly and that prayer with a community of believers is one of the most important ways to reinforce one's faith and to grow spiritually.

For Ralph Middlecamp, National President in the United States, your book "gives us not just the story of an interesting man living at an interesting time, but also a clear picture of why he should still matter to us today". What parallels do you draw between Ozanam's time and ours?

Raymond L. Sickinger: Ozanam's times were like ours: unsettled with great political divisions, economic disparities, and social problems. The Church then, as now, was criticized for not being responsive enough and for its failures to discipline its clergy. Ozanam saw the lay person as the one who could bring people back to the Church and create bonds of trust. That is true today as well. The Society of St. Vincent de Paul can play the same role today as it did in Ozanam's time. His message and his example is as relevant today as it was in the 19th century.

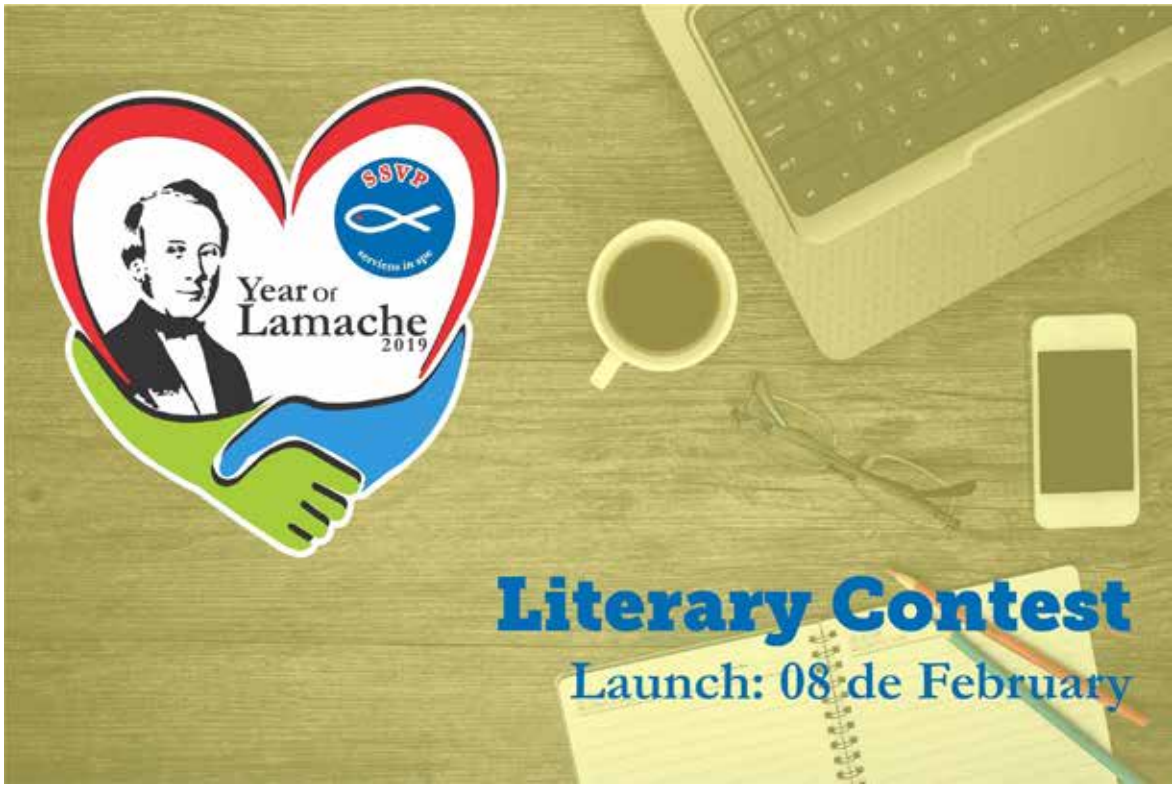
It is often said that Ozanam's writings were prophetic. In what ways do you think Ozanam is up to date for us today?

Raymond L. Sickinger: Ozanam understood that if great economic disparities and social divisions were not addressed then society would disintegrate. The focus on personal interests alone (egoism) was a detriment to society. Only by building authentic community and maintaining the dignity of each and every person can we create a just world. He knew that there were systems in place that kept people in poverty and that those systems were unjust. There is no doubt in my mind that Ozanam has much to say to our present world. Although he was a French layman, he saw beyond the boundaries of his France. His was an international and Catholic vision for regeneration in a changing world. His hope to create a network of charity, not only in France, but beyond its borders, is one that can still inspire us today. He is particularly inspirational for young people. In my classes that I teach, my students greet Ozanam very positively because they see in him a young man who wanted to make his world a better place just as they want to do. And they are impressed with what he accomplished in such a short lifetime.

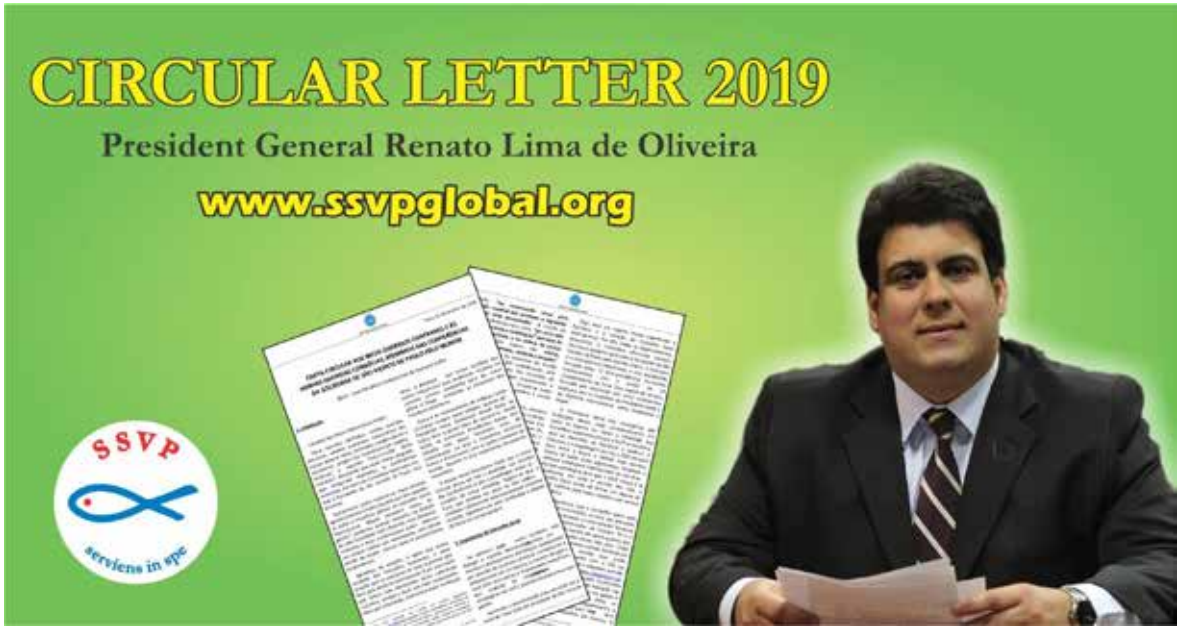


You can order this book on University of Notre Dame Press :
http://undpress.nd.edu/9780268101428/antoine-frederic-ozanam/
or on Amazon

8th February 2019
Launching of The Thematic Year of Paul Lamache



31st. January 2019
Launching of the Circular Letter of the President General International, Renato Lima de Oliveira



THE CALL TO BE A MARTYR

P. Robert Maloney C.M.
Espiritual Advisor CGI

Frederic Ozanam was quite realistic. He knew how unlikely it was that he would suffer the violent death of a martyr, shedding his blood for his beliefs. But he wrote eloquently about the call to martyrdom, urging his friends and followers to offer their lives as a holocaust for Christ and for the poor. On Feb. 23, 1835, he wrote to Léonce Curnier: "The earth has grown cold. It is up to us Catholics to reignite the raging fire that is being extinguished. It is up to us to recommence the era of martyrs. For to be a martyr is something possible for all Christians. To be a martyr is to give our lives for God and for our brothers and sisters. It is to give our lives in sacrifice, whether the sacrifice is consumed once and for all as a holocaust, or whether it happens slowly … To be a martyr is to give to heaven everything we have received – our gold, our blood, our entire soul. This offering is in our hands. It's a sacrifice that we can make. It is up to us to choose what altar we want to bring our sacrifice to, what god we want to consecrate our youth and later life to, and what temple we will meet in – at the foot of the idol of Egoism or in the sanctuary of God and humanity."

Two centuries earlier, on August 19, 1646, Vincent de Paul expressed the same conviction to the Daughters of Charity, "A young woman will come from three or four hundred miles away, from Flanders, or from Holland, to consecrate herself to God in the service of the most abandoned persons on earth. Isn't that going to martyrdom? Yes, without a doubt. A holy Father has said that anyone who gives himself to God to serve his neighbor and endures willingly all the difficulties he may encounter in this is a martyr. Did the martyrs suffer more than these Sisters? No indeed, they certainly didn't… These women who give themselves to God … are sometimes with sick persons full of infection and sores and often noxious body fluids; sometimes with poor children for whom everything must be done; or with poor convicts loaded down with chains and afflictions… Hold them in great esteem … and look upon them as martyrs of Jesus Christ, since they serve their neighbor for love of Him." (CCD:IX:214)

We have all known living martyrs, heroic men and women who poured out their lives day after day. We knew them, perhaps, at home in a selfless mother or father, or at school in a teacher who earned little but gave much. May I suggest the following characteristics of the martyrdom that Frederic calls "something possible for all Christians." A martyr:

1. loves God with his or her whole heart, whole soul, whole mind, and whole strength.

2. expresses that love in sacrificial service of others, at the cost of time, energy and compassion.

3. embraces society's neediest members in love, as Jesus did, even when criticized for it.

4. perseveres in love faithfully in good times and in bad, or, as the rite of matrimony expresses it, "for better or for worse, for richer or for poorer, in sickness and in health, until death."

In his book, The Cost of Discipleship, the great 20th-century theologian, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, wrote: "When Christ calls a person, he summons him (or her) to come and die." As he wrote those words, Bonhoeffer did not know that eight years later he would suffer a violent death at the hands of the Nazis; rather, like Vincent de Paul and Frederic Ozanam, he was proclaiming that Christ's call to martyrdom is addressed to all disciples.

As I look to the future, how does the Lord call me, as a member of the Society, to offer up my life more fully in sacrificial love?

VINCENTIAN VOLUNTEERS

A COMMON INITIATIVE OF THE VINCENTIAN FAMILY TO PROMOTE JOINT ACTIONS OF VOLUNTEERING AMONG YOUNG PEOPLE: VINCENTIAN VOLUNTEERS

The Vincentian Volunteers (VVs) were formed in 1992, in Scotland, by the Daughters of Charity, supported by the Vincentian Fathers, SVP (England & Wales) and SSVP (Scotland). It is a Christian charity with a mission to provide care and support to those in need, without discrimination.

Since 1992, more than 200 young people (aged between 18 -35) have served as VVs working with vulnerable people in Glasgow, Hull, Liverpool, London, Manchester and Newcastle, giving a variety of different services while meeting the challenge to find those most in need. They strive to bring St Vincent's dream and vision to the present time.

During their year the VVs live in a Christian community of three or four people. They engage in work with other charities, helping refugees and those impoverished, homeless, disabled, or suffering from addictions. VVs usually have two placements, with at least one involving meeting directly with those in need.

Accommodation, living costs and a small personal allowance are provided. Their year starts in September with an induction and finishes in July with a community Mass, joined by staff and trustees. The year includes some spiritual formation, including a few days on Holy Island, a very important Christian site in the England's history.

They live in a prayerful environment, where their spiritual formation develops an understanding of Christ and His values,

During their year the VVs live in a Christian community of three or four people. They engage in work with other charities, helping refugees and those impoverished, homeless, disabled, or suffering from addictions.

opening their hearts to, and being transformed by those they serve. They accept the challenge to live in St Vincent's spirit by recognising Christ in the lives of those they serve, being respectful loving and non-judgmental.

A recent placement has written, "The experience has changed my life. It was a rewarding and intense year of my life so far, working with the poor and putting my faith into action. It changed how I saw God, saw people, saw the world and my faith. I realise now what actually matters. I recommend it to anyone who is searching and wants to try something different. It was life changing and while not easy, it was so worth it! It gave me confidence about my faith and my life and many friends. My community will always be in my prayers and there is a real family love forever present there. Vincentian ethos will remain in my heart always." "

VVs come from all over the world, with regular volunteers from USA and Indonesia.

Applications are now invited for Volunteers in 2019-20. However, visas are required for most residents outside the EU (and possibly EU residents in the future). Obtaining visas is no longer taken for granted and can be protracted

More information on
www.vincentianvolunteers.org.uk

This project has its roots in the Encyclical "Laudato Si" by Pope Francis, which Monsignor Bruno María Duffe, Secretary of the Dicastery for the Promotion of Integral Human Development, has explained in a very moving way.

International Meeeting of the Famvin Homeless Alliance (FHA)

THE INTERNATIONAL MEETING OF THE FAMVIN ALLIANCE WITH THE HOMELESS WAS HELD IN ROME FROM 26TH TO 28TH NOVEMBER 2018 IN THE HOUSE MARY IMMACULATE OF THE DAUGHTERS OF CHARITY. THIS INSTITUTION WAS SET UP LAST YEAR TO COMMEMORATE THE 400TH ANNIVERSARY OF OUR VINCENTIAN CHARISMA AND WAS PRESENTED TO POPE FRANCIS IN THE VATICAN CITY.

The Conference focused on three aspects:

1.- About those without a home who are refugees, displaced people and those who are homeless because they had to flee war or a natural disaster.

2.- People living in slums and those living in the city in extremely inadequate dwellings.

3.- Homeless people living in the street and also those who, due to different circumstances, sleep in the streets or in shelters.

The project has been named “13 Houses” because it is inspired by the first thirteen houses built by Saint Vincent de Paul.

This meeting has gathered more than 100 people and included experts who have shared their experiences explaining how we can improve our service to the poor.

The head of the FHA, Mark McGreevy presented the event and among other attendees, we could see Father Robert Maloney CM, Spiritual Advisor of the SSVP’s IGC, Father Aáron Gutiérrez CM, general assistant of the General Superior of the CM, Sister Kathleen Appler DC, Mother Superior of the Daughters of Charity, F. Joseph Agostino, international Coordinator of the Famvin office, members of different branches of the Famvin. There was also a large representation of national Presidents of the SSVP: from Australia, Brazil, Spain, United States, Lebanon, Malawi, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Guatemala, India, etc.

The goal is that from this project the Vincentian Family would also have a common denominator to join in activities of this kind.

They have discussed about issues such as slavery and homelessness, of how to raise funds for building homes, how we can improve the health services for the homeless and what position has the lack of housing on the agenda of the UN and of the Church. They addressed how we can better listen to the voice of the poor and replicate it in various forums. Furthermore, they submitted real cases of cooperation of the Vincentian Family in some countries, especially in Latin America, where the SSVP is present in almost all projects of this type.

This project has its roots in the Encyclical “Laudato Si” by Pope Francis, which Monsignor Bruno María Duffe, Secretary of the Dicastery for the Promotion of Integral Human Development, has explained in a very moving way.

The underlying idea is that with the cooperation of the whole Vincentian Family, we work to make a real and sustainable difference in the lives of many homeless people; that we promote the growth of new services, build a network among the vincentian groups, and support and develop leaders who carry out these actions. The idea is also to share the best practices that we have in the Vincentian Family.

All of this from the point of view of the Vincentian spirituality and based on the Encyclical “Laudato Si”.

The project has been named “13 Houses” because it is inspired by the first thirteen houses built by Saint Vincent de Paul. The FHA invites us to promote this concern in our national or local coordinators of the FAMVIN as an opportunity to start a first joint project for the homeless.

The date coincided with the anniversary of our Lady of the Miraculous Medal, and therefore a solemn Eucharist was celebrated in the Apostolic Leonian College of the CM, said by H. Em. Cardinal Angelo de Giorgio, Vicar General of His Holiness.

ITALY

"The Unity of Humankind", National Assembly of the SSVP Italy

At the end of October, the people of Assisi, famous for having seen the birth of Saint Francis and Saint Clare, was the town chosen by the Superior Council of Italy for its national meeting, under the theme "the Unity of Humankind".

About 800 fellow members from the whole country gathered in this mystical place in the region of Umbria to share and be trained in the Vincentian spirit, with the constant reflection of the need to be aware of the importance of representing a charisma that has as a hallmark the service and care to the most deprived persons.

This service "does not understand of quantity but of quality, and does not set economic objectives but human ones", stated the National President of the SSVP Italy, Antonio Gianfico.

The work of the Conferences prioritizes proximity and empathy, love and the capacity to devote oneself personally to your neighbour. For this reason, this Assembly strengthened the great potential that the Society of St. Vincent de Paul has in its original NDA and that today keeps giving an answer to the "traditional" poverty but also to "the new emerging poverty". Since, thanks to the personal involvement in the relation to the one that suffers most, we can realize their problems and thus take the necessary measures towards their holistic, spiritual and material recovery.

At this National Assembly, the fellow member Alessandro Ginota read an interesting statement of our dear President General, Renato Lima de Oliveira, which we attach in full. In his message, we highlight a beautiful phrase inspired by the motto of the meeting: The way that the Vincentian chooses for the unity of humankind is the charity. Moreover, this should guide us in the service that we have chosen to get to the next stage: charity is closeness, assistance and justice as well; and there lies inexorably the recognition of the person's DIGNITY.

Communiqué from the International President General

Dear President,
Dear members of the Vincentian Conferences,
Brothers and sisters,

1. This humble President General thank you for the opportunity of sending you a message in this gathering of reflection that takes place in the beautiful city of Assisi. Last year in Rome, I had the opportunity to engage with several of you in the vincentian symposium of the 400 years of our Charisma.

2. First of all, I would like to introduce myself. I am Renato Lima, Brazilian, 47 years old, journalist, married and father of 2 children, and my term of office as 16th President General of the SSVP goes from 2016 to 2022 under the slogan "if anyone would be first, he must be last of all and servant of all".

3. My dear friend Antonio Gianfico informed me that the purpose of the meeting in Assisi is to reflect together on the social changes and, in that context, on the care for the dignity of the human person. It is important to rediscover the meaning of "unity of humankind" in a historical period in which humanity is very much divided: into categories, class, census, interests and wars. The road to unity seems to be far away.

4. The world of volunteering (and the Society of St. Vincent de Paul in particular) has always been at the forefront in addressing the sensitive issues linked to the phenomenon of changes. Let us remember that from the beginning, Frederic Ozanam was one of the most brilliant forerunner of the Church's Social Doctrine.

Member Alessandro Ginota read an statement of our President General, Renato Lima de Oliveira

5. The way that the Vincentian chooses for the unity of humankind is the charity. Moreover, this should guide us in the service that we have chosen to get to the next stage: charity is closeness, support and justice as well; and there lies inexorably the recognition of the person's DIGNITY: of each of the seven and a half billion people who inhabit the planet, united by the same DIGNITY.

6. I invite you to read my Circular Letter of 2018 where we defined our vision of "being a global organization that promotes the INTEGRAL DIGNITY OF THE NEEDIEST".

7. Through the home visit, the members of the SSVP are called to have an encounter with Christ, present and hidden in the Poor. As Ozanam says: "We should fall at their feet and tell them like the Apostle: 'You are our masters and we will be your servants, you are for us the sacred images of the God that we do not see, and not knowing to love him in another way, we will love Him through your person '."

8. As proof of this, we can learn from the exemplary life of people who belonged to the Vincentian conferences (more than 50) that today are in various stages of canonization processes (just to mention some of your fellow countrymen: Frassati, Geana Beretta Molla, Contardo Ferrini, and Giorgio La Pira).

9. People from all parts of Italy, Vincentian missionaries in their own land, will certainly participate in this encounter of Assisi, and they will bring in their rucksack the experience of helping others; they will exchange experiences and knowledge, because as we also say in the Circular Letter of 2018 "the Vincentians need to be permanently trained".

10. However, all of you have something in common: your faith and commitment to serving the excluded of society, which is summed up in one sentence of Frederic Ozanam: "what can we do to be truly Catholic, but dedicate ourselves to what most pleases God? Let us then help the poor, as Jesus Christ would, and let us put our faith under the protective wings of charity". This is our vocation and our way of living the faith and, as reads the motto of the Italian SSVP ("Apply a layer of colour to life") to the needy 's and to yours. Thank you.

Remain steadfast in your prayers and in your vincentian work. Vincentian greetings.

Vincentian greetings.

Brother Renato Lima de Oliveira
16th President General

The Territorial Vice-president for the Middle East, Ella Bittar, with the new members of the SSVP Cyprus

SSVP in expansion: Cyprus is the 154th territory that is joined into our great charity network

The Council General International (CGI) of the SSVP has the immense joy to announce to the worldwide Vincentian community that two Conferences have just been founded in Cyprus. Now, with the entry of Cyprus, the Society of St. Vincent de Paul is located in 154 countries/territories.

The Conference "St. Joseph of the Apparition" was created in the city of Larnaka, and the Conference "Holy Mary" was founded in the town of Nicosia. The two new Conferences were established after the brilliant missionary work carried out by sister Ella Bittar (International Territorial Vice-president for Middle East) and her team, who made visits to Cyprus on October 19, 20 and 21 of this year.

The team participated in several meetings, distributed leaflets and prospects, visited churches and did presentations in parishes. The team spoke about the origins of the SSVP, the history of the founders, the mission and vision of the Vincentians, the Vincentian spirituality, the role of the Council General, the work of the Conferences and the service in hope, that we offer in love to the poorest, all based on the principles of the SSVP.

"I want to thank, first of all, God, for allowing us to achieve this goal, and especially the Catholic Church of Cyprus, which has been providing the necessary support so that we could found these two Conferences", said Ella. The mission in Cyprus was possible only thanks to the support, encourage-

ment and presence of the Church at our side. It is very possible that more new Conferences will be created in Cyprus shortly, taking into account the excellent openness of the clergy and Catholics in general. The motivation is infectious.

Also the 16th President General, our brother Renato Lima, spoke about this very gratifying news for the SSVP and for the extension of our service to the most marginalized. "The SSVP Plus Project, thank God, has been progressing steadily. We have managed to bring the seed of the SSVP to Albania, Liberia and now Cyprus. We still have other nations in sight. We thank many Superior Councils that have helped CGI in this task, with economic resources and support materials", said Renato Lima.

We thank, from the bottom of our hearts, the unconditional support of Monsignor Youssef Soueif, Maronite Bishop of Nicosia, who during the homilies on the day of the founding of the Conferences motivated the parishioners to join the SSVP. Monsignor Youssef appointed Father Akl Abi Nader to accompany the Nicosia Conference, and Sister Teresa to support the growth of the Larnaka Conference.

The Republic of Cyprus belongs to the European continent, but due to the work of our Vice-presidency of Middle East, and for cultural and historical reasons, the country will be initially linked to the supervision of our sister Ella Bittar, from Lebanon. Cyprus is a country with a million inhabitants, but with only 8% of Catholics who follow the Maronite rite.

USA

A mobile app for the Vincentians in the United States

The Superior Council of the SSVP in the United States has developed a mobile application to keep all Vincentians connected and informed.

This is an example of how new technologies can help us in our service to people who need it most. In addition, thanks to this application, we can also receive notices of upcoming Vincentian meetings or about issues related to training and spirituality. This is undoubtedly an important breakthrough to maintain the network of charity advocated by the Blessed Frederic Ozanam more lively and fruitful.

France

Third Edition of "Innovate! for the solidarity"

A contest promoted by the SSVP in France, and aimed at the students of higher education.

INNOVATE! pour la solidarité
SOCIÉTÉ DE SAINT-VINCENT-DE-PAUL

The purpose of this contest is to encourage the would-be entrepreneurs and to support innovative projects that contribute to counter poverty in all its forms: related to loneliness, housing, access to education, the problems of exclusion, employment, inequality of opportunities, etc.

The website of this initiative is, www.concoursinnovate.com

Portugal

The Portuguese Parliament grants the Human Rights Award 2018 to a Vincentian work located in Oporto

The Assembly of the Republic of Portugal, through the Committee on Constitutional Affairs, Rights, Freedoms and Guarantees, awarded to the Vincentian Assistance to Prisoners (OVAR), which is a special work linked to the Central Council of Oporto, the "Human Rights Award 2018".

The OVAR was recognized by the Portuguese Parliament for acting with the penal population and granting support to the prisoners and their families in the three prisons in the north of Portugal: Custoias, Saint Cross of the Bishop and Pazos de Ferreira.

By publicly recognizing the work of the OVAR, the prize is, in fact, recognition of the charitable actions carried out by the Society of St. Vincent de Paul on Portuguese soil, bearing in mind the exceptional work of humanization of the poorest, in particular, of the inmates.

"The great work developed by the OVAR, in the promotion and rehabilitation of prisoners and support for their families, gives an account of the importance of the Vincentian spirit, of voluntary work and of Christian solidarity together with those who suffer," remarked the 16th General President of the SSVP, our brother Renato Lima. "In many parts of the world, the SSVP provides excellent support for prisoners and former inmates, with the aim of providing conditions for a decent and productive life," said our president Renato Lima.

The prize will be awarded on December 10, 2018, in a ceremony presided over by the president of the Assembly of the Republic of Portugal, in Lisbon. The General Council congratulates the Vincentians of Portugal on this excellent news!

Visit of the IPG to the "OVAR" Project

Spirituality Day with the Lebanese Youth

Trip of the International Vice President for the Young, Children and Adolescents to Lebanon

The International Vice President could know first-hand the great service provided by the young Lebanese Vincentians, since he shared with them their daily work within the Conference.

On his first day in Lebanon, he lived with the young people of the Conference of Notre Dame, in the town of Jounieh, where 40 members of this Conference help more than 100 families in the city. The work that they carry out consists, on the one hand, in sharing food and food vouchers and, on the other hand, in running workshops of computing, languages (English and French), visual arts and sewing. They perform all these activities thanks to the donations that they obtain by organising solidarity events and making themselves known through informative leaflets that they hand out throughout the city. The young people of this town serve alongside the adults, since they share the same Conference.

This Conference has an annual magazine as an Activity Report, in which they publish the work carried out throughout the year and is sent to the benefactors in order to inform them about the activities and projects, a practical way of promoting transparency in the management of the resources obtained.

On the second day, Willian Alves visited the Conference Saint

Group of Lebanese Vincentians in a meeting with the International Vice-president, William Alves

Pierre in Cornet Chahwan, which is also a mixed Conference of adults and young people. In the headquarters of the Conference, there is a space for sewing where the members of needy families can work. Everything they make is sold and part of the money is for the families as a wage, while the other part serves to maintain the activity. There is also a general medical practice and another one of dentistry that the assisted families can use free of charge.

The young members of this Conference, most of them studying medicine and dentistry, participate in these activities to assist the families.

Beside the headquarters of the Conference of Saint Pierre there is a firm of professional catering that they manage themselves. There, they prepare meals for schools, events and for families in need. This Conference helps an average of 110 families (most of them refugees from Syria and Iraq).

The International Vice President for the Young, Children and Adolescents also visited the Conference located in Zouk. The main work of this Conference relates to education, since it runs a nursery in which 60 children study. There is also another space for children and adolescents who go, after school, to study languages and receive school support. Thus, between 70 and 80 teenagers study there. Once a month, the members of this Conference organize an event of entertainment and leisure for families in the community and help more than 100 families in their area.

The Vincentian children that due to their young age do not visit directly the families in their homes are responsible for promotional and awareness-raising events to help the neediest and to make the SSVP known.

A very special moment of the trip was the holy mass that took place in the parish of Saint Vincent de Paul, which was partially destroyed during the war and that young people have rehabilitated and cleaned so that the religious service could continue.

The trip ended with a day of spirituality with young Lebanese Vincentians, which had as trainers the priests of the Congregation of the Mission. On this day, they spoke of Jesus Christ, “who is always clothed in mercy and love, capable of changing people”. The young thought about the need to be “clothed in this love and in Jesus’ acting way, especially when we are with the poor”.

22nd to 27th January - Panama 2019

World Youth Day

Facebook, @jornadamundialdelajuventud,
www.panama2019.pa.

Meeting of the fellow members of Porto's Central Council

The President General visits the Central Council of Oporto, accompanied by the National President of Portugal

On last October 12th and 13th, the fellow member Renato Lima de Oliveira, 16th President General of the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul, paid an official visit to Porto's Central Council. The IPG was accompanied, at all times, by the National President of Portugal, the fellow member Alda Couceiro. The host was the brother Manuel Carvas Guedes, President of the local Central Council.

The Council of Porto prepared an intense agenda for the President General and the National President. On the first day (12th October), there was the visit to "Ozanam House", where the President General was impressed by the quantity and quality of the services provided to users. Afterwards, they paid an institutional visit to Mgr. Manuel Linda, Bishop of Porto, with whom they had a very pleasant and relaxed conversation, reaffirming the Diocese's full support to the Vincentians.

Then, Renato and Alda went to the head office of the Central Council, in Santa Catarina street, where the presidents of Special Works made a brief account of the activities underway. This was followed by the visit to the "Social Shop", located in the very headquarters, and to the "Saint Vincent de Paul Store", located a few meters away. After that, they took the underground to get to Vila Nova Gaia, where the President General took part in the meeting of Saint Ovidio Conference and attended a fraternity dinner offered by the Zone Council.

Next day (13th October), they visited two Zone Councils in the town of Maia, an event that was attended by political leaders of the region. Afterwards, they went to "San Antonio Home", where the delegation that accompanied the President General was offered a delicious lunch. Later, at the Diocesan House of Vilar, a general meeting of the Central Council was held, attended by 800 Vincentians. On that occasion, the President General gave a lecture entitled "forward-looking approach of the General Council.

In the Holy Mass, celebrated by Mgr. Manuel Linda, Bishop of Porto, the Choir "Our Lady of Maia" livened up the celebration, and treated all to the international anthem of the SSVP, entitled "the Light", which was sung by the whole assembly. A strong emotion was also felt during the performance of the theatre group of "Touguinha's Social Centre", from Vila do Conde. During the Assembly, the book "Ozanam: a model, a reference" was launched, whose author is the fellow member José Garcia, a work of 45 pages that gathers the main letters written by Ozanam and contains recommendations for the Vincentians.

In the evening, a farewell dinner was served in Valongo. This event was attended by the representatives of the Zone Councils and of the Central Council's board.

In all the places visited, the President General unveiled commemorative plaques, received souvenirs, talked with the Vincentians, gave brief speeches and recorded the activities through dozens of photographs. "The Portuguese Vincentians are very kind and they know how to receive us warmly. Here in Porto, I feel at home, like every time I come to Portugal", stated the President General. "I want to thank the president Carvas Guedes who did not spare efforts to organize our work schedule so wonderfully. I enjoyed all the places visited and will always take, deep in my heart, the memory of all the exciting moments that we have lived together." The President Renato finished congratulating the whole SSVO in Porto".

The Central Council of Porto was founded in 1893. It currently has 25 Zone Councils, 304 Conferences, 6 Vincentian Works, 3,500 active members and 23,000 people assisted. This city has been chosen by the General Council to host, in June 2019, the plenary assemblies. On that occasion, the General Council will celebrate its 180 years of existence.

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25
Zone Councils

304
Conferences

6
Vincentian Works

3,500
Active members

23,000
People assisted

STRATEGIC GOALS 2016-2022

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 world-class technology
9. IGC structure
   Constant search for accountability and efficiency
10. National Councils
    Support to maximize effectiveness

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CONFEDÉRATION INTERNATIONALE DE LA SOCIÉTÉ DE SAINT VINCENT DE PAUL
6, rue de Londres 75009 PARIS (France) TEL: +33-153 45 87 53 / cgi.communication@ssvpglobal.org