

# OZANAM NETWORK



Issue N° 3-2017

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International General Council - Society of Saint Vincent de Paul

# EDITORIAL

## The importance of the International Structure for the proper functioning of the General Council



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It is important to recognize that the Structure is the heart of the International General Council. Through this Structure, all departments, supporting groups, and committees offer services, resources, and projects to the Society of St. Vincent de Paul throughout the world. The Structure is the Council on the move.

The Structure currently comprises 12 International Territorial Vice Presidents, with the support of 23 Zone Coordinators. This service team, made up of Vincentians from all five continents, supports the work of the President General and the International Board, as defined in the Rule.

The organization chart of the CGI in this administration shows the Structure has a very relevant role. The Vincentians have received an express order of the President General to travel to all countries in their areas of action, spreading a message of unity, cooperation and charity, from the headquarters in Paris, encouraging the confreres and the members to continue in their mission and vocation. The Structure also helps to solve any problems that may appear at the national level.

For obvious reasons, the President General can't be personally in all places or visit all 152 Superior Councils of the SSVP; but the members of the Structure can! The Structure is the gear that allows the International General Council to work well, think of the future, and provide more services.

In the face of all these arguments, strengthening and enhancing the International Structure of the International General Council is a strategic decision for the SSVP to grow and develop all over the world. For this reason, the General Council has just signed a collective travel insurance agreement for all those who serve the Structure.

The proper operation of this Structure depends exclusively on the generous donation that the Superior Councils regularly make to the International General Council. With these resources, the Structure acts and is able to "give these resources back" to the countries through visits, events, training, consulting, guidance, and much more. It is a two-way street, which increases the support and promotes advances.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank the 12 Territorial Vice Presidents and the 23 Zone Coordinators for the excellent work they have performed, especially at this moment when the SSVP Plus Project has been launched, an initiative aiming to take the SSVP to all 210 countries around the world.

The Vincentians who are volunteers in the International Structure act as guides, since they are direct representatives of the President General. We ask everyone to pray and support the members of the SSVP International Structure. Let's ask God, through Blessed Ozanam, for the Structure to keep producing good results, and for the SSVP Plus Project to be very successful, expanding the charitable network much dreamed of and preached by our founder.

Renato Lima de Oliveira,  
16th General President

# Current General Council administration completes one year of work

Headed by Renato Lima de Oliveira, the 16th General President, the Council General International (CGI) of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul celebrated, on September 9 2017, one year of the new administration.

Since Renato Lima and his team assumed the SSVP, they have worked hard to represent the SSVP and efficiently fulfil the strategic planning during these six years of service.

Some initiatives of this administration include:

- a) creation of the Ombudsman's Office;
- b) creation of a new Territorial Vice-Presidency for Oceania;
- c) launch of the "SSVP Plus" Project (to promote the presence of the SSVP in the 60 countries where it is still not present);
- d) search for cooperation agreements and international agreements with charity or philanthropic entities;
- e) updated definition of mission, vision and values;
- f) expansion of the role of the Commission for International Aid and Development (CIAD);
- g) creation of the International Solidarity Fund (FIS);
- h) the reassignment process of the Conferences.

In the area of communication, the publication of the Circular Letters was resumed, as well as the "Ozanam Network" newsletter (available on the internet), and live broadcasts of the main CGI meetings started via the Ozanam TV. Some working committees have also been created (for example, Superior Councils in India, canonical status and historical investigation), each with specific tasks to perform.

In the area of training, the "Thematic Years" Project (2017: Bailly International



Year), the "Charity in Hope" medal, the weekly spiritual readings (available on the website), the "Praying in Unity 10-20-30" Project, and new modules of the Universal Training have been created. For the youth, the 4th of July was selected as "the SSVP International Youth Day". Also, the work started to have in June 2018 the 2nd SSVP International Youth Meeting in Salamanca. Ozanam's canonization process has gained more insights with new possible miracles.

In the field of international visits, the General President took several institutional trips, always with the support of the host Superior Councils from Portugal, Spain, Brazil, United States, Italy, Sri Lanka, India, Canada, Panama, Australia, New Zealand, Malaysia, and Chile. Until the end of the year, he will also visit Ecuador, Belgium, and the Netherlands. In 2018, God willing, six African countries will receive the missionary visit of the General President.

"All these moves were only possible thanks to four factors: the excellence of the board members, the high level

of professionalism of the headquarter staff in Paris, the synergy with the Superior Councils, and the support from our private families. This scenario has ensured a favourable and positive environment for the Council General International to provide services and make improvements," said the General President. For all this achievements, we thank God for the projects, programs and initiatives of the current administration, whose motto was chosen by Renato: *"Anyone who wants to be first must be the very last, and the servant of all"* (Mark 9, 35b).

To all Vincentians in the world, please visit the CGI website ([www.ssvpglobal.org](http://www.ssvpglobal.org)), which is also in the modernization process, to learn more about the actions and projects that have been conducted by the Council General International.

The Council General International was founded in July 1839, headed by brother Emmanuel Joseph Bailly de Surcy, the 1st General President. The first official CGI meeting took place in February 1840.

# Appeal for Generosity: “Fund for International Solidarity”

In order to respond to the many requests the CIAD (Commission for International Aid and Development) receives, Renato Lima de Oliveira - General President and Bertrand Ousset - President of the CIAD, appeal in a letter to the generosity of the vincentians all over the world to feed the Fund for the International Solidarity (FIS).

“Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Our planet is suffering more and more frequently from climate upheavals and increasing levels of regional conflicts; the consequent humanitarian disasters are manifold, with some making headlines in the media, while many others unfold, forgotten and unknown to the general public around the world.

Up to now, the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul has launched appeals on an ad hoc basis for donations to relieve suffering, to rebuild and restart sustainable development in the countries and regions affected, and it will continue to do so for disasters that affect whole nations.

But the Society is asked to deal with many regional, sometimes endemic, humanitarian crises, most often ignored by the media, which leave scores or even hundreds of people in situations of long-term distress; here are some examples among the many for which no specific appeal for donations has been initiated by the CGI.

In March 2017, Madagascar was struck by Cyclone Enawo, which killed at least 78 people, with 300,000 affected and around 30% of crops destroyed. This followed the drought which at the end of 2016 left 850,000 people in a position of serious food insecurity, then a flood struck the island at Tulear, in which 1200 people were drowned on 18 January 2017.



In Peru, the torrential El Niño rains caused flooding, avalanches and mudslides, leading to 75 deaths and over 625,000 people affected, of whom 70,000 lost their homes. The SSVP children's home, Villa Infantil Federico Ozanam, was flooded and had to be evacuated.

An earthquake with a magnitude of 6.4 hit the north of the island of Sumatra in Indonesia, on 7 December 2016. 97 people perished in the disaster, which destroyed dozens of homes. Another earthquake had hit the island previously in June 2016.

In the Democratic Republic of Congo, a country hit hard by an unprecedented

humanitarian disaster, torrential rains caused the River Calamu to break its banks in December at Boma: at least 50 people died, with 13 missing, 24,260 people affected, including 4077 men, 4275 women and 15,808 children, and much of the local infrastructure damaged. Further rainstorms led to floods in Kinshasa in February.

An earthquake was reported in Ecuador in April 2016: it affected the coastal region, causing destruction as far as the country's economic capital of Guayaquil. There were numerous victims: 668 dead, 8 missing, 6274 injured and over 29,067 homeless.



Also in April 2016, the north and centre of Malawi experienced flooding caused by torrential rains, forcing the President to declare a state of emergency.

The consequences of these rains were severe. They cost the lives of at least a dozen people and displaced hundreds of others. Houses collapsed and latrines were carried away leading to health concerns.

Under the heading of humanitarian disasters, it goes without saying that the situation in the Middle East is included, with tens of thousands of people threatened, persecuted, hunted from their homes into Iraq or Syria, displaced within their own country or fleeing from it, especially into Lebanon, or trying to stay on with the support of the local SSVP.

The Central African Republic is put to fire and the sword. The country is plunged into internal conflict which is driving it to the brink. It has succumbed to violence and insecurity: assassinations, torture, rape, lynching, forced displacement, looting, fire and destruction of Christian villages. The militia have already killed thousands of Christian civilians, pillaged and torched thousands of houses, and started a cycle of violence still going on throughout the country. Within this chaos, the civilian population is

in the front line: 2.2 million people need immediate humanitarian assistance, 1.4 million people have been displaced since 2013, 2 million are short of food.

Six years after independence, South Sudan is on the edge of the most severe humanitarian crisis in Africa because of the civil war which has been raging since 2013 with the most extreme violence: massacres, rapes, enrolment of children as soldiers have led to the displacement of 2.3 million people within the country and the flight of 500,000 to neighbouring countries. In January, a fire broke out in one of the many camps where the SSVP is working. On 20 February 2017, the government of South Sudan declared a state of famine in several areas of the country.

Since the 1950s, Uganda has welcomed refugees fleeing from neighbouring conflicts. Rwandans, Somalis, Burundians, Congolese or South-Sudanese, there are some 540,000 living in the cities or in rural areas, and the influx continues. SSVP Uganda serves the refugees in many camps, and also has to deal with frequent natural disasters.

Venezuela has been plunged into a serious economic crisis, with shortages of 68% of basic products, and uncontrollable inflation. Almost a third of Venezuelans, 9.6 million

people, eat only one or at the most two meals a day. Poverty affected 81.8% of homes in 2016, some 9 points higher than in 2015, according to a survey of living conditions carried out by a group of universities.

This long list is unfortunately not complete today, and the rollcall of disasters can only get longer over time.

So on behalf of these unknown missions, forgotten or even hidden, which do not mobilise donors, even though they affect millions of people, we are proposing to organise an appeal for donations to a Fund for International Solidarity (FIS), which will allow CIAD, the Commission for International Aid and Development of the SSVP-CGI, to respond to the many requests it receives. The FIS was created by CGI precisely to receive donations along the year without a specific purpose to allow CIAD attend any request it receives. This collection may be repeated every year.

On the CGI website you will find an explanatory leaflet with the report on the actions and projects funded by the Commission in 2016.

> [en.svpglobal.org/News](http://en.svpglobal.org/News)

This campaign for donations could be called....

## OPERATION 'FORGOTTEN DISASTERS'

Serving in hope

**Renato LIMA DE OLIVEIRA**  
16th President General

**Bertand OUSSET**  
CIAD Chairman



## President General visits new countries: Canada and Panama



Between June 21 and 23, brother Renato Lima de Oliveira, 16th President General, was in Quebec attending the Annual General Assembly of the National Council of Canada.

On that occasion, the President gave the talk "Vision of the future of the General Council" and answered many questions from those present.

We thank to brother Jean-Noel Cormier (National president) and the members of the National Council for the warm welcome to the President General. On this visit, president Renato was accompanied by the International Territorial Vice-president for America 1, brother Edmund Keane.

On June 24 and 25, the President General was visiting Panama City, where he presented the lecture "Nine months: beginning a new mandate" for the presidents of the 12 Panamanian Conferences. At this opportunity, there was also

a working meeting with the local Vincentian Family that is organizing the International Meeting of Vincentian Youth, which takes place in January 2019 before World Youth Days (WYD-2019) with Pope Francis.

The Council General International thanks to sister Mixila Martínez, national president in Panama, for the kindly reception given to President Renato. On this trip, the President General was advised by sister María del Carmen Guzmán Soto, International Territorial Vice-president for America 2, and by sister María Damaris Lopez Calderón, Zone Coordinator.

## 2nd SSVP Lusophone Countries Summit

On 03 and 04 September 2017, the International General Council, through the International Territorial Vice-presidencies América 3 (South America) and Africa 2, held the 2nd SSVP Lusophone Countries Summit.



The meeting gathered at the Brazilian National Council headquarters the National Presidents of the Portuguese-speaking countries. The event was attended by the National Presidents

or representatives of the SSVP from Angola, Guiné Bissau, Mozambique, Portugal and São Tome and Príncipe, as well as Brazil. The meeting was made possible thanks to the support of the National Councils of Brazil and Portugal, who assumed the costs of airline tickets and accommodation of the participants.

On Sunday morning, 03 of september, the participants attended the inauguration ceremony of the new National President of the Brazilian SSVP. On the afternoon of the same day and on Monday morning, 04 of september, the activities of the event were held, beginning with a speech by the International General President, Renato Lima, who presented the "CGI Vision of the Future". Presentations were also made about the reality of the SSVP in each country and discussed ways to

increase the cooperation between the countries in order to better serve the poor. In this sense, the National Councils of Brazil and Portugal handed over to the participating countries several materials for Vincentian formation.

At the end of the event, the work commitments assumed by the countries present were consolidated in the Letter of Rio de Janeiro. It was also decided that the third edition of the event will be held in 2020 in an African country.

According to brother Júlio César Marques de Lima, International Territorial Vice-President for América 3 (South America) and coordinator of the event, the meeting strengthened the ties between the Portuguese-speaking National Councils and should result in greater cooperation among countries aiming at the growth of SSVP work in each of them.

# CGI in ACTION

## Communication

### New website in the works.

The Council General International (CGI) is glad to share that the Communications Commission has been working hard on a project to redesign the website of the CGI. The objective is to provide the Council General with an effective tool that meets the standards of the web as well as the future needs of the CGI. It is designed to meet the strategic communication needs of the Society, both the general public and the Vincentian users.

The new website will therefore offer contents dedicated to these two target audiences whose expectations may significantly be different. The interface will be more ergonomic, so that visitors can more intuitively access the content sought. The communication team relied on the expertise of two French web agencies: one to study and build the architecture of the future website and the other for the graphic design and programming part. The new website is expected to be launched in early 2018. The current site was launched in 2013, on the occasion of the celebrations of the Bicentenary of Frederic Ozanam.

## Aggregations

The General Council completes its aggregation database for some countries. Since July 2017, the CGI has welcomed Armelle de Boissieu, who was recruited for a period of three months with a mission to complete the database of aggregations for the major countries.

The digitization of aggregation data begins for the year 1996 when the General Council has been equipped, for the first time, with a computer program allowing the registration in a database of aggregated conferences worldwide. A considerable amount of work was carried out by the team of employees then who typed all aggregation data for almost 120 countries in record time!

However, for the countries with more than 1000 Aggregated Conferences such as India, Brazil, the United States, Australia, Canada, Portugal, England and Wales, it was just too much work to be done at this time. On the other hand, any new Conference has been systematically recorded in the program. As a result, for these territories, there is a gap between computer data that only began in 1996 and the reality of the present situation, because the Society in these countries were founded in the 19th century yet. In practice, this also made the work of the CGI employees responsible for aggregations extremely time-consuming since they had to systematically refer to manual sheets in the case of requests for aggregation for Conferences founded before 1996. Meanwhile, the registers have begun to deteriorate as a result of time.

At present, the entire data for about 150 years has been processed, thanks to the effective work of Armelle. Hopefully by the end of the year, the data will be available after being inputted into the new computer program. Indeed, this is a most welcome development specially for the countries concerned.



### LITERARY CONTEST The First Conference" WINNERS



As publicized on 09 September 2017, after the thanksgiving Mass for the Feast Day of Blessed Frederick Ozanam directly at his tomb, the International Council General of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, headed by its 16th President General, Bro. Renato Lima de Oliveira, announced the winners of the Literary Contest "the First Conference" which centered on the life of Emmanuel Bailly, the first President General of the SSVP

### The winners are the following:

- 1st Place: **Luciana Moreira** - Brazil
- 2nd Place: **Fernando Lusanthi** - Sri Lanka
- 3rd Place: **Roselyn Mpatogera** - Uganda

### Honorable Mention:

- Thierry Vialatte de Pemille** - France  
**Elsa Alemão** - Brazil  
**Ralph Middlecamp** - United States  
**Austin Fagan** - England

The International Council General received 40 works from many countries around the world.

Congratulations to all the participants and kudos to those who contributed for the success of this Contest.

The year 2018 will be dedicated to **François Lallier**.

# News from countries



## Hurricanes Harvey and Irma: the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul faces the storms

These recent days have been rough for members of the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul in the United States. The 2 tropical storms, Harvey and Irma, passed across Texas then Florida, with devastating force, passing over the Caribbean and causing unprecedented damage, to the point that Hurricane Harvey is now considered to be the most costly meteorological disaster in the history of the United States, totalling some 290 billion dollars.

Behind the figures, it is human lives which have been most deeply affected. The Society of Saint Vincent de Paul in Texas had to deal very quickly with calls for help coming from the affected zones, particularly in Houston where the local SSVP is has been on a war-footing since the passage of Harvey on 28 August.

In addition to calling for donations,

whether for supplies, non-perishable foods or money, the Council of Houston has placed a "wish list" on the Amazon.com site to encourage donors to supply items which will be really useful to victims, such as kitchen utensils, basic hygiene products, clothing.

On its website, it has posted messages informing the people affected about emergency measures and procedures to follow in the hours following the disaster.

The SSVP is also offering administrative support to direct people to state organisations to state agencies giving aid to the victims of natural disasters. A practical advice guide is available on line, with step-by-step guidance to the procedures to follow to recover a normal life.

A sense of solidarity has spread throughout the American continent:

Local Councils of the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul have launched collections and there are many volunteers who have spontaneously taken initiatives to come to the aid of the victims. So in Ohio, 2 volunteers from the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul decided to send a container of emergency supplies to Texas. The local SSVP, together with another organisation (Humans with Purpose) supported this initiative by placing their dining hall at their disposal in order to centralise donations. Thanks to social networking, a truck was quickly found and the convoy set out a few days later. A little further away, in Canada, a Vincentian member took the initiative to take a container of babies' nappies to Texas. "We have too many nappies", she explains. A local company lent the truck, and a collection raised the funds to pay fuel costs.

# News from countries

Along the path of the hurricanes, the Caribbean has been severely affected and there have been several tragic losses. The SSVP Councils in some islands such as Trinidad and Tobago, Antigua and Barbuda are on the ground to assess the scale of need. According to our fellow member, Edmund Keane (International Vice-President America 1), *"it is difficult at the moment to get a clear view of the situation. In Trinidad and Tobago, the SSVP has already launched a collection. The island of Barbuda has been entirely evacuated and its residents moved to Antigua; we are waiting for more information from our zone coordinator on site"*. He also adds, *"We are very concerned about the Caribbean islands which again have to face further storms*

*in the coming days, according to the weather forecast".*

In Florida, where Hurricane Irma has led to the evacuation of tens of thousands of people living in coastal areas, the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul was mobilised in the very first hours. Coordinating its work with that of other organisations such as the Red Cross or Salvation Army, it helped to evacuate the victims and opened its emergency accommodation facilities to welcome the refugees.

At federal level, the American SSVP has been prepared for years to deal with disasters. It is one of the founder Members of NVOAD - National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster launched

in 1969. The National Council has also created a "natural disasters" division which is now very experienced in help for victims, particularly through the "House in a box" programme. This helps to provide affected families with material assistance in the form of a "pack" containing emergency products: bedding, blankets, kitchen utensils, clothing, food, medicines, etc. In addition to material support, the programme also includes long-term support for victims, since a life can be turned upside down in a few seconds, but the road to reconstruction is much longer.

*See also: the call for donations on the SSVP - United States website - [www.svdpusa.org](http://www.svdpusa.org)*

## Building Homes, Rebuilding Lives: 4 years after Typhoon Haiyan

In 2013, the Council General International launched an appeal to the worldwide network of the SSVP to raise a pledge of a million Euros for the Philippines to help the millions of victims of the typhoon "Haiyan", known as Super Typhoon Yolanda in the Philippines, one of the most intense tropical cyclones on record.



The "Building Homes Rebuilding Lives" program has been a long process of integral and developmental rehabilitation of the many victims.

After the Relief Stage or immediate

assistance, Rehabilitation Stage commenced which is composed of Housing, Educational Assistance, Health and Wellness, Livelihood, Community Organizing and Faith Building Programs.

In the first three years of the Housing Projects, difficulties were encountered in searching for safe land areas as the SSVP Philippines do not prefer building homes again in the danger zones. The SSVP Philippines also opted to collaborate with other groups and look for land donors so that the funds can reach more victims. The good news is there are many land donations at this time - the result of years of hard work paying up - so the projects are expected to speed up. It is also worth mentioning that some of the houses originally meant to be transient shelters or temporary in nature are now transformed into permanent homes giving the beneficiaries security and better homes.

As for the Education Program, because there has been a change in the Educational

System of the Philippines, adding two more years to the secondary education or high school, there was an extension of this program.

The "Building Homes Rebuilding Lives" program is a long integral process because it is assumed that moving up to a new life is not an easy task. Indeed, it does not stop after constructing houses, the program continues to help the victims shape their homes by injecting values formation in their lives so they can rebuild their lives for social transformation. The beneficiaries are very much thankful to all those who contributed to make these programs possible. Truly, their lives have been changed from that catastrophic "exodus" experience, into the "new land", new homes, new Vincentian communities, God has given to them through SSVP. Looking forward, the National Council of the Philippines remains committed to continue this big mission of transforming lives.

# Youth Space



On the 4th of July, 2017, all young Vincentians of the SSVP celebrated their International Day. This day was proposed by the International Vice President for Youth, Children and Teenagers of the International General Council of the SSVP, confrere Willian Alves.

On this day, the Church recalls the liturgical memory of Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati, a young Vincentian who, in his brief life, dedicated himself to the poor, and this year Frassati has become the patron saint of the SSVP Youth and their activities.

The International Day was celebrated on all 5 continents, with activities such as: Festival integration; Training Day; Prayer of the Rosary; Moments of Spirituality; Bike ride; Tours with young people; Youth Workshop; Walks; Conferences with the Youth; Recruitment Day; Contest on social media

The Vice President for Youth, brother Willian, recorded a special video and sent a message of encouragement and motivation to all young people, which was viewed by more than 6,000 people. Renato Lima, the General President, also posted a video on social media with his message to all young people, remembering that he also joined the SSVP when he was young, when he was 15 years old.

In order to encourage and advertise



Venezuela



India



Hong Kong



Brasil

# Youth Space



Lebanon



Colombia

this special day, the CGI's international youth coordination produced a logo for this festive day, which was used as the profile picture of more than 500 social media users.

During the month of July, the various youth commissions conducted activities related to the International Day.

When asked about the importance of this day for the SSVP youth, Willian highlighted that *"the presence of young people in the SSVP has to be encouraged and celebrated every day, because the SSVP was founded by young people, and it is ideal for young people who want to practice charity, social justice and changes, and having a specific day to remember the presence of the youth in our entity is very important. I was very happy with the result of this first year, it was something new and even so many National Councils participated and organized activities with their young people; thank you all, and let's celebrate every year this date that is so special for all of us, Vincentians, and particularly for the young people."*

## 7th Asian Youth Day in Yogyakarta, Indonesia

The Asian Youth Day (AYD) is a Catholic youth gathering in the Asian region that is held every three years and attended by more than two thousand Catholic youth from various countries in Asia. The spirit of evangelization is built through many activities in this event. AYD was initiated by the advisor of Catholic Youth of Asia and approved by the Federation of Asian Bishops' Conferences (FABC) under the Youth Desk of Laity and Family Office. Catholic Organizations of Youth in Asia (COYA), where SSVP is a council member, is the youth organization arm of FABC.

This year's AYD with the theme "Joyful Asian Youth: Living the Gospel in Multicultural Asia!" was hosted by the Catholic Church of Indonesia. The week before the AYD, from July 30 2017 to August 2, 2017, was called Days in the Diocese (DID) and the participants were distributed in the different dioceses in Indonesia. "Through this event, I learned that family is an important figure in developing our faith. We also learned to be open to each other, have humility and simplicity," said Joshua Dominguez, SSVP Youth from the Philippines.

The AYD, from August 2-6, 2017, took place in the Archdiocese of Semarang where all the participants come together from their DIDs and join the ceremonies and various activities such as

group sharing, reflection, youth festival, Eucharist, among others.

The Closing Mass was held in the Indonesian Air Force Academy in Yogyakarta as culmination of the 7th Asian Youth Day. It was announced that the next host of the 8th Asian Youth Day in 2020 will be held in India. The AYD cross was passed on from Indonesia to India.

Let us pray that the Asian youth continue to radiate the joy of the Good News as they live in communion amidst multicultural diversity. The Holy Spirit brought them together, despite multicultural differences, in faith and in one mission. Though they came from different countries and races and speak diverse languages, one is certain: they speak the same language, the language of Christ, that is Love.

May the Holy Spirit guide them in faith, united even in the diversity. As they go back to their local contexts, may they share this joyful experience of encountering God through their fellow Asian youth, joyfully bearing the Gospel in a lived reality. May they joyfully, gloriously and proudly carry the cross of Jesus on their shoulders, in their hearts and in their lives as they march forward and prepare to meet for the next Asian Youth Day in 2020 in India.

## the "Famvin Homeless Alliance", a new initiative of the Vincentian Family Worldwide

Famvin launches a new action for the benefit of the homeless, as officially announced at the end of June at the European Parliament



June 28, 2017 marked the official announcement of the Famvin Homeless Alliance, an initiative of the Worldwide Vincentian Family to reduce, and wherever possible, eliminate homelessness in its multiple forms. This ceremony took place at the European Parliament, by invitation of its president, Antonio Tajani, who wished to honor the work of the followers of St. Vincent de Paul with the people living in poverty, especially with the homeless.

In the context of the 400th anniversary of the charism, the Vincentian Family chose to focus particularly on the famous passage of Matthew 25: "I was a stranger and you welcomed me." In harmony with the global definition of homeless developed by the Institute of Global Homelessness (IGH), the attitude and actions of welcoming the homeless include action with and in favor of people living in the streets, refugees and internally displaced people, slumdwellers...

The urgency of this issue is evident: The most recent UN reports on this topic suggest that, of the 7 billion people on this planet, more than 1.2

billion fall within this IGH three-tiered definition of global homelessness. It is one of the great social ills of our time.

Mark McGreevy, Depaul International CEO and coordinator of this project on behalf of the Vincentian Family, explained the choice of the European forum for the official announcement of the initiative: *"Europe has been home to the Vincentian Family for 400 years and so it is fitting that the EU Parliament is the place where we celebrate the official announcement of this new project. In partnership, we can do great things together."*

Other speakers at the event included: M. Antonio Tajani himself, Rev. Tomaz Mavric (Superior General and President of the Vincentian Family), Fr. Pedro Opeka (Vincentian priest nominated for the Peace Nobel Prize), and Sr. Carol Keehan (Daughter of Charity, president and chief executive officer of the Catholic Health Association of the United States).

The launching of this global initiative will take place in a very international forum, in October, during the

Symposium of the Vincentian Family in Rome, Italy, in the presence of hundreds of Vincentian Family members from throughout the world.

FAMVIN invites all the Vincentians throughout the world to join the initiative.

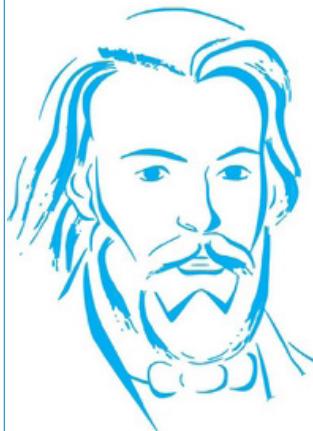
You would share what you are already doing to help the homeless so that we let others learn from your experience:

- Contact [homeless@famvin.org](mailto:homeless@famvin.org) to share the story of your work, to ask any questions you may have.
- Visit the website: [vfhomelessalliance.org](http://vfhomelessalliance.org) to learn more about the project.
- Follow and like the dedicated Facebookpage: [facebook.com/vfhomelessalliance/?ref=bookmarks](https://facebook.com/vfhomelessalliance/?ref=bookmarks)
- Share this information with your Vincentian fellows.



# 20th anniversary of Antoine-Frederic Ozanam's beatification

## OZANAM



1997-2017

**On this date of 22 August, 2017, the Church celebrated the 20th anniversary of the beatification ceremony of brother Antoine-Frederic Ozanam, in Paris, during the 12th World Youth Day (WYD/1997), in a ceremony presided over by Pope John Paul II. Thousands of Vincentians attended the event, and thousands watched it on media vehicles**

At that time, the Pope said: "Frederic Ozanam believed in love, in the love that God has for all men. He himself was called to love, giving an example of a great love of God and of others. He visited everyone who most needed love, to whom God's Love could not be effectively revealed except through the love of another person. Frederic Ozanam discovered his vocation in this action, he saw the way in which Christ called him. He found in it his path to holiness. And he went through it with determination."

It is clear that Ozanam is an example of a man of faith for all mankind. Intellectual and fervent Catholic, he dedicated his whole life and faith to the service of truth and the most disadvantaged. Deeply committed to justice and human dignity, he was the precursor of the encyclical "Rerum Novarum" (which contains the Social Doctrine of the Church). "In his family, he was an exceptional son, brother, husband, and father," as his Prayer for Canonization

highlights. With his friends, he gave the world a gift with the creation of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul in 1833.

According to the 16th President General of the SSVP, confrere Renato Lima de Oliveira, the current term of the International General Council is making every effort to accelerate the procedures for the canonization of Ozanam. The international team, led by Priest Giuseppe Guerra, CM, is very motivated due to the new potential miracles that, once analysed, can be attributed to Ozanam. The first, recognized by the Church, happened in 1926, with the extraordinary cure of Luiz Fernando Ottoni, a Brazilian boy who had malignant diphtheria.

"I feel in my heart that the canonization is near. The four cases under study (in Brazil, Portugal, and Venezuela) are very strong, and we actually feel the intercession of Ozanam in all these possible cures. We are intensely praying and working hard so that the Vatican can soon declare the holiness of the blessed Antoine-Frédéric Ozanam, which will be a great honour for all of us, Vincentians of the SSVP, and also for the whole Vincentian Family," said the President General.

On September 9, in Paris, the International General Council celebrated the 20th anniversary of Ozanam's beatification in a Mass held with the Vincentians of the Council of Paris, at the Church of St. Joseph des Carmes, where Ozanam is buried.

### Prayer for the canonisation of Blessed Frederic Ozanam

*In the hope of obtaining a miracle through his intercession*

Lord,

You made Blessed Frédéric Ozanam a witness of the Gospel, full of wonder at the mystery of the Church.

You inspired him to alleviate poverty and injustice and endowed him with untiring generosity in the service of all who were suffering.

In family life, he revealed a most genuine love as a son, brother, husband and father.

In secular life, his ardent passion for the truth enlightened his thought, writing and teaching.

His vision for our society was a network of charity encircling the world and he instilled St Vincent de Paul's spirit of love, boldness and humility.

His prophetic social vision appears in every aspect of his short life, together with the radiance of his virtues.

We thank you Lord, for those many gifts and we ask, if it is your will, the grace of a miracle through the intercession of Blessed Frédéric Ozanam.

May the Church proclaim his holiness, as a saint, a providential light for today's world!

We make this prayer through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Amen.



## A Pilgrimage to Remember

### SSVP Lebanon Visit To France

Around fifty pilgrims from Lebanon, twenty-three of whom were SSVP Youth, traveled to France from July 22 to August 1, 2017 to visit the many places of great significance in the life of St. Vincent de Paul. This pilgrimage, organized by the Congregation of the Mission or Lazarist priests, aimed to have a glimpse of the life of the said Saint who, in his journey from childhood to priesthood, responded and followed the will of the Father.

According to Mr. Said Safar, SSVP Youth Coordinator of Lebanon, they spent quality time altogether during the 12 days of the trip going to places and cities like Chatillon, Folleville, Le Berceau, Paris and Lourdes. According to him, the pilgrimage was very enriching both on the practical and spiritual aspects.

On the practical aspect, to help the pilgrims defray the expenses of the SSVP members, a fund-raising project was organized. With God's providence,

the project raised enough to cover most of the travel expenses. Truly, where God sends, He equips!

On the spiritual aspect, among the many places they visited, there were two places, in particular where Mr. Safar felt most affected. First, was in Lourdes, the place where the Virgin Mary appeared to Saint Bernadette Soubirou. This place was noted as the dirtiest in the town as rubbish were found thrown all around. This made him realize that the Lord is telling him not to be afraid as He is always ready to reveal Himself even in the dirtiest and darkest side of his life.

The second place that had a great effect on him was Folleville, where St. Vincent de Paul greatly experienced God as he recognized the spiritual needs of the poor of the area. Upon reflecting, Mr. Safar realized that he should not be discouraged even if he is experiencing spiritual dryness in his life because God, after 17 years, has

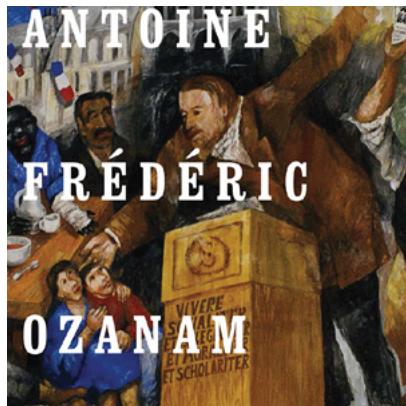
touched the life of St. Vincent de Paul through the Saint's encounter with the many poor.

Through this, St. Vincent was able to see Jesus in the faces of the suffering poor. Truly a real and transforming encounter with the Lord! Realizing that the person in front of him is no ordinary one, St. Vincent de Paul was able to receive the Good News of salvation, and from that moment on, he fully embraced and received a new life in Christ which led to his transformation.

Indeed, this has been a pilgrimage to remember and will forever be embedded in the hearts of the pilgrims. They were able to walk through the footsteps of St. Vincent de Paul and got a glimpse of how he truly became a servant of God. It is hoped that, through God's grace, this will build them up as a community of young Vincentian volunteers who will bring Christ's love as they serve the poorest of the poor.

# Books

## A must-read biography of Bl. Antoine Frédéric Ozanam



Mr. Raymond Sickinger, the author of this insightful book on the founder of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, looks into Ozanam's life in a variety of ways. First, the book explored the various roles he played throughout his life—a son, sibling, student, member of and an inspiration for the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, spouse and father, scholar, and spokesperson for the common people. Second, it examines the lessons he learned in his life, including the importance of friendship, the meaning of solidarity, and the role and purpose of suffering, among many others that he shares with those who study his thought and work. It concludes with an account of Ozanam's enduring legacy. This book is truly a comprehensive study of a man who touched many lives as a teacher, writer, and principal.

Reading this book can encourage us to follow in the footsteps of Blessed Frederic Ozanam who saw each person as a child of God, thus, cared for their needs. This is highly recommendable to all people, especially those at the forefront of service to those in need, inspiring them to grow in holiness in the course of the mission.

Raymond L. Sickinger is a Professor of History and Public and Community Service Studies at Providence College, a Catholic, and Dominican College, where he has taught for over forty years. He received his Doctorate in European History from the University of Notre Dame in 1978. He is currently serving as Chair of the Department of History and Classics. He has been an active member of the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul since 1985. He is currently a member of its National Board of Directors.

- 412 pages
- Written in: english
- Buy on line > <http://undppress.nd.edu/books/P03300?keywords=sickinger>

## President General launches a Spanish-language book

The book "In love with charity and justice" (original: "Apasionados por la caridad y la justicia") was published on the initiative of the Spanish Superior Council of the SSVP. Its author is brother Renato Lima de Oliveira, 16th President General of SSVP. There are 55 articles of spirituality that can be used as spiritual readings in the meetings of the Conferences and Councils.

The book, including 180 pages, counts on the preface of brother Juan Manuel Buergo, Vice-President of the Superior Council of Spain. He thus expresses himself on the publication: "in the book we find articles that tell us interesting personal experiences of the author, problems and solutions, in which we can see ourselves reflected, because it is the daily life of the Society".

There is also a brief text prepared by Mrs. Andréa Bueno de Oliveira, brother Renato's beloved wife, telling

us about the human figure aspects of the President General. Francisco Javier Fernández Chento, the coordinator of the Famvin.org in Spanish, is responsible for editing and translation into Spanish.

The publication can be obtained at the Superior Council of Spain of the SSVP (3, Saint Peter Street, Madrid, 28014 Spain). Phone: + (3491) 369-7990. E-mail: [ssvp@ssvp.es](mailto:ssvp@ssvp.es). The Price is 10 euros, in addition to the postage costs. The values from the sale of the book will be destined to help Conferences and Councils in need, anywhere in the world.

The book was officially launched on June 13th in Paris, liturgical date of St. Anthony of Padua, during the Annual General Meeting of the Council General International. The publication will also be launched next November in Quito (Ecuador), when the 6th Iberoamerican Meeting of the SSVP will be held, with the presence of 36 countries, most of them Spanish speaking countries.

Including this initiative, brother Renato is now author of seven books, four in Portuguese (from the series "Vincentian Chronicles"), this new one in Spanish and two others on political issues.

The copyright to publish this book in English, French or another language is free.

