

NEWSLETTER

INTERNATIONAL GENERAL COUNCIL

Sept/October 2015

International General Council launches the Founders' Award



**Conseil
Général
International**



FOUNDERS AWARD

On the occasion of the feast of Saint Vincent de Paul, the International General Council is launching a prize to reward young members of the Society. Karl Hila, International Vice President for Youth, addressed to all National Presidents to present the SSVP Founders' Award.

Dear National Council Presidents,
Peace be with you!

As we look back and appreciate the long years of joyful service to and collaboration with our masters, the poorest of the poor whom the Church loves, we also have to recognize as well the generous and heartfelt contributions of young individuals in this worthwhile endeavor and provide role models whom our young members can look up to. It is in this light that that we are launching the SSVP Founders' Awards to recognize and affirm outstanding young individuals in our Society.

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To fully understand the mechanics of this award, we have attached its primer and application form. The awards to be given to the six youth and one youth minister is named after the founders of our Society as the legacy of their love for the people, especially the poor, and most of all, for the sign of their youthful passion and vigor in creating our Society, spreading its advocacy, and helping those in need.

As we celebrate this year's Bl. Frederick Ozanam and St. Vincent de Paul's feast day, thanking God for the gift of our organization, we also have to thank outstanding young persons that have contributed to the joy, success, and meaningfulness of the SSVP's youthfull ministry. This is what the SSVP Founders' Awards is all about.

Let me end this letter with the words of our first President General, our very dear Emmanuel Bailly (March 1, 1844):

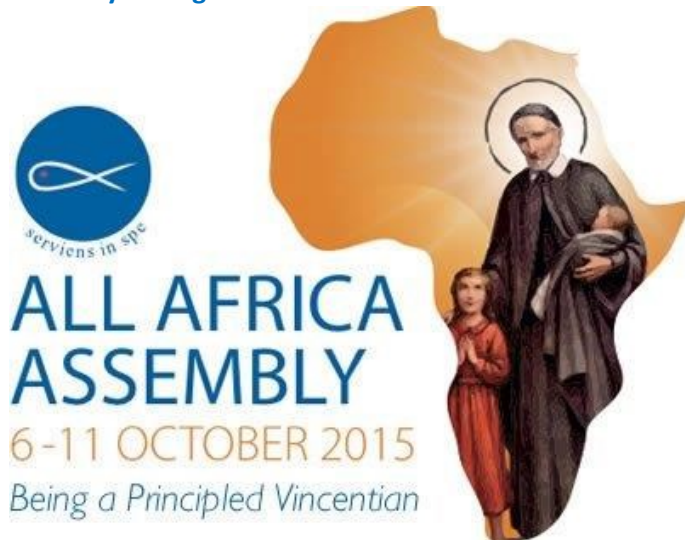
"The Society of St. Vincent de Paul was started by youth and is setup for the youth. Therefore its action holds for us a special virtue. A large part of the affection that the public grant the Society comes from the fact that they believe it to be largely made up of young people. For this reason, it is necessary to continue to find young members, be they from schools or other areas. It is essential for us that young people receive preferential treatment within the body and that they appear on the frontline."

In St. Vincent de Paul and Bl. Frederic Ozanam,
Karl Michael J. Hila
International Vice President for Youth

Presentation's letter and application Form are available to download on the international website:
> www.ssvpglobal.org

All Africa Assembly: the delegates of the SVP in african countries had a meeting in South Africa

All Africa Assembly taking place this October 2015 marks a special year for the Society of St. Vincent de Paul in Africa. From 6-10 October, the International Territorial Presidents, Coordinators, National Presidents and members of the Society met at the Good Shepherd Retreat Centre, Hartebeespoort for an All Africa Assembly. The last meeting of this kind was held 20 years ago.



About 80 participants attended the event: in addition to the delegates of the continent, members of the International General Council as Dr. Michael Thio (President General International), Brian O'Reilly (Vice President General), John Lee (Vice-President for the International Structure) were also present.

The program tackled various topics like spirituality, presentation of the international structure, the

twinning. Other more specific topics were discussed such as xenophobia, refugees, the youth's place in the Society.

Joseph Makwinja (International Territorial Vice President Africa 2), said: *The Theme, Being a Principled Vincentian, calls on all members of the Society to reflect and review their call to serve their fellow men. It will be a time for introspection on how effective and efficient we have been in assisting those whom we have been called to serve, and to rededicate ourselves to this calling.*

We need to look at ways in which the relationship with our International office and other avenues of the Society can be enhanced. Effective communication is key and we will be looking at what steps we need to take in order to improve.

Funds from donor countries and our twinning partners have had a significant impact on our ability to assist the needy in our various communities. It is important that funds are used efficiently in projects and service provisions aimed at bettering the lives of the poor. In this regard let us support the documentary requirements of our partners and donors to report back on utilisation of funds.

The All Africa Assembly gives us an opportunity to build up camaraderie amongst Vincentians from all over the continent and with our visitors from overseas. Let us take this opportunity to interact, discuss and exchange our various experiences so as to build a strong Society in Africa.

Migrants: SSVP in France faces the influx of refugees

In recent months, the world witnessed one of the most important migratory crises for decades. Thousands of refugees, fleeing the Middle East engulfed in an endless war, converge, often risking their lives, at the gates of Europe: Syrians, Iraqis, but also Eritreans, Sudanese ... families, with women and children.

In France, St Vincent de Paul conferences are working on the situation of refugees, since the beginning of the crisis, leading coordinated actions with the National Council of France, other charitable organizations and the French government.

Furthermore, migrants arrive in every district in France and there is not any single Conference which is not

providing some kind of support to our foreign brothers in need.

French government is at last taking some actions to host refugees on a larger scale. Both public authorities and charities are starting to coordinate the build-up or free-up of the required infrastructure to enable decent hosting conditions and long term integration.

With this as a backdrop, The National Council would welcome any support, mostly financial or advisory, which would be channel to the local SVP council.

SSVP - Conseil National de France
120 avenue du Général Leclerc - 75014 Paris
www.ssvp.fr

Vincentian family celebrates Saint Vincent-de-Paul's Feast

27/09, the Vincentian family celebrated the Saint Vincent de Paul. On this occasion, Father Gregory Gay CM, sent a letter to all Vincentians. And to celebrate our Patron Saint, we suggest reading the "Vincentian Oath", kindly provided by Dr. Michael Thio - International President General.



Dear Members of the Vincentian Family,

May the grace and peace of Our Lord Jesus Christ be with all of you!

On this feast of Saint Vincent de Paul I join with you in giving thanks to God for the blessing of serving God's beloved people, especially those men and women excluded from participation in society, those people living on the peripheries, our lords and masters. We are called to serve these men and women and to find Christ in them. We are continually exhorted to not only lend our voices to their causes, but also to listen to them and to speak for them. Hopefully, as a result of our identification with them, they invite us to be their friends (cf., Pope Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*, #198).

As we respond to this call to participate in the process of the New Evangelization, we, as Vincentians have a unique contribution to offer. First, during this Year of Collaboration we are presented with an opportunity to strengthen the bonds of cooperation and solidarity among the almost three hundred branches of the Vincentian Family. In places where those bonds might be weak or non-existent, we are challenged to explore ways in order to establish such bonds. Such collaboration is essential if we are to continue to give witness to the reality that we are all one People of God, one Vincentian Family.

Vincent de Paul often spoke about an affective and effective process of evangelization. Our effort to make greater collaboration a reality in our midst is the best means to insure a more affective and effective outreach to the forgotten members of society.

Furthermore, I believe we have another important contribution to offer the Church as we engage in the

process of the New Evangelization. In recent years we have seen different branches of the Vincentian Family join together in order to change oppressive and unjust structures that prevent people from living in a dignified manner. Our involvement in these collaborative processes of systemic change enables us to be Vincentian missionary-disciples.

Let us continue to work together in creative processes of collaborative systemic change, remembering that the final word of hope belongs to the Book of Revelation: Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; the former heaven and the former earth had passed away, and the sea was no more (Revelation 21:1) ... and may God bless us today and all the days of our life.

Your brother in Saint Vincent de Paul,

Rev. G. Gregory Gay, C.M.

Superior General

The Vincentian pledge :

As far as we are able:

We PROMISE to do all we can to make Christ's Law of Love prevalent among all men and women, practicing the spiritual and corporal works of mercy.

We PROMISE to sanctify ourselves through prayer attendance at mass and frequent reception of the Sacraments in order to fulfill better our duties as Vincentians.

We PROMISE to visit the Poor and the Sick in their homes, and institutions in order to provide their needs both spiritually and materially.

We PROMISE to impart knowledge of our Faith to our friends in need and those we come into contact by sharing our Faith and the Good News with them by our actions.

We PROMISE to participate in the annual retreat and the 2 feast days of the Society so that our zeal for souls may be rekindled.

We PROMISE to help advance the works of mercy by our offering in the secret bag collection within our means.

We PROMISE to increase the influence of the Society by convincing qualified people, especially young men and women to join the Society and to guide them with our experience.

We PROMISE to pray for each other, so that we may be strengthened in our vocation as Vincentians.

Australia : sleeping rough for a cause

Once a year, the Australian Vincentians held a "sleep-out" to raise money for the homeless.



What is more striking than the image of a CEO sleeping outside on a piece of cardboard? Based on this idea, the volunteers of the SSVP Australia launched one of the flagship events in their public campaign : last June, Vinnies held their sixth Vinnies CEO Sleepout. This event sees CEOs and community leaders sleep in the street, experiencing for one night what over 100,000 Australians experience every night. The goal is to raise awareness of homelessness and money to support Vinnies homeless services.

Last June, Vinnies held their sixth Vinnies CEO Sleepout . Across the country, 1300 leaders and 40 local Sleepout were recorded, with a large participation of schools and campuses

In Melbourne, once they registered, participants were given 2 pieces of cardboard, and claimed a space on the steps of the Melbourne's Convention and Exhibition center. After a dinner provided by Vinnies Soup Vans, the homeless for one night had the opportunity to discuss with managers of Vinnies.

The night's formalities were opened by Martin Foley, Minister for Housing, Disability and Ageing and consisted of a panel of speakers talking about their experiences of being homeless, supported by VincentCare Service Managers working in the area. Participants then bedded down on their cardboard in a chilly 7 degrees.

A teacher (Swan Hill college) explains : "...We stayed around the fire pit for several hours. One of our students told us of his experience as a young child when he spent several months homeless on the streets with his brother after running away from foster care[...]This is my third Sleepout with students and I still find it a worthwhile experience for the kids and an eye opening one for myself".

The funds raised amounted to nearly \$ 1 million, more than double compared to the previous year.

Vinnies will use the money raised from the CEO Sleepout to continue to provide responses, both in early intervention and prevention of homelessness, and in delivering programs designed to offer a safe haven and potential to break out of the homeless cycle.

The national Council of Australia wish to thank to all those who participated in the event, donated to the appeal and supported the event through their sponsorships. See you next year on 23 June 2016.



More about the Vinnies :

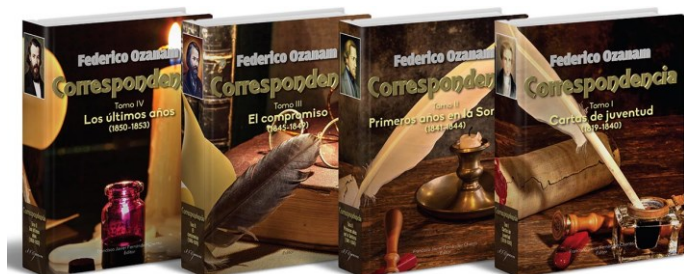
La Société de Saint Vincent-de-Paul en Australie c'est :

- Foundation in **1854** of the very first conférence
- 40.000 members and volunteers
- 8 Regional Councils
- National President : Graham West
- website : <http://www.vinnies.org.au>
- intervention fields : education, housing, underprivileged families, health, migrants and refugees, indigenous populations



Letters of Frédéric Ozanam: soon available in Spanish

Excellent news for Spanish-speaking Vincentians : after five years of study, research and translation, the Spanish edition of the letters of Frédéric Ozanam will soon see the light of day, with the permission of the International Confederation of the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul and of the descendants of Frédéric Ozanam.



The full correspondence (from the six-volume critical edition in French) is co-published by the "Somos Vicencianos" (We are Vincentians) collective and by the Spanish publishing house La Milagrosa, which is responsible for distributing this work. The editor responsible is Francisco Javier Fernández Chento and the translation was undertaken by Fr. Jaime Corera CM. A team of Lazarist Fathers and lay people also contributed to this project in a variety of ways.

Ozanam died young, only forty years old; but despite his very short life, he left behind him work that would do credit to a lengthy career. His fertile spirit and

intelligence were nourished by his deep love of Jesus Christ and the Church. A few days before his death, he wrote from Pisa: *"My whole life has persuaded me that there is no rest for the spirit or for the heart except in the faith of the Church, and in living under her authority. Any merit I may have gained from my long studies arises from the fact that they give me the right to beg those I love to stay faithful to a religion in which I find light and peace"*.

It was in 1953, the year of the centenary of Frédéric's death, that the plan for this work was put in hand by the Council General of the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul. Jacques Zeiller, then President General of the Society, entrusted this task to Léonce Celier, with the help of Jean-Baptiste Duroselle, Didier Ozanam and Marie Laporte. From their patient work of research in the private archives came the first volume of the critical edition in French, containing 271 letters, those known up to 1840, which was published in 1961. After that, three further volumes appeared, and then two supplements.

The first volume of the Spanish edition (out of the 4 planned) will be published in a few days.

Visit the shop on the international website to purchase the full correspondence of Frédéric Ozanam in French, as well as other works.

<http://www.ssvpglobal.org/Boutique/Publications>

Egypt : Opening of the cause of beatification and canonization of Boutros Cassab

The patriarch Gregorios III of Antioch and All the East opened the cause for Cassab, often called 'the apostle of Upper Egypt and the young,' during a solemn service held at Cairo's Cathedral of the Resurrection.

Boutros Cassab, a married layman and father of three, died on March 23, 1986, in the Egyptian city of Beni Suef, and right afterward, people began to speak about his "heroic virtues". Cassab is said to have had an ecumenical spirit and great influence on the mission of the Melkite Church and the Middle East. He was involved in charity work with the Society of St. Vincent de Paul and with youth groups. He has been a former president of the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul in Egypt

Manual of Twinings : a new version released

Tony Muir, Vice President International twinning is pleased to inform you that the revised Manual of Practices and Procedures - Twinning International, approved by the Bureau of the General Council at its meeting in June 2015 in São Paulo (Brazil) is available.

The manual in pdf file was sent by mail to all the Presidents and National Coordinators Twinning. On the Internet, it is available on the website in the "documentation" section:

<http://www.ssvpglobal.org/documentation>

Would all National Twinning Coordinators please make sure that the previous Manual is taken out of circulation and the 2015 version is the only Manual to operate from.

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6 rue de Londres – 75009 Paris – France - mail : cgi.information@ssvpglobal.org - Website : www.ssvpglobal.org