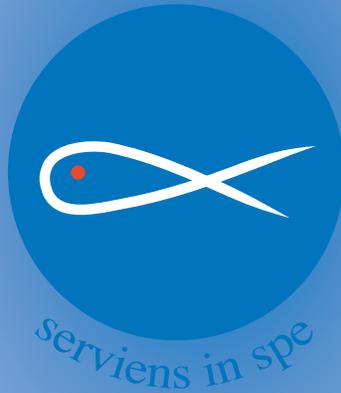


*Society of Saint Vincent de Paul
National Council of Canada*



Annual Report 2009-2010

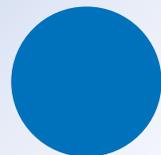


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MISSION

The Society of Saint Vincent de Paul is a lay Catholic organization whose mission is:

To live the Gospel message by serving Christ in the poor with love, respect, justice and joy.

VALUES

The Mission of the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul implies that as Vincentians we :

- see Christ in anyone who suffers;
- come together as a family;
- have personal contact with the poor;
- help in all possible ways.

Visit to Haiti and the Dominican Republic



Members of Haiti and the Dominican Republic with Canadian visitors.



M. Elismé, President of the Society in Haiti, with the many items that Penny brought them.



Street scene of Haiti, with tent city

National President

Yet another very busy year in 2009. During this time, the sale of the house in Quebec City was completed and the purchase of our new head office in Ottawa came to fruition. A tremendous amount of thanks goes to the administrative team for their assistance and direction. The board has been so instrumental in providing the necessary input and decision making to allow processes to move ever so smoothly. But, now we are home again!

Members of the board continue to take up the challenges to move the Society forward in so many ways.



Administration

As you may remember, we hired **Sandra Melo** as full time administrative assistant in the Ottawa office in October of 2008. She was very helpful with the move from the office on Kilborn to the new head office on Innes Rd. She also announced at that time that she was pregnant with her second child. She then went on maternity leave and will return in October of 2010.

For the most part, the office has been managed by **Clermont Fortin** in Ottawa and **Nicole Schryburt** in Montreal using call forwarding. We owe a debt of gratitude to Clermont for his diligence in both administrative work and overseeing the maintenance operations of the home.

Aggregations and Institutions

We continue in our efforts to facilitate the audit of our Canadian Conferences and Councils. This has been a tremendous undertaking. Our thanks to the regional presidents for their assistance in this process.

The applications for aggregations and institutions are moving through the system very well and in a timely manner.

Board Orientation Day

The day was spent in updating administration activities and informal discussion around issues, concerns, sharing and future activities of the Society in Canada. Staff are in attendance and provide information and feedback into administrative processes. Guest speakers provide information for educated decision making by the board. We had presentations regarding insurances, advocacy etc. The day provides a very useful time to work through ideas without having to take minutes. The discussions also facilitate the expediency of the board meeting the next day.

Board Retreat Day

In May, the Friday is spent as a day of retreat/spirituality. The time is spent reflecting on the importance of who we are as stewards and members of the board and the members of the administrative team. We celebrate the gifts each of us brings to the ministry of administration and within the Society. The day begins with prayer and recitation of the rosary and ends with the celebration of Mass.

Also during this day the theme for the following year AGA is developed and decided upon along with possible workshop topics that will help to develop this chosen theme. As members have stated, "a very full day and very worthwhile for both events".

Standing Committees of the National Council of Canada

Education, Strategic Planning - VP Carol Horne;
Advocacy (Voice of the Poor) - VP Clermont Fortin
Youth - Caroline Gilbert, Youth Representative
Twinning - Kathy Weswick, Chair
International Disaster Relief - VP Clermont Fortin
Finance - VP Marcel Tremblay
Spirituality – Yvon Bussieres

These Standing Committees have been diligently engaged in their activities. We are moving forward in so many positive ways. A great deal of thanks goes to the chairs and members of each region that work tirelessly on our behalf. They will provide their own comprehensive reports

Website and Vincenpaul Magazine

Nicole Schryburt is managing that aspect of communications. She has made great strides with entering the information onto the web-site that will be timely and useful for members and the public.

The Vincepaul got a new look as well. **Caroline Gilbert** redesigned the "Look" of the magazine. Many compliments received. **Nicole Schryburt** is the editor, assisted by **Ellen Schryburt**. **Please... Updating addresses can never be over emphasized.**

Translator and Graphic Artist

Our thanks again to **Ghislaine Du Nord** and **Josée Laforest** for their hard work.

As one can see, everyone shares their special gifts to make the Society in Canada a true reflection of the Gospel Message in Canada.

Spiritual Advisor

It is so important that I recognize and thank our **Spiritual Advisor Msgr. Peter Schonenbach**. He has truly been there for us as members. His opinions and guidance have proven fruitful when decisions are being made. His inspirational talks before each meeting and his willingness to provide sacramentals such as prayer, Mass and commissioning etc are such an important part of Vincentian life. Yes, business decisions are required, but the essential reason we come together is to enhance the spiritual life of each other and those we serve.

Spiritual Advisors all over Canada need a big thank you as important persons in the life of any conference or council as we work together to make Gospel based decisions. Thank you to each one of you!

Future Activities

The final frontier for the Society in Canada rests with **Public Relations/Media**.

As a National Council we must now move toward a more professional approach in sending our profile

and messages to those in need and the public. This is especially important in light of emphasis on advocacy. We must know who we are in each region and across Canada if we are to have any credibility. We must be able to speak with some authority about such things as a) how many conferences and councils we have in Canada, b) how many members we have, c) how many stores we operate, d) the number of soup kitchens, the number of summer camp, e) how many employees that are employed because of these entities, f) how many people we have served and helped across Canada etc. etc. It becomes embarrassing when no one can provide accurate information when required to do so. To this end we will be reviewing the National Council Annual Reports to provide a comprehensive overview of the Society in Canada. This review will involve both the statistical data form and the financial reporting form. They will be one comprehensive form with guidelines designed for both. It is anticipated that we may begin using these forms for the 2010 reporting year.

Travel

The National Council Executive meeting was held the first weekend of October in Yellowknife NT. What a wonderful group of people. Sister Joanne could not have been a better hostess. She met us at the airport and saw to our every need from then on. The Trapper's Lake Spirituality Centre was a most comfortable and enjoyable environment.

President Gerda and her St Patrick's Conference members came to join us for supper on the Saturday evening at the Centre. I had the opportunity to address each Mass on the weekend telling them who we were and why we were there. I especially thanked the parishioners for their support of St. Patrick's Conference. It was important for them to know that their prayers, donation of goods and money helped the conference to



Executive in Yellowknife NT

do its work. A thoroughly enjoyable experience meeting these brothers and sisters. A huge thank you to all!

St Louis Missouri – USA AGA

As always I did enjoy my visit to the USA Annual General Assembly. What a tremendous amount of work goes into the preparations for this event. What became abundantly clear was that I cannot be everywhere. There were so many meetings and workshops that would have been of benefit for us in Canada to become connected with. To that end, for the 2010 meeting I have decided that we need to send a contingent of Canadian members to connect with a) education, b) youth, c) advocacy (Voice of the Poor) and d) twinning. So much can be gained from making these connections. Our brother and sister Vincentians in the USA are experiencing the same anxieties and pains that we are in Canada. The impact of the downturn in the economy has taken its toll in many ways. They are worried about resources, the upswing in demand, the older population of their membership etc.

St Catharines

I had the privilege of visiting with the Central Council in St. Catharines Ontario with Fr. Joe Quinn. We were invited to attend Mass and conduct the commissioning ceremony for them. We were very warmly welcomed with a reception afterwards. Our thanks to Maureen Boland for the invitation to meet more brothers and sisters and bring them regards from all of you.

Quebec Regional AGA

A very warm welcome and reception for Ellen and myself by Jean Claude and the members of the Quebec Regional Council. This meeting was held in Trois Rivieres. The Quebec Regional Council has produced a very interesting public relations event that may well spur something for all Vincentians to celebrate all



Yellowknife NT

across Canada. I have asked Jean Claude to present the event to the membership at the AGA in Toronto. As always, much work and prayer mixed in with wonderful food and music. The community itself is so historic as well.

Ottawa

I spent a great deal of time in Ottawa this past year assisting with the move and getting the offices organized. Boxes, boxes and more boxes! It was quite warm the days we were moving these things from one office to the other, but I have to say that between Sandra, Clermont and myself we did manage to get things moved in an orderly fashion and prepare for the volunteers that would be moving filing cabinets and furniture.

Repairs and upgrades were overseen by Clermont starting at 7AM in the mornings. The main areas of concerns were addressed very quickly. Floors were done, repairs to furnaces etc. Clermont himself is quite the “handyman”! I shopped!

We have rented the apartment to a very nice young gentleman in the beginning of September.

The home was used for our first Board Retreat in November. Several of the women stayed at the home as well. There are conferences and councils in the Ottawa area that use the home from time to time as well for meetings.

I have had the opportunity to be at the house in October/ November and February in advance of meetings. During that time, I have had the opportunity to meet with the Ottawa Central Council and Aylmer Particular Council as well while I am in residence there. Wonderful brothers and sisters.

We will be looking forward to preparing for the Open House and Blessing at the Board meeting in May 2010.

Summation

As always, I will continue to assist my brother and sister Vincentians to continually move forward in sharing their gifts in the ministry of administration. They need your prayers as well, they need your support and encouragement. We look forward to another fun-filled year for 2010. I pray that “we may be all one in truth and charity!”

● Penny Craig, President

Atlantic Regional Council

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

I am honoured to report on the activities and achievements of Atlantic Regional Council in this, my second report.

Your Executive members have worked hard to provide information and service to the membership. I wish to express my deepest thanks to the Executive for their dedication and hard work.

Summary

This year we are reduced in number of conferences but remain vibrant and dedicated to the service of the Poor in our communities. A summary of our Region is as follows:

- Number of Members 639
- Number of Particular Councils 5
- Number of Conferences in Particular Councils 44
- Number Isolated Conferences 13
- Number of Visits made 11,711
- Number of People Helped 30,509
- Total Receipts \$915,592
- Total Expenditures \$878,607

The Particular Council in Antigonish has closed due to lack of succession planning there. One conference, St. Anselm's in Dartmouth Particular Council, has closed down and is in the process of completing the final report and transfer of any unused funds to the next highest council.

Our Members across the Region continue struggling with a lack of new members.

Halifax Particular Council

Halifax Particular Council continues to operate three Outreach activities, as follows:

The Hand in Hand Store hopes to have a new building this year. Sales of used clothing and furniture remain comparable to last year. Hope Cottage continues in its hot meals program; approximately 36 000 meals were served in 2009.

The Outreach Office in Halifax continues operation and two people are on staff. A full time Outreach Coordinator provides advocacy services and is a member of several community service boards as our representative. A part time community support worker handles Nova Scotia Power accounts for the needy, among other duties.



St. John's Particular Council

St. John's Particular Council remains in discussion about how to use the funds from the sale of their downtown building that had been used as the site of the former Thrift Store. Initiative by the new Regional Executive:

Screening

We encourage our conferences to continue the Screening Process, with a hope to have it finished by year's end. There are many members who decided not to be screened and they have become Auxiliary Members.

Communication

We continue to share news with members via electronic means and it is working well. Recipients of our news e-mails are asked to share it with fellow members.

We continue to update the Vincenpaul Magazine mailing list, eliminating names of presidents no longer in office in conferences and councils.

Twining

We are twinned in Atlantic Regional Council with both El Salvador and Haiti. Haiti funding comes to us from Halifax particular Council and we offer them our sincere thanks. We have communicated with our "twins" via e-mail and translation service is working very well thanks to Nicole Schryburt in Montreal and Father John Molina in Summerside, Prince Edward island.

Business numbers

We continue to review the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) database for our conferences and councils; any whose Business Number was "revoked" are notified through the Particular Council or vice president concerned.

Respectfully submitted as servant of Servants to the Poor,

● David Grant, President



Quebec Regional Council

Our theme in 2009 was “WELCOME”

According to the dictionary, “welcome” is to greet hospitably and with courtesy or cordiality and to accept with pleasure the occurrence or presence of someone or something (I would add: the way to receive and accept ideas).

In the proposed theme, the word *welcome* includes the concept of kindness, acceptance in the team, friendship.

Welcome:

- to the disadvantaged;
- to the Holy Spirit, to Jesus’ teachings;
- to the new members;
- to our brothers and sisters;
- to our presidents and council leaders;
- to proposals with regard to changes, projects, new activities.

SSVP Week

In 2009, countless efforts and time were dedicated to the planning and carrying out of the first SSVP Week in all regions of Quebec where we are established.

Under the theme “Every-day Dignity”, it has become a 3-year project.

The greatest challenge in Quebec is recruitment and membership rejuvenation.

Members note that the SSVP is well known in our communities, and that it has a strong credibility. However, most people know little about our works.

Therefore, the first objective of an SSVP Week is to enhance our **visibility** in our communities, by informing people about our mission, our activities and our works.

A second objective is to foster **recruitment** of new members by showing a modern image.

We are very proud of the councils and conferences that participated, by organizing all kinds of media activities during that week.

All members are happy about the success of that first experience.

We are deeply grateful to Mrs Angèle Coutu, a comedian very well known in Quebec, for being our provincial spokesperson. She is very attached to our mission and sensitive to the cause of the disadvantaged.

We also thank Mrs Michelle Alarie and Annick Robichaud of the Optimum group, public relations consultant, for their expertise in the development of a plan for strategic activities during the SSVP Week.

Regional AGA

In September, our regional AGA was held in Trois-Rivières, under the theme “Towards the Future”.

Close to 200 members participated in the workshops, focusing their discussions on the future of our great Society.

A professor from the École Nationale d’Administration Publique (National Public Administration School) spoke about “*change*” and the challenges related to it. Another professor of economy, from the Université du Québec à Montréal, spoke about the economic situation and the causes of recession.

On the first morning Father Yvon Laroche provided us with a vigorous momentum, thanks to his spiritual reflection.

With a style adapted to our daily lives, our Spiritual Advisor, Father Dion, made us pray and reflect on the theme of our conference.

Strategic Plan

In 2009, we continued encouraging councils and conferences to prioritize the following issues: recruitment, spirituality, communications and exchanges on those issues, defining objectives and acting to meet them.

The goals are to rejuvenate our membership so that, in accordance with our Rule, they continue to fully achieve our mission of service to the poor.

Opération Bonne Mine

The ultimate objective of this project is to encourage school age children to remain motivated in pursuing their studies without dropping out.

All over Quebec, councils and conferences are increasingly involved in that operation, helping children acquire the school supplies they need to actively participate to school activities.

In addition to participating to the purchase of school supplies, we distribute scholarships in recognition of **efforts** made by children to improve their performance. The scholarships can be in the form of money, or payments for a summer camp session, or the purchase of sport equipment, or any other activity related to the well being of children.

In 2009, the Québec Central Council joined the OBM project, and thus participated to the unification of that operation in all regions of the province. Let us recall that the Council had been managing, since 1986, a similar operation called "Service aux Jeunes Étudiants (SAJE)".

The Christmas Guignolée

It is a traditional activity dating back to the beginning of the SSV in Quebec.

Many volunteers get involved in the impressive organizational and logistical work of finding money, food, presents, clothing, etc. and distributing Christmas hampers to needy families.

Sincere thanks to all those volunteers who work silently to give a great number of needy families the opportunity to enjoy the Christmas season a bit more.

Conclusion

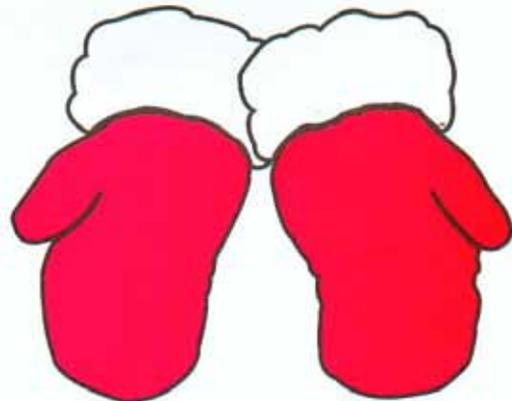
Analysing results for 2009, we see that the Quebec members of the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul work very hard and with much love and assiduity to achieve our mission to serve Christ in the poor.

At our September 2009 AGA, those participating reaffirmed their optimism and willingness to meet the various future challenges, to ensure the continuation of our Society and the achievement of its mission in a changing world. In 2010, we have already started on doing just that.

● Jean-Claude Bienvenue, President



Helping children acquire the school supplies they need.



The Christmas Guignolée, a traditional activity dating back to the beginning of the SSV in Quebec which consists in going door to door to gather food.

Ontario Regional Council

We have intensified our efforts to promote our Youth Program and our Advocacy Programs. Our Spirituality is the glue that holds and directs all our activities in serving the poor for the Glory of God. We are more than just a social agency. We are an apostolate that requires self-sacrifice. You and I are called to serve. A loving response to this call requires humility. We do not have time to boast of our achievements. The reward is in doing God's Will. Blessed Frederick Ozanam stated, "Our guiding rule should be neither to force ourselves on the public gaze nor to conceal ourselves from those who may wish to find us." All Conferences need a Spiritual Advisor. It need not be a priest but a religious or some layperson that you deem worthy.

It is most important that all members follow the Rule at their meetings. Some Councils and Conferences, as part of their educational program, discuss various aspects of the Rule. If we are to be a vibrant and informed group we must adhere to the guidelines set out in the Rule. Many of our problems in our Conferences and Councils stem from the fact that we ignore the Rule. Consequently, we inadvertently fail to treat each other with respect and dignity.

Youth Program

Our Youth Program has expanded greatly. London Particular Council has initiated a youth program with the

Catholic School Board of Greater London, including St. Thomas and Woodstock.

Carmela Addante, Chairperson of the Youth Committee, has moved on to serve with the International Council as an International Twinning Coordinator. I would like to thank her on your behalf for her dedication and service. Jason Hunt will take over the Youth Committee.

Meanwhile, in Windsor we have seven aggregated youth Conferences including a Particular Council. All Catholic Schools including Our French Catholic High School, L'Essor, have Conferences. We also have two Public High Schools with members. St. Clair College, University of Windsor and Wayne State University have students that participate.

As most of you are aware, we sent five youth to FamVin and World Youth Days in Australia. The experience left all who attended not only with a new dedication and appreciation for their faith, but a renewed Spirit to continue their Vincentian work. There are plans to send youth to the 2011 celebrations being held in Madrid, Spain.

Plans are being made for the 'Second Annual Summer Youth Retreat' the weekend of July 23 - 25, 2010, at St Vincent De Paul Camp, located near Bothwell, Ontario. We invite and welcome youth from all over the Region to attend.



Sr. Jean Rochleau and Christopher Chibani



John Staley and Jim Paddon

Assumption High School has received a start-up grant from the 'Ontario Regional Special Project Grants' to assist needy students with a breakfast program. They will also receive funds to assist students who have no money to attend field trips, buy books or clothing. Sister Jean Rochleau, a Holy Name Sister, is the Spiritual Advisor for Windsor/Essex Youth.

Youth Twinning in Guatemala will be one of our first challenges. Initial contact has already been made and the first support payment has been sent on behalf of the Ontario Regional Youth. Our youth are awaiting correspondence in order to establish a written relationship.

Training

The National Training Committee has been implemented. As part of that committee the Ontario Region has two members. Bill Graham and I are members of this committee.

Stores

The Stores Committee has made great strides in introducing our 'Health and Safety Policy'. Toronto Central has been instrumental in implementing this policy across the province. I would like to thank Toronto Central Council, as well as members of our Regional Committee, for your hard work and dedication.

Expansion

Jim Paddon and I are anxious to expand Conferences in the North. Little Current, Thunder Bay, as well as areas on the Eastern side of the province are places where we hope to have enough conferences in close geographical proximity to eliminate the need for Isolated Conferences. An important priority is to get more First Nation Conferences aggregated.

Prison Ministry

There have been two organizational meetings so far at the Toronto St. Vincent dePaul Headquarters. Jim Paddon has acted as Chairperson in order to get things

organized. The Jail Committee has two major groups to coordinate; First, federal prisoners, who are identified as having two or more years sentence, and who have different needs than provincial prisoners. Secondly, the Provincial Prisoners, who are identified as having two years less a day sentence. In addition to this, there are women prisoners whose gender specific needs must be addressed. Our Vincentian challenge is to try to meet their spiritual, physical and social needs.

Formation

ONRC Formation Committee replaces our Membership Committee. The main purpose of the committee is to provide various resources to our membership that both educate and inspire them in their Vincentian spirituality.

One of the first projects has been to assist with the presentation of the new 'National Council Education Modules'. Jim Paddon, (ONRC VP) and Bill Graham, (ONRC Representative on the National Education Committee) have developed a series of workshops that will be given across Ontario with a target audience of Conference Presidents. It is felt that if we can first gain the support of our Presidents, we will have greater success in conducting presentations for the general membership over the next year or two. The first such workshop was held on April 10th in Chatham, ON for the London Diocese. These workshops will continue until June 2010. The Fall of 2010 will see the start of formation sessions for all members across the province.

In order to complete these local sessions, we have recruited a number of members to become trainers. A 'Train the Trainer' workshop was held on April 17th, with another one scheduled for the Fall. This roster of trainers could also become a resource similar to the old 'Flying Squad' but with a much larger number of trainers to draw from to facilitate training.

Voice of the Poor Advocacy

The ONRC Voice of the Poor Advocacy Committee continues to work hard at two major issues; mainly

affordable housing and education. We have made submissions to the government on affordable housing, and as a member of ISARC, we are looking at methods of keeping the pressure on the government to make needed changes that include funding.

In Ontario, we realize there is a need to also educate our own members, as well as the Catholic community on advocacy issues. We have included advocacy in the workshops being held this Spring across the region of Ontario. We are also working on a pilot project in the St. Catherine's and Hamilton diocese to raise the awareness of membership and the public.

Stores Committee

We currently operate 45 stores across Ontario. Our revised store committee now includes two store managers who are also members. We continue to examine ways to improve our store system and develop it into a more efficient and viable operation.

It has always been a challenge to bring our store managers together for a significant meeting that would result in some positive feedback, and the development of various resources.

We decided to start with our 'First Annual Professional Development Day' for store managers. It was held on April 21st in London, ON. Approximately 70 % of our managers attended an interesting day that consisted of several workshops which allowed them to have input on what was needed to improve our stores. In addition, we had Maurice O'Callaghan, a world renowned motivational speaker, deliver his message to us in the afternoon.

We now have a full list of topics and issues that need assessment and prioritizing before we begin the work of development. The key part of our stores operations must remain its dedication to the mission of the Society. With a clear plan of action, there is much more we can accomplish in the coming months.

Final Reflections

This year we are going to turn up our efforts another notch. This means we will need more communication and assistance from our members.

I wish to thank all those conferences and councils who sent money to our treasury. Your support has allowed us to continue to operate in the black.

In addition to supporting your Regional Council, your generous contributions have meant a substantial donation of \$50,000.00 for Haitian relief. There is no greater demonstration of global unity than to stand by our Vincentian brothers and sisters in a time of crisis.

Quick Facts:

- 431 Conferences and Councils
- 115,000 Home visits to the poor
- 4300 members
- 10 new aggregated Conferences
- one new Particular Council

Special Works:

- 45 stores
- 2 Affordable Housing Buildings
- 14 Transitional Homes
- 21 Supportive Homes
- 2 Summer Camps
- 8 Prison Ministries
- 98 Twinned councils and Conferences
- 12 youth Conferences and one Particular Council

I would also like to thank our executive, Jim Paddon, Brenda Kormendy and Agnes Turley for their dedication, loyalty and patience. In addition, we have an outstanding executive council that is willing to help at a moments notice. Their expertise and friendship is appreciated.

Respectfully Submitted,

● **John E. Staley,**
President, Ontario Regional Council

BC and Yukon Regional Council

Spirituality

Father Pat Monette of the Nelson Diocese, St. Anne's Parish in Penticton resigned as our Spiritual Advisor recently due to time constraints. I thank him for his outstanding support of our Society during his tenure. Every effort is made to ensure that all meetings in the Region include the spiritual component of an opening and closing prayer with additional reflections. We encourage all to fill any vacant Spiritual Advisor positions as soon as possible.

Website

Reg Humphries continues to add to and improve our Regional site. Please visit us at www.ssvp.bc.ca.

Twinning

The Regional Council is twinned with the National Council of Jamaica with New Westminster's Paul Levy acting as our contact person. We are also twinned with Haiti and there has been support recently sent. Secretary Claude Bédard serves as our Regional Twinning representative. Vancouver Island Particular Council has prepared a Twinning Manual and copies can be obtained through Angela Hudson, the Executive Director.

Regional Council

I wish to thank the following for their support during my tenure – Rosalie Wells (1st Vice-President), Bill Clendinning (2nd Vice-President), Claude Bédard (Secretary/Twinning), Sheila Coutu (Treasurer), Nora Criss (Extension) and the Members by Right: Bill Yule, Mary Spencer, Bernie Goold, Ron Tronson and Dana Webster.

Screening Process

The screening process is almost completed in the Region.

Retreat

A 2010 AGA Regional Day Retreat is being planned for the Fall.

Regional AGA and Installation of President

The 2010 AGA will be held in West Vancouver at Christ the Redeemer on May 14-16. Nora Criss will be installed as the Regional Council President.

Extension

Nora Criss and Nora Brown went to visit the Yukon diocese recently. They were well received and it was good for them to make contact with Father Terry Bileski who served as a spiritual director at the Vancouver Central Council for a number of years.

In Conclusion

I want to extend my appreciation for our National President and National Council members who have been a source of inspiration over the years. May God bless all Vincentians and their benefactors in our works of mercy. May we ever continue to serve Christ in our neighborhoods by feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, sheltering the homeless, visiting the sick and those in prison.

● Thomas O'Flynn, President



Western Regional Council

It is my pleasure to present the annual report on the Western Regional Council for 2009 – 2010.

Advertising

We have placed ads in the Western Catholic Reporter and Alberta Catholic Directory. Work is being done to have 30 second infomercials on television using our latest video. The Edmonton Journal ran an article speaking on what was right in the churches and mentioned the work of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul in Edmonton. We have a newsletter which is sent out by email seasonally.

Technology

Our database usage continues to grow as conferences come on board. Calgary and Edmonton are setting up their own websites.

Advocacy/Systemic Change

In October National hosted a meeting on Advocacy and we sent a representative from Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba.

Our Alberta representative, Bob McKeon, who is also the director of Social Justice at the Edmonton Archdiocese, gave a report at our Board meeting in March. This report gave the board a sense of direction and Edmonton had Bob McKeon speak at their annual meeting which was well received. They now have organized a meeting in May where we will begin learning the process for systemic change and advocacy.

We are also organizing an Alberta wide meeting in Red Deer in June. It is my hope to take this training to the rest of the region to get this aspect of our work going throughout the Region.

Spirituality

We had our annual spiritual retreat in Cochrane, Alberta in January. Edmonton is now holding an annual spiritual retreat in the fall. With the Region being so vast, it is my hope that each area will hold a day of spiritual

replenishment every year. The spiritual reflections found on the SVDP.org website have become very popular for conference meetings.

Twinning

This year we added the North Haiti Particular Council as a twin and very soon thereafter the devastating earthquake hit their country. We sent out an appeal to the conferences and forwarded a total of \$17,350 to relief efforts.

Alberta

The conferences in Alberta continue to flourish and two new conferences were formed this year. One in Vegreville and one in Red Deer. Calgary is working on the public service announcements using segments of their latest video. They just completed their Titanic dinner fundraiser which appears to have been very successful. The new tenants are moving into the Alice Bissett housing and one of the tenants spoke at the dinner about how having a home again has saved her life.

Edmonton held their antiques and collectibles sale this spring and had a great turnout of shoppers. They are planning a large workshop on advocacy/strategic planning for May.

Saskatchewan

I confess I am not doing well at moving along in efforts to start a conference in Saskatoon yet. Henry Siwak of the Prince Albert conference helped us out with a request for rent assistance from a lady in Saskatoon who emailed the Western Region. We definitely have to get our foot into that city.

Prince Albert conference continues to work diligently with their 6 active members. St. Josephine Bakhita conference in Regina has 5 active members. We need to get some growth in these conferences and new conferences formed. Although both these conferences are small, the work they do is amazing!

Manitoba

St. Timothy's Conference in Winnipeg hosted our AGA this year. They have a new executive with Chris Gillen as President. Mike Langedock has agreed to be the extension committee member in Manitoba and he and his team are working diligently toward the formation of new conferences in Winnipeg. The youth have a strong presence in this conference.

Attempts have been made to contact St. Vital Conference to no avail. The same is true for St. Augustine conference in Brandon. It is my understanding that the president of St. Augustine conference is in a long term medical facility but continues to do visits to the sick.

North West Territories/Nunavut:

Our far north conferences are doing very well. The conference in Gjoa Haven does home visits twice a week and is now aggregated.

The conference in Tuktoyaktuk has applied for aggregation and is about to embark on more badly needed renovations to the "Father's House" which will make it warmer, safer and more usable. The house has been renamed Quyalldauyuat which means "big help to others, make other people happy and positive".

Funding remains a challenge for these two conferences and we pray that the south will remember them financially so that we can assist them with money for food and the ability to travel to attend meetings and training in the South.



Peter Porco, Chris Gillen and Stephen Cross

Yellowknife's conference remains strong and consistent in their work with the poor.

Statistics

Our **1,168** reporting Vincentians have logged in **74,800 hours**.

We have **52 Conferences, 9 Councils**. We served Christ in our **20,140 friends** (men, women and children) with **12,301** visits to our friends who were lifted up with food, clothing, furniture, financial aid, shelter, job search, budget planning, tutoring and much more in the gift of ourselves. We have two new conferences this year.

We received a total of **\$1,357,120** in to our accounts from donations, grants and fundraising. We disbursed **\$1,168,787** to the poor. This does not include monies received as transfer to conferences for tax receipts.

We continue to be good stewards of all God gives us. Less than 5% of our budget is used for administration and a bare minimum is left in our accounts from one year to the next with the excess funds being passed up in true Vincentian spirit. We trust in God to provide for our needs and the needs of our friends, whom we serve in Christ.

Respectfully submitted

● **Patricia Bennetto, President**



Board meeting in March

Education/Formation Committee

The National education committee was established to meet one of the identified issues of the Strategic Planning report, which was the lack of coordinated training and material at the national level. The committee is in the process of developing a training manual to be available throughout Canada. The format for this manual will be like a “bible”, in that it will contain many modules. Entwined in this manual we will continue to have practicable and spiritual components very much in keeping with Frederic’s vision.

Material

This committee is putting its efforts at this time in developing material at the conference level. As you know that first module is completed and titled “Orientations & Renewal”. Currently in development is a booklet for President’s, the executive, and spiritual advisers. The plan is to expand the manual to include all conference and councils. The scope is very broad and will not be completed by the current members of the committee.

Train-the-Trainer

The committee is also developing a Train-the-Trainer manual. Once we have this completed a workshop will be held to help to train members from across Canada to go back to their area and train other Vincentians. Vincentians will receive all additional material as they are developed to be added to their training manuals.

Meetings

As a committee we meet throughout the year. Always at a day long session the day before our National AGA and the rest of the year we meet in Mississauga. Mississauga has proved central for all of us to meet.

The Committee

The committee members are a group of dedicated, passionate, keen and trained people. It continues to be a pleasure to work with them. We will continue to develop materials by phone, email and face to face meetings. A special thanks to Shirley Graham, whose generous spirit and warm hospitality enriches us as we work in Mississauga.

Always with gratitude, thanks to them all for their commitment in working on this committee.

Nora Criss, British Columbia

Lynn L’Heureux, Western Region

William Graham, Ontario

Gerald Croteau, Quebec

Yours in Christ

● **Carol Horne, 3rd Vice President**
Chairperson National Education/Formation Committee

Voice of the Poor Committee

In action

Members of the Committee were quite busy during the past year. Letters were sent to Prime Minister Harper, a number of Ministers and Leaders of opposition parties regarding issues of social justice and the protection of the environment. Most of these letters were published in the VincenPaul magazine to inform and sensitize membership to advocacy matters. Other articles about social justice issues were also published in the magazine.

Contacts and exchange of documents with members of regional and central councils Social Justice Committees continued throughout the year. Michael Burke and Clermont Fortin, members of the Committee, gave a workshop on Advocacy and Homelessness at the AGA held in Kitchener-Waterloo in June 2009. Committee members reviewed all Bills introduced in the House of Commons to offer comments and recommendations, to ensure the rights and the place of the poor are respected in public policy.

National workshop

The Committee organised the first national workshop on Advocacy. The event was held in Ottawa on October 24, 2009 with the participation of Vincentians from every regions and the National President. This forum was considered a success as a result of its interesting presentations and good exchanges.

Vincentian Family

Since the Fall 2009 the Committee is involved with the Vincentian Family Collaborators Committee; this is a Committee sponsored by the Vincentian Family (FAMVIN), the main organisations participating are the Daughters of Charity, the Congregation of the Mission (Lazarists), and the US Council. The main goal of this collaboration is to formulate policy, practices and initiatives seeking Systemic Change by education and empowerment of the poor in all countries where they serve. In February 2010, the Comity joined Citizens for Public Justice and Canada without Poverty, which militate for poverty reduction in Canada in a Christian and non-partisan way.

The voice of the poor is becoming louder within the Society, as time passes, due to the enthusiasm and commitment demonstrated by members. My most sincere thanks to all the artisans of this important program, part of the Society's mission.

● **Clermont Fortin, 1st Vice President**
Chairperson Voice of the Poor Committee

International Emergency Relief Committee

The Committee has responsibility to respond to and track request to financial assistance from national councils outside Canada as a result of disasters. Funds are provided mostly to countries twinning with Canadian councils and conferences.

The Committee recommended and the Executive Committee approved relief assistance to foreign councils as follows:

- Natural disasters in Oceania and Asia (Typhoons Morakot and Ketsama in Taiwan, Philippines, Vietnam & Cambodia), earthquake in Indonesia, flooding in India, tsunami in Samoa & Tonga: a sum of \$4000.00 taken from the reserve funds was sent to the International Council General (ICG) in October 2009. As well, the National Council transferred to the ICG funds contributed by councils for these catastrophes.
- Natural Disasters in Haiti in 2008 (hurricanes Gustav and Ike), the Committee transferred to the Conseil national d'Haiti a sum of \$15,500.00 in several monthly instalments as a result of contributions from the ORC and QRC. Last payment was made in December 2009.
- Earthquake in Haiti on January 12, 2010. It is one of the worst disasters in recent memory. Considering the magnitude of the devastation, the number of people affected by it and the Society's close ties with Vincentians in Haiti, the National President launched a national appeal soon after the catastrophe. The Chair of the IERC was able to contact (cellular phones & E-mail) members of the Conseil national d'Haiti a few days after the disaster to offer moral support and financial assistance. Contributions were still flowing to the National Council at the end of the fiscal year. Close to \$80,000.00 had been collected for Haiti on March 31st. The reliability of the banking system was tested in January; the transfer of a small sum of money to the CNH, according to established system, was successful. Transfers of funds to the CNH for its own needs and that of the four Regional Councils were continuing at the end of FY. Each transfer of money is subjected to acknowledgment and accountability mechanisms, which were established in 2009.
- Updates on Committee's post-disaster actions were posted on the National web site; the National President also kept Regional Presidents informed of progress via E-mail reports for circulation to all members.

The last few months were a challenge as our Brothers and Sisters in Haiti and the destitute they serve needed our help in the most pressing way. I thank all Vincentians for their generosity and compassion in this time sorrow.

- **Clermont Fortin, 1st Vice President**
Chairperson IERC

National Emergency Relief Committee

The Committee did not receive any request for assistance during the past year. There was \$110,000.00 in the reserve fund at the end of the year.

- **Clermont Fortin, 1st Vice President**
Chairperson NERC

Finance Committee

The Finance Committee, chaired by **Marcel Tremblay, VP**, met a few times to ensure a sound administration of the funds sent to the National Council. Our **treasurer, Germain Souigny**, and **François Dufault, members of the Finance Committee**, continue to work in order to develop financial systems that that will ensure long-term viability.

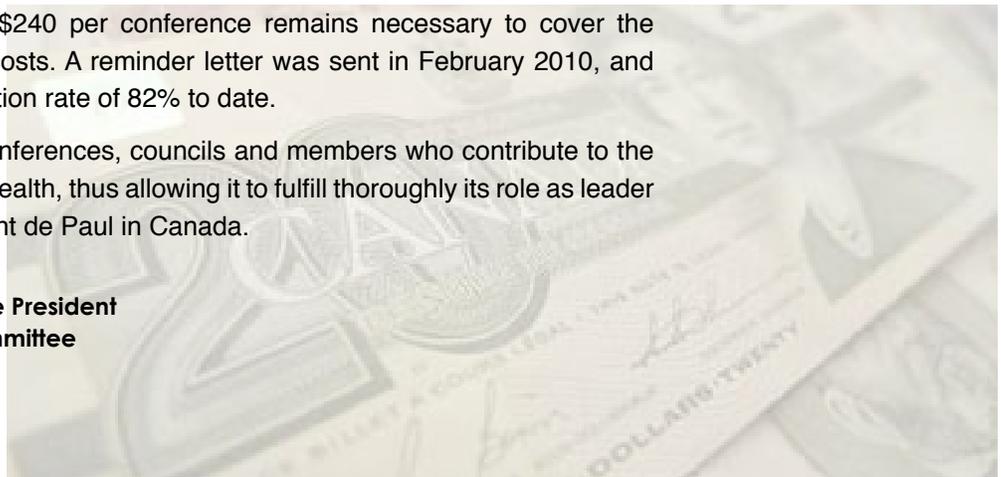
The annual report form has been modified and will be presented for approval by members at the 2010 AGA. If approved, the new form will allow the Voice of the Poor Committee to better advocate on behalf of low-income people.

Financial guidelines appearing on the form have been modified to indicate that every region must pay for traveling expenses when their own President, or delegate, attends National Council Board meetings. That modification will be submitted to AGA members for approval.

The annual contribution of \$240 per conference remains necessary to cover the National Council operating costs. A reminder letter was sent in February 2010, and we have reached a participation rate of 82% to date.

Thank you so much to all conferences, councils and members who contribute to the National Council's financial health, thus allowing it to fulfill thoroughly its role as leader of the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul in Canada.

- **Marcel Tremblay, 3rd Vice President**
Chairperson Finance Committee



Youth Committee

I am happy to present the third annual report of my term as Canadian Youth Representative.

Youth Retreat

The first “Youth Retreat” took place at the end of the 2009 summer, in Chatham, Ontario. A few dozens of young Ontario Vincentians met in Camp Saint Vincent de Paul for three days to share spiritual, social, outdoors and renewal activities. Several volunteers, young and old alike, worked together to make that gathering quite a success! The activity should take place again in July 2010.

Pencil Case Project

The “Pencil Case” project made several people happy last October. Under the supervision of Carmela Addante, the campaign that lasted several months ended with the delivery of several boxes full of school and daily living supplies in Haiti, and the Dominican Republic. Congratulations to Carmela and her team for succeeding with that ambitious project!

Scholarship Program

A scholarship program was developed within the National Council of Canada. The main sponsor has not been determined yet, but the project should be ready to grant the first scholarship at the 2011 AGA. Conferences will soon receive all the information pertaining to the scholarship program.

Youth Conferences' Aggregation

During the last months, the National Council of Canada had to take a stand with regard to a decision by the International Council on the aggregation of youth conferences. In fact, CGI has modified procedures, adding a new level of complexity to the youth conference aggregation process. After discussion, it was decided that the new procedure would not be applied in Canada, as our youth conferences have shown exemplary operations.

A few youth conferences have emerged in Ontario over the last year. Congratulations to recruiters! When such an event takes place in your area, please let me know: carolinegilbert@live.fr.

Constant progress for all of you!

● **Caroline Gilbert, Youth Representative**



Pencil Case project - Haiti and Dominican Republic



Twining Committee

I thank all who have as one of their works, twinning. This is a help to the poor, in Canada, and in the countries with whom we are twinned.

I have committed to goals for twinning in 2007, and continue to try to address them.

Below is a report on progress with these goals, and other task items that are done to maintain and promote twinning.

- Promotion of projects as a way to further assist our twins
- Articles in the Vincenzapaul magazine, which goes to all Conferences and Councils in Canada. The titles of articles published in 2010 are: Tips on Writing to Your Twin, A Planned Jamaican Project, Twining Ad, and What Happens to our Twining Funds.
- Encouragement of conferences who express the wish to help their twin more, to consider the “project process”. During a recent visit to the Dominican Republic, two projects were presented, one to complete a cement block home, and a proposal to buy land for a home for the elderly, each of which have been collecting funds from their own members and conferences and councils.
- Assistance where possible of the young adults in their twinning endeavors. (The young adults contributed much effort and organization to the AGA in Waterloo in 2009). A proposed project in Guatemala, of building the third level of a school/ community center for the young adult conference our youth are twinned with, must be acted upon, either with a response to the project, or a passing on of this project.
- Approaching twins who haven't transferred funds in the past 3 years, to ask about their needs and wishes in regards to twinning. Letter sent in February '10 to twins who haven't transferred funds in the past 3 years. - Not as many twins as last year were responsive to this letter. Perhaps we have addressed which twins were able to respond.

1. The National Board took some actions in regards to twinning in November. The Board passed a motion to change the designated countries with which we twin - policy TW001. If the National Council accepts this at the AGA, we will be able to twin with the two countries of French Cameroon and Brazil. We await the National Council decision.
2. A Canadian Twining Resource Manual has been drafted and is being reviewed by the National Twining Committee and the National Board.
3. I am in the process of ensuring that the Canadian Twining Agreement is signed by another of the designated National Councils - Haiti. I will need to address this action again if the two countries are added to our list of designated countries with which we can make new twinings.
4. Reporting from the Regions: A Quebec twin supports a social and educational center. The Regional Council raised over \$64,000 for relief in Haiti. BC and Yukon reports show prayers offered, “at each and every meeting”, communication mostly by email, slight increase in donations, aid – to children, to train paramedics, to supply sewing machines for small businesses, help to the elderly, repair of homes, assistance to an orphanage. They experience troubles with twin receiving funds, and with translators, both in Canada and in the twinned conferences. One conference concluded, “From all messages and photos, our twin conference appears to be vibrant, energetic and a group of dedicated young Vincentians”. Atlantic reports no big changes. Ontario reports that a brother from their twinned Conference in Guatemala visited them. He attended one of their meetings at which he described the works of the Conference in Guatemala and brought pictures of the Conference members, etc. The Conference here in Hamilton recently again hooked up via ‘skype’ and both Conferences then said the Rosary together.

Task Items

- A twinning newsletter and spiritual message was sent with the annual request for twinning reports. Thank you to Nicole Schryburt for her assistance with the newsletter and publication.
- Twinning X 10 since June '09. We currently have 111 active twinings: 91 external, 12 internal, and 1 PAT conferences and councils actively twinning. We have sent \$51,650 (twinning funds only) to our twinned countries and the poor that they serve.
- I went with Penny Craig to visit the Dominican Republic, and then Haiti by van. I was able to improve our twinning with both of these countries: by meeting our responsibilities to CRA; by acquiring more twins from both countries; by acquiring projects from the Dominican Republic that will be considered by the National Board and Twinning Committee.

Respectfully submitted,

- **Kathy Weswick and Nicole Schryburt**
National Twinning Committee chairperson and
National Administrative Assistant



Members of a Peruvian youth conference



Peruvian children waiting for Santa



Vincentians from Haiti, Dominican Republic and Canada



Vincentians visiting two blind sisters who live together

Spirituality Committee

The mandate of the Spirituality Committee is to work with Conferences and Councils at all levels in order to inspire more spirituality within the society.

The Committee hopes to develop and provide materials that will enhance our spirituality at our meetings, when we visit those in need and, indeed our normal daily lives.

Each year, at the May National Board meeting, members of the committee conduct a retreat that is designed to help the National Board appreciate the spiritual component that is found within the administrative work they carry out on our behalf.

At the National Board meeting, the Spiritual Committee works with the Board to determine the theme for our AGA and, as well, the committee works with the AGA Planning Committee to prepare the spiritual program and develop the theme for the AGA, to plan our liturgies and suggest topics for workshops as well as facilitate workshops.

Each year at the AGA, there is a luncheon for all Spiritual Advisors and they come together to share what is going on in their own area and to discuss spiritual themes to ensure that our Society is adhering to the principles set down by our Beloved Frederic. This is hosted by the National Spirituality Committee.

Articles are written by the Committee for the magazine as well as our website. Members of the Committee may also work with Councils/Conferences who are in need of spiritual assistance in order to enhance their meetings.

In addition, on the website, you will see a copy of the Handbook for Spiritual Advisors as well as some reflections that may be used at meetings. I would like, at this time, to thank Pat Bennetto who has completed a bibliography of spiritual books that all of us will find very useful. This list will soon be available on the website. Unfortunately, there is no French list available. The Committee will attempt to rectify that as soon as possible.

I would like to thank all the members of the Committee for their dedication to our Society:

Yvon Bussières
Pat Bennetto
Monsignor Peter Schonenbach
Father Joe Quinn
Monsignor Andre Drouin

Yours in Christ

● **Maureen MacIsaac, Chairperson**



By the hand of iconographer Donna R. Rathert, based on image at St. Peter's Church, Phibsboro, Dublin. www.reflectionministries.net

Statistics

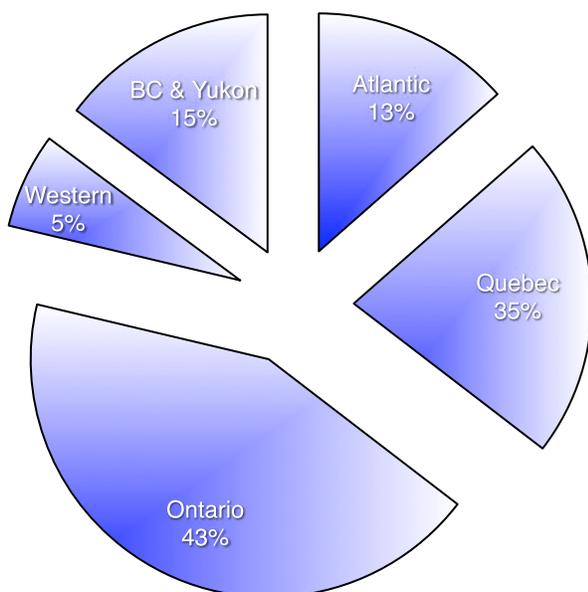
Summary of Vincentian Activities across Canada

Members	12 718	Number of visits made	254 989
Regional Councils	5	Number of people helped	363 328
Central Councils	12		
Particular Councils	95	Total receipts	\$ 24 781 736
Conferences	874	Total expenditure	\$ 24 620 952

Financial Contributions

Atlantic Regional Council	\$ 25 060
Quebec Regional Council	\$ 40 645
Ontario Regional Council	\$ 80 260
Western Regional Council	\$ 12 000
BC and Yukon Regional Council	\$ 27 500

Share of contributions by region



Amounts per conference/council

