

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE SPIRITUAL ADVISOR

***Members of the Society are united in the same spirit of poverty and sharing.
They encourage one another to love a profound spiritual life and a spirit of prayer.
For this purpose, the role of SPIRITUAL ADVISOR is very important.
(international Rule 3.13)***

The purpose of the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul is to increase the holiness of its members, and so from its foundation the Society has affirmed the importance of the role of Spiritual Advisor as being essential for its life and mission

The Rule and Statutes of SSVP Canada 2.7:

In accordance with the tradition established at the beginning of the Society, the president will appoint a spiritual advisor. The spiritual advisor will foster the spiritual life within the conference or council in light of the guidance of the Holy Spirit. But the spirit of the Rule will be promoted in its entirety and be the basis for any program of spiritual development.

Goal 1.1 of the Strategic Plan of the ONRC states:

Presidents of all Conferences and Councils will appoint, develop and have available a Spiritual Advisor for monthly meetings and for general counsel (guidance, advice, direction, recommendation, etc.) to their Vincentian family members

The President of the Conference or Council has the obligation to select a person who is both willing and able to devote the necessary time and energy to the role of Spiritual Advisor. At the present time in the Church, the demands of the parish prevent most pastors from fulfilling the role of Spiritual Advisor.

Today we stand in the grace of Vatican II which called forth the vocation of the laity. Therefore, in this grace, we will find that in our Conferences often there is someone, rooted in Vincentian Spirituality, who is waiting for the invitation to be called forth to serve in the role of Spiritual Advisor.

It is hoped that the material contained herein will provide necessary information for the formation of Conference and Council Spiritual Advisors. Leadership of the Council or Conference should dialogue and reflect with the new Spiritual Advisor as he/she prepares to assume the position. After completing a period of formation, the following will take place:

1. A commissioning ceremony will take place. (see pages 3,4)
2. The Spiritual Advisor will submit his/her information to ONRC (see page 5)



◀ INSTALLATION OF SPIRITUAL ADVISORS ▶

◀ President ▶

Come Holy Spirit, live within our lives.

◀ All ▶

And strengthen us by your love.

◀ President ▶

As we gather here together to commission (Name) as Spiritual Advisor for (Name of Conference of Council) let us reflect on our call to journey to holiness from the International Rule of the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul:

(The following may be recited together or read by different members)

- *Vincentians are called to journey together towards holiness, because true holiness is perfect union with Christ and the perfection of love, which is central to their vocation and the source of its fruitfulness.*
- *Vincentians aspire to burn with the love of God as revealed by Christ and to deepen their own faith and fidelity.*
- *Vincentians are aware of their own brokenness and need to God's grace. They seek His glory, not their own. Their ideal is to relieve suffering for love alone, without thinking of any reward or advantage for themselves.*
- *Vincentians draw nearer to Christ, by serving Him in the poor and in one another. They grow more perfect in love by expressing compassionate and tender love to the poor and to one another.*

The president presents the Spiritual Advisor pin to the Spiritual Advisor.

◀ **President** ▶

Receive this pin as a sign of your leadership and responsibility. May the Holy Spirit grant you a receptive mind and a loving heart so that you will come to know the spirit of St. Vincent de Paul and Blessed Frederic Ozanam.

Since the beginning of the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul, a Spiritual advisor has been appointed to help foster the spiritual life of the members under the guidance of the Holy Spirit and in conformity with the Rule of the Society.

And so now I ask you : Do you (*Name*) promise to carry out your duties with diligence and creativity to promote the work of the Society ?

◀ **Spiritual Advisor** ▶

I do, and I pray for the strength and wisdom to faithfully serve the members and those they visit.

◀ **President** ▶

Do you promise to be a spiritual animator, developing the Vincentian spiritual life of the members so that they may better understand the meaning of charity and its practical application toward those in need?

◀ **Spiritual Advisor** ▶

I do and I pray that I have the strength to build among our members one mind and one heart so that we will be a sign of the presence and love of Christ in our community.

◀ **President** ▶

Do you promise to help all members reach a deeper faith awareness of their participation in the mystery of the Church and their vocation as Christians and Vincentians to serve and minister to others as well as each other?

◀ **Spiritual Advisor** ▶

I do and I pray to be filled with the grace to identify with the poor and needy, and to foster friendship among the members as well as those we serve.

◀ **President** ▶

Do you promise to be loyal to the Rule and the spirit of the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul, attend meetings, provide scriptural and Vincentian readings and prayers, participate in the discussions and provide guidance on Spiritual matters?

◀ **Spiritual Advisor** ▶

I do, and I pray that I will be generous with my time, my possessions and myself in this mission of charity.

◀ **President** ▶

(*Name*), you have generously accepted an important responsibility as a Spiritual advisor of the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul. I now ask all the members to share in that responsibility by offering our prayers and our support. Let us seek the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Patroness of our Society, as we say together:

◀ **All** ▶

Hail Mary...

◀ **President** ▶

Let us now raise our hands in blessing as we pray together:

In the spirit of Jesus, as a servant leader, and in the name of our patron, Saint Vincent de Paul and our Founder, Blessed Frederic Ozanam, we commission you (*Name*) as the Spiritual Advisor of the (*Name of Conference of Council*) .

We ask for the grace that with your wisdom and leadership, we may together:

- grow together in holiness,
- deepen our spirit of friendship with each other,
- serve the poor in charity and justice, love , compassion and joy.

Amen

SOCIETY OF SAINT VINCENT DE PAUL – CANADA

ONTARIO REGIONAL COUNCIL

SPIRITUAL ADVISOR REGISTRATION

Name _____

Address _____

Telephone _____

Email _____

Name of Conference or Council _____

Date of Installation _____

Please forward a copy of completed form to:

The Administrative Assistant

Ontario Regional Council – Society of Saint Vincent de Paul

secretary@ssvp.on.ca



GUIDELINES FOR THE CONFERENCE / COUNCIL

SPIRITUAL ADVISOR

ONTARIO REGIONAL COUNCIL

BACKGROUND:

The Society of Saint Vincent de Paul is a lay Catholic organization founded in 1833 by Frederic Ozanam and his companions. They placed the Society under the patronage of Saint Vincent de Paul and the Blessed Virgin Mary and developed the first rule. Today the Rule and Statutes of the International confederation of the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul and the rules and statutes of the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul – Canada and the foundation documents of the Society of Canada. All spirituality programs must be in keeping with the teachings of the church and the Rule.

No work of charity is foreign to the Society. The Society serves and ministers to all the poor, making no distinction of creed, ethnic or social background, health, gender or political opinions. (Rule 1.1)

Vincentians, within the limits of a parish, a school, a workplace, etc. join together to form a Conference, (Rule 2,2,1) A group of Conferences form a Particular Council. Where sufficient numbers allow, a group of Particular councils may form a Central Council. There are also 5 regional Councils in SSVP Canada. Each Conference and Council must have an elected President who appoints an executive. In addition each Conference and Council must have a Spiritual Advisor who is also appointed by the President. All who are appointed serve at the invitation of the President and until that President 's term ends.

The Council of Vatican II reminds us that all of the faithful are called to holiness, the fullness of Christian life and to the perfection of charity. Because the primary purpose of the Society is to increase the holiness of its members, the Spiritual Advisor is essential to its life and mission.

While holiness is the goal of the Society, perfection has never been a condition for membership. Members of SSVP are struggling pilgrims wanting to grow closer to God through prayer and charity. Blessed Frederic referred to us as 'struggling Samaritans' called to be saints. The Spiritual Advisor accompanies his/her Vincentian sisters and brothers in their journey of faith and charity.

DISCRIPTION and FUNCTION OF THE SPIRITUAL ADVISOR:

The Spiritual Advisor may be a priest, a deacon, a professed religious or a Catholic lay person. The Spiritual Advisor takes responsibility for the spiritual growth, development and life of the Conference or Council in accordance with the mission and ministry of the society of Saint Vincent de Paul by assisting his/her fellow Vincentians to better understand the meaning of charity and its application toward those in need. In many parts of Canada, parish priests are unable to devote the necessary time to be active Spiritual Advisors. A retired member of clergy, a deacon, a member of a religious order who wants to become immersed in the Vincentian charism could be a good choice. Often a member who is already fully Vincentian can be the best choice.

Spiritual Advisors are full Conference/Council members but without voting rights (Rule 2.6) Priests, deacons and members of religious orders are not eligible to be appointed to any office other than that of Spiritual Advisor (Rule 2.7)

QUALITIES APPROPRIATE FOR A SPIRITUAL ADVISOR:

- A commitment to the call and pursuit of Christian holiness
- Personal witness to the growth and development of his/her own spiritual life
- A commitment to the value and role of lay ministry in the mission of the Catholic Church
- Knowledge of and commitment to Jesus Christ and the role of the gospels as integral to Vincentian spirituality
- A commitments the rule, mission and ministry of the Society and to the teachings of the Catholic Church
- Knowledge of the spirituality and lives of Vincentian saints and founders, including Saint Vincent de Paul, Saint Louise de Marillac, Blessed Frederic Ozanam and Blessed Rosalie Rendu
- Ability to recognize and enable the gifts and talents of others in fulfilling the mission of the Society
- Willingness to participate actively with her/his fellow Vincentians in their service to those in need

ROLE OF THE SPIRITUAL ADVISOR:

***You must have an inner life,
Everything must tend in that direction.
If you lack this, you lack everything.
-Saint Vincent de Paul***

The Spiritual Advisor is attentive to the inner life of the Conference/Council and so must be immersed in Vincentian Spirituality. He/she sees Christ in the poor and sees all Vincentians as Christ going to the poor acting as Christ would in all things.

At meetings, the Spiritual Advisor listens with a discerning ear, making sure that our actions are in keeping with Vincentian and Catholic values and social teachings. If she/he thinks it necessary, the Spiritual Advisor voices a living concern to correct the line of thinking or actions. Vincentians must act in the name of Christ, Servant of the Poor, in everything.

The role of Spiritual Advisor includes helping to form members in understanding and living Vincentian Spirituality. This formation begins at birth and continues in the sacraments and in what we learn from the examples of parents and others. Vincentian Spirituality is learned from the special charisms of our patron saint Vincent de Paul, our founders and others. Their lives are examples of service and care for others. Emulating them, Vincentians value compassion greatly and strive to act with compassion in all things. This leads us to seek ways to help in all possible ways with food, housing, education, etc. and to strive for social justice.

Vincentian Spirituality may be best expressed in the hallmark activity of the Society, the Home Visit. Vincentians encounter Christ in those we visit. This personal encounter with our neighbours in need requires a listening ear to discover how to best offer assistance. Leaving those we visit with a sense of hope is most important. Hope says that God will journey with you, through troubled times, and things can improve.

The Spiritual Advisor fosters and animates the spiritual life of Vincentians, encouraging them as well as himself/herself to grow in faith. To prepare ourselves for our Vincentian mission we 'put on Christ'. His love filters through us and permeates our family, work and community lives. We develop our spiritual lives through prayer, scripture and sacraments. Vincentians 'come together as family' sharing these with our Vincentian sisters and brothers.

DUTIES OF THE SPIRITUAL ADVISOR

1. Attend Conference/Council meetings and participate in the activities of the Conference/Council.
2. Lead opening and closing prayers at meetings
3. Provide spiritual reflections with opportunities for participation at meetings
4. Ensure that meetings are conducted in spirit of Christian charity
5. Help to develop the spiritual life of members
6. Encourage Vincentian friendship among members
7. Grow together with the members on knowledge of Vincentian spirituality
8. Strive to learn more about the Society, its history and spirituality
9. Collaborate with other Spiritual Advisors in the Particular and/or Central Council to provide support and spiritual development in such things as retreats, days of reflection, feast day liturgies, study materials, etc.
10. Along with the President, maintain effective communication with pastors.

WHAT IS A VINCENTIAN SPIRITUAL REFLECTION?

HOW DO I LEAD ONE?

A meeting shall include a spiritual reading followed by an exchange. Vincentians are encouraged to participate actively in sharing insights on spiritual topics, particularly on the way they relate to the development of a Christian attitude towards the poor and to the development of the Society's service ministry. (Rule 2.2.9)

Every meeting begins and ends with prayers which can be found in the Rule. A spiritual reading or meditation or address follows the opening prayer with one or more questions presented for discussion. Members are always invited to share their comments on this spiritual reflection.

The spiritual reflection may be drawn from a variety of sources (e.g. scripture, the Rule, writings or feast days of Vincentian saints, liturgical feasts) but should always relate to the mission of the Society. It need not be lengthy. A test of a larger selection that is meaningful will encourage members to search further on their own. When using material prepared by others, it is preferable to make it personal to the local Conference/Council and its current needs.

HOW TO LEAD A SPIRITUAL REFLECTION

(If the process is new to the membership,
the Spiritual Advisor describes how it will take place before beginning.
The entire process should take 10-15 minutes)

Hand out copies to members, whenever possible, so that they can re-read and reflect at their own pace.

Read, or have someone else read, the passage clearly and slowly. Two readers can make some readings more easily understood.

Invite everyone to reflect on the reading and anything in it that strikes them personally.

Read the discussion questions. Pause for a minute.

Invite comments. Not everyone present will want to comment but everyone who wants to say something should be accommodated. If the process is new to the Conference, leading questions will help elicit responses.

A short prayer can be used to conclude the reflection time.

VINCENTIAN FEAST DAYS AND CEREMONIES

Vincentians are called to journey together towards holiness. Conference and Council members should celebrate together throughout the year. Feast days are important dates for the Society. Vincentians attend mass together or, alternatively share prayer services or other paraliturgies.

The following are particularly Vincentian in nature:

February 7	Feast of Blessed Rosalie Rendu
April 28	Feast of Saint Gianna Beretta Molla
May 9	Feast of Saint Louise de Marillac
July 4	Feast of Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati
September 9	Feast of Blessed Frederic Ozanam
September 27	Feast of Saint Vincent de Paul
November 27	Feast of the Miraculous Medal
November 28	Feast of Saint Catherine Laboure
December 8	Feast of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary
December 12	Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe and National Day of Prayer in Solidarity with Indigenous People

Prayer services that can be used by Conferences and Councils follow in this section.

VINCENTIAN PRAYER SERVICE
FEAST OF BLESSED ROSALIE RENDU
February 7

LEADER:

Sister Rosa lie Rendu, a Daughter of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul, served the poor in a very densely populated quarter of Paris where people were often without bread and without God. Sister Rosalie's name was a promise of hope.

Concern for others united Sister Rosalie and Monsieur Bailly, director of The Catholic Tribune. In 1833 he wrote to her: 'I am sending you two young men who have left our history conference ... Their charity is spirited, but they are young and impetuous. They have already committed themselves to certain praiseworthy acts but in little harmony with their possibilities. They have already distributed their winter provision of wood. They need direction. You alone, my mother, are qualified to guide them. Their names are Monsieur Ozanam and Monsieur Le Tallandier. Both are students.'

And so with love and devotion, Sister Rosalie taught the founding members of our Society how to befriend the poor with dignity, love, kindness and respect, in the spirit of St. Vincent de Paul.

SPIRITUALADVISOR: In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.
All: Amen

SPIRITUAL ADVISOR: Come Holy Spirit live within our lives,
All: And strengthen us by your love.

SPIRITUAL ADVISOR Send forth your Spirit and new life will be created,
ALL: And the whole face of the earth will be renewed.

SPIRITUAL ADVISOR: Let us remember the words spoken by Sister Rosa lie to Frederic Ozanam and his companions, "Be kind and love, for love is your first gift to the poor. They will appreciate your kindness and your love more than anything else you bring them."

Invoking the names of God, we pray:

God of Compassion, you move deep within us making us aware of those who are suffering and poor.
ALL: Give us loving hearts as we touch the pain of others.

SPIRITUAL ADVISOR: God of Peace, you are the centre of our lives, as strong current of calmness in the whirlwind of our struggles.
All: We look to you for strength and constant assurance of hope.

SPIRITUAL ADVISOR: God of Truth, reach into our inner space, enlarge our capacity to receive, help us to recognize and accept your challenges to growth.
ALL: May we trust in your presence among us as we strive to be friends with you, friends with each other and friends with the poor.

AMEN

VINCENTIAN PRAYER SERVICE
FEAST OF ST. LOUISE DE MARILLAC
May9

LEADER:

As a wife, mother, teacher and foundress, Louise de Marillac welcomed the grace of God into her life.

She had a heart that welcomed poor, homeless, alienated and abandoned people. She took a small

group of women and molded them into a community of total dedication: "Given to God for the Service of the Poor" and rooted the Daughters of Charity in the Vincentian spirituality of finding Jesus in the poor and the poor in Jesus. Louise loved and hoped in God.

Louise taught us: "You see a great deal of stress that you are unable to relieve. God sees it also. Bear

the pain with them, doing all you can to give them whatever help you can, then remain in peace."

SPIRITUAL ADVISOR: lord, grant us the heart and spirit of Louise de Marillac.

(Alternate sides or readers)

- Lord, we ask for the grace to have ...
 - Her listening heart
 - Her love and respect
 - Her ability to empower
 - Her strength and dignity
 - And her faith amidst turmoil.
- Lord, we ask for the grace to have
 - Her organizational genius
 - Her deep spirit of prayer
 - Her dedication to the poor
 - Her simplicity and laughter
 - And her humble, servant leadership.
- lord, we ask for the grace to have
 - Her compassion and sensitivity
 - Her understanding of suffering
 - Her total commitment to God
 - Her abandonment to Providence
 - And her faithfulness to the will of God.
- lord, we ask for the grace to have
 - Her gift of discernment
 - Her willingness to take risks
 - Her ability to negotiate
 - Her clarity of vision and mission
 - And her dedication to the service of the poor.

AMEN

VINCENTIAN PRAYER SERVICE
FEAST OF BLESSED FREDERIC OZANAM
September 9

SPIRITUAL ADVISOR/LEADER:

As we celebrate the feast of Blessed Frederic Ozanam, let us pray with the words of scripture found in the Gospel of Matthew {25:31-40):

When the Son of Man comes in his glory, escorted by all the angels of heaven, he will sit on his royal throne and all the nations will be assembled before him. Then he will separate them into two groups as a shepherd separates sheep from goats. The sheep he will place on his right hand, the goats on his left. The king will say to those on his right: Come, you have my Fathers blessing! Inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the creation of the world.

For I was hungry and you gave me to eat. I was thirsty and you gave me to drink. I was a stranger and you welcomed me, naked and you clothed me. I was ill and you comforted me, in prison and you came to visit me.

Then the just will ask Him: 'Lard, when did we see you hungry and feed you or see you thirsty and give you drink? When did we welcome you away from home or clothe you in your nakedness? When did we visit you when you were ill or in prison? And the king will answer them: "I assure you, as often as you did it for one of my least brothers, you sis it for me."

(Alternate sides or alternate speakers)

- I was hungry and you prepared food and shared it with me in your dining rooms, always treating me with dignity. You also brought me food from your food pantries and helped me celebrate Christmas.
- I was thirsty and you shared with me and helped me find ways to break my addictions and find that which would truly satisfy my thirst.
- I was a stranger and you welcomed me, and you fought in every way you could against the barriers of race and class and gender that separate us from each other.
- I was naked and you helped clothe me by running St. Vincent de Paul Stores, giving me respect as I purchased clothing and furniture for my family that I could not afford.
- I was ill and you visited me, brought me medical assistance and when I was sick with worry, you helped pay my bills giving me hope and courage.
- I was in prison and you came to see me, contacted my family for me and always prayed with and for me.

SPIRITUAL ADVISOR: Then the Vincentians will answer, "But lord we don't deserve any reward for these things! We were blessed when we did them and we found that we always stood on holy ground for:

(Alternate sides or alternate speakers)

- When you were hungry we felt the presence of the Holy Spirit as we gave you food.
- When you were thirsty we were touched by your agonies and, as we listened to you we became able to believe that God really loves us in the midst of our agonies.
- When you were a stranger we were enriched as you broke down our racial fears and cultural
- stereotypes to share with us. We were blessed when you helped us move beyond 'Us and Them' simply to WE.
- When you were naked we were moved by your pain and your humility in asking for help. We felt the peaceful conviction grow within us that we are privileged to be in the struggle together.
- When you were ill and dying we felt great awe at being able to touch your suffering.
- When you were in prison we were touched by sharing in your brokenness and blessed with greater sensitivity and prayerfulness and hope.

SPIRITUAL ADVISOR: Then Christ will answer: "Now you have a true glimpse, a real taste of what the Reign of God will be like in its fullness! But there is much yet to do. Throw yourselves into the work. Bring everyone onto this holy ground to join you to carry on the work of Frederic Ozanam, and always give thanks for the vocation of being a Vincentian. Amen

VINCENTIAN PRAYER SERVICE
FEAST OF ST. VINCENT DE PAUL
September 27

SPIRITUAL ADVISOR: In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.
ALL: Amen

SPIRITUAL ADVISOR: Come Holy Spirit, live within our lives,
ALL: And strengthen us by your love.

SPIRITUAL ADVISOR: Send forth your Spirit and new life will be created,
ALL: And the whole face of the world will be renewed.

SPIRITUAL ADVISOR: Let us listen to the words of St. Vincent de Paul:

"Jesus, You have called me to evangelize persons who are bruised and burdened, and my purpose is to make you known. When you lived on this earth, your thoughts and actions were of mercy, forgiveness and healing for all people, because you knew it was your Father's will that all be saved.

Teach me by your example, and grant me all the virtues necessary to be a true evangelizer. Help me,

through the fervor of my zeal, set the world on fire. I want to give myself to you, body and soul, mind

and heart and spirit and always to do what pleases you. In your mercy, grant me the grace to have you continue in me and through me Your Work, O Blessed Saviour. Amen"

SPIRITUAL ADVISOR: Let us pray. (Alternate sides or alternate readers)

- Loving Creator, we ask for the insight to understand the needs of people today that we might grasp the complexity of the situations that face us, and the absolute demands of human need.
- The hungry have a right to food, the homeless to shelter, the oppressed to freedom and the ill to care.
- God enable us to risk being in solidarity with our brothers and sisters, to be contagious in our love for all, as we transmit our charism of the spirit of St. Vincent de Paul
- Do not allow our fear, ignorance or pride to limit the actions of your Spirit, nor allow our selfishness to prevent your Divine creativity within us from bearing fruit.

SPIRITUAL ADVISOR: We ask this in Jesus' name,
ALL: Amen

VINCENTIAN PRAYER SERVICE
FEAST OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION
December 8

SPIRITUAL ADVISOR/LEADER:

The feast of the Immaculate Conception has always been one of the festival days when Vincentians gather and celebrate. This feast day dates back to the very beginning of the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul and can be traced to Blessed Frederic Ozanam himself.

Since the earliest days of the Society, members have shown great devotion to Mary, the Mother of God. Our principal founder, Blessed Frederic Ozanam, developed a great spirit of piety by fervent devotion to the Blessed Virgin and this virtue was explicitly expressed in the text of his decree for the introduction of his cause for beatification.

It was Blessed Frederic who, shortly after the beginning of the Society, formally proposed that the Mother of God- Mary Immaculate-should be the heavenly patroness of the Society. It was his suggestion that at each Conference meeting the Hail Mary should be said and that the Feast of the Immaculate Conception should be a festival day of the Society. Just prior to his death in 1853, despite protests from his wife and friends, Ozanam desired to walk to the Church saying, "This is my last walk on earth and I desire that it should be to visit my God and His Blessed Mother."

It is no wonder that the tender devotion to the Mother of God -Immaculate Mary- has been and still is, traditional among the members of SSVF for she is our heavenly patroness.

SPIRITUAL ADVISOR: O God, through the intercession of Mary conceived without sin, we now lift our voices in praise:

ALL: We ask for the grace to embrace God's will as Mary did.

SPIRITUAL ADVISOR: Through Mary, seat of wisdom:

ALL: We ask for the grace to believe that all things are possible with God.

SPIRITUAL ADVISOR: Through Mary, our Mother:

ALL: We ask for the grace to bring strength to the weary and comfort to those in sorrow.

SPIRITUAL ADVISOR: Through Mary, source of our joy:

ALL: We ask for the grace of healing for those who are brokenhearted.

SPIRITUAL ADVISOR: Through Mary, queen of all saints:

ALL: We ask for the grace of recognizing the goodness in all those we serve.

SPIRITUAL ADVISOR: In the spirit of Mary's Magnificat we pray:

(Alternate sides or alternate speakers)

- Our souls are filled with wonder at the gift of our loving and our spirits take on new meaning in the giving of love. God of love, you have looked upon us with favour as we join our lives in response to you.
- Yes, from this time on, all people who look on us will recognize us as friends and will call us blessed for you, the One who dwells in human hearts, have done great things for us.
- Holy is your name and your confirming joy reaches from age to age to those who dare to journey with us in the service of our brothers and sisters.
- You have shown us the life-changing power of love in the eyes of those whose lives we touch, and we recognize that the bondedness of human hearts and lives reflects one true reality, the Living God.

SPIRITUAL ADVISOR: And so we pray together: Hail Mary

CLOSING SONG: (Conclude with a song to Mary)

VINCENTIAN PRAYER SERVICE
NATIONAL DAY OF PRAYER IN SOLIDARITY WITH INDIGENOUS PEOPLE
FEAST OF OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE
December 12

LEADER:

Our Lady of Guadalupe Circle was formed in 2016 in response to the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops invitation to discuss how to respond to the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. The name of the group was chosen because of the vision of the Blessed Virgin Mary to St. Juan Diego, an indigenous person, in Mexico in 1531. On December 12 we celebrate both the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe and Canada's National Day of Prayer and Solidarity with Indigenous People. As Vincentians we seek to demonstrate our love for our fellow human beings and to build bridges of trust within our country and our world.

The belief in a benevolent Creator, a natural world that is good, the need to answer the call to live a life of virtue, and the importance of communication with the Creator are some of the elements that Catholic and Indigenous spiritualities have in common. Both Catholic and Indigenous spiritualities are committed to a relationship with a Divine Being who is honoured and loved for His gifts and kindness to the human world.

SPIRITUAL ADVISOR:

God blessed the Americas at Tepeyac with the presence of the Virgin Mary of Guadalupe. May her prayers help all men and women accept each other as brothers and sisters. May she inspire all Vincentians who serve Christ in the poor and work for justice for all people.

Let us pray together: (prayer of the CCCB):

0 Creator God, we give praise to You for our lives and world. You make all things new and good, and you invite your peoples throughout creation to receive and share all that is good with each other. Thank you for how wonderfully and intimately You share Your life with us. Likewise we seek deepening relationships with each other and all Creation.

We commit to live and work with one another- our families; our communities; all cultures, nations and peoples- in union with Mary, all the Saints, our Grandmothers and Grandfathers who have gone before us and inspire us. We thank Your Great Holy Spirit for the great variety of gifts and talents You give Your people, and we commit to always using Your blessings to help one another and all Creation.

0 God there are many challenges in the world. We thank you for the gift of Your Son, Jesus Christ, who is the Way, the Truth and the Life. We rely on our friendship in Jesus and the power of Your Great Spirit to help us live good and moral lives. May our journey towards deepening virtue help us to battle evil and to bring blessings to the most difficult challenges.

We commit, 0 Creator, to share and care for each other as You continue to do with us: with prayer, generosity and respect. All praise to you, 0 Creator for the privilege and call to share in Your wonderful life! AMEN

INSTALLATION CEREMONY FOR A PRESIDENT WITHOUT A MASS

This brief ceremony may be used for installing a new president without a Mass. It may take place at a meeting of the conference or council. If the spiritual advisor is not present, the past president or another officer will assume the role of leader for the installation.

The spiritual advisor will be the leader:

OPENING PRAYER

Leader: In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit

All: Amen.

Leader: Holy and everliving God, through the lives and works of Saint Vincent de Paul and Blessed Frédéric Ozanam, you have taught us to follow your example in caring for those in need. Look now with love on this Society and bless the work we do in your name. We ask this through Christ our Lord who lives with you and the Holy Spirit, one God forever and ever. Amen.

SUGGESTED READINGS

1st reading: Eph. 4:1-7, 11-13, or Rom. 12:3-13, or Psalm 16, or psalm 23

Gospel: Luke 4:16-24, or John 21:15-17

(A reflection may be given at this point)

PRESENTATION OF THE PRESIDENT

The past president (or another officer if the past president is the leader) presents the president for installation with these or similar words:

The members of _____ Conference/Council have carefully chosen _____ to be their new president. The members of this conference/ council, relying on the help of the Holy Spirit, ask you to install him/her as president.

The past president (or the other officer) passes candles, then a copy of the Rule to the leader.

PRESENTATION OF THE CANDLE

Leader: _____ receive this light. May it be a sign of the light and joy which the charity of Christ brings to those in need.

PRESENTATION OF THE CANADIAN RULE AND STATUTES

Leader: _____ receive the Canadian Rule and Statutes of the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul. May your observance of the Canadian Rule and Statutes and your dedication to its spirit bring blessings to you, to the members of the Society and to the whole Church.

EXPRESSION OF COMMITMENT

Leader: _____ you have received the light and the Canadian Rule and Statutes. Are you willing to commit yourself to spreading this light and encouraging the observance of the Canadian Rule and Statutes in order to bring relief to those in need, to foster holiness in your fellow members and yourself and to bear witness to the greater glory of God?

President: Yes, I am willing to make this commitment.

INSTALLATION

Leader: You are hereby installed as president of the Conference/Council of the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul. May God bless you and may God's work prosper.

SOCIETY OF SAINT VINCENT DE PAUL – CANADA

ONTARIO REGIONAL COUNCIL

REGISTRATION of NEW PRESIDENT

As soon as possible after the instalation of a new president,
the following informaton will be submitted to the secretary of the ONRC

Name _____

Address _____

Telephone _____

Email _____

Name of Conference or Council _____

Date of Installation _____

Please forward a copy of completed form to:

The Administrative Assistant

Ontario Regional Council – Society of Saint Vincent de Paul

secretary@ssvp.on.ca



◀ INSTALLATION OF SPIRITUAL ADVISORS ▶

◀ President ▶

Come Holy Spirit, live within our lives.

◀ All ▶

And strengthen us by your love.

◀ President ▶

As we gather here together to commission (Name) as Spiritual Advisor for (Name of Conference of Council) let us reflect on our call to journey to holiness from the International Rule of the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul:

(The following may be recited together or read by different members)

- *Vincentians are called to journey together towards holiness, because true holiness is perfect union with Christ and the perfection of love, which is central to their vocation and the source of its fruitfulness.*
- *Vincentians aspire to burn with the love of God as revealed by Christ and to deepen their own faith and fidelity.*
- *Vincentians are aware of their own brokenness and need to God's grace. They seek His glory, not their own. Their ideal is to relieve suffering for love alone, without thinking of any reward or advantage for themselves.*
- *Vincentians draw nearer to Christ, by serving Him in the poor and in one another. They grow more perfect in love by expressing compassionate and tender love to the poor and to one another.*

The president presents the Spiritual Advisor pin to the Spiritual Advisor.

◀ **President** ▶

Receive this pin as a sign of your leadership and responsibility. May the Holy Spirit grant you a receptive mind and a loving heart so that you will come to know the spirit of St. Vincent de Paul and Blessed Frederic Ozanam.

Since the beginning of the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul, a Spiritual advisor has been appointed to help foster the spiritual life of the members under the guidance of the Holy Spirit and in conformity with the Rule of the Society.

And so now I ask you : Do you (*Name*) promise to carry out your duties with diligence and creativity to promote the work of the Society ?

◀ **Spiritual Advisor** ▶

I do, and I pray for the strength and wisdom to faithfully serve the members and those they visit.

◀ **President** ▶

Do you promise to be a spiritual animator, developing the Vincentian spiritual life of the members so that they may better understand the meaning of charity and its practical application toward those in need?

◀ **Spiritual Advisor** ▶

I do and I pray that I have the strength to build among our members one mind and one heart so that we will be a sign of the presence and love of Christ in our community.

◀ **President** ▶

Do you promise to help all members reach a deeper faith awareness of their participation in the mystery of the Church and their vocation as Christians and Vincentians to serve and minister to others as well as each other?

◀ **Spiritual Advisor** ▶

I do and I pray to be filled with the grace to identify with the poor and needy, and to foster friendship among the members as well as those we serve.

◀ **President** ▶

Do you promise to be loyal to the Rule and the spirit of the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul, attend meetings, provide scriptural and Vincentian readings and prayers, participate in the discussions and provide guidance on Spiritual matters?

◀ **Spiritual Advisor** ▶

I do, and I pray that I will be generous with my time, my possessions and myself in this mission of charity.

◀ **President** ▶

(*Name*), you have generously accepted an important responsibility as a Spiritual advisor of the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul. I now ask all the members to share in that responsibility by offering our prayers and our support. Let us seek the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Patroness of our Society, as we say together:

◀ **All** ▶

Hail Mary...

◀ **President** ▶

Let us now raise our hands in blessing as we pray together:

In the spirit of Jesus, as a servant leader, and in the name of our patron, Saint Vincent de Paul and our Founder, Blessed Frederic Ozanam, we commission you (*Name*) as the Spiritual Advisor of the (*Name of Conference of Council*) .

We ask for the grace that with your wisdom and leadership, we may together:

- grow together in holiness,
- deepen our spirit of friendship with each other,
- serve the poor in charity and justice, love , compassion and joy.

Amen

SOCIETY OF SAINT VINCENT DE PAUL – CANADA

ONTARIO REGIONAL COUNCIL

SPIRITUAL ADVISOR REGISTRATION

Name _____

Address _____

Telephone _____

Email _____

Name of Conference or Council _____

Date of Installation _____

Please forward a copy of completed form to:

The Administrative Assistant

Ontario Regional Council – Society of Saint Vincent de Paul

secretary@ssvp.on.ca

C.6

INSTALLATION CEREMONY FOR A NEW MEMBER

SA = Priest or Spiritual Advisor or past president

CP= Conference president

M= Members

After at least six months in the Society, new members may take part in a Commissioning Ceremony to express their commitment to the spiritual dimension of membership. The ceremony may be conducted during a Mass, or at a conference meeting, with other members present. The Conference President and the Spiritual Advisor (or a Priest) preside over the Ceremony. During Mass, the ceremony takes place following the Creed.

SA: The needs of the Church are many and varied, but God shows his goodness by sending people to bear witness to his love in the community. Today we will be asking God to bless our brothers and sisters (as applicable) who have declared their willingness to serve the Church as full members of the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul.

CP: This is a very significant occasion for the Society. _____ has (have) been welcomed among us for some months, and has (have) now expressed a desire to make a formal commitment to membership and its spiritual dimension. In Christ's name, we are gathered together to commission our brothers and sisters as committed new members, to be channels of peace, hope, love and practical help to persons in need.

PRESENTATION OF THE CANDLE

SA: Receive this light, may it be a sign of the light and joy, which the Charity of Christ brings to those in need.

PRESENTATION OF THE CANADIAN RULE AND STATUTES

SA: _____ receive the Canadian Rule and Statutes of the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul. May your observance of the Canadian Rule and Statutes and your dedication to its spirit bring blessings to you, to the other members of the Society and the whole Church.

SA: _____ You have received the light and the Canadian Rule and Statutes. Are you willing to commit yourself to spreading this light and encouraging the observance of the Canadian Rule and Statutes in order to bring relief to those in need, to foster holiness in your fellow members and yourself and to bear witness to the greater glory to God?

Each New Member: Yes, I am willing to make this commitment.

SA: Holy and everliving God, your providence reveals the glory of your name and your works to us. Look with love on the new members of the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul, guide them in their good works, lead them to holiness and prepare them for eternal life. We ask this through Christ Our Lord who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God forever and ever.

All: Amen.

End of Ceremony.

C.9 COMMISSIONING CEREMONY

WHEN

Any date is suitable for this annual ceremony. However, the beginning of the year or any of the Vincentian feast days is especially recommended. The commissioning is only for full members who have been active members of a conference for at least six months. It is a renewal of members' commitment to serve those in need in the spirit of Christ and of the Society.

The ceremony may also be held during a meeting of the Society. Ideally, it should be led by the spiritual advisor, another priest or a deacon, who has a very close connection to the conference, although the actual commissioning is proclaimed by the conference president, because Saint Vincent de Paul is a lay society. If no member of the clergy is available, a member other than the president may read the words attributed to the spiritual advisor.

If the commissioning takes place during a Mass for the Society, it should take place just before the offertory. The ceremony should not be celebrated during a regular parish Mass, as this is not in keeping with the humility of the Society.

MATERIAL NEEDED

All the members of the conference should be informed well in advance which meeting or Mass will include the commissioning ceremony for active members.

Required are:

- a copy of the text for the ceremony for the spiritual advisor (priest) and for each member,
- either a candle for every member or one candle to be passed to the newest or youngest member to hold on behalf of all the members,
- matches,
- a copy of the Canadian Rule and Statutes of the Society.

THE CEREMONY

Abbreviations

SA: Spiritual advisor (priest)

CP: Conference president

M: Member(s)

INTRODUCTORY RITES

SA: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

ALL: Amen.

Using the following, or similar words, the SA prepares those present.

SA: God shows His goodness by sending people to bear witness to His love in the community. Today we will be asking God to bless our brothers and sisters who have declared their willingness to continue serving the Church as full members of the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul.

THE VINCENTIAN PROMISE AND PRAYER

All stand. The SA says:

SA: I invite you to make the Vincentian promise:

A vocation to bear witness to Christ's love

SA: In response to the call of Christ who invites you to follow Him, do you promise to bear witness to his compassionate and boundless love for the poor, the lonely, the suffering and deprived, those without faith and those who feel unloved?

M: I do.

Vincentian friendship and mutual enrichment

SA: Do you firmly resolve to treasure the warm friendship and unity which from the beginning has been a hallmark of our Society?

M: I do. Grant me, Lord, the grace to grow in humility, and to serve in hope, as the light of faith and the flame of love are kindled among us.

Members light one another's candles or the president lights one candle and gives it to the newest member, who represents the members as a whole. All members still respond together.

SA: Receive the light of Christ, which illumines the path to those who are troubled.

Vincentian love for those in need (see Mt 12:20, describing Jesus)

SA: Do you promise to seek and find those who are forgotten and to devote yourselves generously to the personal service of the poor?

M: I do. Help me, Lord, to be sensitive to their vulnerability, and never to break the crushed reed of the broken-hearted, nor to quench the smouldering embers of human dignity and faith.

SA: Do you promise to respect and not to judge, to empower and not to impose, and most of all, to try to understand the deeper needs of those you serve?

M: I do. Help me, Lord, to sow seeds of faith and hope, and to bring comfort and solace, aware that a smile is the sunshine of Your love.

Commitment to social justice

SA: Do you promise to support the Society's modest work for social justice, and to help build a civilization of love and a culture of life?

M: I do.

Our frailty and need for inspiration and support

SA: Do you promise to persevere in regarding your visits as a sacred trust to be carried out faithfully each week, in the name of Christ, so far as family and other duties permit?

M: I do, but I know the depths of my own needs, my frailty and failings. Lord, make me ever more aware of the blessings I receive from those I visit, and of my need for the support of my Vincentian brothers and sisters. Never let me forget that whatever good I do comes from You and You alone. Amen.

**THE BLESSING OF THE CANADIAN RULE AND STATUTES:
LOYALTY TO THE CANADIAN RULE AND STATUTES**

The president of the conference holds the Canadian Rule and Statutes with outstretched hand for the SA to bless.

SA: Let us pray:
O God, by whose word all things are made holy, pour down your blessing upon this Canadian Rule and Statutes of the Society, and grant that those who read it with a receptive mind, in the light of the Gospels and with the help of the Holy Spirit, may come to know Jesus better, to see with His eyes and love with His heart. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

PRAYER OF BLESSING

The SA says the prayer of blessing, with hands outstretched over the members.

SA: Lord God, our Father, bless all our members as they renew their commitment to membership of the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul. May the Holy Spirit strengthen their resolve, fill their hearts with joy, an ever more vibrant faith and an ever deeper love for You. Bless also all auxiliaries, benefactors, all their families and those whom the conference is privileged to visit. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

ALL: Amen.

COMMISSIONING

The conference president says:

CP: In the spirit of Jesus, and in the name of our Patron, Saint Vincent de Paul, and our principal founder, Blessed Frédéric Ozanam, I renew the commission of all the full members of the conference “to go to the poor with love” and share their burdens and joys as true friends, with the help of God, the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

ALL: Amen.



Society of Saint Vincent de Paul National Council of Canada

CANADIAN GUIDELINES FOR THE SPIRITUAL ADVISOR IN THE SOCIETY OF SAINT VINCENT DE PAUL

Presentation

This document presents, in its first section, a description of the role and a list of the responsibilities of the Spiritual Advisor in the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul. The second part offers a few suggestions of reflections and prayers that could be used at the meetings.

I. THE SPIRITUAL ADVISOR OF THE SOCIETY OF SAINT VINCENT DE PAUL

A. DESCRIPTION

The Spiritual Advisor is a priest, permanent deacon, religious or Catholic lay person who undertakes the role and responsibility for the spiritual growth, development and life of the Council or Conference in accord with the mission and ministry of the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul.

Spiritual Advisors are full Council/Conference members, but they do not serve as officers of a Council or Conference.

B. FUNCTION OF THE SPIRITUAL ADVISOR

Spiritual Advisors play an important role in promoting the work of the Society. They give inspiration and challenge for the adoption of works in keeping with changing times and need.

The Spiritual Advisor's task is that of spiritual animator. The Spiritual Advisor is to help the development of the spiritual life of the members and to enable them to better understand the meaning of charity and its practical application toward those in need.

C. QUALITIES APPROPRIATE FOR A SPIRITUAL ADVISOR IN THE SOCIETY

- A commitment to the call and pursuit of Christian holiness.
- Personal witness to growth and development of his or her own spiritual life.
- A knowledge of and commitment to Jesus Christ and the role of the gospels as an integral part of Vincentian spirituality.
- A knowledge of the spirituality, values and lives of Saint Vincent de Paul, Blessed Frederic Ozanam, Saint Louise de Marillac and Blessed Rosalie Rendu.
- A commitment to the value of lay ministry in the fulfillment of the mission of the Catholic Church.
- A commitment to the Rule, mission and ministry of the society and to the teachings of the Catholic Church.
- An ability to recognize and enable the gifts and talents of Vincentians and others in fulfilling the mission of the Society.
- A Willingness to participate actively with fellow Vincentians in their service to the needy.

D. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE SPIRITUAL ADVISOR

To either provide scriptural and spiritual readings for the meetings of the Council or Conference which relate to the mission of the Society or share responsibility with others to assure that appropriate readings are provided.

To help design, plan and execute special prayers and formational sessions, such as days of recollection, prayer services, etc.

To help members of the Society reach a deeper faith awareness of:

- a) their participation in the mystery of the Church;
- b) their need for openness to others;
- c) their vocation as Christians and Vincentians to serve and minister to others as well as to each other;
- d) their identity with the poor and needy;
- e) fostering friendship with those in need;
- f) In short, remind members of their Vincentian vocation and that their primary purpose is to grow in holiness.

E. FUNCTIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES OF A COUNCIL SPIRITUAL ADVISOR

- Attend, when and where possible, regional and national meetings and participate actively in the spiritual components of these meetings.
- Aid in the recruitment of Conference Spiritual Advisors.
- Organize training sessions and materials for Conference Spiritual Advisors.
- Frame the spiritual portion of quarterly gatherings and other meetings of the whole Council. This will necessitate attendance and participation at these meetings.
- Guide Conference Spiritual Advisors on matters of spirituality both collectively and personally.
- Be the direct liaison and advocate on spiritual matters with the bishop.
- Assist in supervising the spiritual growth and development of the Conferences.
- Arrange for, in conjunction with the Conference Spiritual Advisors and officers, retreats, days of recollection, special spiritual study opportunities, the feast of Blessed Frederic (September 9th), Ozanam Sunday, etc.

F. SELECTION AND APPROVAL OF A CONFERENCE SPIRITUAL ADVISOR

The Conference president may nominate someone with the pastor's approval, e.g., a parochial vicar, a parish administrator, a permanent deacon, a member of a religious community, a lay person who is an active member of the Conference. However, with the guidance of the Council Spiritual Advisor, other candidates may be considered, e.g., a religious assigned to pastoral ministry, a director or teacher of religious education, a retired priest or religious. In any event, the person nominated should be dedicated to his or her spiritual life and one who possesses or is willing to learn the meaning of Vincentian Spirituality (see Appendix II).

G. RESPONSIBILITIES OF A CONFERENCE SPIRITUAL ADVISOR

- Lead opening and closing prayers of each Conference meeting.
- Obtain, prepare and read – or assign to be read – spiritual reading for each meeting which relates to the mission of the Society.
- Lead discussion/reflection after each reading.
- Insure that all meetings are conducted in a spirit of Christian charity.
- Collaborate with the Council Spiritual Advisor in setting up programs for the spiritual development of the Conferences such as days of recollection, prayer services.
- To assist members to reach a deeper faith awareness of their participation in the mystery of the Church, of their need for openness to others, of their vocation as Christians and Vincentians to serve and minister to others, person-to-person, as well as to each other, and of their identity with the poor and needy.
- Attend Council and regional meetings and, if possible, other gatherings dealing with or related to spirituality.
- Communicate and promulgate information obtained from meetings to the Conference membership regarding spiritual matters.
- Provide resource material for the membership to assist in their personal spiritual development.
- Maintain ongoing communication with the pastor or parish administrator.

H. RELATIONSHIP OF A SPIRITUAL ADVISOR TO THE COUNCIL AND CONFERENCE

The Spiritual Advisor may be a spokesperson, along with others, for the Society's unity to other parish organizations and in extra-parochial meetings.

Spiritual Advisors should be readily available to members of the Society and should manifest support in every way possible for the ministry and mission of the Society.

The Spiritual Advisor should understand and encourage the development of a Vincentian spirituality in him/herself and in the members of the Council or Conference.

I. RELATIONSHIP OF THE SPIRITUAL ADVISOR TO DIOCESE, CLERGY AND LOCAL COMMUNITY

The Spiritual Advisor should help the Council President communicate the value, works and needs of the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul to the bishop, clergy, religious and pastors or parochial administrators.

The Spiritual Advisor, Council and Conference members should seek ways in which the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul's ministry and mission has a complementary role in relationship to archdiocesan or diocesan social services.

The Spiritual Advisor should assist members of the Society in seeking ways to expand membership of the Society in the service of the poor. With a special urgency, there should be an outreach to those retired who have the health, time and energy to offer their assistance, as well as to the youth whose vitality and energy level would be invaluable to the mission of the Society.

II. REFLECTIONS AND PRAYERS

1. REFLECTING ON OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH THE POOR

Reflection:

I ought not to consider a poor peasant or a poor woman according to their exterior nor according to what appears externally in their demeanor, especially since they quite often do not have even the appearance or the intelligence of a rational person, so gross and crude are they. But reverse the medallion and you will see by the light of faith that the Son of God, who wished to be poor, is presented to us in those poor; that he did not have the appearance of a man in his passion, and that he passed as foolish in the minds of the Gentiles and as a stumbling block to the Jews; and with all that he calls himself the evangelizer of the poor. O God, who makes the poor appear beautiful if we consider them in God and in the esteem that Jesus Christ gives them! But if we regard them according to the feelings of the flesh and the spirit of the world, they will seem contemptible.

“On the Spirit of Faith”, Saint Vincent de Paul

Discussion Questions:

1. How do I feel about the Poor? Will any of them ever be my friends?
2. Are the Poor “Our Lord and Masters”? Why then do we call them our “clients”?
3. Do we defend and speak out for the Poor in our Nation today? Where is our advocacy in the “Welfare Reform” controversy?
4. How do we feel about the “laziness” of the poor? Do we blame them for their plight? Do we think, “If they would only work as I do...”?
5. Jesus is present in the Eucharist. Is He not present, too, in the Poor? What is the difference?

Prayer:

God, you inflamed Blessed Frederic with the Spirit of your charity, that he might found a lay society for helping the poor; by following his example of keeping your commandment of love, may we become a living leaven and an instrument of salvation for all humanity. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

2. FROM A LETTER WRITTEN BY FREDERIC OZANAM (Rev. Pedro Villarroya, C.M.)

The humanity of our days seems comparable to the traveler to whom the Gospel speaks; it also, although it took its way in roads marked out for it by Christ, has been attacked by the cutthroats and robbers of thought, by wicked men who have robbed it of what it possessed: the treasure of faith and love, and they have left it naked and wounded and lying by the side of the road. Priests and Levites have passed by, and this time, since they were true priests and Levites, they have approached suffering themselves and wished to heal it. But in its delirium, it did not recognize them and repulsed them.

In our turn, weak Samaritans, worldly and people of little faith that we are, let us dare nonetheless to approach this great sick one. Perhaps it will not be frightened of us. Let us try to probe its wounds and pour in oil, soothing its ear with words of consolation and peace, then, when its eyes are opened, we will place it in the hands of those whom God has constituted as the guardians and doctors of souls, who are also, in a way, our innkeepers in our pilgrimage here below; so as to give our errant and famished spirits the holy word for nourishment and the hope of a better world for a shield.

That is what is proposed to us, the sublime vocation God has given us.

Frédéric Ozanam A Life in Letters, Translated and edited by Joseph I. Dirvin, C.M.
Ozanam’s Letter to Léonce Curnier. Paris, Feb. 23, 1835 (#90)

Discussion Questions:

1. How are Ozanam's times similar to ours? What make them different?
2. Do I, we, the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul, feel the responsibility for the well being of God's creation? Is it true that God entrusted His creation to us?
3. Gospel values vs. World values. How have we, as members of the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul, come to see the difference and make them real in our lives? Do we still believe we can serve two masters?
4. Why do I feel "burnout" since I am doing what Jesus did on earth?
5. How do we strengthen our faith in Jesus so we never give up our work? Where do we find the energy to continue to be a joy to the poor and to our families?

3. PRAYING IN SAINT VINCENT'S SPIRIT FOR THE VIRTUE OF GENTLENESS

Scripture Reading: Mt 4:23-25

Jesus toured all of Galilee. He taught in their synagogues, proclaimed the good news of the kingdom, and cured the people of every disease and illness. As consequence of this, His reputation travelled the length of Syria. They carried to Him all of those afflicted with various diseases and racked with pain: the possessed, the lunatics, the paralyzed. He cured them all. The great crowds that followed Him came from Galilee, the Ten Cities, Jerusalem and Judea, and from across the Jordan.

Discussion Questions:

1. Do I serve the poor and those with whom I work with the love and kindness shown me by the work and actions of Our Lord as He walked and worked on our earth with the poor of His time?
2. Do I sometimes forget that the poor people I serve are loved by God in a very special way?
3. Each person I meet carries his/her own physical, mental, psychological suffering. Do I respect and honor whatever silent sufferings each one carries?

4. PRAYING IN SAINT VINCENT'S SPIRIT FOR UNITY AMONG VINCENTIANS

(Read prayer slowly. Pause for a minute to reflect on the prayer.)

Scripture Reading: Ephesians 4:1-6

I, then a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to live in a manner worthy of the call you have received, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another through love, striving to preserve the unity of the spirit through the bond of peace: one body and one Spirit, as you were also called to the one hope of your call; one Lord, one faith, one Baptism, one God and Father of all who is over all and through all and in all.

Question for Reflection/Sharing:

1. When do I feel most united with the members of the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul?
2. When do I feel least united to the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul?
3. How does one person making important decisions affect the unity of a group?
4. How can we involve more people in Conference decisions?

5. VINCENTIANS ARE BEATITUDE PEOPLE

People who are about building up the Kingdom of God in the here and now, are Beatitude people. When one lives the Beatitudes, one's life is a blessing. Beatitude people are co-creators with God of a peaceful and just world. They challenge us to be hot, not tepid, comforting, not comfortable, and to see the ordinary and extraordinary. They are risk takers who embrace the sacredness or the holy in each moment, particularly in the culture and unsettled times in which they live. To be about Beatitude-living enables Beatitude people to constantly bless the world and praise God. Beatitude people's values are from the mind and heart of Jesus. They rejoice in the nourishment provided by the Holy Spirit.

Scripture Reading: Matthew 5:1-12

When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up to the mountain;
and after he sat down, his disciples came to him.

Then he began to speak, and he taught them, saying:
"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.
Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.
Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.

"Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy.
Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.
Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.
Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

"Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you".

Discussion Questions: (Rev. Ron Ramson, C.M.)

1. Make a list of what you would consider to be your eight Beatitudes.
2. Do you feel comfortable with our Lord's Beatitudes?
3. Which Beatitude makes you feel most uncomfortable?
4. How are Vincentians Beatitude people?
5. How are Saint Vincent and Frédéric Ozanam Beatitude people?

6. SAINT VINCENT DE PAUL (SEPTEMBER 27)

The King will say to those on his right hand, "Come you whom my Father has blessed, take for your heritage the kingdom prepared for you since the foundation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me food; I was thirsty and you gave me drink; I was a stranger and you made me welcome, naked and you clothed me, sick and you visited me, in prison and you came to me." (Mt 25, 34-36)

At daybreak on September 27, 1660, Vincent de Paul, heavily burdened both by years and work, offered his life to the God of mercy in whom he had always trusted. A group of missionaries from the community of Saint Lazare were witnesses to the peace with which the Founder of the Mission passed from time to eternity. He was leaving a life filled with numerous works of charity and an extremely rich apostolic and spiritual legacy, which would sustain the vocations in his Congregations. Death did not catch him by surprise; for many years he had been preparing for this joyful encounter with God, the crown of his achievements.

Prayer 1:

Lord, you are the **Way**

Open our minds to understand your work in the world.

Lord, you are the **Truth.**

Open our hearts, so in trusting your ways all the fears of our life will disappear.

Lord, you are the **Life.**

Make ours an example for the world to see your love for all creation.

We are the **Light.**

Make our Baptism, the strength, so we can establish your Kingdom in the world.

We are the **Salt.**

Make our Eucharistic life bring hope and joy to the world of prejudice and confusion.

We ask this through Christ our Lord.

Prayer 2:

Lord God, you filled your priest Saint Vincent with the strength of the apostles to work for the salvation of the poor and the instruction of the clergy. May we who follow the example of his life be driven by unceasing charity to continue the mission of your Son in the world. We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. Amen

Charity must never look to the past, but always to the future, because the number of its past works is still very small and the present and future miseries that it must alleviate are infinite. Blessed Frederic Ozanam

The Society of Saint Vincent de Paul National Council of Canada

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

The National Spirituality Committee would like to thank Father Jean Picher who wrote the original guidelines. Only minor additions were required to bring his document up to date.

January, 2012

Resources for Spiritual Advisors

ON-LINE

www.ssvp.ca the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul, Canada web site, sepecially SPIRITUALITY

www.ssvp.on.ca Ontario Regional site – now providing a quick and easy access to the USA's weekly reflections and bullitin inserts

www.ssvpglobal.org The international site – SPIRITUALITY

www.famvin.org A Vincention Family site – for all of the groups inspired by St. Vincent de Paul includes news, formation, dailly and weekly reflections

www.vincentions.com -Another Vincentian Family site – especially the letters of Frederic Ozanam

www.svdpusa.org The National Council of the US – bulletin announcements and spiritual reflections

www.vinnies.org.au Australia's national site – SPIRITUALITY has material for spiritual reflections

www.svp.org.uk England and Wales

www.ssvpscotland.com

And any other SSVP site in Canada or the world

Books and Publications:

The Rule and Statutes of the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul Canada

International Confederation of the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul – Rule and Statutes

Appostle in a Top Hat by James Patrick Derum

Praying with Vincent de Paul by Thomas McKenna

Praying with Frederic Ozanam by Ronald Ramson CM

Vincenpaul Canada – back issues available inline at www.ssvp.ca

Booklet – The Frederic Ozanam Story

PRAYER FOR WORLD DAY OF THE POOR

"As long as Lazarus lies at the door of our homes

(Luke 16:19-21)1

there can be no justice or social peace."

Pope Francis

God of Abraham,
On my television,
On my newsfeed,
On my street,
Everywhere I go,
I see Lazarus.

But I also see so many doors,
Doors I've built,
That I've closed.

Doors that society has hung and locked.
Doors that separate me from Lazarus.

Lord,

Teach me to open the door to Lazarus,
To the poor.

To know them as your children,
To lift them in their distress,
To work to find them a fair share of your bounty.

This World Day of the Poor,
Help us to turn to those outside our door.

To bless, heal, comfort,
And together, from this day forward,

Build a world,

Where the poor are strangers to none,
And, indeed, the very chains of poverty are broken.

Amen

(Source: Catholic Relief Services)

A PRAYER FOR VOCATIONS TO THE VINCENTIAN FAMILY

Lord, we ask that you bless our Society by continuing to call
men and women to serve you
as full members of the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul.
We remember that many years before Vatican II
called forth the vocation of the laity,
Blessed Frederic and his companions recognized their vocation
and so became our founders and our examples.

We pray for an increase in membership for our Conferences.
Help us to seek and find those you have called.
Help us to encourage them and invite them to join us
in serving you in the poor
with love, respect, justice and joy.
We ask this through Jesus our brother.
Amen

**PRAYER FOR THE CANONIZATION OF
BLESSED FREDERIC OZANAM**

Lord, you made Blessed Frederic 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 Frederic 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.

PRAYER BEFORE A VISIT

Father, we ask you to provide all that we need
As we do the work you have given us to do.
Fill our hearts with your love,
help us to listen with compassion
and to speak with kindness and confidence.

Jesus, we pray for the grace to go out
without our preconceived judgements
so that we can be true peacemakers.
Stir in us the fire of your love and
guide us with discernment.
Fill our hearts with wisdom, generosity and kindness.

Holy Spirit, inspire us with joy and patience.
Be at work in us so that we will bring
the Good News to the downcast,
healing to the broken hearted,
hope to the destitute,
love and compassion to all who are suffering.

Amen

PRAYER AFTER THE VISIT

Thank you Lord for all the blessings you have given us today.

We ask you to continue to bless the ones we have visited.

Please inspire them to trust in you
and come to you for their needs.

We pray

(names of each person and specific needs).

We pray that our work may be continued

by your Vincentian servants

and completed by your grace,

in the spirit of St. Vincent de Paul

and Blessed Frederic Ozanam.

Amen

PRAYER WITH A FAMILY

God our Father, we thank you for this visit and the opportunity to meet with (names).

Lord, you know each of us.
You knew us from the day we were born.
You know our hearts, our needs,
and everything about us.
You told us that you would never leave us or forsake us.
You ask us to seek and we shall find,
knock and the door will be opened,
ask and it shall be given.
We are asking today for each of our needs,
some spoken and some in our hearts.

And so we pray together: **Our Father**

Please Lord, walk with us and give us your strength
in our worries and our difficulties.

Amen

PRAYER FOR HOME VISITATION

(SSVP Scotland)

O God, someone in this house needs me.
I don't know how I will be received,
but I go as your ambassador,
however unworthy and weak I am myself.
Give me your power to help in the best way possible,
offering what is needed,
giving the proper advice,
saying the right thing.
I am your servant
and the servant of anyone who needs me.
I am weak- You can make me strong:
I am tongue tied- You can supply my words:
I lack courage- You can reinforce me:
I am perplexed- You can give me the answer:
I am useless- You can make me useful.
Above all, make me recognise You in these people,
and seeing You let me love them as I love You.
They need your love,
they need my love,
let's love them together.
I'll do my best:
be with me in what is Your work and mine.

Kind, gentle, understanding St. Vincent de Paul,
inspire me in all my dealings with the needy
whom you knew, understood and loved so much.

AMEN

PRAYER FOR HOSPITAL VISITATION
{SSVP Scotland}

O Lord, best sufferer of all time,
help me to understand the sufferings I am about to witness around me.
Teach me to offer the help most needed,
to say the right things,
to sympathise and console,
to strengthen and encourage,
to say the words of comfort and cheer.
Teach me to spread your love in this place of sickness,
to listen to suffering,
to explain suffering,
to reassure and turn pessimism to optimism,
to see You in suffering humanity,
You, crucified, You,
You at your best, You at your strongest.
These are poor souls, yet privileged and noble souls,
these are called to imitate You more intimately.
These are your special friends.
Give me strength to pass on some strength to them.
Use me as an instrument of Your love,
and enrich and ennoble me through contact with those who share your cross.
Sword-pierced Mary, tender and understanding Mother,
be with me as I try to give myself to your suffering children.

AMEN

PRAYER FOR PRISON VISITATION
{SSVP Scotland}

Lord, You fell three times under the cross, but You got up three times;
teach me to help prisoners to rise up again!
I may never have been in prison, Lord,
but I often wonder have I really deserved to be!
At least I have this in common with the prisoners:
I have often yielded to temptation.
So I have something in common with them for a start.
Give me the light to see the dignity of man,
even men who have fallen in other men's esteem.
Give me the wisdom to comfort, to counsel and to console
without seeming self-righteous or patronising.
Help me, Lord, to be genuine and sincere, to be understanding and humble.
If I can help, show me how.
If I cannot help, at least I can befriend.
If I cannot befriend at least I can seem to CARE.
No matter how I am received, even with cynicism and resentment,
give me the strength and courage to return to bring YOU
to men who need YOU in their loneliness.

AMEN

Direct, O Lord, our actions by Your holy inspiration,
and carry them on by your gracious assistance;
that every prayer and work of ours may begin always from You,
and by You be happily ended:
this we ask through Jesus Christ Our Lord.

AMEN

A FEW PRAYERS FROM SSVPA AUSTRALIA

OPEN MY EYES

Open my eyes that I may see the deepest needs of men, women and children;
move my hands that they may feed the hungry;
touch my heart that it may bring warmth to the despairing;
teach me the generosity that welcomes strangers;
let me share my possessions with people in need;
give me the care that strengthens the sick;
help me share in the quest to set prisoners free.
In sharing our anxiety and our love,
our poverty and our prosperity,
we partake of your divine presence. Amen.

PRAYER FOR HOMELESS PERSONS

O God, you are a God of justice, mercy and compassion.
Support us, your servants of the poor,
as we endeavour to bring your love and compassion
to people who are homeless and in need of your love.
We pray that we will see you, our all-loving God,
in each homeless person we encounter
and in our service to those in need.
May we do all in our power to support each person reach their potential,
so they experience the fullness of life.
Amen

PRAYER BEFORE HOME VISIT

Lord, where two or three are gathered in your name you are in our midst.
Walk with us now as we journey into the home of ____ -
Be our support as we are your hands and feet and heart.
We ask this prayer in the name of Jesus. Amen

IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF JESUS

(Prayer of St. Louise de Marillac)

Lord, help me to imitate your way of loving and acting:
you said that you had come upon the earth to serve, not to be served.
Teach me to show great gentleness towards all,
to imitate your goodness in welcoming them.
Like you, I want to love tenderly, to be respectful to all those I meet,
to be affable and gentle to those in the greatest need.
Lord, teach me to maintain always great esteem for my neighbour.
Your life on earth, your death and resurrection bear witness to your love for all.
Amen

IDEAS FOR CONFERENCES AND COUNCILS:

SSVP WAKE SERVICES FOR DECEASED MEMBERS

Vincentians, by their calling, serve Christ in others and in doing this become members of the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul family. It is most fitting that, upon the death of a member, other Vincentians come together as family to pray for the deceased sister/brother and her/his family and friends. In 2013 the Spirituality Committee of Windsor-Essex Central Council formed a Wake Service Team to lead prayers for any deceased member whose family requests this. The following are things that have been explored, tried and found successful in Windsor-Essex. Individual conferences and councils are encouraged to investigate and implement a Wake Service Ministry Team.

- A team of Vincentians sufficient in number to serve the needs of the Society in the area should meet, discuss, pray about and formulate the Wake Ministry.

In Windsor-Essex there are six Vincentians for 28 conferences within the four particular councils. Most of the team members were experienced in leading wake services within their own parishes. This team met three times before announcing the formation of the SSVP Wake Ministry of Windsor-Essex.

- 'Order of Christian Funerals' is the format used along with SSVP prayers of petition and scripture readings selected as appropriate for Vincentians.
- An item of identification is a good idea. White stoles/scarves with the SSVP logo were made for the Windsor-Essex team.
- A keepsake for the family is also appropriate. A candle (available for purchase on the national website) could be presented to the family at the conclusion of the prayer service.
- The Wake Team member leads the prayers. Other Vincentians can be included to read, offer petitions and or speak about the deceased sister/ brother Vincentian. It is best if the reflection can be personalized as much as possible.

It is important that, once a Wake Team is established, members are aware that they can have a Vincentian wake service. Presidents should be responsible for making this resource known and for reminding members occasionally. When a death has occurred the president of the conference or council should be the one who offers a Vincentian wake service to the bereaved family and who contacts the Wake Team.

SAMPLE #2

For Eugene M. a member and mentor for many years. Gene was a past president of his conference.

Members of SSVP walk to the casket and reverence the body before beginning. They may either form a standing circle around the coffin or be seated.

INTRODUCTION

Thank you, Frank, the children and grandchildren for allowing us, the members of Margaret's parish family and her Vincentian family to share in this evening's prayer and remembrance of our sister, Margaret. We offer you our prayers and our continued support.

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

R; Amen

May the love of God, who is our comfort and our strength, be always with you.

R: And also with you

OPENING PRAYER

O God to whom mercy and forgiveness belong, hear our prayers on behalf of our sister, Margaret, whom you have called out of this world; and because Margaret put her hope and trust in you. Command that she may be carried safely home to heaven and come to know the joy of your eternal reward.

We ask this through Christ our Lord.

R: Amen

LITURGY OF THE WORD

A reading from the book of Deuteronomy (Deuteronomy 15: 7-8, 10)

If one of your kinsmen in any community is in need, in the land which the Lord your God is giving you, you shall not harden your heart nor close your hand to him in his need. Instead you shall open your hand to him and freely lend him enough to meet his need.

When you give, give freely and not with ill will, for the Lord your God will bless you for this in all your works and undertakings.

The word of the Lord.

PSALM 27

Response: The Lord is my light and my salvation

The Lord is my light and my help.
Who shall I fear?
The Lord is the stronghold of my life,
Before whom shall I shrink?

R:

There is one thing I ask of the Lord,
For this I long,
To live in the house of the Lord
All the days of my life,
To savour the goodness of the Lord,
To behold His temple.

R:

I am sure that I shall see the Lord's goodness
In the land of the living.
Hope in Him, hold fast, take heart;
Hope in the Lord.

R:

GOSPEL

A reading from the holy gospel according to Matthew (Matthew 25: 31-40)

When the Son of Man comes in all his glory and all his angels with him, he will sit on his glorious throne and all the nations will be assembled before him. And he will separate them one from the other as the shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. He will place the sheep on his right hand and the goats on his left. Then the King will say to those in his right, "Come you who are blessed by my Father. Inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For when I was hungry you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, a stranger and you welcomed me, naked and you clothed me, ill and you cared for me, in prison and you visited me."

Then the righteous will answer him and say, "Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you or thirsty and give you drink? When did we see you a stranger and welcome you or naked and clothe you? When did we see you in prison and visit you?"

And the King will say to them in reply, "Amen I say to you, whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me."

This is the gospel of the Lord.

REFLECTION

We gather tonight to remember our sister Margaret. We thank God for the blessing that Margaret was too Frank and her children, her siblings, her friends and to the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul.

Margaret was a care giver. She took care of Frank and their children. As the kids grew up she expanded her care to include others... To the CWL... To those she brought holy communion... To everyone else she prayed for. Margaret was one of the first women to become a member of the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul, Saint John the Baptist Conference.

Margaret lived her vocation as Vincentian. She gave witness to God's instructions in the Deuteronomy reading. She never closed her hand or her heart to anyone in need. She gave freely of her time and her talents. In her later years when ill health could have stopped Margaret from being an active Vincentian, she still managed to help Frank collect donations from the seniors' parties and she made mittens and hats for our Christmas gifts.

As humble as she was, Margaret would probably say that she didn't do so much, that she enjoyed doing things for others, that making those mittens and hats gave her something to do when she couldn't get out. But really, Margaret was living the gospel we just heard. Along with Frank she brought food to the hungry, clothed those who needed warm winter things and welcomed all who needed her.

St. Vincent de Paul said, "How happy will they be who can repeat at the hour of their death, those beautiful words of our Lord, 'He has sent me to bring Good News to the poor.'"

All of us will miss Margaret, especially Frank and the family, but we know that she is now with God. Margaret was the faithful servant. We believe that she is, right now, in heaven where we will be reunited with her one day.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Let us turn to Christ Jesus who willingly accepted death and gave his life so that we might live forever. In faith we say: LORD HEAR US.

For our sister Margaret, that she might be welcomed into the company of the saints through whom we pray: LORD HEAR US.

For Frank and all of Margaret's family and friends, that they will receive comfort in their time of loss we pray: LORD HEAR US

For all of the benefactors of the poor, that God may reward them with eternal life, we pray: LORD HEAR US.

For those who have no homes, that they may quickly find a place where they can live a decent and happy life, we pray: LORD HEAR US

For all who are suffering, that God may give them courage and consolation, we pray: LORD HEAR US.

Immaculate heart of Mary PRAY FOR US.

St. Joseph, spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary PRAY FOR US.

Blessed Frederic Ozanam PRAY FOR US.

Together let us pray as Jesus taught us. OUR FATHER...

(A family member may want to speak at this time.)

PRESENTATION OF THE CANDLE

Please accept this candle, Frank, from the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul. It is the candle that is lit whenever Vincentian brothers and sisters gather. We invite you to light it as often as you like as you say a prayer for our sister Margaret. We hope that as you light your candle you will also think of our Vincentian family. We will continue to keep Margaret and your family in our prayers and we will be available to you when and if you need us. Margaret was a vital part of our Society and she will be missed.

CONCLUDING PRAYER

Into your hands, O Lord, we humbly entrust our sister Margaret.
In this life you embraced her with your tender love.
Deliver her now from every evil and bid her enter eternal rest

CONCLUDING RITE

Blessed are they who have died in the Lord;
Let them rest from their labours for their good deeds go with them.

Eternal rest grant unto her, O Lord.

R: And let perpetual light shine upon her

May she rest in peace.

R: Amen

May her soul and the souls of all the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace.

R: Amen

BLESSING

May God bless you and be with you in this time of sorrow.

In the tears of others, know that he weeps with you.

In the touch of others, know that his arms are holding you.

In the practical words of others, know that he is helping you cope from day to day.

In the words of others, know that he is speaking to you.

In the prayers of others know that he hears you.

And in the desolation of this time, know that by each tear, touch, act, word and prayer, others are bringing God to you.

May God the Almighty bless us, the Father and the Son and the Holy spirit.

Amen

SAMPLE #2

For Eugene M. a member and mentor for many years. Gene was a past president of his conference.

(Note: This follows the same format as SAMPLE #1 except for the first reading and the reflection.

There is also a committal service which was done by a member of the SSVP wake team at the request of the family.)

FIRST READING

A reading from the book of Sirach (Sirach 3: 28-30, 4: 1-10)

The mind of the intelligent man will ponder a parable and an attentive ear is the wise man's desire. Water extinguishes a flaming fire; so alms giving atones for sin. He who does a kindness is remembered afterward; at the moment of his falling he finds support.

My son, deprive no one of his living and do not keep needy eyes waiting. Do not grieve the one who is hungry nor anger a man in want. So not add to the troubles of an angry mind, nor delay your gift to a beggar. Do not reject an afflicted supplicant, nor turn your face away from the poor. Do not avert your eye from the needy, nor give a man occasion to curse you; for if in bitterness of soul he calls down a curse upon you, the Creator will hear his prayer.

Make yourself beloved in the congregation; bow your head to a great person. Incline your ear to the poor and answer them peaceably and gently. Deliver the one who is wronged from the hand of the wrongdoer and do not be faint of heart in judging a case. Be like a father to the orphans and like a husband to their mother. You will be like a son of the Most High and he will love you more than does your mother.

The word of the Lord

REFLECTION

We gather here tonight to remember our brother Gene, to pray for him and with his family. Sandy and the children and grandchildren and great grandchildren: He always spoke of you fondly... his family...

Gene was a man of duty who answered every time he was called. He served in world War II because he was called to serve his country. He worked for many years at Chrysler Canada because he was called to be the husband and father his family needed. He served many years on the county Catholic school board because he was called to serve education. And he became a Vincentian because he was called to serve the poor in his own community.

Gene answered each of these calls, I think, because he believed that these calls were his vocation, his call from God. He said, "Yes Lord," whenever he was needed. It wasn't always an easy 'Yes' either. War is never easy. Nor is going to work every day, raising a large family or serving your community and continuing to do it faithfully for many, many years.

I knew Gene many years ago as a school board trustee, but mostly as a member of the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul. As a Vincentian, Gene was a rock. Gene followed the mission of SSVP: to serve Christ in the poor with love, respect, justice and joy. He kept to his mission and sometimes he made us laugh as we worked together. He showed many of us here tonight how to do it, how to give feely and generously, in the Vincentian way, without judging our neighbours. Gene was very generous. To his children: I know that at Christmas, families who couldn't afford it enjoyed a 'real Christmas dinner' because your father gave to us instead of to you. We sincerely thank you for this.

The first reading we heard, from the book of Sirach, is suggested for use at the feast of the founder of SSVP, Blessed Frederic Ozanam. It speaks of the virtues of Blessed Frederic and also, I think, of the standards that Gene set for his own life and perhaps goals he would like his family and friends to have for themselves.

*An intelligent person will ponder a parable and an attentive ear is to be desired.
As water extinguishes a fire, giving alms atones for sin. Whoever gives will find support.
Do not deprive anyone from making a living. Don't keep the needy waiting or avert your eye from the poor.
Deliver the wronged from the hands of the wrongdoer and don't be fainthearted.
Be like a father to the orphan and a husband to their mother.*

Gene did these things. In tonight's gospel we heard the King of Glory say, "Whatever you did for the least of these, you did for me."

Saint Vincent de Paul said, "How happy will they be who, at the hour of their death, those beautiful words of our Lord; 'He sent me to bring the Good News to the poor.'"

How happy must Gene be right now!

SAMPLE
Rite of Committal with Final Commendation
For Eugene M. - Vincentian

INVITATION

We come together at the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month to inter the ashes of our brother, Gene. The time and the day are important because Gene did not miss the cenotaph services each year on Remembrance Day. This will be Gene's final Remembrance Day service, and as the poem says. "We will remember him."

As we gather to commend our brother, Gene, to God our Father and to commit his ashes to the earth, let us express in prayer and in tribute our common faith in the resurrection.

As Jesus Christ was raised from the dead, we too are called to follow him through death to the glory where God will be all in all.

SCRIPTURE VERSES

We read in sacred scripture:

This is the will of my Father, says the Lord, that I should lose nothing of all that he has given to me, and that I should raise them up on the last day. (John 6:39)

And also:

Our true home is in heaven, and Jesus Christ whose return we long for will come from heaven to save us.

COMMENTS

So it is that in our time of loss and sadness we remember our brother, Gene. We cherish all that he was as a husband, father and grandfather and all that he was as a Vincentian and a veteran. Before we commend Gene's ashes to their final resting place, some of his family members would like to speak.

PRAYER OVER THE PLACE OF COMMITTAL

All praise to you; Lord of all creation.
Praise to you holy and living God.
We praise you and bless you for your mercy.
We praise you and bless you for your kindness.
Blessed is the Lord our God.

R: Blessed is the Lord our God

You sanctify the homes of the living
And make holy the places of the dead.
You alone open the gates of righteousness
And lead us to the dwelling of the saints.
Blessed is the Lord our God.

R: Blessed is the Lord our God

We praise you, our refuge and our strength.
We bless you, our God and our Redeemer.
Your praise is always in our hearts and on our lips,
We remember the mighty deed of the covenant.
Blessed is the Lord our God.

R: Blessed is the Lord our God

Almighty and ever-living God, remember the mercy with which you graced your servant, Gene, in this life. Receive him, we pray, into the mansions of the saints. Look also with favour on those who mourn and comfort them in their loss.
Grant this through Christ our Lord.
AMEN

COMMITTAL

My friends, as we prepare to bury the ashes of our brother, Gene, we recall that our bodies bear the imprint of the first creation when they were fashioned from dust.

In faith we remember too, that by the new creation we also bear the image of Jesus who was raised to glory.

In confident hope that one day God will raise us and transform our mortal bodies, let us pray together as Jesus taught us: OUR FATHER.....

Faithful God. Lord of all creation, you desire that nothing redeemed by your Son will ever be lost, and that the just will be raised up on the last day.

Comfort us with the word of your promise as we return the ashes of our brother to the earth.

Grant Gene a place of rest and peace where the world of dust and ashes has no dominion.

Confirm in our hope that he will be created anew on the day when you will raise him up in glory to live with you and all the saints for ever and ever.

AMEN

PRAYER OVER THE PEOPLE

Bow your heads and pray to God.

(Silence)

Merciful God, you know the anguish of the sorrowful; you are attentive to the prayers of the humble.

Hear your people who cry out to you in their need and strengthen their hope in your everlasting goodness.

We ask this through Christ our Lord,

AMEN

RESPONSORY

Eternal rest grant unto him, O Lord.
And let perpetual light shine upon him.
May he rest in peace.

AMEN

-

BLESSING

May the love of God and the peace of our Lord Jesus Christ bless and console us and gently wipe every tear from our eyes,
In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,

AMEN

(Note: Because the deceased was a veteran and his committal took place on Remembrance Day, those present removed the poppies they were wearing and place them on the grave before they left the cemetery.)