



TERRITORIAL DELEGATES FOR FORMATION AND TRAINING.

Training has played and continues to play an essential role in the operation of SSVP activities worldwide. By providing programmes and training materials the Vice Presidency for Formation and Training ensures that members of SSVP worldwide are equipped with appropriate tools, not only to adhere to the same objectives, regulations and ethics of the Society, but are also able to carry out their functions and activities effectively and efficiently.

The past two years has seen our functions, as a Society, severely curtailed due to the Covid pandemic. However, with the grace of God, it would appear that the world is beginning to open up as we witness face mask mandates, social distancing rules, travel restrictions, and other Covid protocols being dropped in many countries across the world. This has come about due to decreasing numbers of infections and slowing down of transmission of the disease. During the past two years, when Covid was at its peak, restrictions on movement and person-to-person contact curtailed our ability to, fully carry out, training programmes. It is worthy to note that in some areas training programmes by virtual means, continued to be conducted, whenever possible. These efforts are highly commendable and we express our sincere appreciation to those Training Delegates who continued to carry the torch under very difficult circumstances and ensured that members were not entirely deprived of much needed training. In some areas and countries, things were much more difficult, this either due to lack of equipment, internet accessibility, e.t.c, and regrettably training needs were not satisfied on account of these hurdles.

We also must thank those members who took advantage of the training offered in order to avail themselves of those enlightening interventions. My congratulations go to the training teams and members of Conferences for being pro-active and for collectively ensuring that the training programmes initiated by Vice President for Formation and Training are implemented successfully, albeit under constrained circumstances.

Now that we see the lifting of restrictions, it is necessary to take stock of what has been done and to know what needs to be done. We need now to see how we can fill up the gaps that resulted from covid. We have a few months before the election of the next 17th International President General and the new regime takes office. We need now to look specifically at what each of us has experienced during those difficult times when our activities were constrained by Covid-19, and map out a way forward in the few months ahead. Accordingly, there should be concerted effort to establish from the areas under your jurisdiction how far we have been able to cascade the available training materials at Conference level. This will involve consultation and discussion with the Training Coordinators to obtain the necessary information as to where we stand. This will no

doubt, also entail on your part watchfulness and feedback to ensure that we cover as much ground as is possible before the next PGI takes office. No doubt, it may be difficult to achieve a complete exercise of imparting all the necessary training programmes to all SSVP membership, however with concerted effort good progress can, and will be achieved. It is worthy to note that training in the Society of St. Vincent de Paul is an on-going undertaking, and our efforts today will serve to augment future endeavours in this regard.

In conclusion, it would be amiss not to mention the immense advances in the area of formation achieved during the tenure of office of President General, Renato Lima. Under the leadership of sister Marisa Tellez, Vice President of Formation and Training, Council General has launched an increasing amount of training material, in the form of books and booklets. Many of these efforts were to encourage and rekindle study of the seven founders, and bring to attention the memory of Amelia Ozanam, and to recognise the significant part she played during the formative years of the Society. In addition to these, online events were held during the pandemic, including expanded modules of the Universal Formation Program. These significant initiatives never lacked economic or institutional support and we trust that these important advances will continue for the foreseeable future.

I wish you all the best and trust that you will have a very fruitful and productive formation and training session.

Joseph Makwinja
1st Vice President General-Deputy