2016-2019 Report

Confédération Internationale de la Société de Saint-Vincent-de-Paul
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Council General International (CGI)
“Se alguém quiser ser o primeiro, que seja o último de todos e quem serve a todos” (Marcos 9, 35b)
2016-2019 Report
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Territories: 150
Members: 800,000
Conference groups: 47,000
Collaborators: 1,500,000
This Report from the Council General International (CGI) of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul (SSVP) aims at providing an overview of the main activities undertaken over the first three years of the term office of our fellow member Renato Lima de Oliveira (June 2016 - June 2019).

As outlined in the following pages, the history of the SSVP is an intense experience, with the spirit, heart and hands outstretched to the most vulnerable people on our planet, as our International Rule says: “No charitable work is beyond the Society”.

But within this clear intention to dedicate ourselves to those who suffer most, there is also a way of doing what defines us, the love of a Catholic institution made up of lay people who wish to live their faith in a fraternal community that works, every day, for personal improvement, the well-being of our neighbours and for social justice. This is the legacy of the first 7 founders of the SSVP which, after nearly two centuries of existence, is still deeply rooted in all members of the institution. In fact, in 2019, the CGI is celebrating the 180th anniversary of its foundation with the same enthusiasm as on its first day. This celebration will take place in Porto, as part of the annual CGI meetings.

The SSVP, founded in Paris (France) in 1833, is currently present in 150 territories of 138 countries recognised by the United Nations. It is an institution that continues to grow all over the world, always responsive to situations of emergency, social injustice and aid to the most vulnerable people.

There are more than 800,000 members, organised into 47,000 Conference groups, supported by 1.5 million collaborators who are part of our beloved institution, helping 30 million people in the world every day.

This work and the significance of the SSVP mission is up to every member of this great family, the CGI’s technical team, all members of the international structure of the General Council, the Board and all the members, volunteers and collaborators who, every day and all over the world, make it possible, with God’s help, for there to be hope on the faces of our most needy brothers and sisters.
1. SSVP Strategic Plan

The Council General International has drawn up a Strategic Plan (2016-2022) consisting of 10 main goals to be achieved within the institution.

These 10 strategic goals are based on the 20 commitment programme that our fellow member Renato Lima de Oliveira presented in his candidacy for President General, in the elections held in June 2016 (Rome) during the Extraordinary Assembly of the SSVP.

This Strategic Plan and all the SSVP’s service work are defined by the following motto adopted by our president:

“If anyone would be first, he must be last of all and servant of all.” (Mark 9, 35b)

Mission: A network of friends seeking sanctification through service to the needy and the defence of social justice.

Vision: To be recognised as a global organisation that promotes the all-embracing dignity of those in need.

Values: Service, Spirituality, Humility, Charity, Empathy.

STRATEGIC PLAN 2016-2022

1. Training: Constant for all members.
2. Youth: 30% of members under the age of 35.
3. Twinning: Building a global network of spiritual and material support.
4. Expansion: Presence in every country in the world.
5. Vincentian Family: Permanent, close collaboration.
9. CGI Structure: Constant search for transparency and efficiency.

Behind each of the goals in the Strategic Plan there is a lot of work and dedication by the fellow members, who are devoted in body and soul to their mission, and an institutional structure in the service of these goals, which can only be achieved with God’s help, through constant effort and effective organisation and coordination.
Within the international structure, it’s worth mentioning the progress and contributions made during this period:

- One of the most significant ones is the appointment of an International Regional Vice Presidency for Oceania, as they were not represented by such an official in the past. Therefore, at this point, there are 12 International Regional Vice Presidents (IRVPs).
- Life insurance has been arranged for members of the international structure, in view of the many trips and visits to conflict zones, etc.
- A CGI support office has been opened in Brasilia (Brazil).
- Quarterly Board meetings, made up of 13 CGI’s members with the President General International at the head of the Board (these meetings are normally held at the CGI headquarters in Paris, France). These are very important meetings for coordinating CGI activities and controlling financial management and transparency.
- The spiritual advisor of the Council General International is vitally important for developing the spirituality of the SSVP and preserving the Vincentian charism. This service post is currently held by Fr. Andrés Román María Motto C.M.
Both the CGI’s emergency aid and the SSVP’s involvement presence in the world are overseen by the International Commission for Aid and Development (CIAD). This General Council Commission channels and coordinates four main international action areas:

- Emergency aid in disaster situations;
- Development aid projects;
- Support for the expansion and growth of the SSVP;
- Strengthening of National/Superior Councils.

### 3.1. Emergency Aid

The CIAD has had an average investment of approximately one million euros per year for its projects (see Graph 1), with more than 90% of this amount being devoted to emergency aid and projects related to these disasters. The vast majority of donations that the CIAD receives come through the generosity of the SSVP member countries of the Confederation and from organisations and foundations that generously take part and collaborate in this mission.

In 2016, international aid was provided to emergency situations in Tanzania (earthquake), Sudan (floods) and Haiti (Hurricane Matthew).

The main aid programmes in 2017 were again for Haiti (in projects alongside the Vincentian Family), the Philippines (natural disasters, mainly Typhoon Haiyan) and Lebanon (dealing with refugees, mostly from Syria and Iraq).

In 2018, the main aid projects included the Philippines (Typhoon), Nepal (Earthquake), Lebanon (Refugees), Madagascar (natural disaster, cyclone) and the Central African Republic (humanitarian crisis caused by war and terrorism).
HIGHLIGHTED SSVP PROJECTS

Nepal: Reconstruction of homes for 310 families (start in 2016), 2014 Earthquake. Reconstruction after the earthquake (391,304 euros in 2018). After the massive earthquake in 2015, the SSVP launched an ambitious reconstruction programme in 2016, together with Caritas. The 300 planned housing units were completed in 2018.

The Philippines: This 1.3 million euro programme, lasting between 5 and 8 years, was launched in 2014 to alleviate the suffering of the victims of Super Typhoon Haiyan and covers several fields, including Education (school fees, materials, food and accommodation for 800 secondary, university and vocational students), the reconstruction of 200 health centres (2 missions and medical campaigns in 2018), and livelihoods (creation of a cooperative to promote small businesses and micro loans for 500 people).

Lebanon: Assistance to refugees (€ 98,768). With 4.5 million inhabitants, Lebanon hosts 1.5 million refugees from Syria and Iraq living in poverty. The SSVP Lebanon, with CIAD’s support, offers fortnightly meals to older refugees and full scholarships to refugee children.

Central African Republic: Assistance to victims of war and terrorism (€ 38,950). The world’s poorest country is going through extremely violent unrest. The SSVP brings help to thousands of displaced people who are either fleeing violence or returning home. Four missions have been organised along with the CIAD to distribute food and clothing, hygiene items and household goods.


The Goughin Conference identified 10 orphans living in extreme poverty, without support, who are being trained to become qualified motorcycle mechanics. At the end of their training they are given a toolkit so that they can start to work. This project opens up a path of reintegration through work for young people, enabling them to get their lives back on track.

Dominican Republic: In the small town of Bonao, the SSVP in the Dominican Republic owns a very large rice field that produces more than 45,000 kg of rice every year, 30% of which goes directly to the poorest, another 30% to support the charitable projects of the Conferences in the area, a further 30% goes towards the production costs associated to this land and the remaining 10% goes to the Superior Council for its support.

A NEW SOLIDARITY INITIATIVE

In order to be able to respond to requests for emergency aid and to act quickly and effectively in these situations, the SSVP has set up an economic amount set aside for humanitarian emergencies called the International Solidarity Fund (IFS). This fund is always open to the solidarity of donors, whether or not there is an emergency situation at the time, as the aim is for the SSVP to be prepared to launch effective aid when necessary.
The SSVP, being faithful to its charism and the lessons of St. Vincent, regards efficiency as a key factor within the Society. As the patron saint of charitable societies said: “It is not enough to do good. It must be done well”, which also means to be trained and structured to better serve those we help. For this reason, a Special Projects Workshop was organised in Madrid (November 2018), which was attended by the regional delegates of special projects to consolidate their work in the field, giving support to all the social projects financed by the CGI.

Another initiative that fulfils the deepest aspirations of the SSVP “to embrace the world in a network of charity” (F. Ozanam), is achieved through Twinning, a collaboration between SSVP Conferences or Councils all over the world, by means of which spiritual and material aid is obtained and translated into friendly projects to help those who need it most. During the meeting in March 2018 in Kuala Lumpur, the International Twinning Commission discussed the need to generate measures to facilitate the operation of twinning arrangements, with the aim of expanding the network of coordinators.
3.2. Expansion of the SSVP

With regard to the expansion and growth of the SSVP, the CIAD has supported the SSVP Plus Project, for which funds have been earmarked for the establishment and start-up of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul in new territories. In the last three years, the SSVP has spread to Côte d’Ivoire, Suriname, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Liberia, Cyprus, Albania and the Cayman Islands, and is now present in 150 territories around the world.

At an international level, the groups of fellow members into which the SSVP is organised are called Conferences. There are about 47,000 Conference groups distributed around the globe, with the following presence per continent:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Continents</th>
<th>Vincentian Territories</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Africa</td>
<td>40</td>
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<tr>
<td>America</td>
<td>36</td>
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<tr>
<td>Asia</td>
<td>32</td>
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<td>Europe</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oceania</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to the CGI aggregations registered over the last three years, the growth in the number of SSVP Conferences is close to an average of more than 520 new Conferences per year.

In addition to the traditional Conferences made up of adults, in many countries there is already the possibility of enjoying the Society of St. Vincent in a different Conference format, adapted to children and teenagers or people who want to be part of the SSVP as a family. As for the latter, the SSVP Italy has developed an excellent project.

As shown in Graph 5, according to the number of Conference aggregations received by the Council General International, the SSVP is growing primarily in Asia (a continent without much of a Catholic tradition but one which has experienced a boom in recent years), closely followed by Africa and America.

**In the last three years, the SSVP has spread to 8 countries, and is now established in 150 territories around the world.**
4. CGI Financial Information

The CGI financial guidelines is to achieve a balanced budget every year. Similarly, its purpose is to apply the resources available to support the presidency of the SSVP on its way towards attaining the goals of the strategic plan, which enhances its development worldwide, strengthens the social foundations and improves our service to the most vulnerable people.

The financial work within the CGI is to ensure that the necessary resources are available to meet the goals set out in our mission, and that these resources are effectively allocated. The CGI accounts are validated annually by an external audit.

The CGI accounts are validated annually by an external audit.

The financial stability of the Council General International is achieved through the generous response of the many SSVP territories around the world. Their support is highly valued and much appreciated by the CGI.

Comments from the General Treasurer, Larry Tuomey, on the CGI’s finances for this period:

“The unflagging support of the Concordat and other National/Superior Councils has made it possible, since mid 2016, under the presidency of our fellow member Renato Lima de Oliveira, to finance the international structure in order to implement the strategic goals set, which are aimed at developing and expanding the SSVP and improving care for the most needy. It has also ensured the financial stability of the CGI offices in Paris, which provide a valuable service to the Society worldwide, and the operability of the International Commission for Aid and Development (CIAD), whose grants from SSVP International reach countries affected by natural disasters and other emergencies.

A financial surplus has been generated over the last three years, so the General Reserves have increased in this period from €1,367,000 to €1,569,000, meaning that the financial situation of the company is in a good position to support the international structure and implementation of the agreed strategic goals”.

Graph 6: Income/Costs/Surplus

Graph 7: Balance Sheet
5. Formation

The CGI Presidency regards formation as a top priority within the SSVP Strategic Plan, since it's one of the pillars for the good performance of the SSVP.

Over these three years, important steps have been taken with regard to training. In 2016, a Universal Training Programme was developed, common to all fellow members. This programme included the following topics: ‘History and origins’, ‘Spirituality’, ‘The SSVP Rule’, ‘Life in Conference’, ‘Poverty and Systemic Change’, ‘Visits’, ‘International Relations and Solidarity’.

Over this period (June 2016 to June 2019) four other topics have been added to complete the formation programme:

- Personal growth;
- Practical love at the SSVP;
- Christian doctrine;
- Doing good well.

In addition to implementing universal formation, the CGI launched “The Thematic Years” (in 2017), a way of dedicating every year to one of the seven founders of the first Conference of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul. To this end, the CGI has managed to motivate the members of the institution to delve deeper into the roots and origins of the SSVP, learning not only about its historical figures, but also about the spirit, commitment of faith and fellowship that led them to the service of the most needy.

- **2017, Emmanuel Bailly de Surcy**: “We will love each other now and forever, from near to far, from one Conference to another, from one city to another, from one country to another country.”

- **2018, François Lallier**: “Charity has its origin among the early Christians, it shapes people that love each other, that become better and therefore, God certainly blesses it and makes it both fruitful and lasting.”

- **2019, Paul Lamache**: “In everything we do, let us commit ourselves to the greater glory of God.”
In addition to promoting knowledge about the founders through these “Thematic Years”, a Literary Contest entitled “The First Conference” is organised every year to delve into their lives and works. As another action of the CGI’s recognition and respect towards the original founders, pilgrimages have been organised to their tombs: in 2016 the tomb of Blessed Frédéric Ozanam was visited, in 2017 that of Emmanuel Bailly de Surcy, in 2018 that of François Lallier and, in 2019, that of Paul Lamache will be visited.

Led by the Commission for Historical Research, the SSVP is preparing material and promoting the publication of books on the founders, the history of the SSVP and its special charism. These include *Saints and Blessed of the SSVP in the World*, by Gesiel Theodoro da Silva Junior; *Vincentian Reflections on the Gospel*, by Eduardo Marques Almeida; the re-issue of books about Frédéric Ozanam, such as *Ozanam, professor at the Sorbonne*, written by Kathleen O’Meara; *Frédéric Ozanam and the Rerum Novarum*, written by Eduardo Almeida; *Anecdotary of Federico Ozanam*, by Juan Manuel B. Gómez; and *Weaving God’s Work*, by Javier F. Chento. Also of note is the book by the President General International, Renato Lima de Oliveira, *Passionate for Charity and Justice* (published only in Spanish).

Similarly, and with the intention of providing materials that can be used as formation guidance for all members of the SSVP worldwide, the Brief Guide to Conferences has been produced, showing the criteria and good practices on how Vincentian groups work can be standardised.

Along these lines of moving forward together “as a true and unique Community of Vincentian friends that stretches across the world” (article 3.3 of the International Rule), a Formation Workshop was held in November 2018 in Madrid (Spain), for the 12 regional formation delegates from all over the world with the aim of establishing formation criteria and priorities for the SSVP.
6. Cause for the Canonisation of the Blessed Frédéric Ozanam

The “Amin de Tarrazi” Commission for the Cause for the Canonisation of Blessed Frédéric Ozanam has worked very intensely over the last three years. Two new cases of a possible miracle through the intercession of Ozanam are being studied and, in order to strengthen the work that the SSVP is carrying out in this regard, a Vice-Postulation has been set up, with its headquarters in Brazil, under the charge of Fr. Vinicius Texeira.

This Commission for the Cause for Canonisation and the SSVP worldwide suffered a great loss with the death of our fellow member Amin de Tarrazi (January 2019), who, having been General President of the SSVP, offered his service as a delegate for this Cause.

With regard to Frédéric Ozanam, the main co-founder of the SSVP, it should be noted that in 2017 the 20th anniversary of his beatification (which took place on August 22, 1997) was celebrated with various commemorative ceremonies.

It should also be mentioned that, with the permission of Ozanam’s relatives, his museum, until now managed by the Superior Council of France, has come under the coordination of the SSVP Council General International, and is now on the 3rd floor of the CGI headquarters in Paris.
7. Communication

Over the last three years, the SSVP has striven to improve international communication. The first objective achieved was the revamp of its website www.ssvpglobal.org (in April 2018), which has the latest technology and connectivity for all types of devices.

The presence on social networks has also been strengthened thanks to the different SSVP profiles:

- www.facebook.com/SSVP.INTERNATIONAL
- ssvp.conseil.general (CGI SSVP)
- @SSVP_CGI (SSVP INTERNATIONAL)
- SSVP Conseil Général International

The Council General
International receives the support and collaboration from
Ozanam TV, which carries out audiovisual communication work and has covered the main international meetings of the SSVP live and broadcast worldwide. It also makes videos and edits the CGI’s main messages and audiovisual releases.

A video on the “Vincentian places of Paris” has been produced and a new SSVP institutional video is being edited in order to convey the message of the mission and the values of the institution more easily throughout the world.

Recently, the SSVP’s international logo was revamped, a small change to make it easier for member countries of the Confederation to apply the logo in their territory. A special Commission has been set up to discuss the future of the international logo.

Moreover, there is an online magazine, Ozanam Network, which is currently published every four months (three issues a year), featuring all the latest news from the Council General International and the main initiatives of the Confederation’s member countries.

One of the main challenges regarding international communication is that of translating the messages and communiqués into the different official languages (French, English, Spanish, Portuguese and Chinese). In 2018, the “Translators’ Club” project was launched, whereby SSVP members and collaborators from all over the world join forces to translate, free of charge, the texts that appear in the SSVP international media, thus saving costs that can be allocated to SSVP’s social action.

Through the SSVP media, our beloved institution is taking a stand against situations of poverty and exclusion. Press releases have been published supporting life and family, while condemning the situation of refugees, the suffering of the civilian population in situations of armed conflict, the poverty suffered by some countries that are systematically the centre of humanitarian disasters...

With regard to internal communication and between fellow members or bodies of the SSVP, the role of general mediator, the “CGI mediator”, was created during this period in order to resolve possible conflicts within the SSVP, another way of understanding and being in harmony within the institution. We are all friends, and charity must always prevail among us.
8. Institutional Relations

- Vincentian Family;
- Representation in major international organisation;
- Relations with the Holy See.

8.1. Vincentian Family

The Society of St. Vincent de Paul shares a charism and is part of the Vincentian Family, an organisation that includes all the institutions that have been founded by, or have St. Vincent de Paul as their patron saint. For this reason, it is important to nurture and develop a relationship with all of them and, whenever possible, to promote common spaces and joint service for the benefit of the most needy.

The year 2015 until May 2016 was the Year of Vincentian Collaboration, in which those in charge of the Vincentian Family called for maximum cooperation and collaboration between all Vincentian branches.

2017 was 400th Anniversary of the Vincentian Charism. The central event of this anniversary took place in Rome, from October 11th to 15th, 2017, with the holding of a Vincentian Family Symposium for the 400th anniversary of the Charism. Thousands of representatives from many branches of the Vincentian Family from all over the world came together to celebrate this event, which was rich in exchanges, sharing prayers and emotions. The highlight of the event was the gathering in St. Peter’s Square on October 14 for the public audience with Pope Francis.
At the same time, the “Famvin Homeless Alliance” initiative, a joint project of the entire Vincentian Family on behalf of the homeless, was officially inaugurated.

The Famvin Homeless Alliance continued to develop in 2018, a potential that materialised in the 13 Houses Campaign, which consists of initiatives by the Vincentian Family around the world to promote projects that offer a home to homeless people.

Also in 2018 Famvin joined forces to raise awareness about the reality of the situation in Venezuela, through a statement in support of the Venezuelan people and a request for donations to alleviate the great hardships they are experiencing.

Through the President General and other CGI members, the Society of St. Vincent de Paul takes part every year in the International Executive Committee of the Vincentian Family, which brings together the servant leaders of the main branches of the Vincentian Family. In recent years, this has been held in Philadelphia (the United States).

The CGI represents the SSVP in various commissions and activities of the Vincentian Family. To find out more about all the collaboration work, please visit www.famvin.org, where you will find all the information on the most relevant aspects of both charitable action and spirituality within the charism.
8.2. Representation in Major International Organisations

Since March 2012, the Society of St. Vincent de Paul has been accredited by the United Nations, having a presence in New York (at the Economic and Social Council, ECOSOC; and on the United Nations platform for sustainable development); Geneva (Commission on Human Rights and consultative status with other UN agencies) and Paris (UNESCO, protection of cultural heritage and religious rights). In addition, the SSVP is fully aligned with the 17 sustainable development goals proposed by the United Nations.

The SSVP strives to achieve both several objectives: to eradicate poverty in the world, to preserve the dignity of people who are suffering, to promote peace and justice and, lastly, to make the voices of the poor be heard at an international level.

The idiosyncratic nature of the SSVP always features networking and collaboration in order to better defend the interests of those most in need. With this in mind, much of the work carried out in these organisations is carried out in collaboration with other similar entities, as is the case of the Vincentian Family (at the headquarters of the United Nations in the USA) or through participation with the Vincentian Family or the International Catholic Committee at the headquarters in Geneva.

Participation of the SSVP in the 34th session of the Human Rights Council in Geneva (March 2017).

Representatives of the Vincentian Family at the United Nations in Geneva (Company of the Daughters of Charity and the Society of St. Vincent de Paul) took part in the 34th session of the UN Human Rights Council in March 2017. The session focused particularly on the situation in Syria and allowed for the renewal of the mandate of the International Commission of Inquiry against impunity.

In September 2017, an exhibition on St. Vincent de Paul and SSVP development aid projects was opened at the UN.

The Society of St. Vincent de Paul together with the Daughters of Charity presented an exhibition on St. Vincent de Paul and the ongoing projects being carried out by the International Commission on Aid and Development (CIAD) coordinated by the SSVP Council General International.

Participation, as the Vincentian Family, in the UN High-Level Political Forum in July 2018, when the UN met to review Goal 11 of the UN agenda: “Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable”. Our choice as a Vincentian Family to contribute to ending homelessness is a human rights-based decision and commitment, fully aligned with our charism and global proposals for homelessness, such as the Famvin Homeless Alliance.
Since 2018, in its wish to “embrace the world in a network of charity”, the Council General International of the SSVP has officially granted an award to entities or persons pursuing the same aims and/or collaborating in an outstanding way with the SSVP throughout the world.

The first edition of the ‘Charity in Hope Medal’ was presented at the CGI Annual Meetings in Salamanca in 2018. The award was granted to the Rotary Club International. The Spaniard Manuel de Florián, the governor of district 2201 of the Rotary Club, received the award in representation of this institution, and the Australian Ian Riseley, on behalf of its international president.

This award recognises the international collaboration of the Rotary Club International with the SSVP for its great service to humanity, particularly to the most needy people around the world.

The candidates for this medal are chosen through proposals made by the various Superior/National Councils of SSVP countries. The World Organisation of the Scout Movement was the winner of the 2019 ‘Charity in Hope’ Medal.

In 2020, the ‘Charity in Hope’ Medal will be presented at the SSVP International Assembly that will take place in Nairobi, Kenya.
8.3. Relations with the Holy See

In 2016, the SSVP was invited to take part in an international congress organised by the Vatican under the title “Love Never Fails”, in commemoration of the 10th Anniversary of the Encyclical “Deus Caritas Est”.

In March 2017, the President General International, Renato Lima de Oliveira, had a general audience with Pope Francis, at which he took the opportunity to give him a report on the activity of the SSVP in the world. Our President General also had a meeting with the Vatican’s Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development, accompanied by other CGI members.

In October 2017, the President General had another meeting with the Holy Father, this time to give him a document containing the following topics: the path to holiness within the SSVP, the progress of a book on servants of God, venerable, blessed Vincentian saints, the life and work of Antoine-Frédéric Ozanam and details on the process relating to the canonisation of Blessed Ozanam.

In February 2018, the President General again had a brief General Audience with His Holiness Pope Francis at the Vatican, where he gave him a report on SSVP activities in Africa. At the same time, the International General President met the Prefect of the Dicastery for the Laity, the Family and Life, Cardinal Joseph Farrell, as the SSVP is included in the list of international institutions that already have ecclesiastical recognition. Similarly, he had another interesting meeting with Cardinal Leonardo Sandri, Prefect of the Congregation for the Oriental Churches, to analyse the work that the SSVP is doing in the East, and those in charge of the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development (formerly “Cor Unum”).

Lastly, in June 2018, our President General represented the SSVP at a meeting of the “Dicastery for the Laity, the Family and Life”, where he was able to provide information about the SSVP and the institution’s main lines of action on youth and other charity-related issues.

Antonio Gianfico, the National President of SSVP Italy, was appointed the International General President’s delegate for Vatican-related activities and events.

The SSVP supports all the initiatives of the Holy See and, in particular, it has celebrated and promoted “World Day of the Poor” and joined the “Global Catholic Climate Movement”.

In all international trips made by the President General International, the agenda includes visits to members of the ecclesiastical hierarchy: nuncios, cardinals, bishops, priests and various representatives of the clergy.
9. SSVP Youth

Youth should be synonymous with the SSVP, which was founded by a group of young people in 1833 and, since then, it has sought to maintain that young spirit able to adapt to new times and respond to emerging poverty.

Our fellow member, Renato Lima, regards youth as pivotal within the SSVP. Firstly, youth is included in one of the ten strategic lines, with the intention of rejuvenating the average age of the members, so that the SSVP has at least 30% of young people among its ranks.

Various actions have been carried out to achieve this objective. Firstly, July 4 has been officially established as “SSVP International Youth Day”, with a worldwide collection to promote youth conferences. This day was chosen because it was the feast day of an Italian Vincentian who was a role model for young people, Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati.

From June 15th to 21st, 2018, the “2nd SSVP Youth International Meeting” took place in Salamanca (Spain), which brought together young SSVP representatives from more than 100 countries around the world. It was an extraordinary meeting, the first edition of which had been held ten years earlier, also in Salamanca.
During this 2nd meeting, the regional youth delegates were appointed, 12 young people responsible for developing and coordinating youth actions in the different SSVP territories, working together with our fellow member William Alves, the International Vice-President for Youth.

An institutional video commemorating the event was recorded, including the best moments experienced by the young representatives and the anthem “Youth in Hope”.

One of the main commitments that the President General International made with the young people at this 2nd Youth International Meeting was to organise these international meetings every five years, always in Salamanca. Therefore, the 3rd Youth International Meeting will be held in 2023.

The SSVP youth actively take part in their parish and ecclesiastical sphere, while attending events specifically organised for young people, such as World Youth Days. During this three-year period (2016-2019), we witnessed what took place in Krakow (July 2016), with the previous meeting of the youth of the Vincentian Family in Piekary, and the meeting that took place at the end of January 2019 in Panama, the venue of the International Vincentian Youth Meeting at the Hogar “San José de Malambo”, under the motto “The joy of being Vincentian”.

10. Institutional Life

- Celebrations and Anniversaries;
- President General International’s Activity;
- SSVP Meetings.

10.1. Celebrations and Anniversaries

Over the last three years, the Society of St. Vincent de Paul celebrated the 15th Anniversary of the Rule (2018), a document approved in Rome in 2003 which represents the true internationalisation of the SSVP and a great effort to accommodate international statutes that would serve as a framework to cover the existing diversity among the member countries, so different from each other in terms of their culture and regulations.

In the same vein, the SSVP celebrated the 20th anniversary of the beatification of Frédéric Ozanam (2017), a historic moment which took place under the pontificate of St. John Paul II, in the Cathedral of Notre Dame (Paris) on August 22, 1997. To celebrate this anniversary, on September 9, 2017, the feast day of Blessed Ozanam, a holy mass was held at the resting place of Ozanam, the church of St. Joseph of the Carmelites. This celebration was broadcasted live by Ozanam TV for the whole world.

Since 2017, there has been a “Thematic Year” dedicated to one of the seven founders of the first SSVP Conference.

During 2018, the SSVP organised the 180th Anniversary of the founding of the Council General International, which was launched in 1839 to coordinate and unite the SSVP worldwide. This special event will be celebrated in 2019, being a Film Festival one of the main activities: The 7 Founders, based on the members making up the first Conference of the SSVP. In addition, an anthem has been specially composed for this occasion, as well as two new books on the founders and the SSVP will be published. A collaboration agreement will also be signed with the Religious of St. Vincent de Paul.

In addition to the major feast days of our Charism, such as that of Blessed Frédéric Ozanam (September 9th) and that of St. Vincent de Paul (September 27th), it is suggested that all fellow members around the world should start celebrating the date of December 8th again, the feast of the Immaculate Conception, to which the SSVP is committed.

10.2. President General International’s Activity

VINCENTIAN COMMUNICATION

Among the most noteworthy actions, our President General, Renato Lima de Oliveira, summarised the Circular Letter, a communiqué addressed to all fellow members around the world. This is a true Vincentian tradition in which, once a year, the President General shares his actions and ideas with his fellow members.

He also conveys Christmas messages to all fellow members around the world, remembering and strengthening the true sense of belonging to the Society of St. Vincent de Paul through its Vincentian charism.

The President General gave multiple interviews around the world to many media outlets. It is worth mentioning the one given for the programme À la source (From the Source), presented by Olivier de Keranflec’h. It was an exclusive 26-minute interview on K-TO TV (the French Catholic television channel).

AMBASSADOR OF THE CHARITY NETWORK

In his mission as SSVP representative, our President General has supported his fellow members all over the world. In 2016 and 2017, he visited 5 and 16 countries respectively.
In 2018, he travelled to 15 countries, with a view to visiting at least 10 countries in 2019.

It should be noted that in March 2017 the President General made official visits to seven Superior Councils: Italy, India, Sri Lanka, Malaysia, New Zealand, Australia and Chile.

Similarly, from 20th February to 15th March 2018, the President General travelled to Africa to learn first-hand about the reality of the Conferences in seven countries on this continent: Burkina Faso, Central African Republic, Nigeria, Zambia, Mozambique, Botswana and South Africa.

**SSVP REPRESENTATIVE**

The President General oversees institutional relations with the different entities with which our institution cooperates. He personally represents the SSVP at the main events regarding the Vincentian Family, institutions and organisations as well as the Holy See.

**RECOGNITION GRANTED TO SSVP THROUGH THE PGI**

- **November 28th, 2016**
  “Citizen Goiano” and “Pedro Ludovico Teixeira Medal for Legislative Merit”.
  Goiás, Brazil.

- **November 30th, 2016**
  “Medal for Legislative Merit” in the Chamber of Deputies. Brasilia, Brazil.

- **June 2nd, 2018**
  “Illustrious Citizen”. Navarro, Argentina.

- **June 18th, 2018**
  “Distinguished Guest”. Salamanca, Spain.

- **May 17th, 2019**
  “Citizen Itapetiningano”.
  Itapetininga, Brazil.
In June 2016, the Extraordinary Assembly of the SSVP was held in Rome. It was there that our fellow member, Renato Lima de Oliveira, was appointed as the new President General.

In 2017, the CGI annual meeting was held in Paris. In 2018, Salamanca (Spain) was the venue hosting this annual CGI meeting, while in 2019 it will be held in Porto (Portugal).

It is worth mentioning the 2nd SSVP Youth Meeting, which also took place in Salamanca in June 2018, and brought together young people from over 100 nations.

Furthermore, other meetings are held by geographical or regional areas of the SSVP. In this regard, we should mention the 2nd Vincentian Meeting of Portuguese-speaking countries, which took place in September 2017 in Rio de Janeiro (Brazil), and the 6th Latin-American Meeting of the SSVP, which brought together more than 60 fellow members, national presidents and international regional vice-presidents representing 37 Ibero-American countries in Ecuador between November 15th and 19th, 2017 under the motto “Developing the structure to better serve the poor”.

Other meetings are held by geographical areas, such as the International Meeting of the Europe 1 Region, where the SSVP countries belonging to this region met in Durham by the end of September 2018 to discuss several issues: the development and improvement of service and spirituality within the SSVP. Similarly, the 2nd Regional Meeting of the America 2 Region was held in Mexico in April 2019, under the motto “Formed in order to serve better”, bringing together the national presidents of this area, accompanied by their respective Formation Delegates and the Coordination Team.
“If anyone would be first, he must be last of all and servant of all.” (Mark 9, 35b)