



SOCIETY OF ST. VINCENT DE PAUL
COUNCIL GENERAL INTERNATIONAL

International Youth Committee of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul



4th July International Day of the Young Vincentians



Young Vincentians caring for the environment!
Caring today to generate sustainability and ensure tomorrow.

4th July 2019, the International Youth Day of the SSVP

with the blessings of Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati, patron saint of the Vincentian Youth

**Motivational Support Material for Celebration and Commemoration in all
Vincentian Territories of the World**

*“As friends, we are Vincentian teenagers and children, helping to
to build a great network of charity.” 2019*





Table of contents

Letter of Motivation	3
Actions put forward on the International Youth Day 2019	5
Eucharistic Liturgy	7
Week of Sharing and Prayer	12





• Letter of Motivation

Dear friends, Vincentian Youth,

Time flies so fast... Time is the pivot of life, so full of activity, hopes and expectations of what is to come. For others, life can be synonymous with loneliness and emptiness, which can even trigger a feeling of hopelessness. The fact of being a global society means that reality belongs to us; in other words, we are committed to caring for one another with affection and devotion.

The SSVP International Youth Day is the perfect moment to pause for reflection on this fast-paced world and to highlight the hopes and challenges for youth in our Society.

The Vincentian youth worldwide should never be silenced. They should take part in conference meetings and councils far beyond 'youth affairs' or 'youth reports'.

We have "Vincentian youth", who are already national presidents, in regional and central councils throughout the whole structure. Furthermore, they are developing international strategic plans and are part of communities that are leading the change.

The International Youth Day emphasises that young people are of paramount importance for the Society. Starting back with a 20-year old university student in France, young people have always instilled an enthusiastic and proactive spirit over time to achieve an organised, multi-faceted and fearless society that is building networks and forging bonds.

Moreover, it is essential to remember that the International Youth Day is not just for young people. We are 'a society' and as such, if you are between 8 and 80 years old, this day is for you too. We share our joys, our fears and our accomplishments and challenges, and this is what helps the Society to grow in its charism of selflessness and to care for those we serve in hope.

Often selfishness and misunderstanding hinder our true calling. The future of the Society depends so much on cultivating the spirit and the unity that our founders had, in order to ensure that the enthusiasm of both young and old members can shine forth.

We must be an open society that urges its members and volunteers to uphold the principles they believe in, without fear of being frown upon.

The International Youth Day gives us the opportunity to share with the world our own experiences related to our village, city, council or continent. It's also a great chance to keep in touch with anyone in all corners of the world. Sharing stories of our adventures as a global community is part of every culture. These stories are far too good not to share, and can inspire a movement.

This day gives us the chance to reflect on our mission as young Vincentians, because we are called to change the course of history whenever necessary. No work of charity is unfamiliar to the Society, and we are reminded that many of us are doing these good works in our own

***"As friends, we are Vincentian teenagers and children, helping to
to build a great network of charity." 2019***





**SOCIETY OF ST. VINCENT DE PAUL
COUNCIL GENERAL INTERNATIONAL**

International Youth Committee of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul

communities throughout the world, always with one heart and one goal: to serve our Masters and Lords, the poor, and to reach out to them, help them up and walk with them.

Children, young people, adults and elderly people... the time has come for us to share a story. We all have reasons to celebrate the International Youth Day of the SSVP, under the blessings and protection of Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati, our patron saint, equally young Vincentian like us!

Happy International Youth Day!

Greetings from the International Youth Committee of the SSVP Council General International

Willian Alves

*International Vice-President for Youth, Children and Teenagers
SSVP Council General International*

***“As friends, we are Vincentian teenagers and children, helping to
to build a great network of charity.” 2019***





- **Actions put forward on the International Youth Day 2019**

Young Vincentians taking care of the Environment! Caring for our environment today for a better sustainable development tomorrow

As Pope Francis said: *"You, dear young people, are not the future but the now of God"*.

As Vincentian youth, we are called to face oppression, to fight inequality, and not to abide by the rules of a society that prides itself on fame, wealth, and a hierarchical structure. These are not SSVP's ideas and we are called to be different, we are called to give another flavour to this world, to be the salt and light of the world.

On this International Youth Day, we remember that we have a role to play in shaping the world to come. We often focus on issues such as homelessness, refugees, education, but one crucial issue for society is **climate change and the attendant environmental degradation**.

As guardians of the Earth, we have the duty to care for the world around us.

The International Youth Committee of the Council General International of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul calls each of you to take effective and concrete action to challenge old habits and find ways to help the environment in our own communities, for we believe that if you do your part the whole world will be taken care of, for there are hundreds of thousands of us in every part of the planet.

Caring for the environment and seeking sustainable practices are new ways of practicing charity, because it focuses on the common good. We know that sustainability is the new currency of the global economy, because sustainable development aims to preserve the planet and meet human needs. In other words, a natural resource exploited in a sustainable way will last forever and with conditions that can also be exploited by the generations to come.

The encyclical *On Care for Our Common Home* (Laudato Si') is the new appeal from Pope Francis addressed to 'every person living on this planet', *"Praise be You, my Lord, through our Sister, Mother Earth, who sustains and governs us, and who produces various fruit with coloured flowers and herbs"* (St. Francis of Assisi). As the Pope tells us in his encyclical letter: *"I urgently appeal, then, for a new dialogue about how we are shaping the future of our planet. We need a conversation which includes everyone, since the environmental challenge we are undergoing, and its human roots, concern and affect us all"*.



Thus, the International Committee suggests some practical activities that can be carried out until the end of this year, mainly by the Vincentian youth and within their conferences around the world:

- Get trash out of rivers and beaches (make sure it is safe to do so);
- Plant trees in your area;
- The three Rs: Reduce, Reuse and Recycle;
- Buy a second-hand T-shirt at your local shop;
- Use recycled paper;
- Cycle or walk to conference meetings (it reduces CO₂ emissions);
- When going on pilgrimage, take care of the environment and pick up the trash on the way;
- Organise meetings and carry out studies highlighting the importance of sustainability;
- Teach the poor how to take care of their land and produce their own food;
- Teach children in the community how to save water;
- Donate drinking water to needy communities;
- Speak in the communities about how to take care of the environment;
- Choose your own adventure and make up your own fun ideas!

After these activities, share a moment of fraternity and reflect on how these small steps can contribute to changing your community and the world. Take a photo and share with the SSVP around the world what's going on in your region or community. And remember to wear your SSVP T-shirt with pride.

Share your photos on the International Committee's social networks:

Facebook: SSVP Youth, Children and Teenagers International (@SSVPYouthCGI)

Instagram: @ssvpyouth_international

E-mail: cgi.ivp-youth@ssvpglobal.org



- **Eucharistic Liturgy**

Review of the Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati, the patron saint of the Vincentian youth

International Youth Day of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul (SSVP)



Initial Remarks

In the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul, there are friends and brothers, and as its founders grow older, it needs to be renewed by young members, who can bring audacity and creativity and come up with new ideas to serve the poor of today.

Today, July 4th, we commemorate the International Youth Day of the SSVP, to honour the memory of Pier Giorgio Frassati, a young Italian Vincentian who died at the age of 24, when he fell ill after visiting poor families.

Let us pray to the Lord that, through the intercession of Blessed Frédéric Ozanam and Pier Giorgio Frassati, we may renew our commitment to the SSVP.

As we rise, we receive the priest who presides over this Holy Eucharist.

Collect Prayer

O Father, who gave Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati the joy of meeting Christ in faith and charity through his intercession, help us to spread the spirit of the blessedness of the Gospel amongst the people of today. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

The Liturgy of the Word

The prophet Isaiah reminds us that the true fasting will be that which is not simply an activity of the body keeping a day of penance, but entails committing oneself to the plight of others. Shared suffering forges bonds of solidarity with people.



Let's listen with reverence and in silence.

First Reading (Isaiah 58, 5-11)

Book of the Prophet Isaiah

"5. *Is this the fast I have chosen, a day for a man to deny himself, to bow his head like a reed, and to spread out sackcloth and ashes? Will you call this a fast and a day acceptable to the Lord?* 6. *Is not the fast I have chosen to break the chains of wickedness, to untie the cords of the yoke, to set the oppressed free, and tear off every yoke?* 7. *Is it not to share your bread with the hungry, to bring the poor and homeless into your home, to clothe the naked when you see him, and not to turn away from your own flesh and blood?* 8. *Then your light will break forth like the dawn, and your healing will come quickly. Your righteousness will go before you, and the glory of the Lord will be your rear guard.* 9. *Then you will call, and the Lord will answer; you will cry out, and He will say, 'Here I am.'* *If you remove the yoke from your midst, the pointing of the finger and malicious talk.* 10. [...] *and if you give yourself to the hungry and satisfy the afflicted soul, then your light will go forth in the darkness, and your night will be like noonday.* 11. *The Lord will always guide you; He will satisfy you in a sun-scorched land and strengthen your frame. You will be like a well-watered garden, like a spring whose waters never fail."*

The word of the Lord

Thanks be to God

Responsorial Psalm (Psalms 112)

R. Happy the man who fears the Lord.

V. Alleluia! Happy the man who fears the Lord, who takes delight in all his commands. His sons will be powerful on earth; the children of the upright are blessed.

R. Happy the man who fears the Lord.

V. Riches and wealth are in his house; his justice stands firm for ever. He is a light in the darkness for the upright: he is generous, merciful and just.

R. Happy the man who fears the Lord.

V. The good man takes pity and lends, he conducts his affairs with honour. The just man will never waver. He will be remembered for ever.

R. Happy the man who fears the Lord.

V. He has no fear of evil news; with a firm heart he trusts in the Lord. With a steadfast heart he will not fear; he will see the downfall of his foes.

R. Happy the man who fears the Lord.

Remarks on Second Reading

In his first letter to the Corinthians, Saint Paul composed a sublime hymn about love. He depicts it as patient, obliging, detached, exonerating everything, believing in everything, hoping for



everything, the everlasting love. Love is a gift of the Holy Spirit. This is how our charity should be.

Let's listen with reverence and in silence.

Second Reading (1 Corinthians 13:1-13)

Reading from the letter of St. Paul to the Corinthians:

"1. If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am only a ringing gong or a clanging cymbal. 2. If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have absolute faith so as to move mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. 3. If I give all I possess to the poor and exult in the surrender of my body, but have not love, I gain nothing. 4. Charity is patient, charity is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. 5. It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no account of wrongs. 6. Love takes no pleasure in evil, but rejoices in the truth. 7. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. 8. Charity never fails. But where there are prophecies, they will cease; where there are tongues, they will be restrained; where there is knowledge, it will be dismissed. 9. For we know in part and we prophesy in part [...]. 10. [...] but when the perfect comes, the partial passes away. 11. When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I set aside childish ways. 12. Now we see but a dim reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known. 13. And now these three remain: faith, hope, and charity; but the greatest of these is charity.

The word of the Lord

Thanks be to God



Remarks on the Gospel

The evangelist Matthew portrays the beatitudes as the life plan for every follower of Jesus Christ. They are described as fundamental conditions each disciple shall comply with to be involved in God's plan. Whoever wants to live according to Jesus' plan will encounter difficulties and problems, but will have God's strength and the joy of living according to his redeeming Word. Stand up, sing the Alleluia chant and listen to the Gospel.

Gospel (Matthew 5, 1-12)

"1. When Jesus saw the crowds, He went up on the mountain and sat down. His disciples came to Him [...]. 2. [...] and He began to teach them, saying: 3. Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven! 4. Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted! 5. Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth! 6. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled! 7. Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy! 8. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God! 9. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called sons of God! 10. Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven! 11. Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you, and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of Me. 12. Rejoice and celebrate, because great is your reward in heaven; for in the same way they persecuted the prophets before you.

Word of Salvation!

Glory to God in the highest

Prayer of the Faithful

To each of the calls we will respond: ***“Through the intercession of Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati, O Lord, listen to us”***

1. *“Entirely immersed in the mystery of God and totally dedicated to the constant service of others: thus you can sum up your earthly life.” (St. John Paul II)*

For the Pope, the Bishops and the whole Church, so that they may bear witness to and defend the love of God and your neighbour. Let us pray.

2. [...] *I would like for us to pledge a pact which knows no earthly boundaries nor temporal limits: union in prayer. (Pier Giorgio)*

Because united in prayer, we can spread the Word that redeems all the people we meet over the course of our lives. Let us pray

3. *“Jesus pays me a visit every morning in Holy Communion, and I return the visit in the meager way I know how, visiting the poor.” (Pier Giorgio)*

O Lord, help us live the Eucharist as the source and summit of life, at the service of mankind. Let us pray.

4. *“With love, peace is sown among men [...]” (Pier Giorgio)*



**SOCIETY OF ST. VINCENT DE PAUL
COUNCIL GENERAL INTERNATIONAL**

International Youth Committee of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul

So that we know how to be peacemakers. Let us pray.

5. *“But I am poor like all the poor. [...] And we have the duty of putting our health at the service of those who do not have it.” (Pier Giorgio)*

May the imprint of our faith be service to the poor, the weak and the downtrodden, the sick, the lonely and the hopeless. Let us pray.

6. *“Living without Faith, without a patrimony to be defended, without a steady struggle for truth, that is no living, but existing.” (Pier Giorgio)*

For us, young people, so that, following the example of Pier Giorgio, we can make courageous decisions that bear witness to our faith in life, truth, love and justice. Let us pray.

Prayer over the Offerings

Our Lord, we place these offerings upon your altar with the same spirit of love and genuine faith as Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati. May our sacrifice, celebrating this Eucharist in purity of heart and love, be acceptable to You and leads us to eternal salvation, through Christ our Lord.

Communion Antiphon

“There is no greater love than to lay down one’s life for one’s friends.”

Post-Communion Prayer

O Lord, may we renew ourselves through the mysteries and follow the example of Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati, who served and loved the poor wholeheartedly, through Christ our Lord. Amen.

***“As friends, we are Vincentian teenagers and children, helping to
to build a great network of charity.” 2019***





• Week of Sharing and Prayer

Wherever it is not possible to hold a Eucharistic Celebration, moments of sharing and prayer are suggested, some themes for reflection are proposed below.

Suggestion: Gather the young people and other Vincentian members and have a moment of prayer, with songs, spiritual readings and reflection.

LOVE

Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is Love (1 John 8). Jesus gives a very basic summary of the commandments of the gospel, explaining the most important ones: *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind and Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself (Matthew 22: 34-40).* If everyone can observe these two commandments, we will not have to experience the different evils of today's society. As Vincentians, we preach the gospel of love through our actions whenever we care about our needy masters. Christ identified himself with the poor when He said: *"Whatever you do to the least of my brothers, you do unto to me". (Matthew 25:40).* This entails that we are serving God and our neighbours at the same time, whenever we help those in need. St. Paul also made us understand that we can have the gifts of the spirit, but if we have not love, we gain nothing (1 Corinthians 13: 3). *If you love those who love you, what reward will you get? (Matthew 5: 46-48).* If we do, then we will not practice God's love, because God's love is not selfish. That's why he told us to love even our enemies (Luke 6: 35-36). *Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no account of wrongs. Love takes no pleasure in evil, but rejoices in the truth. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails (1 Corinthians 13: 4-10).*

If we have the above characteristics, then we can say that we are in harmony with God's love; otherwise, we should pray to God to grant us the grace to perfect His love in us.

REFLECTIONS

- I. Am I living in the plenitude of God's love?
- II. As a young Vincentian, how do I show love to my neighbour?
- III. Can young Vincentians put into practice the Love of God with their neighbours? If so, how?
- IV. Why does man fail to love? How can we change this?



IDENTITY

For we walk by faith, not by sight, living our lives in a manner consistent with our confident belief in God's promises (2 Corinthians 5: 17). Doing God's work does not make us immune to the negative challenges of life. We are human and have our own share of problems and have to carry our cross every day. And in the midst of all this, we sometimes have two options: Either we commit ourselves to our personal comfort and go against our call as Vincentians and Christians; or we wait for God's promises that have already manifested before us, despite the circumstances in which we find ourselves. David sang in Psalm 23, "Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me". He recognized God's presence in difficult times and was confident that God was leading him to greener pastures, even in the midst of darkness. Every victory has a story. Jesus turned and said to Peter, "Get behind me, Satan" when he rebuked him about his sufferings and death, Jesus knew that if he did not die on the cross, the salvation of mankind would not be complete (Matthew 16: 21-23). [...] Moses [...] refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter. He chose to suffer oppression with God's people rather than to experience the fleeting enjoyment of sin (Hebrews 11: 24-26). Joseph went to prison for many years because he refused to betray his slave master, and to sin against God (Genesis 39: 9). Jesus was condemned and endured the agony of the cross, and was crucified, even though he had made no mistake. Moses was exiled for 40 years and Joseph was imprisoned without a right cause. Jesus conquered sinless death, and man was reconciled to God (Hebrews 12: 2; Ephesians 2:16). God sent Moses to bring the sons of Israel out of Egypt, since that time no prophet has risen in Israel like Moses (Exodus 3: 11-12; Deuteronomy 34: 10-12). Joseph became governor in Egypt and freed his family and Egypt from seven years of famine (Exodus 41: 40-41; Genesis 41: 56-57).

Our identity shapes our approach and how we face the challenges. If we identified ourselves with God and his promises, we have nothing to fear, but to remain firm, focused and committed, regardless of what life has in store for us, knowing with utter confidence that the one who cares for us never sleeps, and in the end, victory is guaranteed (1 Corinthians 2: 9).

REFLECTIONS

- I. Did you find your identity?
- II. What is your most challenging Vincentian experience and how did you overcome it?
- III. Are you having any difficulty fulfilling your Vincentian duties? If so, please tell us about it.
- IV. What is the identity of the Vincentian Youth today?
- V. Is SSVP in line with environmental protection and sustainability?
- VI. How can we make other young people feel identified with the Vincentian charism?



**SOCIETY OF ST. VINCENT DE PAUL
COUNCIL GENERAL INTERNATIONAL**

International Youth Committee of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul

AS SMALL AS A MUSTARD SEED...

"What is your church doing now? What is it doing for the poor of Paris? Show us your works and we will believe you!". These are the words that prompted the young Frédéric Ozanam and his companions. Despite the hardship they experienced, they started a network of charity which eventually took the name of 'the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul'. The Catholic Church has been severely criticised mainly because it refuses to compromise and conform to the standards of the world, remaining rooted in the truth. Its doctrines and teachings have also withstood the test of time, regardless of the age. It began on Pentecost with 120 Christians (Acts 2: 1-4). Today, it is the largest church in the world, with over 1.2 billion members. Seven friends, led by Blessed Frédéric Ozanam, impelled by the misery of the poor, engaged in and sowed a seed of charity that has borne fruit. What began in Paris with a conference and seven members spread rapidly. Nowadays, it is present in more than 149 Vincentian territories around the world, with over 800,000 members. We live in a generation where we are confronted with natural disasters, dictatorship, the lack of respect for human rights, war, poverty, high crime rates, etc. The first Christians started in Jerusalem, but what they preached spread throughout the world; the seven founders started in Paris and their mission spread throughout the world as well. We all have a mustard seed within us that God has placed in the form of gifts, talents, messages, etc., according to the discernment of the Holy Spirit. No gift is insignificant, because we are different parts of a body in Christ Jesus (2 Corinthians 12: 4-8 / 12-14). Many people are waiting for you to sow mustard seeds, thus providing shelter for them (Matthew 13: 31-32). Like the first Christians and the seven founders of the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul, they decided to be involved with sowing their seed and make it grow. You are a seed sowed by God, you may look small on the surface, but God has placed great potentials within you so that you can accomplish great things, but not until you sow that seed, can you experience growth (John 11:24). So, what are you planning to do with your seed today?

REFLECTIONS

- I. Which are the factors that prevent you from sowing your seed or delaying its growth?
- II. What gifts, talents or ideas you have not yet shared do you think can help SSVP and also the young people?
- III. How has SSVP positively impacted you since you joined in?
- IV. How can young Vincentians be more involved in the event of crisis or natural disasters?

***"As friends, we are Vincentian teenagers and children, helping to
to build a great network of charity." 2019***

