



**Confederation International
Society of Saint Vincent de Paul
Council General International
16th President General**



Letter 01/2020
Paris, 26 January 2020

To brother **Ralph Middlecamp**
President
SSVP USA
Saint Louis, USA

Copy to: Mike Nizankiewicz (ITVP America 1).

Subject: Congratulations

*Dear President,
Dear Board members,
Dear Vincentians of the National Council of the United States,*

1. Today is truly a momentous event for the Council of the United States. My only regret is that I cannot be there, yet I know you are well represented with our brother, Michael Nizankiewicz, as the International Territorial Vice-president for America 1 and English speaking countries in the Caribbean.
2. The beautiful mosaic of Blessed Antonie-Frederic Ozanam, which will be commemorated this day at The Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, D.C., is a historical event for the Society. Not just for the Council of the United States, but for every Vincentian in our global network and for Council General International too.
3. When I had the privilege of visiting the National Basilica in 2018, in the company of several Vincentian brothers and sisters, I realized that there was a special space in which the images of Saint Vincent de Paul and Saint Louise de Marillac were placed. Thus, in tune with brother Ralph, we talked about the possibility of having an image of Ozanam in the same place. It was dream?
4. Thank God, our prayers have been heard and the administration of Basilica has authorized us, and today we are inaugurating this beautiful mosaic, which will further increase devotion to Frederic Ozanam, especially now that we are accelerating the process of canonization with the Vatican. A true blessing from God to all of us Vincentians!
5. While it is true that Frederic Ozanam was a key founder of The Society, this day will also serve to recognize the importance of the other six founders who collectively created a network of charity that is now active in over 150 territories serving some 30 million people in need each day.

6. Let me also take this opportunity to thank the National Council of the United States, and so many of your Central and District Councils for your great spirit of charity in providing much needed twinning funds for so many other Superior Councils. This allows those smaller Councils to also be effective in serving the less fortunate in developing countries.

7. I conclude, once again, thanking you for the fruitful partnership between the Council General and the United States National Council, one of the most important Councils of our entire International Confederation.

8. I wish this year, the 175th anniversary of the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul in the United States, will bring much hope and blessings to all of the Vincentians in the U.S. and the thousands upon thousands of those you serve. I look forward to joining you later this year in St. Louis. It will be a great pleasure to me.

Vincentian Greetings, together in the spirit of Clavé, serving in hope.



Brother **Renato Lima de Oliveira**
16th President General