



# YOUTH COMMITTEES IN SSVP

## International Manual of Guidance

**Society of St. Vincent de Paul  
Council General International  
International Youth Committee**

Issue I - 2023





# **International Orientation Manual for Youth Committees in SSVP**

**Published by the Council General International of the  
Society of Saint Vincent de Paul.**

**Revised by the International Youth Committee**

**Issue I - 2023**



# International Orientation Manual for Youth Committees in SSVP

- **16th President General**

Renato Lima de Oliveira

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## INTRODUCTION

The Society of St. Vincent de Paul (SSVP) is an international organization formed by lay Catholics who seek holiness, personal and spiritual growth through service to those most in need.

In Paris, France, on April 23rd, 1833, a group of young university students, faced with inequality and social injustice, decide to act with the hope of changing the world. To this end, they create the first "Charity Conference", a group of friends who wanted to share their faith and for this to translate into deeds.

Prayer and action come together to visit the Mouffetard neighborhood, one of the poorest in Paris. It is a Daughter of Charity, Sister Rosalie Rendu, who accompanies and guides them, instructing them in the teachings of Saint Vincent de Paul.

In 1834, the Conferences make Saint Vincent de Paul their patron saint and invoke the Immaculate Virgin. The following year, the first Rule was published and in 1839, the Council General International was constituted.

The Society of Saint Vincent de Paul is present in more than 150 territories, has 800,000 members and 1,500,000 volunteers. Its help reaches more than 30 million people every day.

Conducted in 2019 and updated in 2020 the SSVP International Vincentian Youth Census illustrates the presence of young people up to 35 years of age in the organization:



- 27% Youth aged 18 to 35.
- 6% of Adolescents 12 to 17 years old.
- 5% of children aged 7 to 11 years.

The young Vincentians are encouraged to participate in the Vincentian Conferences, which are the base groups of the SSVP, and that make home visits to assist people in situations of social vulnerability. In addition, the organization develops specific programs and projects for young people, which aim at their formation, training and engagement in the SSVP mission.

The National Youth Committee is important in the organization, which seeks to promote the formation, recruitment and engagement of young people and the constant rejuvenation of the Vincentian Conferences in its area of operation.

It is also a fundamental role of the National Youth Committee to ensure that the primitive spirit of the young founders is always present in the institution, therefore in its activities, decisions, deliberations and collaborating in the whole structure of the SSVP.

Valuing the participation of young people in all its activities, social projects and organizational structure must be a priority, especially among its leaders and Vincentian leaders.



This manual aims to guide all national councils on how to work with young people in each of their countries. It aims to provide suggestions to facilitate the creation of national youth committees and shed some light on the way forward as youth leaders.

**Audience:**

- **International Vice President for Youth, Children and Teenagers** (*under the SSVP International General Council*)
- **International Youth Committee** (*under the SSVP International General Council*)
- **Delegates/Territorial Youth Coordinators** (*territories of the SSVP International General Council*)
- **National Youth Delegate/Coordinator** (*within the SSVP National Council/Superior Council*)
- **National Youth Committee** (*under the SSVP National/Superior Council*)
- **Youth Coordinator of the Metropolitan, Regional, Diocesan, Particular, Local Councils** (*local scope of a given SSVP National/Superior Council*)





## PRESENTATION

### VINCENTIAN YOUTH: PROTAGONISM AND TRANSFORMATION

The Council General International is very pleased to launch, during the General Assembly in Rome (June 2023), the "International Orientation Manual for Youth Committees in the SSVP". It is certainly an effective contribution to enable the Superior Councils to better organize strategies and priorities related to the Vincentian youth movement.

The better structured the National Youth Committee, the more fruit it will bear for the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul. As our Rule predicts, the renewal of our Conferences is urgent and necessary, not only to honor the legacy of the seven founders, but above all to ensure our existence for many, many years to come.

The first Conference was born from the joint prayer of some young people, in Paris, at the beginning of the 19th century, who wanted to convert their prayer into action. Those young people gave themselves to the neediest. Since then, the primitive spirit of the collegiate foundation has infected the world, and today thousands of Catholics, many of them young, serve in the ranks of the SSVP.

In this mandate (2016/2023), young people had a voice and protagonist. The Vice Presidency led by the confrere Willian Alves, with the support of 12 territorial delegates and the Department of Children and Adolescents, really made a difference. There were countless initiatives, activities, events and documents produced, aiming to enhance the role of Vincentian youth.

Our Rule is full of comments on the importance of youth, including "Members strive to maintain a youthful spirit" (Article 3.5) and "Young people take a fresh look at the world and often see beyond appearances" (Article 3.7). In the Holy Scriptures we can also find exactly what youth



means for the SSVP: "Your elders shall dream dreams, and your young men shall see visions" (Joel 3.1).

I am convinced that the Superior Councils will appreciate the content and information available in this Manual, which will be very useful for them to rejuvenate and revitalize the action of SSVP, attracting more young people, transforming our bases and better organizing the existing service structure. A Superior Council without a National Youth Committee is doomed to failure, and we will answer to God for that.

Vicentinously,

**Renato Lima de Oliveira**

16th International President General of the SSVP, from 2016 to 2023



## Letters from Presidents-General on the importance of Youth in SSVP

But what means, they will say, should we use to attract the young? We call anxiously, and no one comes.

We have two means that can be employed: the first, used in many Conferences, consists in forming within the Conference itself a section of aspiring confreres, and in getting them to take an interest in the works, by entrusting them, under the supervision of an older confrere, to visit the poor who are alone and elderly.

At the age of twelve, thirteen, fourteen, when the salutary impressions of the first Communion are still alive in the soul, it is easy to gather these young people together and make them pass through the sweet apprenticeship of charity; in this way, when they reach eighteen, twenty, educated, so to speak, in the midst of the Conferences, accustomed to frequent them with human respect, they will most easily enlist as active confreres.

It is much more difficult to attract *people* of these ages by themselves, because misunderstood shame and shyness drives them away, and also because they know that they will not find among the *group members* other young like themselves with whom they could make good comradeship. The organization of special Conferences for aspirants seems to us a sure way to nip this in the bud.

**Adolph Baudon**

3rd International President General of the SSVP, from 1848 to 1886

*Circular of November 1, 1851*



Founded by young people and for young people, whose fraternity lasts a lifetime, the spirit of youth is an original and permanent characteristic of the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul. It has been engraved from the beginning in the Regulations and will remain there. But it is also the point on which it is necessary to be vigilant, because the youth of the body is fading in each one and it is necessary to renew it constantly at the level of the heart and of thought.

The spirit of youth is dynamism, enthusiasm, projection into the future. It is the generous acceptance of risks, it is the creative imagination, which is to say, above all, adaptability, that essential property of youth, much more important than the adaptation that becomes sclerotic when one can no longer readapt oneself.

In this sense, the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul can be called a movement of charity and apostolate. However, youth of age is not always enough to guarantee youth of spirit, but it predisposes to it, To give ample place to young people, to understand them, to dialogue with them with mutual patience, to give them charges, to be young with them, is both a necessity for recruitment and a requirement of fidelity to the Vincentian tradition of Ozanam.

**Pierre Chouard**

9th International President General of the SSVP, from 1954 to 1969.



## MESSAGE FROM THE INTERNATIONAL YOUTH COMMITTEE

My friends, the motto of our mandate at the head of the Vice-Presidency for Youth, Children and Teenagers in the Council General International of the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul was *"Vincentian Youth as Protagonists of the present and the future of the SSVP"*, this motto proposes an assumed commitment to present and ratify the importance of youth in our institution; understanding here that protagonist is related to service, to be protagonist is to put oneself at the service, to dedicate oneself in everything one does, it is mission, it is action.

The motto is also an invitation to value the participation of young people in an effective way in the entire organizational structure, not only in themes and reports focused on youth, but also in formation, strategy, social projects, communication, financial, administrative, and to have an active and participative voice in meetings, assemblies, decisions and deliberations in all spheres of the SSVP.

The voice and the presence of the young in the SSPV bring dynamism, an attentive and renewed look at all situations. The Vincentian Youth should not be seen only as an investment for the future, but should be inserted in the today, in the now, in the present of SSVP, so that their actions are able to bear good fruits, especially for the good of the poor, the sanctification of its members and assisted and the constant growth of the serving presence of SSVP in the world, as it was the wish of the seven young founders.

This manual is a concrete gesture that the Youth are important to the whole structure of the SSVP, study it, put it into practice, because we want an SSVP stronger and younger.

**Willian Dimas da Silva Alves**

**Vice President International Youth, Children and Teenagers**



You did it! May you always be compassionate like Rosalie Rendu and determined like Frederic Ozanam! You are the present and the future of the Society. Vincentian friends, never stop trying to make the world a better place. Love your neighbor, grow in holiness and trust in God's Divine Providence!

**Kathleen Brissette**

**Territorial Youth Delegate for America 1**

"God does not choose the prepared but enables his chosen ones." This is a phrase that has always brought me much hope and peace, knowing that it is God, with the help of the Holy Spirit, who precedes us in the mission to which he calls us by name. And as Saint John Paul II said, "Do not be afraid!", the world and the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul need courageous young people who respond to the new poverties of our time.

**Edgardo José Fuentes Flores**

**Territorial Youth Delegate for America 2**

Dear young people of the SSVP, may this manual serve as a guide to optimize your services within our association. An educated Vincentian will never be confused, so I humbly ask you, for love of Christ and Blessed Frederic Ozanam, to be constantly trained doctrinally and spiritually, not to forget the Eucharist, to pray and to love our Society of St. Vincent de Paul.

**Arturo Adrián Antezana Pacheco**

**Territorial Youth Delegate for America 3**

In the midst of chaos, we can bring peace, in times of despair, be the hope someone needs and the reason someone still believes that love exists. A shoulder to lean on and a reason to carry on.

What is love without giving, charity without sharing, leadership? without service, kindness without care, and mercy without acceptance? For we cannot solve all the world's problems, but we can make a difference.

**Joseph Beige Shemang**

**Territorial Youth Delegate for Africa 1**



Enjoy your ministry, take advantage of the opportunity to love God through service, make friends that will last a lifetime, and create irreplaceable memories. The Society of St. Vincent de Paul is ours to change the world by opening our hearts and hands to collaborate creatively and be with our friends in need.

**Boipelo Dorothy Alvinah Mathodlana**

**Territorial Youth Delegate for Africa 2**

Being Vincentian Youth is a gift that God has given us, and a great opportunity to be the difference in the world that lacks love, charity and young people willing to do good for others. May this manual be an incentive for many young people to awaken to the leadership of service in the SSVP.

**Yannick Stanislas Zembebe Ouandaogo**

**Territorial Youth Delegate for Africa 3**

Youth ministry in the Society of St. Vincent de Paul has gone through several phases, always evolving into a more specialized ministry. This evolution has taken youth from the early days when the founders started the charity conference to the present day. This handbook is designed specifically for youth leaders, youth conference formation, and more. This guide will also serve as training material, general principles of a youth committee.

**Leo Levin Pushparaj Ravi Kumar**

**Territorial Youth Delegate for Asia 1**



Vincentian youth ministry has grown steadily, with strong connections and working together with relevant ministries in the Catholic Church. This manual is a new platform designed with clarity for each position, the main youth committee and training materials for this committee. From your generation forward, it will be different. Together with the Society of St. Vincent de Paul.

**Thon Sokcheat (Gabriel)**

**Territorial Youth Delegate for Asia 2**

Vincentian Youth may this manual help the desire to serve in the SSVP grow even more among us. This manual is only a step to make the strong and active presence of the Youth Committees and their respective leaders, equally young people to infect other young people and thus grow in quality and number in our association, more and more a reality in our Councils.

**Orlando do Nascimento Geraldes Mendes**

**Territorial Youth Delegate for Europe 1**

We are young Vincentians with the same dreams and longings as those who were also young like us, the seven founders. They started it all and today we are the ones responsible for continuing this incredible work.

**Slavko Tonković**

**Territorial Youth Delegate for Europe 2**





The Society is young in spirit. Young people are not the future, but they are today's leaders. Share your voice, share your experiences, share yourself. Come as you are, for SSVP needs diverse minds and hearts to challenge ideas and structures. Remember to have fun.

**Luke Brouwer**

**Territorial Youth Delegate for Oceania**

Youth and councils, your commitment to society and to forming national youth committees is inspiring. Your voice matters and your actions can make a real difference. Never doubt your ability to create positive change. We are here to support you and encourage you to persevere in this organization. Together, we will build a bright, inclusive, and prosperous future for all. With confidence and determination,

**Tamer Chemaly**

**Territorial Youth Delegate for Middle East and North Africa**

This manual is a joint work of a group of friends for many groups of friends around the world. It has been produced with the aim to highlight that "Youth is the present and the future of SSVP in the world".

**Josmary Del Carmen Palencia Centella**

**Coordinator of the Children and Adolescents Department**



# RATIONALE IN THE INTERNATIONAL RULE AND STATUTES OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONFEDERATION

## PART I - RULE OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONFEDERATION OF THE SOCIETY OF SAINT VINCENT DE PAUL (2003)

### 1.1- Origins

The Society of Saint Vincent de Paul is a Christian community spread throughout the world, founded in Paris, France, in 1822, by a group of young Catholic laymen and an older one, who came together to create the first Conference.

### 3.7 - Young Members

Young Vincentians allow the Society to keep a permanently young spirit. Forward-looking, they take a fresh look at the world and often see beyond appearances.

The Society takes permanent care to form Conferences of Young People and to favor their reception in all Conferences. The experience of a community of faith and love, their confrontation with the world of poverty deepens their spirituality, stimulates to action and favors their realization as persons. The senior confreres and consociates assume the responsibility of helping them on the path of formation, always respecting their personal choices and their aspirations for Vincentian service.



## **PART II - STATUTES OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONFEDERATION OF THE SOCIETY OF SAINT VINCENT DE PAUL**

### **3) The President General, the General Council Bureau and the International Service Structure**

#### **3.16 - Members of the General Council Bureau**

The General President appoints, after appropriate consultations for a limited period, but renewable, a General Vice-President, a General Secretary and a General Treasurer, who with him compose the Bureau of the General Council of the Confederation, who advise him and have the functions provided for in Article 7.4 of these International Statutes.

All members by right mentioned in Articles 3.16 to 3.18 of these International Bylaws have the right to vote at Bureau meetings, except the Spiritual Advisor. No quorum is required for Bureau meetings and decisions will be made by simple majority.

##### **3.16.1 - Its mission**

The Bureau collaborates with the General President in developing the strategy to put into practice the agreements of the General Assemblies of the General Council and the recommendations of the International Executive Committee.

It also collaborates with the President General in the conception of the strategy to be proposed to the General Council Assemblies and to the International Executive Committee.



This is the Vincentian body closest to the President General, which advises him on all problems.

The General President formally consults the Bureau at least three (3) times a year between meetings of the International Executive Committee

### 3.16.3 - The International Youth Delegate

The brother or sister in charge of the International Delegation (here changed to International Vice Presidency) of Youth will always be part of the Bureau of the General Council.

- *Rule Comment: It is recommended that Superior, Assimilated and Associate Councils consider such a provision in their Internal Statutes for the different levels of the Council.*



## **RESOLUTION ON YOUTH AGE CLASSIFICATION IN SSVP**

Since the beginning of the mandate of confrere Renato Lima de Oliveira (in 2016) and with the release of the new International Youth Committee (in 2018), there have been many consultations by National Councils to the Council General International (CGI) about what should be the age range to be considered a Vincentian Youth in SSVP.

During the II International Meeting of National Youth Coordinators, held in June 2018 in the city of Salamanca, youth representatives from several countries asked the International Committee to definitively clarify this issue, in order to better facilitate the work of recruiting and acting in the National Councils.

The International Vice President for Youth, confrere Willian Alves, along with a small team within the Committee, in the year 2019 promoted a consultation with several SSVP countries to understand how the division of the age group of children, adolescents, youth and adults was done in their National Councils, and in other branches of the Vincentian Family, as well as studied some statements of the United Nations Organizations on the distinct age classifications for youth.

During the year 2020, the International Committee looks into this topic again, and armed with more information and data, the International Vice-Presidency for Youth, Children and Teenagers defines in unison the theme of the age group and takes it to the General President, Renato Lima de Oliveira for approval and ratification by the International Board of Directors. The understanding of both was favorable and approved at the meeting of the board of directors of the General Council on December 6, 2020.



In his Letter to the Vincentian Youth on July 1, 2021, on the occasion of the SSVP International Vincentian Youth Day (July 4), the then International Vice President for Youth, Children and Teenagers, Brother Willian Alves, presents how the theme of the age group was defined and standardized at the International level for the whole SSVP:

- **0 to 11 years old - Child**
- **12 to 17 years old - Teenager**
- **18 to 25 years old - Young**
- **26 to 35 years of age - Young Adult**

And during the International Plenary of the Council General International held between September 11 and 12, 2021, in Madrid, Spain, confrere Willian Alves, also officially presented the decision of the Council General International to establish a standardization for the age group of children, adolescents and youth in the institution, for better organization of the activities, recruitment and strategic plan of the Councils.

This resolution makes it effective and pragmatic that it is young people of appropriate age who are the leaders of the Youth Committees, whether of the International General Council, the National/Superior Councils and the other hierarchical councils of the SSVP.



# GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR SSVP YOUTH COMMITTEES

## 1. Objective of a Youth Committee in the SSVP

- 1.1. In particular, and without constituting a parallel organization, Councils at all levels should promote Vincentian Youth Committees that help young people to become fully integrated into the life of the Society.
- 1.2. The Youth Committees have the same relationship with the Council to which they report as the other Committees attached to the same Council.
- 1.3. The main objective of a Youth Committee is to give life in a structured and organized way to the strategic plan of the President of a Council and its board, of the themes related to the SSVP Youth, and not only to the youth themes, but in everything the youth must be involved, committed and be able to contribute in an effective and collaborative way, as for example in the themes below:
  - 1.3.1. Greater Sanctification of Vincentian Youth through the SSVP and the Catholic Church.
  - 1.3.2. Recruitment and Rejuvenation of the SSVP Conferences.
  - 1.3.3. Proper training for young members.
  - 1.3.4. Foster Christian and Vincentian Spirituality among young people.
  - 1.3.5. To facilitate the presence of young people in all the administrative structures of the SSVP.



## 2. Procedures for SSVP Youth Committees

2.1. In practical terms, the Youth Committee should be made up of young Vincentian, **active members of a Vincentian conference of the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul** (with the exception of the Spiritual Advisor\*). It is recommended that the Youth Committee be composed of

- **1 Coordinator**
- **3 to 7 members** (*depending on the size and structure of the Council*)
- **1 Spiritual Advisor** (*\*can be a priest, deacon, seminarian, friar or nun, religious, an adult lay person with reference to Catholic Christian Spirituality and possible knowledge of the SSVP mission*), this will be optional, however, recommended by the International Committee.

**Specific Guidance:** Councils may hire a staff member (paid employee) to support Youth Committees, but this employee should not be a member of the Committee. He/she will not be officially responsible for the Committee and will not be able to exclusively represent the Committee at official SSVP events. And, consequently, he/she will not be able to replace the Coordinator of the Committee. The staff member will not define specific strategies without consulting the Coordinator and Committee members. A paid staff member to support the Youth does not eliminate the need for the appointment of the Coordinator and Committee members.

2.2. As established by the International Rule and the International Statutes of SSVP, it is the sole and exclusive competence of the President of the Council to appoint the Coordinator for Youth, and there is no right to have an election to choose the Coordinator or any member of the committee (exception only if the National Rule provides for this type of election). The prerogative to appoint and/or change the coordinator or committee member is the sole and exclusive prerogative of the Chair of the Council, it is





recommended to make few changes throughout the term of office, so that the youth have the chance to put the activities into practice.

**2.2.1.** The members of the Youth Committee must be chosen by the Youth Coordinator and approved by the Council President.

**2.3.** The members of the Youth Committee must maintain a constant bond of friendship with the Chairman of the Board, and the latter must support them in their work with the Youth Committee, which must have the approval and knowledge of the Board and the Board.

**2.4.** Every Youth Committee will be headed by a Youth Coordinator, and as established by the International Rule and International Statutes of SSVP, this coordinator shall be a member of the Board of Directors of the Council and with voting rights, and participate actively and effectively in all deliberations, decisions and orientations, as were the young founders of SSVP.

**2.5.** Members who make up the Youth Committee are not released or allowed to not actively participate in the regular meetings of the Conference they are a part of, as well as the home visitation and other commitments of their conference.

**2.6.** It is recommended that Councils provide all the financial support for Youth Committees to develop their activities.

**2.7.** The Councils can establish within their possibilities and strategies, an annual budget so that the Youth Committees can organize their activities.

**2.8.** It is recommended that National/Superior Councils hold a Special Collection in the month corresponding to July 4th, the date when the SSVP International Vincentian Youth Day is celebrated. This collection at national level is an



opportunity for all SSVP members to be generous and contribute concretely to support the youth activities in their country.

The money collected should be directed to the National Council (or as otherwise directed by the National Council itself) and be fully used to support the activities carried out by the Youth Committees.

- 2.9. Young people can also hold events and activities to raise money to support their activities. On the other hand, the Youth Committees cannot have a Financial Box separate from the Council to which it is linked, that is, all the money collected must be known to the Council and managed according to the specific guidelines of each Council.

**Specific Guidance:** Expenditure on Youth Committees is not about taking money from the most vulnerable. They are rather an investment on behalf of the vulnerable themselves, as the entrance of more young people into the SSVP and the strengthening in faith of those who are already members of the SSVP can only benefit the most vulnerable.



# **SPECIFIC GUIDELINES FOR SSVP YOUTH COMMITTEES**

## **International Youth, Children and Adolescents Committee**

### **1. Vice President International Youth, Children and Teenagers**

#### **1.1. Appointment**

The young person in charge of the International Youth Delegation (or Youth Vice Presidency) shall always be a member of the Board of Directors of the Council General International of SSVP, as established in the Rule and Statutes of the Council General International of SSVP with voting rights and shall participate in all Board meetings, plenary meetings and general assemblies, as well as being an active member of the Standing Committee of the International Confederation of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul.

This appointment is a sign of the special affection that the Society's members feel for its younger members and the intention to provide opportunities for talented young people to contribute to the governance of the Society at the highest level of service. In this way, we are reminded of how effective our founders were, despite their youth. Young members with this experience will have much to offer the Society in the future.

It is the International General President who will elect the young person to fill this position, as well as the other positions in the International Youth Committee of the General Council.



## 1.2. Roles and Responsibilities

- To animate and coordinate the youth activities of the Society throughout the world.
- To be a member of the board of directors International General Council, with voice and vote in decision making.
- To establish, together with the General President and the Assistant Vice-President responsible for Youth, the strategies for the work of the International Youth Committee.
- Working closely with the President General and the Assistant Vice President to whom he belongs, submitting to him the annual planning and budgeting of events, activities, and travel.
- Present the activities carried out by the youth to the Council General International at its regular meetings.
- Form the composition of the International Youth Committee, with 1 (one) Youth Delegate from each of the established Territories.
- Appoint, together with the President General, the delegate of the Department of Children and Adolescents.
- Request regular reports from the delegates of the International Youth Committee.
- Coordinate the theme and activities for the SSVP International Vincentian Youth Day on July 4th each year.
- To make Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati known and remembered as the patron of the Young Vincentian of the SSVP.



- Send an annual letter to the Young Vincentians of the SSVP, promoting the bond of friendship.
- To prepare the International Meeting of National Coordinators of Vincentian Youth to be held every 5 years in the city of Salamanca (or another city, upon decision of the International General Council).
- Convene regular meetings of the International Youth Committee, either face-to-face or virtual, for direct follow-up.
- Two face-to-face committee meetings are recommended during the term, and the rest can be virtual.
- Ensure the participation of the SSVP in the International Youth Meeting of the Vincentian Family and in the World Youth Day.
- Manage the annual financial budget with the Council General International for the development of youth activities.
- Mission visits to National/Superior Councils when needed or invited.
- Authorize in advance with the General Council and the financial team, the expenses of the territorial delegates.
- Attend Council General International board meetings or appoint a representative (who is a member of the International Youth Committee) when absent.
- Participate in the annual Plenaries and General Assembly of the International General Council.
- Maintain contact with other branches of the Vincentian Family that have youth coordination.
- Maintain contact with the organizations responsible for Youth in the Catholic Church present in the Vatican.
- Update every 3 years the Statistical Census of the participation of Youth, Children and Teenagers in SSVP.



- Keep updated the register of SSVP National Youth Coordinators.
- To orient and clarify doubts about the roles and responsibilities of the Young in the SSVP.
- Promote training for SSVP National Youth Coordinators (online or in person) at least every 2 years.
- Make known to all National Councils this *International SSVP Youth Committee Orientation Manual*.
- Update the *International Manual of Guidelines for Committees of Young People in SSVP* whenever necessary, after approval by a simple majority of the International Youth Committee, the General President and endorsed by the International Board of Directors.

### 1.3. Recommended Profile

The International Vice President for Youth, Children and Teenagers of the SSVP Council General International will ideally have the following characteristics:

- Be a young Catholic aged at least 18 and no more than 30 (at the time your term begins).
- Be an active member of your local Vincentian conference for at least 5 uninterrupted years.
- Have a Catholic and Vincentian Christian spirituality that is able to influence other young people.
- Ideally, have already held a similar position at the local, regional, national, territorial, or international level.
- Have the time and flexibility to participate in international visits and activities.
- Have the desire to continue to extend the network of charity around the world.



- Leadership and organizational skills.
- Ideally, you should be fluent in one or more of the official languages of the SSVP: English, Portuguese, Spanish or French.

#### **1.4. Term of office**

The mandate of the International Youth Vice President is directly dependent on the mandate of the General President, which is currently limited to six years. According to the SSVL Council General International Statutes, every 2 years the General President can make changes in the structure, ending the mandate.

The International Youth Vice President can also make changes to the International Youth Committee every 2 years.

#### **1.5. SSVP Representation**

The International Vice President for Youth is responsible for representing SSVP with:

- Specific Dicastery for Youth at the Vatican.
- Vincentian Family on the International level (youth branches).

## **2. International Youth, Children and Teenagers Committee**

### **2.1. Appointment**

It is the International Youth Vice President together with the Territorial Vice President who selects and chooses the Territorial Youth Delegate for each of the territorial regions.

It also selects and chooses the Coordinator of the Children and Adolescents Department.



The Territorial Delegates and the Coordinator of the Children and Adolescents Department who form the International Youth, Children and Teenagers Committee report directly to the International Vice President for Youth of the International General Council.

Even if acting in the front line with the Territorial Vice-President, the global strategy of action with the Youth is the one defined by the International Vice-President for Youth and the International Committee, which should be shared with the members that compose that territory, for specific strategies of action.

It is important that the young person who will perform the role of Territorial Delegate meets the same characteristics already mentioned in section 1.3. **Recommended Profile** for the International Vice President for Youth, Children and Teenagers.

Once the young people have been chosen, the International President General will make their appointment official by means of a letter. From then on, they will be part of the International Committee of Youth, Children and Teenagers of the Council General International (IGC) of the SSVP and members of the international service structure of the IGC.

## 2.2. Roles and Responsibilities

- Accompany and support the International Vice President for Youth, Children and Teenagers in the fulfillment of all his duties.
- To animate the youth conferences of the countries in its territory.
- Support the national youth delegates in your territory.
- Ensure that there is a National Youth Coordinator in each of the countries in their territory.





- Encourage the creation of National Youth Committees and the creation of more youth conferences in your territory.
- Participate in the different activities and territorial meetings that require the presence of young people or to which you are invited.
- Present to the committee the different activities carried out and the realities of the youth of the countries in their territory.
- Visit the various national youth committees in your region whenever possible.
- Represent the International Youth Vice President, when necessary, at the General Council Board meeting, or on any official visit to an SSVP National/Superior Council.
- Organize every 6 months a meeting (online or in person) with the National Youth Coordinators of your territorial region.
- Keep the register of the National Youth Coordinators of your territorial region updated with the International General Council.
- Maintain constant contact with the Territorial Vice President and align the International Committee's strategies with the territorial region.
- Maintain contact with territorial delegates of Training, Projects, Zone Coordinators of your territorial region and work together in partnership.

### **2.3. Participation in international meetings and events of the Church or Vincentian Family**

In communion with the various associations of Vincentian spirituality and the Catholic Church, it is important that the young people of the SSVP participate in activities such as the International Vincentian Youth Meeting of the Vincentian Family and the World Youth Days. It is the task of the International



Committee to encourage the participation of young people from its territory in both activities.

It is also important that the committee representatives are appointed to the event as SSVP delegates.

#### **2.4. Term of office**

The mandate of the Territorial Youth Delegate depends directly on the mandate of the General President, which is currently limited to six years. According to the Statutes of the SSVL International General Council, every 2 years the General President can make changes in the structure, ending the mandate.

The International Youth Vice President can also make changes to the International Youth Committee every 2 years.



# National Youth Committee

## 1. Delegate / National Youth Coordinator

### 1.1. Appointment

When a National President is elected and appoints his or her board of directors (Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Training Delegate, Twinning Delegate, Project Delegate, etc.) he or she must also include a Youth Delegate.

The appointed youth delegate will have direct participation in the National Council, as a board member, with voice and vote for all important decisions.

It is the sole prerogative of the National President to choose and appoint the youth person who will be the National Youth Delegate/Coordinator of the National/Superior Council.

### 1.2. Roles and Responsibilities

These are direct functions of the youth delegate at the national level:

- Represent the youth in the National Council of their country, having active participation, voice and vote in decision making, as well as in board meetings, plenaries and national assemblies.
- Act in close harmony with the President of the Council to which he belongs, submitting to him the annual planning and budget for events, activities, and trips.
- Encourage existing youth conferences so that the flame of charity and service is not extinguished.



- Encourage the formation of new conferences with young people on a national level.
- Promote Youth Recruitment activities for Vincentian conferences.
- Appoint in conjunction with the National President your own National Youth Committee and when possible, include a representative to address the issue of Children and Adolescents.
- Lead the 4th of July commemorative activity (SSVP International Vincentian Youth Day) by carrying out the activities suggested by the International Youth Committee.
- Report every six months on the activities carried out in a report to the Territorial Youth Coordinator of your region and to your National President.
- Participate in national and international events to which you are invited.
- To communicate all information about the SSVP that is received nationally and internationally.
- Ensure continuous training for young Vincentians at the national level.
- Request financial support from your National Council for visits to ensure the opening of new youth conferences. If support is not available, make sure that financial activities are put in place to help them carry them out.
- Update every 3 years the Statistical Census of the participation of Youth, Children and Teenagers in the SSVP in their country and report to the International Youth Committee International General Council.
- To keep updated the register of the Young SSVP members in your country.



- To orient and clarify doubts about the roles and responsibilities of the Young in the SSVP.
- Represent the National Council at the International Meeting of National Youth Coordinators, held every 5 years by the International Youth Committee.
- To maintain bonds of friendship with the Youth Branches of the Vincentian Family in their country, as well as with the organizations of the Catholic Church.
- Maintain constant contact with the Territorial Delegate and the International Vice President for Youth, Children and Teenagers of the International General Council.

### **1.3. Recommended Profile**

The National Youth Delegate/Coordinator will ideally have the following characteristics:

- Be a young Catholic aged at least 18 and no more than 30 (at the time your term begins).
- Be an active member of your local Vincentian conference for at least 3 uninterrupted years.
- Have a Catholic and Vincentian Christian spirituality that is able to influence other young people.
- Ideally, to have already held a similar position at the local, regional, national level.
- Have the time and flexibility to participate in national visits and activities.
- Have the desire to continue to extend the network of charity around the world.
- Leadership and organizational skills.



## **1.4. Term of office**

The term of office of the National Delegate/Youth Committee will be the same as that of the elected National President. It is the prerogative of the National President to decide how long the National Delegate will remain in office. It is recommended that the National President avoid constant replacements, so that the youth coordinator has the necessary time to perform his duties.

If the national youth delegate resigns, it is up to the National President to immediately appoint another National Coordinator. It is recommended that the National President consults and chooses within the current national youth committee the one who can become the new National Coordinator.

## **2. National Youth Committee**

### **2.1. Appointment**

Every National/Superior Council should create and establish a National Youth Committee, regardless of the number of youth and/or youth conferences in their country.

It will be up to the National Youth Committee when the SSVP has a good structure and a strong presence of Young Vincentians, to establish the link between these young people through activities and a well-developed strategic plan, to strengthen and keep alive the flame of youth in SSVP.

When the SSVP in a given country does not have a good structure and little presence of Young Vincentians, it is even more necessary to form a Youth Committee, so that it can work very effectively and



with well-defined strategies for recruiting more young people and rejuvenating the SSVP.

The National Youth Delegate/Coordinator, after his nomination, will have to form his committee according to the reality of his country, submit the names of the members to the National President for effective nomination. Once formed the National Coordinator and the National Committee Members are members of the national structure of the National/Superior Council.

The National Youth Committee is not a separate Council, it works in collaboration and reports directly to the National Council in each country.

## **2.2. SSVP National Youth Committee Structure**

It is recommended that a National Youth Committee have between 3 and 7 members plus 1 Spiritual Advisor.

The Committee can be formed by example *(this is an organizational option; each Committee can structure itself as it best suits the development of the activities)*:

- By 1 Vice Delegate/Coordinator who in the absence or vacancy of the national youth coordinator will perform the functions delegated to him/her by the national coordinator or National President.
- 1 Secretary who will be responsible for organizing the meetings of the National Committee, taking the minutes, and taking care of the other documents of the National Youth Committee.



- 1 Treasurer who will be in charge of managing the financial part of the National Committee. The financial part must always be reviewed together with the treasurer of the National Council, because the National Youth Committee cannot constitute a separate financial box and must always submit to the National Council.
- It is also recommended to appoint other members of the Committee for Education and Training, Recruitment, Projects, Sports and Leisure etc.
- Spiritual Counsellor (*optional, however, recommended*), this may be a priest, deacon, seminarian, friar or nun, religious, or a Vincentian Catholic Christian layman, all of them with an exemplary testimony of life, so that they can support the young people to be always on the path of Catholic and Vincentian Christian spirituality. They should advise them to make the most assertive decisions and accompany the Committee, especially in formative activities.

**Specific Orientation:** Each Council, be it Local, Private, Diocesan, Regional, Metropolitan, etc., should have a Youth Delegate/Coordinator. This delegate/coordinator should have direct communication with the National Youth Committee (depending on how the organizational and hierarchical structure of each National Council is organized, due to its size and geographical extension).

All Delegates / Youth Coordinators (regardless of hierarchical council) should be concerned to work directly with the Young Vincentians in their area, promoting integration, revitalization and rejuvenation of the local SSVP.





The success of a good Youth Committee is the effective and active participation of young people in the various Vincentian Conferences of the SSVP. There is no point in having a Youth Committee without its members being active in the Conference and in the activities carried out by this Conference.

### **2.3. Roles and Responsibilities**

- Support the National Youth Delegate/Coordinator in the performance of his/her duties.
- Carry out activities with youth conferences on a national and regional level.
- Lead, together with the National Delegate/Coordinator, the activities of the SSVP International Vincentian Youth Day on July 4th.
- To organize, together with the National Delegate/Coordinator and the Treasurer of the National Council, the Special Collect (at the national level) in the month when the SSVP International Vincentian Youth Day is celebrated on July 4th.
- Prepare all necessary reports (financial, activities, schedules, etc.) when requested.
- Encourage the participation of young people in Vincentian celebrations (saints' days, birthdays, etc.).
- Schedule various activities in order to raise funds for meetings, activities and projects.
- Ensure the participation of young people in all regions of the country.
- Organize formation, training activities for the young Vincentians of your region, at least once a year.
- Organize leisure and sports activities with the Vincentian youth in your area at least twice a year.



- Organize Youth Recruitment activities, events and strategies on a national and local level at least once a year.

#### **2.4. Term of office**

The term of office of the National Youth Committee will be for the same duration as the appointment of the national youth delegate. At the end of the term of office of the national youth delegate, the service of the committee will be terminated.

Or the replacement of a member of the National Youth Committee can also happen through the decision of the National Coordinator or the National President.

The National Council is recommended to avoid too many replacements during the term.

#### **2.5. Meetings**

It is recommended that the National Youth Committee have recurring meetings, which ensure effective communication among its members. Depending on the reality and the distance between members, these meetings can be held in person or virtually.

Ideally, the committee should have at least one meeting every three months and make sure that all agreements are recorded in minutes.



# Applicability and Adaptability of the International Guidelines Manual

## 1. Applicability of the International Handbook

This International Manual of Guidelines for SSVP Youth Committees is to be applied to the Council General International of the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul and its respective International Youth, Children and Adolescent Committees.

It is also recommended to be applied to all National, Superior, Assimilated and Aggregate Councils and to the Council General International of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul and their respective National Youth Committees.

## 2. Specific Adaptability Guidelines

Each National Council together with the National Youth Committee can adapt this manual according to its local reality, as well as establish other Roles and Responsibilities for other Youth Committees of other Councils that make up the hierarchy in that country.

The adaptation cannot establish guidelines that contradict what is established in the Rule and Statutes of the Council General International of the SSVP, as well as this International Manual of Guidelines for Youth Commissions in its general guidelines.

When National/Superior Councils create a National Youth Committee Manual, they are requested to forward it to the



International Youth, Children and Teenagers Committee of the Council General International for review, revision and approval.

The International Youth Committee must formalize in writing the opinion in favor, against and/or with reservations to certain points contained in the document presented by the National Council.

# ANNEXES

## 1. SSVP Special Collections for Youth



To all the Superior Councils and Conferences of the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul

The Special Collection for Vincentian Youth was created by the Council General International to help Vincentian youth in the more than 150 territories where SSVP is present. The decision was made by our President General, confrere Renato Lima de Oliveira, after

listening to the demands of the young people who gathered in 2018 at the 2nd International Vincentian Youth Meeting, held in Salamanca (Spain).

In his circular letter of 31 January 2019, the President General expressed himself as follows: "The General Council gives its full support to the Vincentian children, adolescents and young people, because we firmly believe that they are the source of renewal of our Society. The youth of today will be the Vincentian leaders of tomorrow. We suggest that Councils set aside a small budget for youth activities. They need economic resources for recruitment meetings, formation courses, publication of publicity and motivational materials, trips within



countries, among other needs; in short, these are fundamental resources to boost the work of the youth delegates. To the Councils that have already adopted this procedure, my sincere congratulations! In this sense, the Council General International has decided that on July 4, 2019, the "Special Collection for the SSVP Youth" will be held in each country, and that the total amount collected will be converted into a "Fund for the SSVP Youth", to be administered by the Superior Council (or equivalent) in each nation. I am sure that the generosity of the confreres and consociates will allow this fund to be supplied with sufficient resources to boost the actions related to the youth of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul. Thank you for everyone's support!"

The General President also suggested that the Special Collection be held at the Conference meeting between July 1 and July 7 or at the earliest possible date, this collection can be held at any conference meeting in July.

The orientation of the International Youth Committee of the General Council is that all collections should be directed to the respective Superior Councils, these Councils in turn should allocate the amount collected for youth work in the country. The Superior Councils that have more financial conditions and/or collect more money can practice twinning, donating the amount to countries with fewer resources or send the amount to the International Committee to be destined to countries with fewer resources.

As a form of transparency, all Superior Councils must communicate to the General Council the amount collected and what activities will be carried out. This communication should be sent to the territorial delegates who will send it to the International Committee.

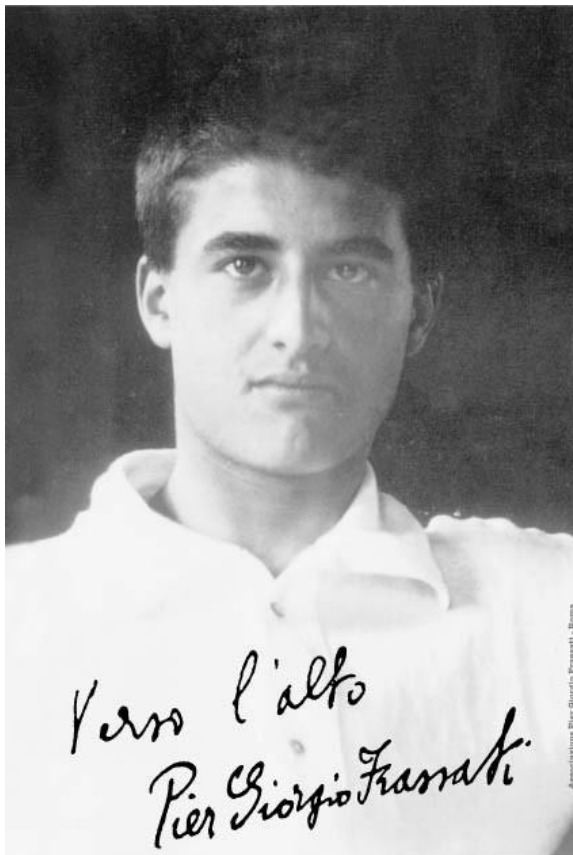


"I am sure that this collection will become something traditional in our Society, that is, being held every year, in the week when we celebrate the International Vincentian Youth Day of the SSVP, and that young people will have an additional amount of economic resources to be able to boost the role of Vincentian youth, performing more events, improving the specific communication for young people, and helping the renewal of the SSVP. The national youth committees, in line with the Superior Councils, should decide how and where the resources will be used", highlighted Brother Willian Alves, International Vice President for Youth, Children and Teenagers of the International General Council.

The young Vincentians are grateful for the support of all the Conferences for the generous realization of this Special Collection and are committed to renew the SSVP with audacity, courage and great joy in Serving in Hope.

## 2. Meet Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati and his direct relation to the SSVP International Vincentian Youth Day

(Patron of the SSVP Vincentian Youth since 2017 on the recommendation of the International Youth Committee of the International General Council)



In the year 2017, the International Vice Presidency of Youth, Children and Teenagers of the General Council proposed to the General President, confrere Renato Lima de Oliveira, and he approved, that all SSVP Vincentian Youth be placed under the protection of Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati, thus considering him as the Patron of the SSVP Vincentian Youth.

The Church places **July 4** as the liturgical feast day of Blessed Frassati, as it marks the date when he died and thus won Heaven. And it is this date that the SSVP International Youth Committee also chose to be the **SSVP International Vincentian Youth Day**, a date widely celebrated by hundreds of Vincentians around the world.

The International Vice President for Youth, confrere Willian Alves, highlights the reason why he chose Frassati to be the patron of the Vincentian youth: *"When I got to know the life of Frassati, I was*





*enchanted by it, by the testimony of love for the Church, his spirituality, his life as a confrere of a Vincentian conference, his personal contact and unconditional love for the poor that he helped. In fact, Pier Giorgio was a young man who dedicated his life to God through service to the poor and he needs to be seen by the young people of our institution as a model to be followed as well. Ozanam and the other founders are also references, but for the whole SSVP, that is, for all Vincentians, including Youth, Children and Teenagers. When we highlight Frassati as patron for young people, we want to show them one more reference of a young man who knew how to follow the Vincentian charism and achieved holiness, that is, it is possible through the SSVP, with the references we have, to achieve holiness."*

Frassati was born on April 6, 1901, in the city of Turin, into a family with many material goods and strong personalities. Son of Alfredo Frassati, political figure and owner of a newspaper very influential until today, and Adelaide Ametis, artist well known in several exhibitions.

A young man of great spirituality and prayer life, he prayed the rosary every day and received the Holy Eucharist equally every day, Frassati said "Jesus visits me every morning in communion and I repay him in the meagre way I can, by visiting the poor".

Pier Giorgio belonged to so many Catholic organizations and clubs that it was impossible for him to attend meetings for all of them. But his membership in the Society of St. Vincent de Paul Conference was very special from the day he joined at the age of 17 until hours before his death at the age of 24. He knew how to combine in a remarkable way political activism and work for social justice, piety



and devotion, humanity and kindness, holiness and daily life. He carried with him a small diary, in which he wrote down the names of all the families he helped.

As with some young Vincentians, Pier Giorgio sometimes disagreed with how things were being handled within a particular conference. In 1922, he wrote to his friend Carlo, *"If you really want to know, one of my ideas is that I would abolish certain St. Vincent conferences ..."* His frustration resulted from the Conference's decision to stop helping a needy family because of immoral activity on the part of one of the family members. Pier Giorgio felt that the family should be instructed in proper conduct rather than abandoned. Eventually, he resigned from that conference and joined another.

Even when Pier Giorgio was studying for his exams and had no time to visit his friends, he continued his visits to the poor whom he was caring for through the St. Vincent de Paul Conference. In a beautiful speech on charity, he urged his fellow students to get involved in the Conference. **"I do not know if you all know what these institutions are which have been so wonderfully conceived [...],"** he wrote. **"It is a simple institution that is suitable for students because it involves no commitment beyond being in a particular location one day a week and then visiting two or three families a week. You will see, in a short time, how much good we can do to those we visit and how much we can do to ourselves."**

Pier Giorgio loved the poor, which many stories claim. Pier Giorgio's mother often scolded him for being late for dinner. She did not know that he spent his afternoons serving the hungry and that he usually ran home after donating the bus money. His father often



chastised him for coming back without his coat. It was not because he lost it; he gave it to someone who needed it more. One episode sums up his compassion: once a friend asked Pier Giorgio why he always chose the third class on the train, when he could clearly afford better. He replied, **"Because there is no fourth class."** He used to sacrifice vacations at his family's summer home in Pollone, because, as he said, **"if everyone leaves Turin, who will take care of the poor?"** It was not simply a matter of giving something to the lonely, the poor, the sick, but rather giving his whole being. He saw Jesus in them, and to a friend who asked him how he could bear to enter the dirty, stinking places where the poor lived, he replied, **"Always remember that you go to Jesus: I see a special light around the sick, the poor and the unfortunate, which we don't have."**

Yet even with this deep holiness and charity, young people are especially attracted to Pier Giorgio's normality. On the surface, he looks like any other young man. He climbed mountains and played sports. He has championed political causes. The pictures show him laughing, drinking, and joking with his friends. He was a joker known for "putting small sheets" on his friends' beds. One day, a lazy friend woke up and found a donkey in his bed, a sign from Pier Giorgio that he was being an "idiot" for not keeping up with his studies.

Nor did Pier Giorgio let his impending death interfere with the needs of his poor loved ones. On July 3, 1925, the day before his death, with his hand already paralyzed from polio, Pier Giorgio asked his sister Luciana to take a small package from his jacket and, with a semi-paralyzed hand, wrote the following note to Grimaldi, a friend at the conference he was attending: *"Here are the injections from*



*Converso. The pledge note is from Sappa. I had forgotten it; renew it in my name."*

We know that Pier Giorgio wanted to see Jesus so much that he used to say, *"The day of my death will be the most beautiful day of my life."* Pier Giorgio's sacrifice was fulfilled at seven o'clock in the evening of July 4, 1925. His funeral was a triumph. The streets of Turin were lined with a crowd of people who did not know his family: clergy and students, and the poor and needy whom he had served so selflessly for seven years.

When he beatified Frassati in St. Peter's Square on May 20, 1990, Pope John Paul II described Pier Giorgio as the **"man of the eight beatitudes"** and said in his homily: *"By his example, he proclaims that a life lived in the Spirit of Christ, the Spirit of the Beatitudes, is blessed and that only the person who becomes a 'man or woman of the beatitudes' can succeed in communicating love and peace to others. He repeats that it really is worth giving up everything to serve the Lord. He testifies that holiness is possible for everyone, and that only the revolution of charity can kindle hope for a better future in people's hearts. He left this world quite young, but he left a mark on our entire century, and not only on our century."*

**"May the young people of the SSVP see in the example of Frassati, a model of Vincentian life to be followed, may our friend Pier Giorgio help us to achieve holiness and "verso l'alto" to heaven!"** is the invitation left by confrere Willian Alves.



### 3. Guide for Creating Youth Conferences at Universities



In the year 2021 the International Youth Committee released an important tool for forming Youth Conferences in Universities that can easily be adapted to form youth conferences in colleges, parishes, etc.

You can access the complete Guide on the International General Council's website via the link below:

<https://www.ssvpglobal.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/eng-youth-conference-guide-at-universities-5.0.pdf>



Society of St. Vincent de Paul  
Council General International  
International Youth, Children and Adolescents Committee

[www.ssvpglobal.org](http://www.ssvpglobal.org)  
2023