

VMI AND OUR DISTANT COUSINS IN CANADA

Camille, the coordinator for Vie Montante in Canada, accompanied by Jackie—both of whom attended the gathering in Madrid last May—give us an insight into the situation there.

Vie Montante is currently active in Quebec, Ontario, and New Brunswick. The situation described does not reflect the entirety of Canada, a vast country characterized by highly diverse provincial and regional realities.

The situation facing retirees and the elderly reflects a reality undergoing profound change. In rural areas, difficulties are often compounded by the remoteness of services and transportation challenges.

This reality presents not only a challenge to be met but also a call to build communities that are more humane, more united, and more attentive to the needs of each individual.

The coordination of Vie Montante in Canada relies on a simple structure organized around local groups and coordination committees at various levels.

Local teams—or parish groups—form the movement's basic units. They meet regularly for reflection, sharing, and prayer. There are currently 15 groups spread across various parishes.

Coordination is handled by a national committee responsible for general leadership, planning, and implementing the movement's strategic direction. This committee is currently chaired by Camille Hubert.

Vie Montante in Canada has approximately 300 members. It is a small-scale movement where groups operate simply and remain closely connected to local realities.

In this context, there is no formal organization with teams dedicated to specific activities. Instead, operations rely on flexible, informal organizational structures within a fraternal atmosphere that fosters close personal connections.

The spiritual advisor plays a key role within the Vie Montante coordination team. They oversee the movement's spiritual direction and help nurture its pastoral dimension. He is appointed by the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops (CCCCB), upon the recommendation of the Board of Directors, for a three-year term that may be renewed once, for a maximum of six consecutive years.

In Canada—particularly within the relevant dioceses—pastoral initiatives exist to support the elderly, notably through outreach, spiritual support, and efforts to combat isolation.

However, there is no evidence of a structured, formal, and concerted effort—either nationwide or within the movement—to address the specific challenges facing the elderly or to develop proposals for a comprehensive response.

More broadly, while pastoral care for the elderly is well-established in practice, it remains underdeveloped in terms of strategic reflection.

In this context, a more comprehensive approach is needed to address the pastoral urgency highlighted at the recent Rome Congress and to develop a pastoral care model for the elderly that is suited to current challenges.

Excerpts from the report by Camille and Jackie