

A. Ozanam

V E T E R A MONIMENTA

"A Newsletter for Vincentians, by Vincentians"

October, 2021 | A monthly newsletter of Tools, Resources and Activities for Vincentians in Contra Costa County

Calendar

Bob Liles' Corner

Don't Get Involved with the District Council

That was the advice given to me by the outgoing president when I became conference president. I ignored that advice, and look where it got me.

Being District Council president is a lot more effort than being a Conference President, but I can't complain. I did not offer that advice to the person that took over the Conference presidency from me, and I would not offer it to anyone. I urge everyone to explore service possibilities with the DC and see if something matches their talents and what they enjoy doing.

The DC is trying hard not to be a bureaucratic overlord of the Conferences, but rather an aide in their mission. If you like to plan events with other people, we can always use a hand with our annual golf tournament and bocce ball tournament. Good with computers? Having someone with that skill whom we can call to help with technical issues would be great. We have quite a few volunteers that love helping out at our thrift stores by sorting and pricing donations and arranging floor displays. Interested in safety? You can inspect our stores to ensure that we follow our safety rules.

If you want to help steer this ship we call a Society, then join us on the board! Charity takes a lot of forms. Handing a food bag to someone in need is obvious and direct, but volunteering to help the DC operate smoothly is no less worthy. God has given all of us a variety of talents, and there may be ways to serve that better utilize yours. Would you please think and pray about it? Please contact Stephen Krank, s.krank@svdp-cc.org if you'd like to get involved.

Tuesdays with Vincent
Tuesday, October 5th
6 PM - 8 PM on Zoom

Spiritual Advisor Get-Together
Tuesday, October 12th
3:00 PM - 4:00 PM on Zoom

Annual Reports Due
Monday, 10/25/21

Gianni's Italian Bistro Fundraiser
Monday, 10/25/21
2065 San Ramon Valley Blvd, San Ramon
5:30 PM - 8:30 PM

Ozanam Orientation Part 1
Saturday, 10/30/21
8:45 AM - Noon PM on Zoom

Holiday Grant Requests Due
Monday, 11/1/21

Ozanam Orientation Part 2
Saturday, 11/6/21
8:45 AM - Noon PM on Zoom

All Links to Above Sessions on
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The Rule

by Bob Liles

When the Society of St. Vincent de Paul was founded, we created rules to govern our actions and confirm who we are. Today in the United States, these would be called the Articles of Incorporation or the bylaws, but back then it was simply The Rule. The Society is different from other charitable organizations. The Rule is what makes us different. So it is essential to keep the Rule in our minds and hearts in all of our actions. It is only twelve pages long. Starting this month, sections of The Rule will be included in the monthly newsletter help it stay paramount in our minds.

1.1 Origins

The Society of St. Vincent de Paul is a worldwide Christian community; founded in Paris in 1833 by a group of young Catholic laypeople and an older person, who joined together to create the first Conference. The Society wishes to remember them all with gratitude, as they set an example of dedication to the poor and the Church. From Le Taillandier, who received the first inspiration, to Blessed Frederic Ozanam, Paul Lamarche, François Lallier, Jules Deveaux, Félix Clavé, all of them knew, in their humility, how to seek the wise advice and support of the one who would become the first President General of the flourishing Society, Emmanuel Bailly.

The Holy Spirit was undoubtedly present in all of them at the founding of the Society, fostering the charism of each one. Among them, Blessed Frederic Ozanam was a radiant source of inspiration.

The Society has been Catholic from its origins and to this day remains an international Catholic lay organization.



Annual Report to the Parish

by Bob Liles

Our fiscal year ends on September 30th, and every Conference must prepare an annual report for the National Office. Now might be a good time for each Conference to use that data to report to its pastor and parishioners in the Sunday bulletin. Let everyone know how their donations are making a difference in people's lives. It can also be an excellent time to recruit to get more Vincentians, but inviting people to serve should be done year-round.

CLICK HERE to find a template for what can be put in a Sunday bulletin, and **CLICK HERE** for some examples of flyers that conferences have used to get more members. If you are still having trouble using Dropbox, it just takes an email, b.liles@svdp-cc.org, to get some help.

Employees Wed Inside SVdP Thrift Store

by Jill Pioter, SVdP National Director of Marketing & Communications



Laurie Hinkens and Scott Kopish are married in the SVdP thrift store where they met.

Wedding bells rang in Marinette, Wisconsin as one local nonprofit geared up to be the place two of its employees say, “I do.” Scott Kopish and Laurie Hinkens wed on September 11, 2021 right in the middle of the sales floor of St. Vincent de Paul Marinette, Wisconsin (SVdP) Thrift Store in a private ceremony.

According to both of the newlyweds, choosing the location of their nuptials was a no-brainer, “This place (SVdP) has that feel-good feeling,” Hinkens said. “We come to work with a smile on our face every day. That’s a fact.”

“When I was sent here on a light-duty assignment, I walked in and I instantly felt safe,” Kopish said. “I don’t know how I can explain it. I just felt safe and I thought, you know what? We met here. It would be great to get married in this building. I just thought it meant something.”

Kopish and Hinkens are both long-term employees of SVdP who were both struggling physically prior to starting in their roles. Kopish has been with SVdP for over three years, starting through the Worker’s Compensation program due to an injury as a truck driver. Hinkens started nearly two years ago as a volunteer who had recently received a scary health prognosis.

[Click Here to Read More](#)

Vincentian Survey

By Steven Krank

This last year and a half has been a challenging and tumultuous time for our Society in Contra Costa County. The increase in need at all of our Conferences has been astounding. This increase came at a time when many of our most beloved and cherished Vincentians had to step away from some of our work due to health and safety reasons. With leadership at many of our Conferences changing at a time where need is great and lifelines are few – this was a recipe for burnout.

Our Spirituality and Formation Committee has done much to provide on-going opportunities for Vincentians to meet with each other, albeit virtually, and share in the spirit of our mission. Each of you have invested countless hours in your Conference, supporting your parish Vincentians and your Conference's work to meet this increased need – and for that we all eternally grateful.

This seemed like the perfect time to begin having a conversation and receive feedback via a survey about the future and direction of our society. We started with our Vincentian Leadership, who, for this last year and a half, served, supported, and protected those serving the poor. We wanted to see what our Vincentians see as the current challenges in our Society, and what direction they believe we should take to address them.

[Click Here for a Summary of the Survey Results](#)

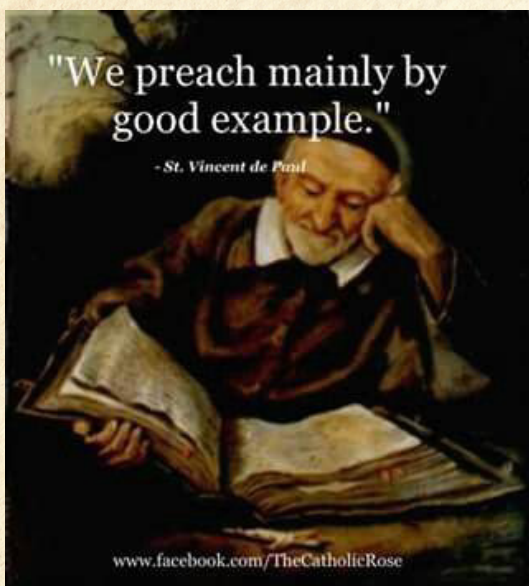
Ozanam Orientation

Parts 1 & 2, Oct. 30 & Nov. 6 8:45 AM - Noon

OZANAM ORIENTATION introduces members to WHY and HOW our Society was started and able to continue for centuries.

There is so much to learn from the presenters and from our fellow participants on how to grow our spirituality while helping others. After being involved in the Society for a few years, it can be very helpful to revisit the training and review information that may be viewed in a different light. Not all Conferences work on the same projects and not all of our Conferences have the same opportunities and obstacles. We can learn from each other at the training, as well as from the material presented.

The next opportunity for Ozanam Orientation is scheduled as a two-part series for the **Saturdays of October 30th and November 6th, 8:45 AM - Noon** on Zoom. With the pandemic still on-going, we cannot offer the trainings in person as previously promised, and have to resort to holding them on Zoom for a little while longer. We apologize for this, and hope that we can join together in person soon. Please mark your calendars! We hope to see you at Ozanam Orientation Training in October & November, please let us know if you plan to attend, and bring one of your new members with you.



SVdP National Assembly - Houston Texas



Contra Costa Vincentians at the National Assembly pictured l-r, standing: Ruben Rodriguez, Claudia Ramirez, Ron Costanzo, Juan Cardona, seated: Shawwna Costanzo, Bishop Donald J. Hying, National Episcopal Advisor, Aurora Mendoza (& son), and Oliba Cardona.

Impressions and Learnings from the National Assembly, by Ron Costanzo

The SVdP National Meeting had lots of sessions available to help improve our Conferences. There were sessions discussing ways a Conference may be “stuck,” in (bad) ways:

- Aren’t bringing in new members
- Don’t have spiritual reflections
- Not working on friendship

And there were positive ideas for change to improve our Conferences:

- Promote systemic change – even for those who already do home visits
- Pause service to get spirituality and friendship going
- Publish (spiritual) articles written by Conference members
- Plan “On-boarding” for new members

Thoughts on attending the National Assembly, by Claudia Ramirez

Whenever I go to National meetings I am always energized by the Holy Spirit and the spirituality that is one of the foundations of our ministry. In addition, the opportunity to speak with fellow Vincentians about how they are doing the work of the Society – home visits in the age of COVID, Thrift Stores, Workforce - always gives me great ideas to implement upon my return. One of the most interesting statements made during the Spirituality keynote presentations was “Vincentians are not volunteers, this is a vocation.” As I reflected on that, I realized how true of a statement that was. Our ministry of Vincentian service is one that we are called to do, and once committed to it, we grow in the three pillars of our Society – Friendship, Spirituality and Service. I am blessed and thankful to have been called to this vocation.

Tuesdays with Vincent Bl. Frederic Ozanam

On October 5th at 6PM, Tuesdays with Vincent will focus on the topic “Blessed Frederic Ozanam,” and how he helped form and define what it means to be a Vincentian.

SVdP National Council President Ralph Middlecamp will be our guest host to follow up on our study for the October 5th, Workshop from 6 PM - 8PM on Blessed Frederic Ozanam.

The link to attend is:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87034403349?pwd=bjJJdHlMVG44RFZ2L2s5bGtKNzZCdz09>

Meeting ID: 870 3440 3349 Passcode: Vincent

Presenter Bio: National Council President Ralph Middlecamp



SVdP National Council President
Ralph Middlecamp

Ralph has been a student of Bl. Frederic Ozanam for over 30 years.

He has contributed the benefit of his study of Vincent de Paul and Bl. Frederic Ozanam to The Society of St. Vincent de Paul, Fam-Vin the international Website of the Vincentian Family and multiple contributions to the Archives of Vincentian Studies at De Paul University in Chicago.

He is on the presenting team of the Society's national leadership renewal program, Invitation for Renewal. Ralph also is a past member of the International Council General's Commission for the Cause of Canonization of Blessed Frederic Ozanam. In 2017 was elected as National Council President.

Ralph is married to Dr. Cathy Hurt Middlecamp who is a current member of the Nelson Institute for Environmental Studies faculty at the University of Wisconsin-Madison.



Related to our Tuesdays with Vincent Study of Bl. Frederic Ozanam: Imagine Frederic Ozanam Addressing Congress

by John Freund, CM courtesy to SVdP from FAMVIN.org

After viewing an amazing presentation by Sr. Claire Sweeney, DC on Frederick Ozanam and Social Justice, I fantasized what he might say if he, like Pope Francis, were invited to give an address to a joint session of Congress.

She points out:

Ozanam studied, wrote, spoke, and led his friends in action – all to promote the cause of justice. Ozanam wanted to see society reformed through debate and social action, not through revolution. He believed that “truth which will rise up to judge political systems.” Ozanam took an active part in political debates.

What did he say?

She presented the following insights and features his own words.

His vision was always gospel-based. Ozanam saw no dichotomy between the principles of liberty, equality, and fraternity of the 1789 Revolution and the principles of the gospel:

‘I recognize the temporal advent of the Gospel expressed by these three words: liberty, equality, fraternity.’ He declared himself ‘to be passionately in favor of liberty, in favor of the legitimate triumphs of the people, in favor of reforms which uplift’.

He wanted to engage everyone in the justice question and warned of the dangers of losing the support of any strata of society in the struggle for justice. He wrote to Alexandre Dufieux, April 1851:

‘... Let us principally learn to defend our convictions without hating our adversaries, to love those who think differently than we do, to recognize that there are Christians in all camps and that God can be served today as always.’

[Click Here to Read More](#)



The Vincentian Toolbox - Your Free Medical Clinic

by Brian Boyle

As Vincentians, the work you do to help your neighbors in need can be life changing and truly transformative. The tools in the Vincentian toolbox allow you to help your neighbors deal with rental issues, utility problems, hunger, stress, anxiety, and a plethora of tyrannies of the moment. As Vincentians, you also have tools in your belt that can, quite literally, be life-saving.

The RotaCare Pittsburg Free Medical Clinic at St. Vincent de Paul – a partnership with RotaCare Bay Area – was opened thanks to the generosity, compassion and dedication of the Vincentians in our local Conferences. This free medical clinic, your free medical clinic, has been able to provide over 13,500 medical visits to those without insurance nor means of affording healthcare. The free medical clinic has truly changed the lives of its patients. The intervention of the clinic's volunteer medical professionals have helped people deal with diabetes, hypertension, heart disease, and other life-threatening illnesses.

The clinic is located at the District Council Offices at 2210 Gladstone Drive in Pittsburg, and is open on Wednesdays, 5- 8 pm. For some Conferences and neighbors in need, this may have been too far away in the past. This year, however, the free medical clinic has implemented an electronic medical records system and telehealth. Telehealth enables the clinic to provide free medical care via telephone or video conference.

The free medical clinic is one more tool in the Vincentian toolbox that allows you to help your neighbors in need meet whatever crisis is dominating their life at the moment. It is open every Wednesday evening to see patients. Please direct your neighbors-in-need to call the clinic on Wednesdays, 1-3 pm, to make a same-day appointment, [\(925\)439-2009](tel:9254392009).



Free Medical Clinic Meals Needed 4th Wednesday of Each Month – Can You Help?

A little over ten years and 13,500 patients visits ago, St. Vincent de Paul of Contra Costa County responded to the need for medical care for the uninsured. Vincentians from Conferences in Contra Costa, the SVdP District Council staff, and a volunteer team - the “Medical Clinic Steering Committee,” partnered with RotaCare Bay Area and local Rotary Clubs to open the RotaCare Pittsburg Free Medical Clinic at St. Vincent de Paul.

Each night the Clinic has been open, SVdP Conferences, Rotary Clubs, the National Charity League, and generous individual volunteers, have been providing meals for the approximately 20 clinic volunteers who staff the clinic. During the pandemic, the clinic implemented telehealth, so that both in-person and video medical visits are now offered.

Beginning in July 2021, The National Charity League has generously agreed to provide meals for the first three weeks each month, leaving the 4th Wednesday available for SVdP Conferences to provide meals for the volunteers. In June, The SVDP Conference from Immaculate Heart of Mary in Brentwood provided meals for the volunteer personnel staffing the Free Medical Clinic.

The clinic volunteers share that one of the highlights of volunteering at the clinic are the delicious meals that are lovingly prepared and presented to them so they won't go hungry during their “shift” at the clinic. Many of the clinic volunteers arrive in Pittsburg after a long day at their “real job”, and are so grateful for the meal that is offered.

The clinic needs your help! Can your Conference sign up to provide one or two meals this year? Please contact Steve Krank, s.krank@svdp-cc.org to learn how.

What: SVdP Conferences provide meals for 20 clinic volunteers

When: Deliver at 5 pm on the fourth WEDNESDAY of each month

Where: Deliver to the SVdP Family Resource Center, 2210 Gladstone Drive, Pittsburg, CA 94565

How: Contact Steve Krank, s.krank@svdp-cc.org to reserve your date!

There are a couple of ways to participate.

1. Make it a Pot-Luck Event! Have your Conference members each make a dish, then bring them to Pittsburg with utensils on the day you selected.
2. Have your Vincentians buy a dinner meal for 20 people and deliver to Pittsburg to see what your Clinic does in real-time.
3. Don't Cook? Sponsor a meal by providing the date & funding \$ 8.00 to \$10.00 per person, (\$150.00 to \$200.00 to feed all clinic volunteers for one night).

The best part of our Free Medical Clinic is the care our volunteers provide to our neighbors in need. If interested, please pick a date for your Conference to provide meals for the volunteers and email s.krank@svdp-cc.org. Steve Krank will confirm the dates and return them to you.

Volunteers Needed at the District Council

Microsoft Sharepoint expert - Someone who can help us migrate from DropBox to Sharepoint.

Call Claudia Ramirez at (925)635-3219 or email her at: c.ramirez@svdp-cc.org.

Safety auditor - quarterly inspect the stores to make sure we are following safety guidelines. Call Bob at (925)437-9853 or email him at b.liles@svdp-cc.org.

Store volunteers - sorting, pricing, setting items out on the floor, etc. Call the office at (925)439-5060.

For a complete list of all volunteer opportunities with the DC click on this link:

<https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fi/o3bqz44m2mqas5iuvr92v/Volunteer-Opportunities.docx?dl=0&rlkey=vf33gde9jc8jcdskdmk2cmh0t>



Volunteers help pass out food and school supplies at an SVdP food distribution in Pittsburg, CA.

National Q&A

Every week in Frederic's E-Gazette, National SVdP's newsletter, they have a Q&A section. The questions range from detailed interpretations of the by-laws to home visits to meetings to everything else under the sun.

They have compiled them and created an index. Check it out at: [Q&A Index](#).

<https://files.constantcontact.com/fd89f49d001/bff8d394-d465-4db9-a3aa-95c4d2f1639d.pdf>

Another great place to find this information is on their website at:

<https://members.svdpusa.org/members/Documents/Council-Conference> .

Links

Tuesdays with Vincent

October 5th, 2021 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM Pacific Time (US and Canada)

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87034403349?pwd=bjJjdHlMMSG44RFZ2L2s5bGtKNzZCdz09>

Meeting ID: 870 3440 3349 Passcode: Vincent

Dropbox:

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/yfj70vzjy3bj5ky/AADDxY9E5ywnpl0DarZEVMrTa>

St. Vincent de Paul of Contra Costa County:

<https://www.svdpc-cc.org>

National Site for Vincentians:

<https://members.svdpusa.org/members>

St. Vincent de Paul of Contra Costa County YouTube Page:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCMKjgpCZOYqdmXRF0kn0tUg>

Formation & Training Zoom Link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/9254395060?pwd=N3BxU0w4RjFiUnlQZ1BYWGVVcHIRUT09>

Meeting ID: 925 439 5060 Passcode: Ozanam

California Tenant and Landlord Housing Resources:

https://landlordtenant.dre.ca.gov/tenant/protection_guidelines.html

<https://landlordtenant.dre.ca.gov/landlord/resources.html>

Hope Conference Documents:

Applications in English and Spanish:

<https://www.svdpc-cc.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/1.-SVdP-Hope-Application-PRINTABLE.pdf>

<https://www.svdpc-cc.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/3.-SVdP-Hope-Application-SPANISH-PRINTABLE.pdf>

Important Tenant-Landlord Information Documents:

<https://www.svdpc-cc.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/Tenant-Landlord-Information.pdf>

<https://www.svdpc-cc.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/Tenant-Inability-to-Pay-Notice.pdf>