

V E T E R A
MONIMENTA

A. F. Chanam

April 2022

Vincentian **Wisdom**
Quotes • Charism



Easter Sunday

Sunday 4/17/2022

Meeting

Board of Directors Meeting

Tuesday 4/19, 9:30 AM – 11:30 AM

Meeting

Spirituality and Formation Committee

Tuesday 4/19, 12:00 PM – 1:00 PM

Ozanam Sunday

Sunday 4/24

Event

Gianni's Italian Bistro

Tips for Change Benefit

Monday 4/25 4:30 PM – 8:00PM

Western Region Assembly

Opening Mass (ZOOM)

Tuesday 5/10, 8:30 AM

Western Region Assembly

Event Agenda Attached (ZOOM)

Workshops 5/11, 5/12, 5/13 (6:00-8:00PM)

Western Region Assembly

Home Visit Retreat (ZOOM)

Retreat 5/14 9:30 AM – 12:00 PM

Meeting

Board of Directors Meeting

Tuesday 5/17, 9:30 AM – 11:30 AM

Meeting

Spirituality and Formation Committee

Tuesday 5/17, 12:00 PM – 1:00 PM

Bob Liles Corner

RIP TYRONE MARSHALL 8/2/57-12/20/21 - PART II

“SAN FRANSICKO”

By Michael Schellenberger – a book review

A couple of months ago I talked about a mentally ill homeless man in Antioch who died sleeping by a bus stop. In my search for how our society can let something like this happen I read “San Fransicko” It is a brand-new book and traces policies on the homeless, the mentally ill and substance abusers from the 1930’s until today. It specifically focuses on policies that San Francisco has implemented and how well they have worked.

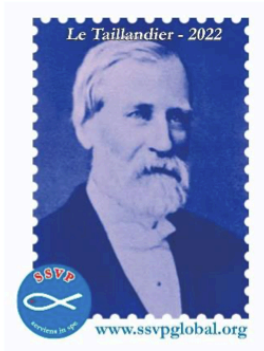
I hope you agree with me that they have not worked all that well. But there are some homeless advocates who think that they are working just fine. They believe that since the government will not give every homeless person their own house or apartment rent free with no conditions then they feel that the homeless have every right to sleep wherever they want, use drugs however they want, defecate wherever they want and never be bothered.

The author does a very good job of interviewing the people responsible for San Francisco’s policies and presenting their data that supports their vision. Then he shows how their data doesn’t show the whole picture and how other studies refute their position.

Originally, he only intended to show why the policies failed. However, his wife told him that he must include some possible solutions because they live in SF, and she wants the homeless problem solved. I was so impressed by the book that I emailed everyone on the Antioch City Council about the book and offered to buy a copy for them if they promised to read it.



16th President General International



CIRCULAR LETTER TO MY DEAR MEMBERS OF THE CONFERENCES OF THE SOCIETY OF SAINT VINCENT DE PAUL AROUND THE WORLD

*A necessary reflection on the challenges of these times, some
educational and social aspects of Vincentian action.*

2022 - International Themed Year of Pierre-Auguste Le Taillandier

Paris, 31st January 2022

SVDP PRESIDENT GENERAL'S CIRCULAR LETTER

The current President General of SSVP, Renato Lima, has just published his seventh circular letter to all Vincentians. It has been recommended that each district council passes on small bits of it to their Vincentians so that everyone will learn from it. If you want to read the entire document, you can find it at Rule 1.12 1.12 Gratitude to those we visit Vincentians never forget the many blessings they receive from those they visit. They recognize that the fruit of their labor's springs, not from themselves, but especially from God and from the poor they serve. If you want to read the entire document, you can find it at <https://www.ssvpglobal.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/r-carta-circular-en.pdf>. Here is something that he writes about the rule:

“Today, the International Rule of the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul is a solid, broad, youthful document, open to dialogue and permeable to change. The improvements made during these decades did not alter the spirit which moved the seven founders in 1833: the need for prayer (individual and community); personal contact in Vincentian work; our living relationship of brothers and sisters together; the universality of our commitment to service those in need; and our Vincentian vocation.

On occasion, we may criticize, and not agree with some articles in the Rule, or find them overly bureaucratic. This is democratic and should be seen as natural. What we can never do is fail to fulfil the Rule, or any other regulation which has been approved by Vincentian leaders, specifically to improve management of Conferences, works and Councils. We know that the Rule is not perfect, as we human beings are not perfect. But the Rule is a safe path for us to help us to holiness, humility, and charitable service to those who suffer. Above all, the Rule is a path and a beacon guiding the future of our Society. It specifies the values, mission, and vision we want for our Society and its members”.

The third President General, Adolphe Baudon, showed his wisdom when he said that “if a Conference threatens to fail, it is because it has diverged from the Rule; and if it prospers, on the other hand, it can be sure that it is faithfully observing the traditions and practices of the Society”. Many people want to adapt the Rule to their own situation in life, or to resolve some, practical situation, but that's not what it was created for. It is we who must humbly adapt ourselves to the Rule, and follow it without hesitation, because we know that its principles are uplifting.



Detachment from one's own opinions, one of the essentials of Vincentian life, is also expressed by faithful observance of the Rule, since this way we can avoid the standards of the Society being interpreted in different ways. The presence of the Rule guarantees that Superior Councils will develop in harmony and total consistency with the dictates of the Council General, since this was what our founders wanted. The essential role of the Council General is to be the protector of the Rule and guardian of unity within the Confederation.

The existence of statutes, basic requirements, standards, and the Rule itself, above all, is intended to make our organization more fluid, more flexible, dynamic, and modern, without the bonds of bureaucracy⁷, hierarchy and excessive regulations, which so annoyed Antoine-Frédéric Ozanam (Isaiah 28, 10). The only reason for the Rule's existence is to improve the daily life of Conferences, Social Works, and Councils. The Rule only exists to serve the poor more lovingly and effectively. It is a great ally in the service of charity: the clearer its principles, the clearer will be its affectionate acceptance by everyone. The hierarchy we must follow, in observing the Rule, should be the hierarchy of love, adopting an inclusive, conciliatory attitude. Observing the Rule, body, and soul, working in harmony with the precepts of the Church, and based on good organizational practice, is the certain way to ensure an enriching future.

Hope Conference

Dear Conference Presidents and Vincentian Members,

The Hope Conference has been working closely with a variety of organizations and grantors to ensure that they have a comprehensive application allowing for swift funding of your cases. As such, Hope has revised and simplified their process to ensure compliance with even the most rigorous of requirements for funding (FEMA). This affords your neighbor / client the best chance of getting their requests funded.

The current Hope application may be found on [the St. Vincent de Paul website](#) as well as the [Hope Conference Google Drive](#).

Hope Cont.

- Hope's meeting and application submission schedule is also attached.
- All applications are due to Hope a week prior to their meetings. Incomplete applications will be returned to sender and may result in applications getting reviewed at a later meeting, delaying important funding for your neighbor.

In 2020, the Hope Conference distributed over \$220,000 to neighbors in need. In 2021, this amount nearly doubled to over \$420,000. In these times, as you can imagine, the volume of Hope applications is at its peak. In the face of growing needs (and, thankfully, growing funding!), Hope must firmly adhere to its established process as documented on page 1 of their application to remain efficient and good stewards of the funds with which they have been entrusted.

Please understand that the landscape of how we can best help our neighbors is evolving...this may mean that Hope asks you to take certain additional steps (i.e., call a utility company that may have recently received their own emergency funding) prior to reviewing your submission. We ask for your patience as we work in an ever-changing environment. Remember: the end goal is to help our neighbors in need. We are all on the same team.

This month Vincentians from HOPE began with the pilot of a Housing, Mortgage, and Utility Clinic to support the Pittsburg/Bay Point area Conferences who have experienced an increase by our neighbors having their power and water shut off and an increase of eviction notices. The area of focus was from Antioch west to Bay Point.

The event structure was to have Vincentians from the local Conferences host Vincentians from the Hope Conference and the District Staff to facilitate a Training of Trainers.

The Vincentians from their local Conferences referred their neighbors in need to the Clinic to complete their applications to get Housing, Mortgage, and Utility for assistance. With help upon completion of the application, the team reviews their documentation and approves them for HOPE submission. Our mission is training the local Conferences to work together and provide immediate relief.

On the first day of the pilot, we had eight Vincentian volunteers – five from the local Conferences, four bilingual, and four members from the Hope Conference join in. Twenty of our neighbor families attended with a combination of Housing, Mortgage, and Utility bill's needs. Eight cases were able to be submitted that day. Within twenty-four hours, we were able to get the water for a family turned back on (after a conversation and discount from the Water Company) and Hope Conference support of electronically forwarding a copy of the check to them.

Without question, the pilot was a success. This will never replace our core work of Home Visits, but the Housing, Mortgage, and Utility Clinic model is transferable to support Conferences in other parts of the county dealing with a backlog of existing requests for help or Conferences that have stopped assisting due to a lack of a workable mechanism to do so. Please contact me if you have any questions. Thank you for the time at the District Council Meeting.

Rick Richardson, Hope Conference President

Vincentian of the Month – March: Elizabeth Ruiz



Vincentian Volunteer Elizabeth Ruiz said she feels blessed to be able to Vincentian with SVdP.

For Elizabeth Ruiz, being a Vincentian is not just an opportunity to help her neighbors in need, but it is a deeply spiritual experience where she is spreading the love she feels in her community at St. Paul's Church in San Pablo, California. Elizabeth began volunteering with the St. Vincent de Paul of Contra Costa County (SVdP) Conference 14 years ago, when her pastor invited her to volunteer with the SVdP conference (branch) at St. Paul's.

"Because I've known what it's like to be very poor, and to not know how I was going to get food for my children, I feel like I have a deep, sacred responsibility to help other people," Elizabeth said. "It's like I've been blessed with the ability to connect with people in need because I've been there myself. A lot of people are very shy about accepting charity, so it helps if they have someone helping them that can appreciate that and show them understanding."

Elizabeth and her husband, Ignacio, joined the SVdP branch at St. Paul's and began acting as treasurers for the fledgling group of Vincentian volunteers. Elizabeth soon found herself taking on more roles at the SVdP branch, as the volunteer team began to expand services. Elizabeth said she loved helping fill boxes and bags of food for the hungry, helping get and assemble furniture for people in need, and before she knew it she found herself as the branch's vice-president.

Steve Krank, SVdP's Vincentian Services Manager, said Elizabeth is an exemplary Vincentian. Steve said Elizabeth not only helps provide food for the hungry, or comfort to the cold, but that she is also a true leader who is able to lead by example.

"Elizabeth is an amazing volunteer and we're extremely lucky to have her," Steve said. "She has a very deep, and practical spirituality that moves her to help people, and in doing so she moves those she helps to help others. She's a blessing."

Elizabeth does not only help care for her neighbors in need, but she also helps organize and inspire the community at St. Paul's and in San Pablo. Elizabeth helped run the youth program at St. Paul's, and is still deeply involved with their outreach and volunteer activities. She said she is proud that the efforts of her fellow Vincentian volunteers has inspired many of the teens in the community to volunteer with SVdP.

"Every year I'm lucky enough to help create a wonderful holiday experience for the kids in San Pablo," Elizabeth said. "In 2021, we got an amazing donation of toys from St. Monica's Catholic Church's parishioners in Moraga, and with that we were able to individually wrap and address them to the children of over 300 families. The teens in the youth group helped wrap all of the gifts and address cards to the recipients. We decorated the front of the church with a beautiful Christmas scene and let families take photos and learn about the traditional history of Christmas. I just felt blessed to get to help create such a beautiful memory for so many families that were struggling during the pandemic."

Elizabeth said she is blessed to have the time to volunteer. A mother of two, Elizabeth's eldest is finishing up his theology studies at the Pontifical College Josephinum in Ohio. A lot of Elizabeth's time is spent caring for her daughter, who has a motor condition which requires Elizabeth's attention and care.

"Every day is a challenge, but through the grace of God I'm able to get through it and find time to volunteer," Elizabeth said. "And I'm so thankful for everything I've been given. My daughter has taught me to be a better, more understanding person and I'm able to carry those lessons forward when I help people through St. Vincent de Paul."

Elizabeth said she cannot imagine not volunteering. She said when she is helping people, she feels like she gets proof of her faith.

"When I volunteer and get to help people, I'm blessed with these truly beautiful and moving moments that I carry with me every day." Elizabeth said. "When I get to go into someone's home, and bring them food, furniture, clothing or blankets because they're hungry and cold, I get to see their faces light up with smiles and tears of joy. It's in those moments that I see God and know that the love I feel is real. When you get to help someone, and share that moment when they realize that there are people out there that care for them and want to help them, it can be very transcendental and deeply moving."

Bob Liles Corner (Cont.)

THE RULE

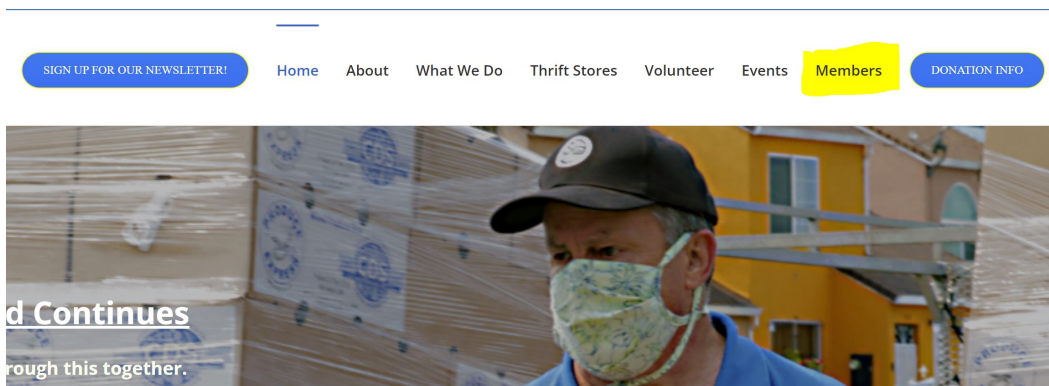
Rule 1.12

1.12 Gratitude to those we visit. Vincentians never forget the many blessings they receive from those they visit. They recognize that the fruit of their labor's springs, not from themselves, but especially from God and from the poor they serve.

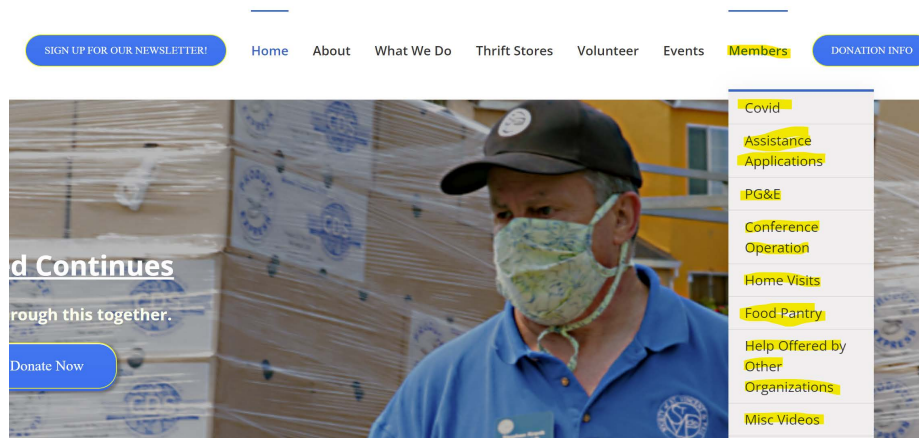
St. Vincent de Paul of Contra Costa Website: <https://www.svdpc.org/>

Hopefully you will find time in the next before our next District Council meeting to check them out and give me some feedback. One nice thing is that if a form or application changes if the title does not change, we can simply upload the new document to replace the old document and nothing else needs to be changed. So, updating documents is very easy.

First go to www.svdpc.org. See anything different? Members has been added to the options at the top of the page, which is just like National does is on their website.



Click on it or hold the cursor on it and you will see a subfolder listed as “Assistance Applications”. For now just click on “Members” to go to the “Members page



I think the “Members” page is self-explanatory. After reading it click on “Assistance Applications”. Read it. Click on one of the documents an see if you can easily download it.

Our goal, which probably will not happen very fast, is that when a Vincentian wants to fill out a Hope, Seasons of Sharing or Catholic Charities application, that they always go to the website. That way they will always have the most recent version of the form. I wonder how many different versions of the forms or applications are circulating around our Conferences.

Thank you,

Bob



Brian Boyle

SVdP Communications and Development Associate

On March 19th I had the opportunity to introduce myself to a small group of Vincentians at the District Council Meeting. That introduction may be coming a little late, considering I have worked doing communications work for the SVdP District Council offices for about a year and a half now.

I wanted to take the chance to introduce myself to the rest of the Vincentians in Contra Costa County. My name is Brian Boyle, and I found SVdP after I graduated college in 2020. I attended Cal State–East Bay in Hayward, California.

My main role at SVdP is to collect, design, and share stories from the good works happening at our Conferences with the wider world. By sharing the stories of the compassion of our Vincentian volunteers, and the amazing work you are doing to help our neighbors in need, hopefully I can help get more support for your Conferences and your programs!

To keep telling you about myself, I was born here in the Bay Area – in Vallejo to specific. I've lived in Sacramento, El Sobrante, Richmond and Pinole. I was raised Catholic and am fairly familiar with a handful of local churches, having attended Christ the King, St. Callistus, and St. Joseph's over the years. After graduating high school, I worked as a butcher for close to 10 years. That experience helped pushed me back toward school where I studied Journalism and Communications.

I'm not very good at writing about myself. I'm a bit of a movie geek, and if you visit my office, you'll find a variety of movie posters decorating my wall and I'm always open to chat about a good movie. I've spent most of my free time during this pandemic walking my dog.

I admire the work all of you do as volunteers, and I'm thankful I get to have a job where I can come to work every day and feel like I am helping people. Thank you all for the opportunity and I look forward to meeting you someday!

But to do so, I'll need your help. I need Vincentians to help share the stories happening at their Conferences with me, and hopefully together we can help many more of our neighbors in need. I would love the chance to come photograph the Conferences in action!

I can be reached at:

Brian Boyle

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Gianni's
ITALIAN BISTRO

&



**KNIGHTS
OF COLUMBUS**
IN SERVICE TO ONE. IN SERVICE TO ALL.
Council 9206 - St. Joan of Arc Parish - San Ramon, California

present



Tips for Change

benefitting



The Society of St. Vincent de Paul
of Contra Costa County

Monday, April 25th
4:30 PM - 8:00 PM

10% of sales and 100% of tips will support
The RotaCare Pittsburg Free Medical Clinic
at St. Vincent de Paul

To place your order or make reservations,
visit www.giannissanramon.com or call 925-820-6969

For take out orders, be sure to click on **APRIL 25TH**,
then choose your items and your desired time.

Deadline to order for take-out is Saturday, April 23rd at 6 PM.
Wine & Cocktails available for take-out.

Formation of SVDP Database User Group

Before we get too far, what is a user group, technically?

User groups connect people to share strategies and best practices around a given product, often software. In our case, these users are usually from different Conferences, Councils, or organizations. User groups are generally location-based (i.e., Users of the Seattle Database under the Diocese of Oakland) or role-based (i.e., admin-level). Conference Level users or District or, in our case, the newly formed SVDP Diocesan Council User Group. The user group isn't always associated with an organization itself; it can be created by the users independently of the organization.

User Groups Enable Better Listening.

A user group can inform that question. Our user group will give our Conferences and Councils direct access to Vincentian needs using the Database and a place for conversations. It will create a constant feedback loop during the Database use, training, and development of the Database development process to meet our needs in the future.

With the formation of our user group, Councils, Conferences, and Vincentians using the system can test concepts, have a place to submit and troubleshoot messages with other Vincentians using the Database. The result? Over time, the Database and services better solve the problems you and your Conferences may have in collecting and sharing data, collecting service metrics, and compiling your quarterly and annual reporting.

Vincentians are incredibly innovative and knowledgeable about the communities and neighbors they serve. In our user group, Vincentians using the system are willing to share best practices, often surprise and delight one another with innovative workarounds that solve their peers' problems. They will even develop new ways to use the Database that our developer (Joseph Roberts) had not considered.

These solutions and ideas are invaluable additions to the support of our Conferences using the Database. Workarounds and other ideas from user groups can also be implemented immediately, without additional product development or investment, providing more accurate metrics to your Conferences and parishes.

While software user groups are creative in finding new ways to leverage software, in our Database, you can be even more helpful if you're willing to dive into product development with us. We are asking for new user group members whose opinions on potential database improvements and new features so you can continue providing more value.

Our user group will likely help you train Conference users, develop best practices and increase database usage with fewer support issues and more relevance.

Since this is just our beginning, our user group will need to stay "Vincentian" member-focused. Any Conference should not use these groups to inundate users with questions about other systems or products. The most effective way to start and keep our user group engaged and thriving is to help the users feel like the group is made for them.

The SVDP National Database, Member Data Collection, Council and Conference, and metrics collection will benefit, of course, help all, including each parish. Still, we need each other, and as a "Start-up User Group," the users need to feel like the group itself is being thoughtful with what they ask and share with the group.

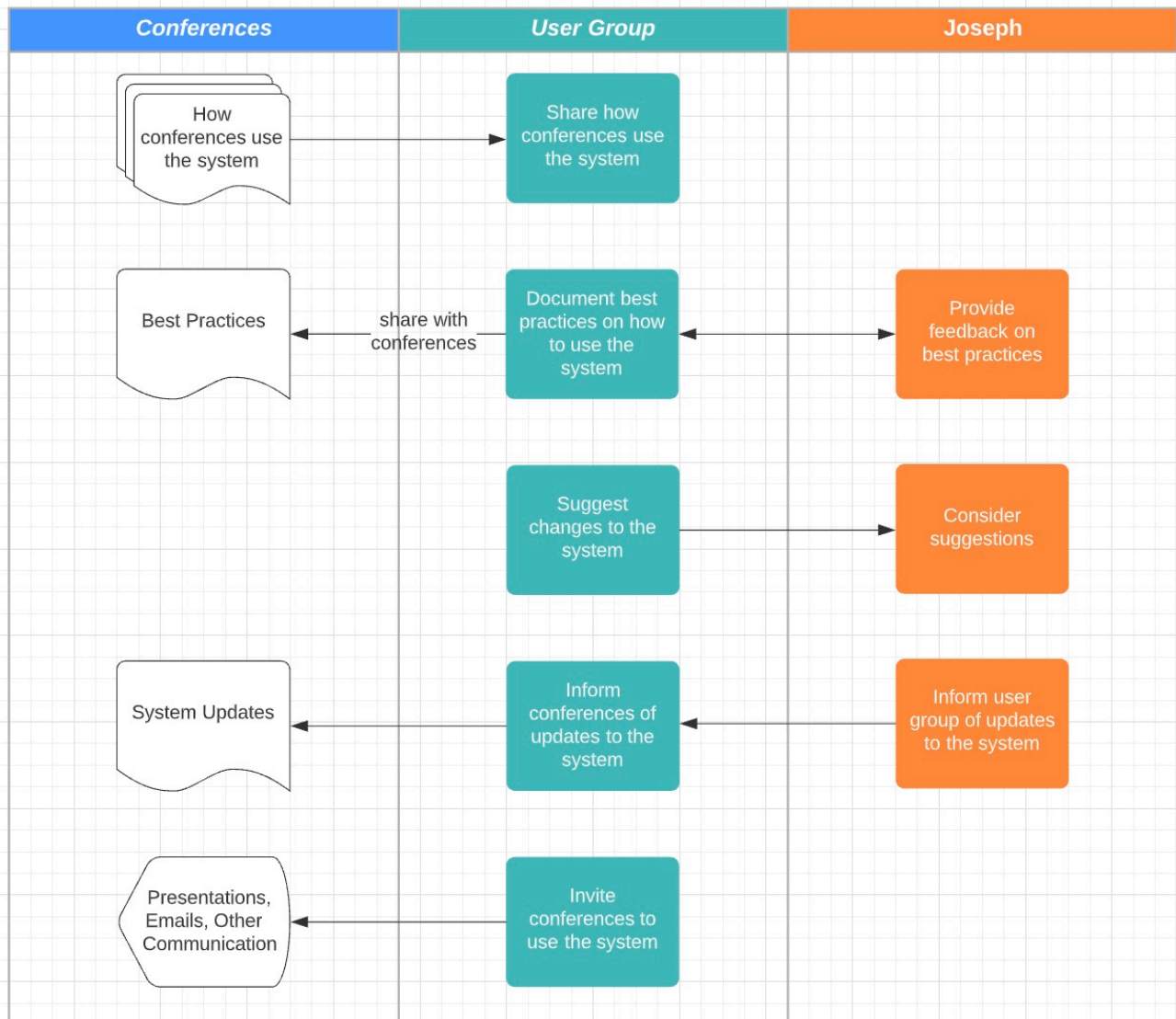
This flowsheet is from the first Bi-County meeting to discuss the group's formation. If you are curious to find out how you can be part of a process that will "lift the whole Vincentian Boat in Contra Costa County and possibly the Diocese", feel free to contact me at s.krunk@svdp-cc.org.

Stephen Krank, Vincentian Services Manager

SVdP Database User Group

Terry Vicencio | March 11, 2022

In the software industry, a user group is not the same as customer support. The green boxes are the things I think we should do if we are strictly a user group.



The Western Region Assembly May 10-14, 2022

Our Assembly is right around the corner. The theme for 2022 is

Living in a World of Hope *Viviendo en un Mundo Lleno de Esperanza*

With the complications coming out of the Pandemic and then going back into additional precautions due to the variants, it was decided the best way to provide the most opportunity to participate was to for a second-year access to the meeting via Zoom.

Like the Home Visit we miss the reflection of Christ in each other when we can meet in person but, it brings us one step closer.



You're invited to our annual Western Region Assembly!

Opening Mass at 10:30am PDT Tue May 10
at St. James Cathedral in Seattle
(Mass available later online)

All other events will be online via Zoom.
\$20 registration fee. Scholarships available.

Wednesday May 11 6:00-7:00pm	Address by our National President <i>Ralph Middlecamp</i>	Mensaje de nuestro presidente nacional
Wednesday May 11 7:00-8:00pm	The Hope to which He has Called You by <i>Sr. Paule Freeburg, D.C.</i>	La Esperanza a la que Ellos ha Llamado <i>Deacon Juan Lezcano</i>
Thursday May 12 6:00-8:00pm	Finding Your Vincentian Vocation: Activities Across the Region <i>John Hallissy and Western Region Committee Chairs</i> (English only) (Solo inglés)	
Friday May 13 6:00-7:00pm	Centro Rendu: A replicable program that authentically engages Latinos in our Vincentian ministry By <i>Mirya Munoz-Roach</i>	Conciencia y Sensibilidad de Culturas
Friday May 13 7:00-8:00pm	Cultural Awareness & Sensitivity by <i>Vicki Vernon Lott, Ph.D.</i> of <i>Just Faith Ministries</i>	Centro Rendu: Un programa replicable que involucra auténticamente a los latinos en nuestro ministerio Vicentino
Saturday May 14 9:30-noon	Mini Retreat: Listening with a Vincentian Heart <i>Western Region Formation Committee</i>	Mini Retiro: Escuchando con un Corazón Vicentino <i>Western Region Formation Committee</i>
Saturday May 14 12:30-2:00pm	Cultivating a Vincentian Culture of Participation by <i>Ryan Carney, Chief Advancement Officer SVDP National Office</i>	Cultivando una Cultura Vicentina de Participación

More details and registration coming soon!

More information to come in the coming weeks.