



June 2022

Vincentian **Wisdom**
Quotes • Charism



Meeting

Board of Directors Meeting

Tuesday 6/14, 9:30 AM – 11:30 AM

Meeting

Spirituality and Formation Committee

Tuesday 6/14, 12:00 PM – 1:00 PM

Meeting

District Council Meeting

Saturday 6/18, 9:30 AM – 11:30 AM

Feast of the Sacred Heart

Friday, 6/24

Celebration

Vincentian Appreciation Gathering

Saturday 7/16, 4:00 PM – 6:00 PM

St. Stephen Church, Walnut Creek

Meeting

Board of Directors Meeting

Tuesday 7/19, 9:30 AM – 11:30 AM

Meeting

Spirituality and Formation Committee

Tuesday 7/19, 12:00 PM – 1:30 PM

Meeting

Ozanam Orientation

Saturday 8/6, 8:45 AM – 3:00 PM

Location to be determined



Bob Liles Corner

BEING A GOOD STEWARD OF YOUR CONFERENCE'S FUNDS

One thing that I am very careful with is how money is spent. I want to be able to look every donor straight in the eye and tell them that our best judgement was used to make sure that the maximum benefit was generated from every dollar of their money that was spent. That is why when my conference has its annual pizza lunch after its Christmas turkey give away, the members pay for the pizza. When my conference holds its annual Christmas holiday party it is potluck, and anything bought is paid for by the members. Also, the Rule of the Society is that none of its funds can be given to another non-profit. Conferences can twin with other domestic and foreign conferences and spend money on joint ventures. But donors gave the money to SVdP because they want SVdP to spend it. They could have given it to the Red Cross, Salvation Army or any other non-profit, but they didn't.

At an Ozanam Orientation that I attended someone from a different district said that her conference uses the secret collection to pay for any refreshments that they buy, and the money left over goes to the poor. So that is how my conference does it. All donations from the parishioners go to serve the poor, not to buy treats for the Vincentians.

I will never criticize who a conference decides to help and how much they decide to give to someone. It is always a difficult decision and there are many factors involved in making the decision. One good principal to follow is whether helping someone enables them to continue to live in an irresponsible and antisocial manner or if it empowers them to lead the life that God wants them to live.

When you have limited resources, you must make choices on who to help and by how much. Here are some actual decisions that had to be made by my conference. Just something for you to think about, though I suspect that you have faced many similar questions. I am simplifying the cases because this article would be too long if I gave all the details.

Bob Liles Corner (BEING A GOOD STEWARD Cont.)

One family owed PG&E \$9,000. Pay off their bill or pay the bills of eighteen families that only owe \$500 each?

Pay for the deposit of a single mother that was tired of living with her mother and wanted her own place or the deposit for someone living in their car and wanted to move into an apartment?

Pay for a storage unit for an able-bodied young man who let his union plumber's license lapse because he was tired of being a plumber and is now homeless and with no job?

Pay a \$1,000 water bill for a household with six healthy adults and three children, with not one adult holding a job? They got behind when one child turned 18 and stopped getting government benefits.

Pay to get someone's dog out of boarding, after she left it there for a full year?

Pay two months of back rent for someone who admitted that she gambled it away?

Pay two months of back rent for someone who admitted that she used her rent money for drugs?

Pay someone's PG&E bill of \$500, when she tells you that she is flying to Houston in two weeks to visit her sister?

Pay someone's PG&E bill of \$500 at the end of summer after she admitted that someone set it at 70 for the entire summer and she had no idea how to change it and not once did she ever turn it off and just open the windows?

We tried to work with all these people to figure out how they could do things to resolve the issue and prevent themselves from getting into the same situation again. In some cases, we told them if they took specific actions and came back to us in a month with proof that they were actively changing their behavior then we could help them. Some did and we helped them. Some didn't, so we didn't help them. The lady that was flying to Houston got so enraged at me for even questioning how she could fly to Houston, but not pay her PG&E bill told me that I was disrespecting her and tossed me out of her house. At least she saved me and my partner from having to make a decision on whether to help her or not.

In one of the Society's publications someone said to not save your money for the "worthy poor" because then you may never give it out. My conference tries to not do that. We help most of the people that request help from us, but we want to see an effort on their part to resolve their situation. It is always surprising how many expect us to write a check immediately. But never follow through when we ask for very simple information like a copy of the bill that they want us to pay.

Maybe we could talk about this at our next Conference Meetings.

Bob

Change someone's life for the better. Ask them to join the Society.

Did someone ask you?



Circular letter by Renato Lima de Oliveira 16th President General Final Message 5.1. An expanding society.

Since the creation of the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul in 1833, and even more since the foundation of the International Council General in 1839, we know our organization has been growing, in both quality and quantity. Throughout these almost 200 years of the Vincentian story, the International Confederation of the SSVP has greatly expanded. Perhaps not even our founders could have foreseen how far we have come.

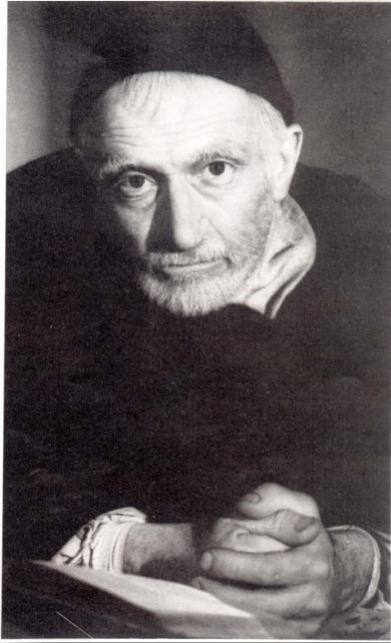
At present, the Society is found in 153 territories, with 800,000 members, 48,000 Conferences, 5000 Social Works and 30 million people helped every day. These are impressive figures, which fill us with pride, joy, and great social responsibility. On Council General's website, there is information about the 153 territories, which has the e-mail address of the national president, the full address of the national office and statistics for each location, with the number of conferences and of the members.

During the present term of office of the International Council General, of which I am proud to fill the important role of President General, significant progress has been made in SSVP's expansion. Seven new territories have joined the Confederation since 2016: Vatican City, Albania, Cyprus, Cayman Islands, Liberia, Tanzania, and Cape Verde. There are still 15 more nations which have been noted that, by God's grace, have the right conditions for founding a Conference, including Greece and the Scandinavian countries. All this effort is included in the strategic plan of the Council General through the "SSVP Plus" Project.

During this five-year term of office, including the coronavirus crisis which we have experienced in the last two years, the number of aggregations of Conferences and Councils instituted has broken all records: there were 3,000 aggregations and 200 institutions. These figures show that SSVP, despite the dark times in which we are living, will always be blessed by God, since it is divinely inspired and its role as an organization is very important: the sanctity of its members, and charity towards those who suffer.

Feast of the Sacred Heart - Friday June 24th

The Society of St. Vincent de Paul has been solemnly consecrated to the Sacred Heart of Jesus since February 5, 1872. An Act of Consecration was drawn up at the request of the Society in 1872, and this act of consecration is renewed annually by all units of the Society



The Rule 2.2 **The journey together towards holiness**

Vincentians are called to journey together towards holiness because true holiness is perfect union with Christ and the perfection of love, which is central to their vocation and the source of its fruitfulness. They aspire to burn with the love of God as revealed by Christ and to deepen their own faith and fidelity. Vincentians are aware of their own brokenness and need for God's grace. They seek His glory, not their own. Their ideal is to help relieve suffering for love alone, without thinking of any reward or advantage for themselves.

They draw nearer to Christ, serving Him in the poor and one another. They grow more perfect in love by expressing compassionate and tender love to the poor and one another.

Therefore, their journey together towards holiness is primarily made through:

- * Visiting and dedicating themselves to the poor, whose faith and courage often teach Vincentians how to live. Vincentians assume the needs of the poor as their own.
- * Attending the meeting of the Conference or Council, where shared fraternal spirituality is a source of inspiration.
- * Promoting a life of prayer and reflection, both at the individual and community level, sharing with their fellow members. Meditating on their Vincentian experiences offers them internal spiritual knowledge of themselves, others, and the goodness of God.
- * Transforming their concern into action and their compassion into practical and effective love

Their journey together towards holiness will be even more fruitful if the members' personal lives are characterized by prayer, meditation on the Holy Scriptures and other inspirational texts and devotion to the Eucharist and the Virgin Mary, whose protection we have always sought, and to the teachings of the Church.

We're providing help, it turns out were helping God provide Miracles

By Joe Rivello

I witnessed a miracle! Mostly the activities I perform as a Vincentian I see as just ordinary acts of charity. I don't always see how the Spirit is active in my vocation. But when I got involved as part of a team to help Anzell Ross, I got to participate in a miracle. Anzell is a single mother of three, who had been abandoned by her ex. She needed money for rent and a car to return to work and care for her family. At her daughter Nija's school, Mrs. Bullock, the principal, learned of her plight and passed the word to the teachers, who pooled their money to pay \$2,400 for Anzell's rent. The principal also told Adriana Fusaro, school volunteer, who she knew volunteered as Hope Conference treasurer. She in turn emailed, Frank Wnuk, President of St. Joan of Arc conference, who emailed the need for a car to all. I didn't a car but reached out to friend Dave Doyle, who is the President of Missing Man Ministry, who in turn reached out to other friends, Kendall Smith and Kristina Bethea, Executive Director of

Monthly Miracle, both are connected to Cornerstone Church, Livermore. At first, Kristina didn't have a car, but then a vehicle that was promised someone else, suddenly became available. Vincentians Suzette Barrett and Mary Anne Kolda drove Anzell to pick up the car and the following Monday Monica Wnuk joined Mary Anne and Anzell to the DMV to register the car. All told, approximately twenty teachers, eight Vincentians and three members of the Cornerstone church were involved in helping and getting Anzell a vehicle. Miraculous!

In same way, a single drop of water seems common and unimportant; yet when one drop combines with other drops, the result can be a flowing river. Christians working together with the grace of God elevate common acts of charity into miracles. I pray for the grace to see more of the ordinary things we do as Vincentians in an extraordinary and miraculous way they really are.

Joe Rivello, Vincentian
St. Joan of Arc & Hope Conference



Kristina Bethea, Executive Director of Monthly Miracles gives auto to Anzell Ross.



SAFEGUARDING THE VULNERABLE

By Bob Liles

SAFE ENVIRONMENT

For help, we have the upper hand in dealing with them and unscrupulous people can use that advantage for nefarious purposes.

For quite some time the Oakland Diocese has had a comprehensive safe environment policy: <https://oakdiocese.org/safe-environment>. Every parish has someone responsible for overseeing that the various parish ministries are in compliance with the diocesan policy. It's time that your conference sat down with that person and made sure that your conference is following all of the requirements. Requirements include doing a Megan's Law background check, on line Virtus training and fingerprinting. It covers Vincentians and Non-Vincentians, who might just drop by occasionally and give you a hand.

As this is a Diocesan program that the Bishop has instructed all of the pastors to implement, the District Council will not be auditing the conferences for compliance. That is the responsibility of the parish.

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

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Make a difference in the lives of those in need

Help volunteers at your local St. Francis of Assisi, **feed the hungry**. We need your help to **keep families housed**. We can **care for the sick**. Together we can **end poverty** one person, one family, one community at a time.

To Learn More or Get Involved
Please Contact:
Isabel Lara - Conference President
email@email.com
(925) 682-5811

Together, we can end poverty one person, one family, one community at a time.

The Society of St. Vincent de Paul is a volunteer organization which brings compassionate people together from around the globe to grow in friendship and spirituality while helping people in need suffering in their local neighborhoods.

In Contra Costa County, St. Vincent de Paul of Contra Costa County (SVdP) has over 700 volunteers, dedicated to helping their friends and neighbors in need. When you join St. Vincent de Paul of Contra Costa County, you are joining a family that wants to help those in need while helping them maintain their dignity.

How You Can Help at your local St. Francis of Assisi SVdP Branch:

Housing & Utility Aid: SVdP is dedicated to helping our neighbors stay in their homes. We work directly with landlords & utility companies to ensure the most vulnerable in our community stay off the street.

Food Assistance: SVdP boasts over 18 community food pantries. From these food pantries we are able to make sure our neighbors do not suffer from hunger.

Medical Care: SVdP provides medical care to the uninsured by partnering with RotaCare Bay Area to host a free medical clinic in Pittsburg.

Dental Care: SVdP provides dental care to the uninsured by partnering with Dentists on Wheels to host a free dental clinic in Pittsburg.

Free Dining Room SVdP partners with Loaves and Fishes of Contra Costa to host a free dining room in Pittsburg which serves free hot meals daily to the hungry.

Daytime Shelter: SVdP partners with Winter Nights to host a free Daytime Homeless Shelter in Pittsburg to provide a safe place for families during the day.

Workforce Development: SVdP volunteers run a hybrid paid job-training and work experience program which helps people with barriers re-enter the workforce.

Hot Shower Program: SVdP partners with The Bay Church to provide weekly hot showers and clean clothing to the people experiencing homelessness.

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

www.svdP-cc.org

Brian Boyle, our Communications and Development Associate, was working with St. Francis of Assisi to help them come up with a handout for a Conference Invitation to Serve explaining to parishioners and the local community the help and services they provide. This type of flyer is available for you and your Conference. For more information contact Brian Boyle at b.boyle@svdp-cc.org

Stephen Krank



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

The 2022 Volunteer Recognition Event

By Claudia L. Ramirez

St. Vincent de Paul of Contra Costa County will be celebrating our Vincentians at a Vincentian Recognition Event on Saturday, **July 16, 2022, from 4-6 pm** at St. Stephen Church (Hall), Walnut Creek. This special event will recognize our history of 58 years of service in Contra Costa County and will acknowledge the dedication of our Vincentians, Volunteers, and supporters. We will be awarding our highest honor, the **Top Hat Award** as well as special Vincentian recognition awards.

First, we will be honoring Vincentians and Volunteers for their contributions to the Society. As such, we request that you consider nominating a Vincentian(s) or Volunteer(s) from your Conference for recognition. Please identify Vincentians or Volunteers who are examples in one way or another of your work and service to our neighbors in need. We have identified some awards and nomination guidelines on the following sheets for your Conference to review. Please submit your conference's nominations to me by June 17, 2022.

Second, we are also accepting nominations for the **Top Hat Award**. The Top Hat award is the pinnacle of recognition for Vincentians. Its name is based on the book *Apostle in a Top Hat*, that chronicles the life of our founder, Blessed Frederic Ozanam. It is bestowed upon those Vincentians who exemplify Bl. Frederic's dedication, zeal, and living the Vincentian Charism. If you know of a Vincentian whom you feel is deserving of such a recognition, please complete the nomination form

Lastly, we put together a budget and are asking each Conference to support the event with both a monetary contribution and by participating in an element of the event thereby making it indeed a celebration for Vincentians and by Vincentians. If your Conference can afford it, and it will not burden your work with our neighbors in need, could you contribute \$100.00 (TOTAL) for your Conference? There will be Conferences where this would unnecessarily burden the Conference and we are not asking them to help. But we want everyone to come, join in, and recognize their fellow Vincentians. If your Conference is in a position where you are willing to "TWIN" to help cover some of the costs, we would appreciate it.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions and thank you for your continued dedication to our Society and our mission.

SPECIAL - Vincentian Recognition Awards

Blessed Rosalie Rendu Award

Blessed Rosalie Rendu – Zeal for the Poor – Award is dedicated to any Vincentian that drives them past meeting the basic needs to include education, care for infants, elderly and the organization of works of Charity.

St. Louise de Marillac Award

St. Louise de Marillac – St. Vincent de Paul became her Spiritual Director. Later, Louise co-founded the Daughters of Charity – Award is in recognition of Vincentians in the Role of Spiritual Advisor who exemplify the charism and dedication to the Spiritual growth of the Society.

St. Elizabeth Ann Seaton Award

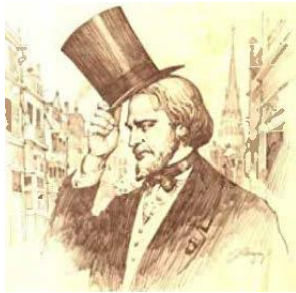
St. Elizabeth Ann Seaton – Foundress and first superior of the Sisters of Charity in the United States. Dedicated to Vincentians who overcome obstacles in service to our neighbors we serve.

Award Guidelines

- (1) No more than two (2) Blessed Rosalie Rendu Awards to be presented in any calendar year*
- (2) No more than two (2) St. Louise De Marillac Awards will be presented in any calendar year*
- (3) No more than (4) four St. Elizabeth Ann Seaton Awards to be presented in any calendar year*

A committee approved by The Society of St. Vincent de Paul of Contra Costa County District Council (or its Executive Board) will consider all nominations for Award Recognition.

Application for Recognition of any Vincentian(s) must be completed by submission of a letter of recommendation to the District Council. Any letters of recommendation for Recognition by the District Council can be submitted in writing to Claudia Ramirez, Executive Director of St. Vincent de Paul of Contra Costa County, via US Postal Service, fax or email (c.ramirez@svdp-cc.org). Nominations must be received by June 17, 2022, for this year's event.



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

The 2022 St. Vincent DePaul Top Hat Award

NOMINATION FORM

(Please print or type)

Date: _____

Name of Vincentian, or Vincentian group, to be recognized:

Please tell us, using one or both sides, why this person, or group of persons, should be recognized for the Top Hat Award. If an individual, include length of service as a Vincentian and tell us about any of his/her extraordinary service or efforts as a Vincentian over and above the norm. The purpose is not only to recognize an outstanding Vincentian or a Vincentian team, but to also to provide an example for others to follow.

Nominator completing form: _____ Conference: _____

Nominator's Phone: _____ Nominator's E-mail _____

How do you know the nominee? _____

Nomination is due in SVDP Contra Costa District Council Office by June 10, 2022.

Attention: Claudia Ramirez c.ramirez@svdp-cc.org

Thank You. Note: All information concerning the nominee must be included on the front and back of this form. No supplemental information or additional pages will be considered.

The graphic features a blue background with a photograph of a tall skyscraper and a historic sailing ship. In the top left corner is the circular logo of the Society of St. Vincent & the Grenadines (SVdP) U.S.A. The text 'SAVE THE DATE' is written in large, white, bold letters in the top right. Below it, the event details 'SVdP National Assembly August 31 - September 3 Baltimore, Maryland' are listed in white. Contact information for Michele Schurk is provided, along with a note about a 10% discount for those who commit to sponsoring or exhibiting for both the 2022 Midyear Meeting and National Assembly.

SAVE THE DATE

SVdP National Assembly
August 31 - September 3
Baltimore, Maryland

For Sponsorship Opportunities, contact:
Michele Schurk at mschurk@svpdusa.org

Commit to sponsoring / exhibiting for both the 2022 Midyear Meeting and National Assembly and receive a 10% discount.

Registration is opening soon for the 2022 National Assembly!
Happening in Baltimore, Maryland at the [Marriott Baltimore Waterfront](#) from August 30 – September 3.

Reservation Information

- **Overnight accommodations are available at the Marriott Baltimore Waterfront, \$145 per room, per night, plus taxes. Reservations can be made online at Marriott Waterfront, or by contacting them at [\(410\) 385-3000](tel:4103853000).**
- **Deadline for making a reservation at the group rate is August 9, 2022; after this date, room rates will be based on the prevailing rate.**
- **The Marriott Baltimore Waterfront is located in downtown Baltimore in the [Harbor East neighborhood](#), approx. 12 miles from [Baltimore/Washington International Airport \(BWI\)](#).**