

VETERA MONIMENTA

A. P. Charam

July 2022

Vincentian **Wisdom**
Quotes • Charism



Celebration

Vincentian Appreciation Gathering
Saturday 7/16, 4:00 PM – 6:00 PM

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 – 1:00 PM

Training

Ozanam Orientation
Saturday 8/6, 8:45 AM – 3:45 PM

Meeting

Board of Directors Meeting
Tuesday 8/16, 9:30 AM – 11:30 AM

Meeting

Spirituality and Formation Committee
Tuesday 8/16, 12:00 PM – 1:00 PM

National Assembly

Event Agenda Attached
Wednesday 8/31 - 9/3 All Day

Event

Tuesday with Vincent
Tuesday 9/6, 6:00 PM – 8:00 PM

Event

Bocce Tournament
Saturday 9/10, 10:00 AM – 2:00 PM

Bob Liles Corner

STATS ON THE MOST HOLY ROSARY FOOD PANTRY

I have visited over half of the SVdP food pantries in the county. Every pantry does it a little differently and I think every Conference does it right for their Conference and neighborhood. This month I want to talk about how my does it and how I use the Seattle database to analyze the people that come to our pantry.

Some conferences will hand out food to anyone who asks for it. My conference has decided to only serve residents of Antioch and only give them one bag of food a month. If a non-resident shows up, we have a list of all the food pantries in the adjacent cities that we give. Antioch is blessed to have two soup kitchens; eighteen food pantries and the Food Bank's Community Produce Program truck that comes twice a week to many locations in Antioch including Holy Rosary Church.

When someone comes to our pantry, we require them to present a photo ID and then verify that they are in the Seattle database. If they are not in it, then we require proof of Antioch residency. It can be a PG&E bill, a lease, their car registration, their car insurance, and we even allow them to show us any letter that was mailed to them in Antioch. We have no qualms about restricting food in this manner since we know that the SVdP conferences in the cities adjacent to us have food pantries and there are plenty of pantries in Antioch that they can attend that have no restrictions. Antioch has so many in need that we want to focus on Antioch residents and make sure that we have funds available for home visits.

At the end of the calendar year, I download from the Seattle database all activity from the past year into an Excel spreadsheet.

Bob Liles Corner (cont.)

I sort it and add a bunch of formulas that calculate how often people come for food. The data shows that we almost tripled the amount of food we gave out during the great recession, and it did not drop to normal levels until 2019. Then the pandemic hit. But unlike some food pantries that saw an increase in food being handed out, in 2020, we gave out 15% fewer bags of food than we did in 2019 and dropped an additional 25% in 2021. The Food Bank truck at Holy Rosary also saw a decrease in people. Perhaps it was because of all the stimulus money the government was giving out or because people chose to visit pantries that were giving out more significant amounts of food.

But the most interesting part of my analysis was how often people come to our food pantry.

Times/year a person visits the pantry	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
% of people	50	13	8	7	5	4	4	3	3	2	1	0

71% of the people come three or fewer times, and only 6% come nine or more times. We believe that indicates that our pantry is more of an emergency food pantry than one that people are dependent upon daily, which was the original concept of food pantries. We did send a letter to the people that, year after year, frequently attend our pantry. It said that it appears that they are in great need, and we offered to do a home visit with them to see if we can help them attain additional financial support. For most of them, the home visit indicated that they could not improve their lives due to their age or physical condition, and they would be relying on us for the rest of their lives. Most were getting as much government aid as they could. However, in one case, a person quit coming to our pantry after receiving the letter. We suspect he was not in real need and just took advantage of free food.



Feeling the Job?

By Brian Boyle

After retiring, Bill Hurley wanted to make a difference in his community and help those in need. Bill looked, but he could not find a volunteer organization that felt like a good fit for him. Bill said he wanted to feel like his time was spent truly making a difference in the lives of those in need, but he could not find an organization he felt was tackling the root causes of peoples' suffering. All of that would change when he attended the funeral for a friend at St. Joan of Arc's Church in San Ramon.

“While I was at the funeral for a friend, the pastor said he was a volunteer with a group called St. Vincent de Paul of Contra Costa County (SVdP). Suddenly, I felt

this power jab in my shoulder, and when I turned around there was nobody behind me.” Bill said. “I took that as the sign I'd been waiting for. I went home and called the St. Vincent de Paul conference at St. Joan of Arc and said that I needed to join. I finally found a ministry that really helps people, it just made a lot of sense to join.” Bill said he attended a meeting that night, and before he knew it, he was attending his first few home visits with a SVdP team. Home visits are the core element of the work

Feeling the Jab Cont.

SVdP Vincentians do. A pair of SVdP volunteer Vincentians visits a neighbor in their home and sits with them, talking about their life and how they can help them. SVdP volunteer Vincentians work with their neighbors in need to not only address the crisis they find themselves in, but to help them become self-sufficient once again.

“Home visits are very powerful. When you’re invited to meet with someone in need in their home, you never know exactly what you’re going to find. Home visits are eye-opening,” Bill said. “During one home visit, this woman we were meeting with was asking us for help paying her PG&E bill. Suddenly her two young sons came down the hall and opened the fridge, and we could just see the fridge was empty. We gave her a few food cards to a local grocery store, and I swear she beat us out of her own apartment to feed her kids.”

Bill said one powerful aspect of home visits that deeply affected him, was the friendships you build with the people and families you meet with and help. At first, most people seem very reticent to ask for help, but after a few meetings people begin to trust you. Once you become friends with someone in need, they feel comfortable trusting you with their problems and asking you for help.

“When you visit people in their homes and become their friend, you build a trust that lasts a very long time,” Bill said. “You get to meet with people and their kids, and you see all the ways you can help a family. You can help them push their kids to getting the education they need to get out of poverty. It’s powerful.”

Having worked in finance and real estate, Bill is no stranger to the value of education. Raised in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, Bill was given the opportunity to travel across the United States while assisting construction projects for U.S. Steel before settling in the California Bay Area and working in Pleasanton, Dublin, Danville, and Oakland. While travelling, Bill said he was able to see the stark differences in how people lived, and this helped instill a strong desire to give back from the blessings he has.

“I wanted to find a place that would help me share my time, my talents, and my treasure with those in need,” Bill said. “And I was able to find that with SVdP.” When Bill began volunteering with SVdP, he found his talents in extremely high demand. SVdP operates via a series of 29 branches located throughout Contra Costa County. From these branches, more than 700 volunteers can help their neighbors in need with whatever crisis they are struggling through. Accounting and tracking this aid are no easy task, but it was made much easier thanks to the contributions of Bill Hurley.

Stephen Krank, SVdP Vincentian Services Manager said, “Working with Bill has been a blessing. I feel lucky to know him, but I feel truly blessed to have him as a Vincentian. Bill built and designed the financial infrastructure we use to track and audit the help our branches provide their neighbors in need. He was critical in the formation of the standards we use across the county to help those in need to learn the new reporting standards he was helping introduce,” Stephen said.

It’s hard to overstate the value Bill has provided SVdP. Thanks to his expertise and time, we can help people more efficiently. Thanks to the reporting standards he drafted and helped introduce and teach, we are also able to help more people than ever before.

Bill said one thing that has made his time volunteering with SVdP much more productive and efficient is a good relationship with his pastor. One thing all Vincentians should seek to do is form a strong

relationship with their pastor, as the pastor at their conference can help SVdP Vincentians recruit more volunteers and help more people.

“If you don’t have a good relationship with your pastor, it’s your fault,” Bill said. “They can be the biggest allies in our mission. Your pastor needs to know who you are and what you do as Vincentians, and they won’t if you don’t tell them!” Bill said having a good relationship with the pastor at St. Joan of Arc allowed his conference to put information in the Sunday bulletin. Bill said this helped them double the amount collected during the 5th Sunday collections, allowing St. Joan of Arc to help even more people in need.

Do you feel a jab...?



Conference

GREAT NEWS!

The Hope Conference has updated to a more friendly and comprehensive version of the Hope Conference Application.

Here are some of the changes:

- clearer explanation for what documents are required – this is critical to meet the strict requirements set by each funder
- a new area for entering funder-required information for gender and ethnicity
- expanded area to enter household information such as children living in the home
- more space for the Neighbor to tell their story about their need for help
- a section that identifies the current housing situation and where the neighbor is in Section 8 housing
- expanded area to enter requested funds for rent/mortgage, utilities, etc.
- expanded section to identify other agencies that assisted, such as Catholic Charities
- a cleaner area for entering and totaling Income and Expenses

The new application and an updated Release of Information are now available on the SVdP CC website. Also, these updated documents will now be accepted by Catholic Charities. In addition, a new paper entitled SVdP Application Missing Documents Checklist is also on the website.

Our goal to become more efficient means we can better help our Neighbors!

The new Hope Application, Release, and Forms necessary to submit your completed applications are available on our SVDP Contra Costa website <https://www.svdpcosta.org/>. Go to the Members Dropdown Menu and select Applications if you haven't been on. Old applications submitted will only be accepted until June 30, 2022. On July 1st Hope will only take the new application and release form moving forward. If you have any questions, please contact The Hope Conference at hopeconference.svdpcosta@gmail.com or Vincentian Support Services at s.krank@svdpcosta.org.

In the future, the Hope Conference will begin to use the Member's section of the SVdP website to provide new information and resources as they evolve to assist you, our Conferences better, and Vincentians Members in offering solutions and resources for the neighbors in need served in your Local Community.



THE RULE

Rule 2.3

2.3 Prayer in Union with Christ

In every Conference throughout the world and in their personal lives, Vincentians raise their prayers to God, united with the blessing of Christ, on behalf of one another and their masters, the poor, whose suffering they wish to share.

To Kill the Spirit

by Michael S. Syslo

In 1833, Frederic Ozanam, Paul Lamache, Francois Lallier, Jules Deveaux, Felix Clave, and Augustus Le Taillander asked Emmanuel Bailly to help them to establish the first Conference of Charity which later became the Society of St. Vincent de Paul. Bailly was an older gentleman who was the mentor and guide for the six students in establishing this new organization. Bailly was the first Conference President and the First Council President. He also wrote the introduction to the first Rule of the Society.

Over the years, Emmanuel Bailly wrote many letters to the young Vincentian Conferences guiding them in the spirit of the Society. In 1842, he wrote:

In a few Conferences, it has happened that some members, prevented by their business, have called the poor to their houses to give them, at the same time, good advice and material help, instead of going to visit them in their homes. That is less contrary to our institution than sending assistance to the poor through servants; the latter method can never be too severely reprovved; nothing would more radically destroy the spirit of the Society.

In essence, what is Bailly saying? He says that two things can ultimately destroy the spirit of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul: 1) having the poor come to us instead of us going to them (home visits), and 2) having paid people do our works for us. Both of these should be avoided at all costs.

The home visit is "the distinctive character of the Conferences of St. Vincent de Paul." (Bailly, 1841) It is through the home visit that we fulfill the words of Vincent: "We are the servants of the poor, they are our masters." The servant does not require the master to come to him, the servant goes to the master. It is in their homes that we can learn enough about the poor to serve them in the best way possible. It is those we serve that will most likely have the problem in traveling to the place of service. We are here to serve them - they are not to serve our convenience. In The Rule, Part III, Statute 8 states: "Visits to those in need should be made in their environment, whenever possible, wherever they are."

We are not a checkbook Society. Throughout the writings about the Society, it is emphasized that the members of the Society are to give person-to-person service to those in need. Person-to-person means exactly what the words indicate. We are to do the works. We are not to give our money to other organizations to allow them to do works of charity. We are not the United Way or a similar organization that simply collects money and distributes it to other non-profits. We do not hire paid staff to do our works of charity for us. Paid staff is to help us accomplish our works but not do our works for us.

The spirit of the Society's works are centered on going to the poor (home visits) and providing the most efficacious (highest quality) and brotherly person-to-person service possible. To eliminate those for the sake of efficiency, convenience, acquisition of large numbers, or other possible reasons would certainly destroy the spirit on which the Society was built and has existed for over 170 years.

All Conferences and Conference members are encouraged to evaluate what you do and how you do it. If change is necessary to fulfill the spirit of the Society, then bite the bullet and make the change. Let us all work together to keep the Spirit of the Society alive and well.

Michael Syslo is the chairperson of the Governance Committee of the National Council of SSVdP.

A LITTLE HISTORY ABOUT HOME VISITS.

As a Society -Two by Two, we have been doing them ... for 400 Years. In 1617 when he founded the Confraternities of Charity (Ladies of Charity), Vincent directed members to go two by two to the homes of the sick and disadvantaged. In 1625 when he founded the Congregation of the Mission, (Vincentian Priests) Vincent wrote: "We ... always go out two by two" during missions to visit the homes of the marginalized."

For More information:

"Why Do Home Visits" go to the Home Visit section of our website: www.svdp-cc.org/home-visits/



Please RSVP to
Shawna Costanzo,
Shawna57@gmail.com

**On August 6, 2022, join us *in person* for
an **Ozanam Orientation****

Hosted by the Catholic Community of

St. Bonaventure Catholic Church

5562 Clayton Road

Concord, CA 94521

Mass at 8 am

Ozanam Orientation from 8:45 am – 3 pm
(Continental breakfast and lunch provided)

Ozanam Orientation is an opportunity for Vincentians to learn, connect with one another, and to develop a deeper understanding of and appreciation for Vincentian life.

The Ozanam Orientation is a one-day workshop that covers the essential elements of what it means to be a Vincentian.

IT'S NOT TOO EARLY TO PLAN FOR YOUR CONFERENCE'S FRIENDS OF THE POOR WALK/RUN



Dear Vincentians,

The annual Friends of the Poor Walk is scheduled to happen on September 24, 2022!

Every year, Conferences across the country host their own local Friends of the Poor Walks as a way to raise funds for the charitable programs their Conferences provide, but also to raise awareness in the local community about the good work being done by St. Vincent de Paul Vincentians every single day.

The Friends of the Poor Walk is an excellent opportunity for Vincentians to form lasting relationships with people and businesses in the community. A lot of people want to help those in need, they just need you to let them know how they can! The Friends of the Poor Walk is an excellent tool to do just that.

You will find attached to this newsletter sample documents that can be more personalized to your Conference if you so wish, or can be used as is to inform people about the Friends of the Poor Walk at your Conference, as well as attempt to solicit sponsorships from the local community!

At the District Council, we are proud to help the dedicated Vincentians in SVdP however we can. If you have questions or need help with your Friends of the Poor Walk, please reach out to: Brian Boyle, b.boyle@svdp-cc.org.

To register a Friends of the Poor Walk at your Conference, or to learn more, visit www.fopwalk.org.

The Society of St. Vincent de Paul of Contra Costa County is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.
Donations are tax deductible to the fullest extent allowed by law



To learn more visit www.fopwalk.org



**ST. VINCENT DE PAUL OF CONTRA COSTA COUNTY
2022 ANNUAL MEETING ATTENDANCE
SCHOLARSHIPS**

Come to the Water

August 30-September 3, 2022

Marriott Baltimore Waterfront – Baltimore, Maryland

Scholarship Request Form:

The Society of St. Vincent de Paul District Council of Contra Costa County is happy to offer a limited number of scholarships and partial scholarships for the Come to the Water, Society of St. Vincent de Paul **2022 National Assembly – Baltimore, August 30 – September 3**. These scholarships are made possible by the Contra Costa County SVDP Board of Directors and the generosity of individual Vincentian Members of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul in Contra Costa County.

The scholarship amount offered is up to \$1,000.00 per Vincentian to cover Meeting Registration Fees, Lodging, and Transportation. Each scholarship recipient will be responsible for remaining expenses above and beyond the awarded amount.

_____ **I have been to a National Meeting**

_____ **I have not been to a National Meeting**

Please provide the following information:

Name: Click or tap here to enter text.

Address: Click or tap here to enter text.

E-mail: Click or tap here to enter text.

Phone: Click or tap here to enter text.

Conference: Click or tap here to enter text.

Officer Position: Click or tap here to enter text.

Please select one of the options below:

Scholarship Request:

_____ **DC Scholarship**

\$ Click or tap here to enter text.

_____ **Conference Supported Scholarship**

\$ Click or tap here to enter text.

PLEASE MAKE ALL SCHOLARSHIP REQUESTS BY JULY 15, 2022, AND SUBMIT TO:
SVDP CONTRA COSTA DISTRICT COUNCIL
SCHOLARSHIP REQUEST COMMITTEE
2210 Gladstone Drive
Pittsburg, CA 94565

Or you may: Fax: 925-439-7863 or E-mail C/O: c.ramirez@svdp-cc.org

For District Council Use Only

Award \$ _____

Date of Approval: _____

Approved by: _____

Reimbursement Sent: _____

Check #: _____

Downtown Baltimore: There are many activities available in the Downtown area just walking distance from the Hotel. Or you can jump in a cab and take a trip to one of the many Historical Sites Baltimore has to offer such as the Ft. McHenry National Monument, Edgar Allen Poe House & Museum, or the Baltimore Trolley Tour!

Take in a Baltimore Orioles game! Cruise the Bay on one of the many boat cruises and charters. Visit a brewery, winery, or local restaurant.

Local Restaurant Options: [Downtown Baltimore Restaurants](#)

National Assembly Links:

- [National Assembly Registration](#)
- [Marriot Baltimore Waterfront Hotel](#)

Reservation Information: Overnight accommodations are available at the Marriot Baltimore Waterfront, \$145 per room, per night, plus tax. Reservations can be made online at the Marriot Waterfront. Deadline for making a reservation at the group rate is August 9, 2022.

The Marriott Baltimore Waterfront is located in downtown Baltimore in the Harbor East neighborhood, about 12 miles from the Baltimore/Washington International Airport (BWI).