



MAY 2023

Vincentian **Wisdom**
Quotes • Charism



CALENDAR

Meeting

Board of Directors Meeting - FRC
Tuesday 5/16, 9:30 AM – 11:30 AM

Meeting

Western Region Annual Meeting
5/19-5/20, San Diego, CA

Training

Home Visit Blessings
Tuesday 5/30
Zoom 10:00 AM – 11:30 AM

Meeting

Board of Directors Meeting - FRC
Tuesday 6/13, 9:30 AM – 11:30 AM

Training

Home Visit Workshop
Wednesday, 6/14, 5:15 PM – 8:30 PM
Our Lady Queen of the World
Bay Point, CA

Feast

Feast of the Sacred Heart
All Day 6/16/23

Training

Poverty Simulation
Wednesday 6/24, 10:30 AM – 3:30 PM
S. Joan of Arc Catholic Church
San Ramon, CA

THE TRAGEDY OF AMERICAN COMPASSION

By Marvin Olasky - a book review.

It reviews how charity has been done in the United States from before there was a United States to the present.

Interestingly enough the author is not a Vincentian and only mentions SVdP in passing, but he does write about home visits a lot and how effective they are. In fact his main point is that the US has gone from a country where family and neighbors used to personally help those in need to a country where people think government is responsible for helping those in need and by paying their taxes they have done their part. And those in need have transformed from people that worked hard to not be dependent upon others to people who feel entitled to having the government pay everything for them.

One chapter talks about affiliation. How a very effective way to help a poor person is to reconnect them with their family. How family should be the safety net. In the 1800's some organizations would ask the person in need if they have any relatives that could help them. In most cases the neighbor in need had burned the bridges with their family. But the organization would reach out to the relatives and try to mend the rift. If they were successful then the person was a lot better off than if the organization had just paid the bill.

I highly recommend this book for those people that are still not convinced that home visits are the best way to help the poor or are confident that the government is the right solution.

Bob

Who We Are

“The knowledge of social well-being and reform is to be learned not from books nor the public platform, but in climbing the stairs to the poor man’s garret, sitting by his bedside, feeling the same cold that pierces him, hearing the secret of his lonely and troubled mind.”

*Frederic Ozanam,
Founder, Society of St. Vincent de Paul*

“The foundation, the very essence of our Society, is visiting the poor in their homes; we must see them in rags amid all the disorder and distress of their misery, improvidence, and discouragement. Such a sight is both a lesson to us and a motive of devotedness to them . . .”

*Joseph Emmanuel Bailly,
First Conference President, 1841*

As can be seen, by the above quotations, home visitation has been emphasized as the primary method of our works of charity since our Society was founded in 1833. Unlike fads or trendy activities, this has faded or needs updating.

It has been proven repeatedly that this is the best way to learn about those we are serving and the best way to be a servant to people experiencing poverty. It’s a primary source of our spiritual satisfaction to go home rather than ask them to come to us.

One’s home is not just a house. A home connotes much more; for it is a refuge, castle, and place of residence. A home, moreover, tells the story of its occupants. It reveals much that is intimate about those who live there.

Because home is that kind of sanctuary, it belongs in a unique way to those who therein live. Under normal conditions, an outsider has no right to enter except by invitation. From this perspective, Vincentians who call on people experiencing poverty are honored by those who receive them. The welcomed Vincentian is being accorded the status of friend, a privileged guest who can share in the inner life of another human being or family.

There are good reasons to do home visits:

Our Vincentian spirituality focuses on our search for Christ in those we encounter. Jesus told us Himself (in Matthew 25) that when He was thirsty, we gave Him drink; when He was hungry, we gave Him food; when He was naked, we clothed Him; whatever we do for the least of His brethren, we do for Him. We are searching for Christ; humbly we go to Him; only in pride do we ask Him to come to us.

“You are the servant of the poor . . . They are your masters” (St. Vincent de Paul). Being a servant draws us to do for them rather than ask them to do for us. In the Peace Prayer of St. Francis, we find, “O Divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled as to console; to be understood as to understand; to be loved as to love;” and to this, we can add to have others to come to us as to go to them. Our act of going to them is a form of sacrifice. We have to give of ourselves, an effort to leave our surroundings and the involved in to go to the this is a personal sacrifice, *wish to become friends with poor, then giving of we are doing – the sharing are about.*” (Robert Australia, 1988)



Going to the homes of those is the best way to learn circumstances. At a that you were given the correct address, an actual address, the family (or families) residing there, the need for food, and the need for the requested furniture is fundamental. *“We shall become acquainted with their sufferings, their hopes, maybe even their vices. We shall know what advice we ought to offer.”* (Bailly, 1841)

The work of the Society is a work of charity, not a business. We strive for efficacy rather than efficiency. The quality of our encounters has a spiritual impact on us rather than the number of encounters. The home visit provides for this quality while enhancing the dignity and self-respect of those we visit.

People experiencing poverty are too often required to go here and go there, and travel is only sometimes convenient for them. Usually, the only means of transportation for people experiencing poverty is walking. Especially at times like this, we can build their self-esteem by going to them.

Fulton J. Sheen wrote, “The truth is the truth whether everyone believes it or no one believes it.” The fact of the matter is that home visits are the best way to learn about people experiencing

give our time, and make comfortable activities we were suffering Christ. Yes, an act of love. *“If we the poor and of the assistance is not what of ourselves is what we Fitzgerald, SVdP*

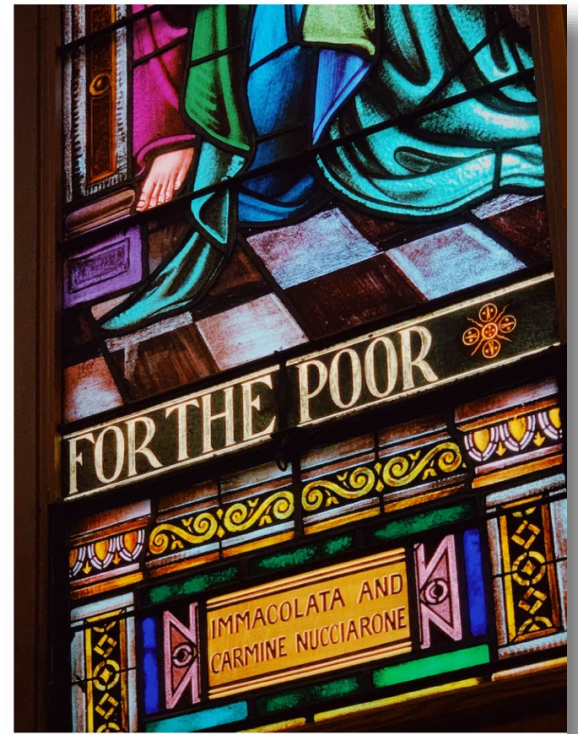
who request assistance about them and their minimum, it verifies

poverty and the best way to serve them. We can devise many reasons (excuses) for not doing this.

But, the reality is: that it is our responsibility as servants to the poor to give them the highest quality, the most efficacious service possible, for it, is Christ Himself whom we serve.

“Let us continue visiting the poor in their homes, the fundamental work of our Society, the work for which our Society exists and which will make it live, which has already brought us such a rich harvest of divine graces and will continue to sanctify us if we remain faithful to its practice . . . Visiting the poor in their homes is then our great, our specific business; the business which should occupy the time of the members of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul.

(Bailly, 1844)

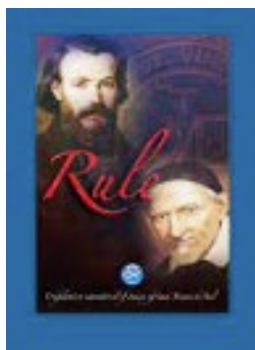


The Spirituality and Formation Committee members have made themselves available to come to your Conference and discuss Home Visits with your Conference members. Call Vincentian Support Services to make arrangements if you want to take advantage of this.

Some *Excuses* Given for Not Doing Home Visits

- Home visits can cause many problems for the Conference.
- The home visit takes too much time.
- During the home visit, the client may ask for more than a Conference can provide.
- It is more efficient to have them come to us; we can handle more families in less time.
- Home visits require more members (**always** go in pairs).
- Home visits require transportation, personal expenses for gasoline, and auto maintenance.
- Street addresses are sometimes challenging to find and can cause frustration.
- Visiting people experiencing poverty in their homes and seeing how they live can cause stress and sorrow. *I sometimes wonder why Frederic did this.*

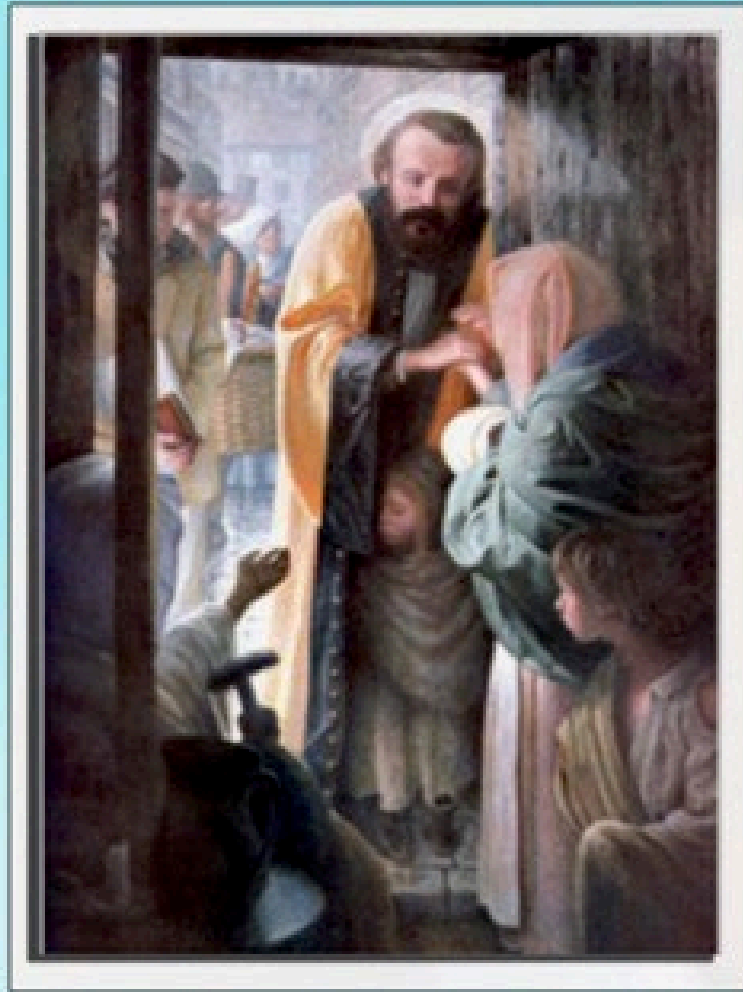
[Credit SVDP Spirituality of the Home Visit Part I]



RULE 3.4 FRATERNITY AND SIMPLICITY

MEETINGS ARE HELD IN A SPIRIT OF
FRATERNITY, SIMPLICITY AND CHRISTIAN JOY.

The Spirituality of the Home Visit



WHEN WE SHOW UP GOD SHOWS UP.

This interactive home visit workshop will help you see how blessed Rosalie Rendu taught our founders to see the face of Christ.

*Join us at
Our Lady Queen of the World
3155 Winterbrook Dr. Bay Point
Wednesday June 14, 2023 From 5:30pm - 8:30pm
Light supper at 5:15pm*

R.S.V.P <http://evite.me/TBZqA8aknH> or Shawna Costanzo (925) 200-5952

How do we grow as Vincentian Home Visitors post training and experiences?

Join your fellow Vincentians on May 30th from 10:00 AM to 11:30 AM on Zoom, where we are hosting a forum for discussion from one Vincentian to another. This sharing opportunity was developed as a response to requests that showed up on Evaluations submitted at our last Ozanam Orientations and Workshops on Home Visits.

This is an opportunity for conversations with fellow Vincentian home visitors. There are many blessings from visiting our neighbors in need and we will be considering these blessings, listing the challenges, and discussing approaches to the neighbors whose “needs” might not have clear or immediate results/conclusions based on our “normal” practices. This is also an opportunity for an additional debrief following a special home visit. We can offer up prayers for the neighbors and Vincentians on their walk together, whether or not there are immediate solutions. Submitting a neighbor’s history in advance is welcome but not required. Send any notes in advance to rcostanzo@astound.net.

The Zoom link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/9256353202?pwd=TkNUaWZoY0xRSVBCN2U2dG9QZE1EUT09>

Meeting ID: 925 635 3202

Passcode: Vincent

THE HOPE CONFERENCE HAS SOME FUNDING AVAILABLE

The Hope Application, Release, and Forms are necessary to submit your completed applications. All of these are available on our SVDP Contra Costa website <https://www.svdpc-cc.org/> under the Members “Dropdown menu”

You can check to see if there have been any changes in funding status by going to the *BLUE Hope Conference Funding Availability **Status Update** Box*. If you haven’t been on, go to the Members Dropdown (Far right of the Home Screen) Menu and select Applications. Hope will only accept the new application with a release form moving forward.

The Hope Conference serves our Vincentian community with funds from federal and state grants and generous private donors. When allocating assistance, these funds come with unique requirements, benefits, and challenges.

The Hope Conference now has additional funds for rental assistance and the remaining funds for utilities.

We want to inform you of the conditions our funders include with these funds. To ensure we meet their requirements, it is necessary that we receive all the required documents (a complete list is included in the Hope application).

1. All sections of the application must be completed and signed. You and the neighbor must sign the Release of Information. We only need a photo ID and do not require birth certificates or social security cards.
2. For rental assistance, we require a past due rental notice, a signed lease agreement, a signed Tenant Landlord Information form, W-9 (if required), and Section 8 documents if living in Section 8 housing.
3. The current plus the previous two months of bills are required for utilities. Our current funder will only fund the most recent three months of utilities due.
4. Very importantly, please clearly explain proof of crisis and all proof of income. As we rely completely on your due diligence in getting this information from the neighbor, it is good to know that you have asked questions.

Section 5: of the application is important in that it helps you to review and ask questions about other resources they have explored. Please provide them with guidance on how to use these other resources. Details on these programs can be found on our website, svdp-cc.org.

Section 6: (Income and Expense) allows for discussion by helping the neighbor to understand how they are budgeting their money. Many times, they need to realize why and where they are possibly overspending; for example, can they save money by talking with PG&E about any discount programs that they might be eligible for? Is there is way to reduce their phone bill?



Feed My Sheep... & Volunteers

The RotaCare Pittsburgh Free Medical Clinic at St. Vincent de Paul and Dentists on Wheels Pittsburgh Free Dental Clinic at St. Vincent de Paul host our volunteer Doctors, Nurses, Dentists, Assistants, Staff, and Volunteers to a meal when they serve our neighbors in need. If you are willing to support the Free Medical Clinic or Dental Program by providing a meal each month or once a year, please get in touch with Stephen Krank at Vincentian Support Services at s.krank@svdp-cc.org, or you can call 925-439-5060 Ext:28



**"BE THE CHANGE YOU
WISH TO SEE IN THE
WORLD."**

**Mahatma
Gandhi**

RETHINK POVERTY.

Community Action Poverty Simulation®

EXPERIENCE A SIMULATED MONTH IN POVERTY . . . IN HALF A DAY

This interactive event will increase our understanding of poverty and will offer us ways to be involved in alleviating poverty in our community. Unless you've experienced poverty, it's difficult to truly understand the reality of it.

The Community Action Poverty Simulation is an immersive learning experience.

This experience is based on real people and their real lives.

- **Date:** Saturday, June 24, 2023, 10:30 a.m. to ~3:30 p.m. (lunch included)
- **Place:** St. Joan of Arc Gym, 2601 San Ramon Valley Blvd., San Ramon, CA
- **Who:** Adults and Teens (ages 16 and above). Teens *strongly* encouraged to attend with parents.

**Sponsored by
St. Joan of Arc Catholic Church
2601 San Ramon Valley Blvd.
San Ramon, CA 94583**

Questions? Email Gina Camp at
gcamp@sjasr.org or call
925-830-4720



**TO REGISTER, GO TO
bit.ly/SJAPovertySimulation
or**

