



December 2023

Vincentian **Wisdom**
Quotes • Charism



Meeting

Board of Directors Meeting
Tuesday 12/12, 9:30 AM-11:30 AM

Meeting

District Council Meeting
Saturday, 12/16, 9:30 AM-11:30 AM
First 5 Contra Costa, Concord

Event – SVdPCCC Closed

Christmas Eve and Christmas Day
Sunday 12/24 & Monday 12/25
New Year's Day, Monday 1/1/24
All Locations

Meeting

Board of Directors Meeting
Tuesday, 1/16, 9:30 AM-11:30 AM
Family Resource Center, Pittsburg

Training

Spiritual Advisor Training
Friday, January 26, 9:00 AM-4:00 PM
St. Perpetua Parish Hall, Lafayette, CA

Retreat

Spiritual Retreat
Saturday, January 27, 9:00 AM-Noon
St. Perpetua Parish Hall, Lafayette, CA

Bob Liles Corner NEW PROGRAMS FOR THE DISTRICT

At its October meeting the board discussed what large scale programs the District might want to take on in the future. Here, in no particular order, are ideas that were discussed.

West County Thrift Store - Just need the right store, the right manager and a bucket full of money.

Getting Ahead in a Just Gettin' by World - This is an intense program designed to move families out of poverty

Microloan program - Work with an existing financial institution to lend families money to pay off their payday loans or their rent

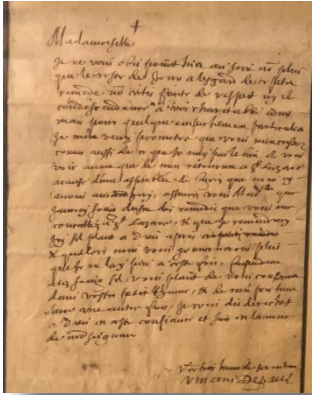
Free Pharmacy - Some councils distribute a million dollars' worth of free drugs to those that cannot afford to pay for them

Centro Rendu: A Systemic Change and Replicable Program for Serving & Engaging Latinos

Use our one acre parcel to house the homeless or for some other purpose

All of these are worthy projects and National has a lot of experience doing them. *What they require are Vincentians that are committed to accomplishing them. If you are interested in working on one of these projects or think some other items should be added to the list please contact me at b.liles@SVdP-cc.org*

BOB



Rule 3.11 Presidents as Servant Leaders

Following Christ's example, the Presidents at all levels of the Society endeavor to be servant leaders. They provide an encouraging atmosphere in which the talents, capacities and spiritual charism of the members are identified, developed and put to the service of the poor and the Society of St. Vincent de Paul. The President of the Conference or Council will have special responsibility for promoting Vincentian spirituality.

(Rule in formation) by Vincent de Paul

“It is a ruse of the devil, by which he deceives good people, to induce them to do more than they are able, so that they end up not being able to do anything. The spirit of God urges one gently to do the good that can be done reasonably, so that it may be done perseveringly and for a long time.” – St. Vincent de Paul

This quote from our patron saint, has brought me some comfort in the recent weeks when we are all feeling so overwhelmed with the growing needs of our neighbors. From help with housing, utilities, holiday gifts for children, and food, where do we start? How do we say, “Sorry, we cannot help you with your rent today”?

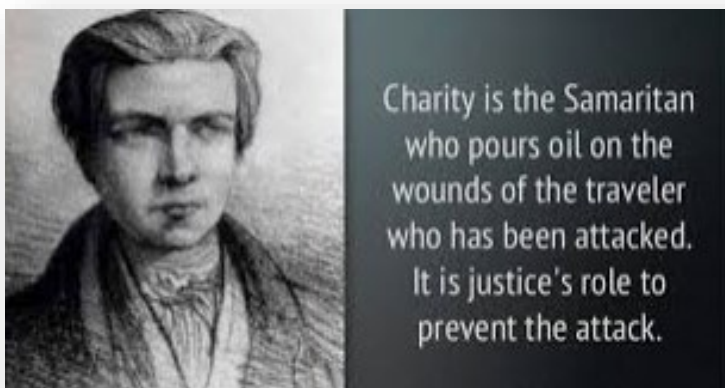
Let’s remember that to serve the poor and see Christ’s face in them is not accomplished by writing a check or handing over a bag of food. It’s when we get to know our neighbor and try to help to carry the heavy cross that is carried by our sisters and brothers in need, by walking and journeying together with empathy, that we live out our Vincentian mission. It’s also a reminder that God is in control, not us.

In my 12+ years as a Vincentian, I have been blessed to grow in my faith and prayer practice. What I have come to realize is that what we do is more than human work; praying with faith can do more than anything we can possibly imagine. Incorporating prayer into every aspect of our work with the Society of St. Vincent de Paul reflects a deep understanding of the spiritual facet of this ministry and vocation.

During this Advent and Christmas seasons, I will be praying for you, our dedicated Vincentians here in Contra Costa County, as well as fellow Vincentians across the country and around the world. May your dedication and kindness continue to inspire others and bring blessings to your community.

Wishing you and your families blessed and joyous Christmas, filled with the warmth of love and the promise of a hopeful New Year.

~ Claudia



Can we hear the words of this young person by John Freund, CM

Can we hear the words of this young person? Karl Michael Hila draws our attention to a young person named Frederic Ozanam. “The earth has become a chilly place. It is up to us Catholics to rekindle the flame of human warmth going out. It is up to us to recommence the great work of regeneration, even if it means another era of martyrs. Can we remain passive amid a world that is suffering and groaning? And as for us, my dear friend, are we going not to attempt to be like those saints we loved?

If we do not know how to love God, it seems that we need to see to love, and we can only see God with the eyes of faith, and our faith is so weak! But men, the poor, we see them with our eyes of flesh!

They are there before us, and we can place our finger and hand in their wounds, and the marks of the Crown of Thorns are visible in their foreheads. Thus, there is no possible room for unbelief, and we should fall at their feet and say to them with the apostle:

My Lord and my God! You are our master, and we will be your servants. You are, for us, the sacred image of the God that we cannot see. Since we know not how to love Him otherwise, we will love Him in your persons.”

Karl Michael is the International Youth Representative of the International SVDP. He describes Frederic Ozanam as” a young lay saint for our generation: a lay person who had so much passion and dedication in serving the poorest of the poor, in promoting works of charity (especially as an expression of faith – even urging priests to leave their pulpits and go out to the poor), and in fighting for social justice (promoting the word “equality” for those who have nothing but the word “liberty” on their lips, and from time to time adding the word “fraternity”).

Tuesdays at 10:00 AM.

A Vincentian Resource for Every Vincentian

Have a Question? Need a Resource? What about Home Visits? Spirituality? Season of Sharing? Hope Conference? PG&E? Twinning vs. Co-Pay? The Diocese? Homeless? Mental Health? Food Bank?

Every Tuesday at 10:00 AM. Come by with a Question or just come by – We may have the Answer, or You May Be the Answer for Someone.

<https://bit.ly/TuesdayZoomForum>

Meeting ID: 925 439 5060

Passcode: Ozanam



GOOD INFORMATION FOR FOOD PANTRIES By Bob Liles

At this time of year, Food Pantries get a lot of donated food. What do you do with food beyond the date posted on it? You might be surprised by what these articles say:

www.svdpc-cc.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/Expiration-Dates-Are-Meaningless.pdf

www.svdpc-cc.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/Food-Product-Dating.pdf

Even though the article says that food beyond the date stamped on it is probably good, many people coming to a food pantry do not believe that. You might try to educate them, but sometimes it is best just to put the items in a separate box and let those who feel comfortable eating them take them.

Gifts



on our Vincentian Pathway



Link to videos of the 2023 National Assembly:

<https://vimeo.com/showcase/10645502>

John Foppe's keynote address:

<https://vimeo.com/showcase/10645502/video/863665268>

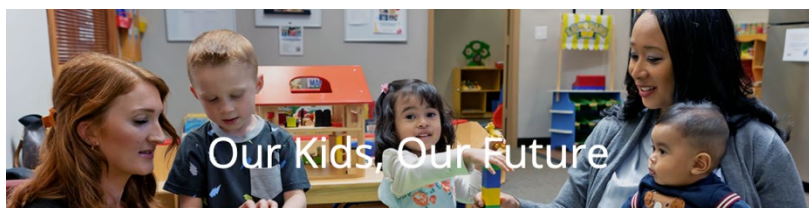
Watch the St. Louis District Council Executive Director open a can of Pepsi, pour it into a mug, and drink it even though he was born with no arms.

Spiritual Retreat with Bishop Donald J. Hying:

<https://vimeo.com/showcase/10645502/video/863719243>

Keynote speech by Fr. John Rybolt: Vincent de Paul, Agent of Change.

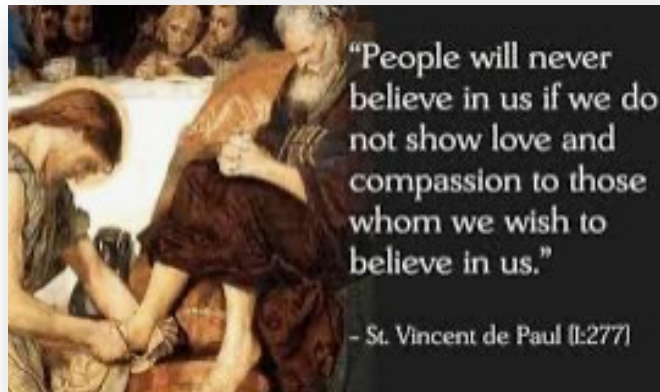
<https://vimeo.com/showcase/10645502/video/863733413>



Why should you join us at the December District Council Meeting on Saturday Dec. 16, hosted by First Five in Contra Costa County?

During this gathering, we will explore the potential for collaboration between our organization and First Five to address disparities, promote equity, and develop trauma-informed systems. By enhancing our Vincentians' understanding of these essential tools, we empower ourselves to better serve our neighbors in need.

As we delve into the workings of the First Five of Contra Costa County, you will quickly see that they align with our core values of diversity, equity, cultural humility, and community partnership. Join us for the St. Vincent de Paul December District Council meeting at 4005 Port Chicago Hwy #120, Concord, CA 94520, on December 16th, from 9:30 AM to 11:30 AM.



A Gift from the Alameda & Contra Costa County Board of Directors.

By The Spirituality and Formation Committees of Alameda and Contra Costa Counties



Prepare for an exciting opportunity next month as we warmly welcome Tim Williams, the National Director of Formation the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, USA. This particular visit is made possible thanks to the collaboration of the District Councils of Alameda and Contra Costa County, who generously sponsor this enriching experience for our dedicated Spiritual Advisors and Vincentians.

During Tim's visit, we have not one but two exceptional events lined up at the beautiful St. Perpetua Catholic Church in Lafayette, CA, on January 26 & 27, 2024.

The first event, an exclusive Spiritual Advisor Training, is an invitation-only affair designed for the Conference and Council Spiritual Advisors of Contra Costa and Alameda Counties and those interested in taking on this most-important servant leadership role. If your Conference currently needs a Spiritual Advisor, don't fret. Reach out to your District Spirituality and Formation Committee, as they have limited spaces available per council.

Let's discuss the second event, 'A Time of Reflection and Reconnection'. This half-day retreat is tailor-made for our cherished Vincentian members from both Counties. The best part? It's open to all Vincentians in Alameda and Contra Costa Counties. It's a day dedicated to nourishing our spirits and strengthening our Vincentian bonds.

For those who've had the privilege of spending time with Tim, you know the immense value he brings. That's why the Council Boards have decided to invest in these two engagement days. It's an opportunity to grow, reflect, and reconnect with our shared mission. Mark your calendars and get ready for an inspiring experience!



Spiritual Advisor Training

January 26, 2024

Led by Tim Williams, SVdP's National Vincentian Formation Director, this event will take place in the beautiful Parish Hall and grounds of St. Perpetua Catholic Church in Lafayette, CA.

Breakfast 8:30 AM

9:00 AM – 4:00 PM

Our Training, an exclusive Spiritual Advisor Training session, is designed for existing Conference and Council Spiritual Advisors of Contra Costa and Alameda Counties **as well as those considering stepping into this most-important servant leadership role. *If your Conference currently needs a Spiritual Advisor, don't fret. Reach out to your District Council Spirituality and Formation Committee, as there are limited spaces available per Council.***

St. Perpetua Parish Hall, 3454 Hamlin Road, Lafayette, California 94549

REGISTRATION REQUIRED

To Register click here or go to

<https://tinyurl.com/SVdP-SA-Training>

A Morning of Reflection on Our Three Essential Elements



January 27, 2024

Our Morning of Reflection will take place in the beautiful Parish Hall and grounds of St. Perpetua Catholic Church in Lafayette, CA. We will be guided on this Vincentian journey by Tim Williams, SVdP's National Vincentian Formation Director

Breakfast 8:30 AM

9:00 AM - Noon

The Event, 'A Time of Reflection and Reconnection.'

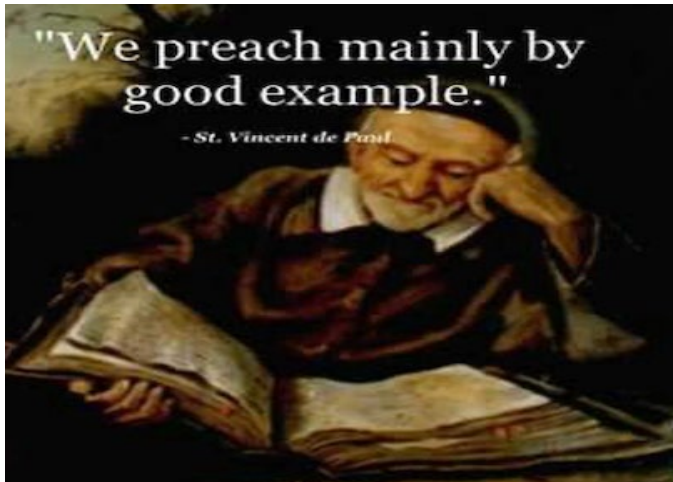
This half-day retreat is tailor-made for Vincentian members from both Counties. The best part? It's open to all Vincentians in Alameda and Contra Costa Counties. Tim Williams stated it will be a morning dedicated to “Our Three Essential Elements: How do they guide us? Where do they lead us? What makes them “essential”?”

St. Perpetua Parish Hall, 3454 Hamlin Road, Lafayette,
California 94549

To Register click here or go to

<https://tinyurl.com/SVdPSpiritualReflection>

PLEASE JOIN US – UNASE A NOSOTROS



FOR AN
OZANAM ORIENTATION...
“PRESENTED IN ENGLISH”
HOW CAN WE ANSWER THE
CALL TO SEE THE FACE OF
CHRIST IN ALL PEOPLE?



Para una
ORIENTACIÓN DE OZANAM...
"PRESENTADO EN ESPAÑOL"
¿CÓMO PODEMOS RESPONDER
AL LLAMADO DE VER EL
ROSTRO DE CRISTO EN TODAS
LAS PERSONAS?

FEBRUARY 22, 2024

ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST

11150 San Pablo Avenue, El Cerrito, CA 94530

8:00 AM Breakfast & Registration

Orientation will be from 8:30 AM to 3:30 PM

SE OFRECERA DESAYUNO Y ALMUERZO CONTINENTAL
CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST & LUNCH PROVIDED

REGISTRATION INFORMATION WILL BE IN THE
NEXT NEWSLETTER AND SENT BY EVENTBRITE