



February 2024

Event

Ash Wednesday
Wednesday, 2/14

Meeting

Board of Directors Meeting
Tuesday, 2/20, 9:30 AM-11:30 AM
Family Resource Center, Pittsburg

Training

Ozanam Orientation
Presented in English and Spanish
Saturday, 2/24
8:00 AM-3:30 PM
St. John the Baptist, El Cerrito

Event

Vincentian Youth Meeting/Tour
Saturday, 3/2, 9:30 AM-11:30 AM
Family Resource Center, Pittsburg

Training

Home Visit Workshop
Presented in English and Spanish
Wednesday, 3/6, 5:00 PM-8:00 PM
St. Joseph, Pinole

Meeting

Board of Directors Meeting
Tuesday, 3/19, 9:30 AM-11:30 AM
Family Resource Center, Pittsburg

Meeting

District Council Meeting
Saturday, 3/23, 9:30 AM-11:30 AM
CCC Healthcare for the Homeless,
Concord, CA

Vincentian **Wisdom**
Quotes • Charism



Bob Liles Corner
FUNDRAISING

All fundraising in the District is done using the District Council's non-profit tax ID. Therefore, the DC needs to be notified of all grant submittals. Most foundations only accept one funding request from each organization.

We want to avoid multiple conferences and the DC submitting requests to the same foundation. Therefore, before submitting a grant request, pass it by our Development Director, Barb Hunt, b.hunt@svdp-cc.org. She can also offer you advice on how to submit a grant.

Current grant funding provided to SVdP supports rental & utility assistance distributed by the Hope Conference, Conference Holiday Programs, Conference food pantries, the free medical clinic, free dental clinic, free food pantry, workforce development program, and operating expenses.

Recently, I read that a nonprofit that does not do fundraising is not doing its job. As Vincentians, we feed the hungry, clothe the naked, and give drink to the thirsty. But what about all the other people who cannot physically help us out for one reason or another?

They can help us by praying for us and by donating money. That way, they can also say they supported the poor on judgment day. We need to give them that opportunity.

On our Member's website, we do not have a section on fundraising, though it is crucial to our existence.

FUNDRAISING Cont.

Please email me, b.liles@svdp-cc.org, a write-up on how your conference raises funds so that it can be shared with other conferences.

The same spirit of poverty and sharing. They encourage one another to live a profound spiritual life and spirit of prayer. *For this purpose, the role of a Spiritual Adviser is vital.*

Bob

This issue of Verita Monumenta, and all the past issues, are in the Member section of the DC website, www.svdp-cc.org under Verita Monumenta.



RESOURCE FOR VINCENTIANS **EVERY TUESDAY AT 10:00 AM** **WHERE: ZOOM VIRTUAL MEETING**

*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

DISCUSSION ABOUT FUNDRAISING

With Barb Hunt, Development Director

St. Vincent de Paul Conferences,

We are excited to invite you to an upcoming session that promises to be insightful and enriching for each of our Conferences. On Tuesday, February 6, 2024, at 10:00 AM, Barb Hunt, Director of Development for St. Vincent de Paul of Contra Costa County, will host a virtual meeting on Conference Fundraising on Zoom.

This session is part of our ongoing initiative to foster dialogue and connection among Vincentians. Every Tuesday, a moderator from a local SVDP Conference leads a forum where Vincentians from all walks of life can come together, share their experiences, seek answers to questions, and find valuable insights. It is a platform where your questions are welcomed, and we seek answers together.

Who should attend? The answer is simple: everyone. Whether you're an experienced home visitor, a dedicated Board Member, a member of the Hope Conference, or a past or current President of your Conference, you will find tremendous value in these discussions.

We've explored questions at the core of our mission, such as, "Why is home visitation so important?" and "Why must we go to them? Wouldn't asking them to come to us be easier and more efficient?" These discussions have deepened our understanding of our roles and responsibilities as Vincentians.

Join us on this meaningful journey of exploration and sharing. Your presence and your voice matter immensely as we continue our mission of service to those in need.

Remember, it's every Tuesday at 10:00 AM. You are welcome whether you come with a burning question or to listen. In this virtual gathering, we may have the answers you seek, or you may discover that you are the answer for someone else.

Please mark your calendars and bring your questions on February 6, 2024, at 10:00 AM, and let's make this session with Barb Hunt memorable and impactful.

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CAN OUR VINCENTIANS HELP?

By Ron Costanzo

In the United States, 27%* of adults have less than \$1,000 in savings. As a result, many are an emergency expense away from a financial crisis. People often turn to PayDay/Title Loan institutions in an emergency. Though more accessible than traditional loans, they come with interest rates as high as 300-400%. For a \$1,000 loan, a person can owe \$3,000-\$4000 in interest!! While these loans may resolve an immediate financial crisis, they lead to longer-term debt and trap people in cycles of debt, which can ultimately lead to economic ruin.

Paying off someone's credit card or payday loan is comparable to paying rent for a Neighbor in Need who will be evicted anyway. It doesn't help our Neighbor; it helps the landlord. Paying off a Neighbor's loan is even a bit worse as you are, in effect, rewarding bad behavior also.

When SVdP Councils partner with an established bank or credit union and our neighbor begins making monthly payments on time, the neighbor establishes or repairs a lousy credit rating. We are exposing them to opportunities to become financially literate, and most of the time, it doesn't cost anything except our effort because, most of the time, the funds are paid back and can be reused to fund another loan.



Some early SVdP adapters have loaned money in two prior cycles that have been paid back and are being lent for the third time or more.

Can our SVdP Conferences help? Can our District Council help? Can you help?
Ron Costanzo, Board Member SVDP Contra Costa County rcostanzo@astound.net

Our Nonprofit Status and Grants

One of the requirements of being a nonprofit in the State of California is that we are required to register annually with the state. The Registry of Charities and Fundraisers administers the statutory registration program. All charitable trustees and fundraising professionals are required to register and file annual financial disclosure reports with the Registry. Many employer-based charitable giving, volunteering, and granting programs use the state registry to verify the status of organizations to whom they are providing funds.

Currently, due to unforeseen circumstances beyond our control, the District Council of Contra Costa County Society of St. Vincent de Paul Diocese of Oakland (our official legal name) is in Delinquent status. Although our overdue filing was received by the state in mid-December, it is "In Process". Unfortunately, as a result of our current status, some generous donations, including employer-matching and volunteer hours, will not be able to be made. We hope that this will all be resolved by mid-February. Please note that our nonprofit status with the IRS is not at risk.

One of the reasons that our generous funders and donors continue to support SVdP here in Contra Costa County is that we are consistent and timely with our reporting of our programs and services. Properly recording and reporting how we use donations and grants is integral to our reputation. We continue to be good stewards of our donor's funds. This is why I strongly recommend that you participate in our Tuesday Zoom call on February 6, where Barb Hunt, our Development Director, will be answering questions and providing guidance on grant writing for your conferences and why it is important that we, at the District Council, are aware of our conference activity in this area. **Join us on Tuesday, February 6 at 10 AM.**

~ Claudia

3.13 The Spirit of Poverty and Encouragement

(Rule in formation) by Vincent de Paul

Members of the Society are united in the same spirit of poverty and of sharing. They encourage one another to live a profound spiritual life and spirit of prayer. For this purpose, the role of a Spiritual Adviser is critical.

WHY ALL CATHOLICS SHOULD BE VINCENTIANS

A Contra Costa County Vincentian

Home visits are at the heart of our society, offering a unique privilege to connect with individuals in the comfort of their homes. Through these visits, we can listen, understand, and



get to know people on a deeper level. It's often said that we are the ones who respond when others may not. Bringing Christ's light to those we serve is a special honor, allowing us to see His presence in the faces of those we meet. Even when we cannot provide financial assistance, our presence, listening, and sharing bring blessings to all involved.

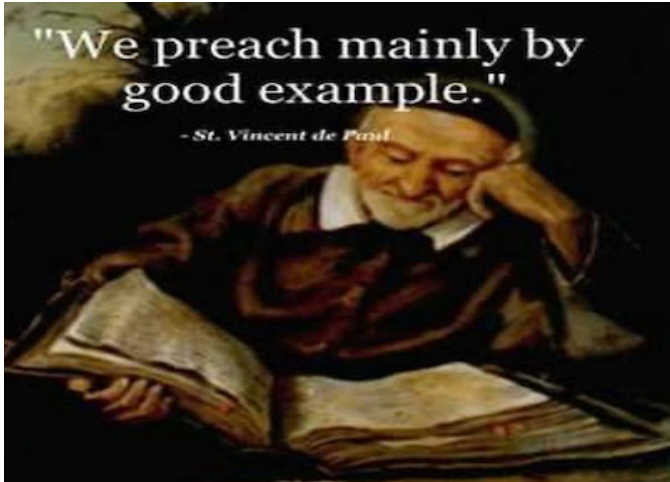
This work is a continuous journey of growth and learning, often requiring creative and 'out-of-the-box' thinking to assist. Additional interactions may be necessary after the initial home visit to gather information and explore solutions, leading to closer relationships.

Keeping the parish priest and fellow parishioners informed about the SVdP Conference's efforts raises awareness and concern for the poor and marginalized in our community.

Home visits present diverse challenges that may test our faith at times, but they also allow us to rely on the guidance of God's Holy Spirit as we carry out His work. It's an opportunity to put our lives in perspective, distinguishing between wants and needs. Through this process, we learn not to judge the worthiness of those we serve.

“The true spirituality of a home visit can only be fully experienced when we are fully engaged from beginning to end.”

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 24, 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

CLICK HERE TO REGISTER

HACER CLIC AQUI PARA REGISTRARSE

Or

<https://bit.ly/OzanamFeb24>

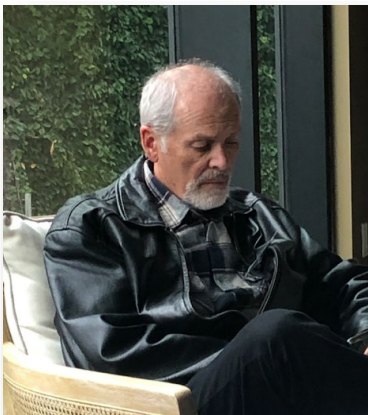
Show Me The Good of The Church

A Spiritual Advisor Training and a Morning of Reflection with Tim Williams, National Formation Director, SVdP USA



On Friday, January 26, 2024, Tim Williams, Our National Director of Formation for the Society of St. Vincent de Paul USA, posed to us the very same question that was once asked of Frederic Ozanam during a pivotal debate that ultimately led to the establishment of our Society: "Show me the Good of the Church."

Strikingly, there were numerous parallels between the circumstances in which Frederic Ozanam faced this question in 1835 at the Sorbonne in Paris and the moment we encountered this January at St. Perpetua. The Church found itself in a state of turmoil, with certain priests tainted by scandal, parishes facing closure, political unrest and uprisings, and their communities grappling with the aftermath of plagues and pandemics.



Won't You Pray with Me?

The mission of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul is to embody the teachings of Christ in a concrete and palpable manner. As Christ Himself instructed, "What you did for the least among you, you did for me." Christ, in His wisdom, provided us with the answers even before presenting us with the test. He guided us by saying, "If you seek to find me, look among the poor." It is precisely for this purpose that I have come...

Following the conclusion of the Spiritual Advisor Training, we had the chance to be part of a record-breaking event as we commissioned over 40 Spiritual Advisors, marking the largest commissioning of its kind in the Bay Area.



The Morning of Reflection on Our Three Essential Elements

Stephen Krank/Adaptation

Tim Williams/Three Essential Elements/ SVdP, USA

Our work is a beacon of hope and compassion for our Church. Our legacy dates back to our founding in 1833 because Vincentians have always retained sight of our three core values woven into its existence: Friendship, Service, and Spirituality. These elements are not isolated concepts but are intrinsically interconnected, as we discovered in our reflection guided by Tim Williams, the National Director of Formation for the Society of St. Vincent de Paul.



Friendship: At the heart of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul lies the profound principle of friendship. Blessed Frédéric Ozanam, one of the organization's founders, recognized the transformative power of shared experiences. He noted that individuals grow closer when they engage in activities together, just as friends do when they go for a walk or share a meal. However, Ozanam also emphasized that moral acts have greater bonding power. When two or

three individuals unite to do good, their connection deepens, and their union becomes perfect. This concept of perfect union is the unique character of the essential element of friendship within the Society. It is a bond that is formed and strengthened through service. As Ozanam wisely suggested, our visits to the poor are as much for them as for ourselves, allowing us to become progressively better friends. Thus, friendship becomes the foundation upon which service and spirituality are built.



Service: the second essential element is the active expression of the Society's mission. It is not mere philanthropy or volunteerism but a genuine commitment to "draw nearer to Christ, serving Him in the poor and one another." The Society of St. Vincent de Paul was founded with a specific purpose: to live out Christ's teaching by serving the least of our brothers and sisters. This service is not abstract but concrete, manifesting our spirituality in tangible ways. Our service reflects our spirituality, bridging the gap between faith and action. It is through service that we fulfill our mission and bring comfort to those in need. By embodying the teachings of Christ in our actions, we ensure that our service is imbued with purpose and meaning.

Spirituality: Both essential elements above rest on our Vincentian spirituality, the soul of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul. This spirituality is a call to both service and friendship. St. Vincent once proclaimed that we love God "with the strength of our arms and the sweat of our brows." Our spirituality is not a passive belief but an active, vibrant force that drives us to serve and connect with others. In the Society, we are members of Conferences, genuine communities of faith and love, prayer and action. Here, we grow in holiness together, deepening our bonds of friendship and service. Our spirituality is the guiding light that illuminates our path, inspiring us to live out the Society's mission with devotion and dedication.

The Essential Elements of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul—Friendship, Service, and Spirituality—are not isolated ideals but interconnected facets of a holistic mission to bring hope, compassion, and love to those in need. As articulated by Tim Williams, National Director of Formation for the Society, these elements remind us that we are not only called to serve but also to forge meaningful friendships and nurture our spirituality. In the morning of reflection, let us recommit ourselves to the mission of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, embodying these essential elements in our actions and in our hearts.

During our Day of Reflection on Saturday, more than 70 attendees from the Diocesan and District Councils of Alameda, Solano, Sacramento, Santa Rosa, and Contra Costa Counties joined us. By the end of the day, a recurring question emerged: How can we reintroduce these essential elements to our Conferences, which we are privileged to share with our Friends, fellow Brothers, and Sister Vincentians? This inquiry aligns with Christ's pre-test guidance: "You are no longer slaves or servants; you are friends."

Home Visit Workshop/Taller de Visitas a Domicilio



***WHEN WE SHOW UP,
GOD SHOWS UP.***

***JOIN US FOR AN INTERACTIVE
HOME VISIT WORKSHOP. WE
WILL HELP YOU SEE HOW
BLESSED ROSALIE RENDU
TAUGHT OUR FOUNDERS TO
SEE THE FACE OF CHRIST.***

***CUANDO NOS
PRESENTAMOS,
DIOS SE PRESENTA.***

We will gather together as One Vincentian Society. The Home Visit Workshop will be presented live simultaneously in different rooms at the same time for our English- and Spanish-speaking Vincentians

Nos reuniremos como una Sociedad Vicentina. El Taller de Visitas a Domicilio se presentará en vivo de forma simultánea en diferentes salas, tanto para nuestros miembros que hablan inglés como para los de habla español.

***ÚNETE A NOSOTROS PARA UN
TALLER INTERACTIVO DE
VISITAS A DOMICILIO. TE
AYUDAREMOS A VER CÓMO
LA BENDECIDA ROSALIE
RENDU ENSEÑÓ A NUESTROS
FUNDADORES A VER EL
ROSTRO DE CRISTO EN LOS
QUIEN SERVIMOS.***

Por Favor, Confirma Tu Asistencia Para Reservar Tu Espacio. Please Register to Reserve Your Space. <https://bit.ly/HomeVisit-VisitasDomicilio>

Wednesday, March 6, 2024

5:00 PM to 8:00 PM

St. Joseph Catholic Church

2100 Pear Street

Pinole, CA 94564

Lite Supper Served * Cena ligera servida