



**May 2024**

Vincentian **Wisdom**  
Quotes • Charism



### **Event**

West Region Meeting  
Thurs.-Sat, 5/16-5/18, All Day  
Doubletree Hotel, Sacramento, CA

### **Meeting**

Board of Directors Meeting  
Tuesday, 5/21, 9:30 AM-11:30 AM  
Family Resource Center, Pittsburg

### **Meeting**

National Board of Directors  
Meeting - Tour 5/31-6/1  
Embassy Suites, Walnut Creek

### **Feast**

Feast of the Sacred Heart  
Friday, 6/7, All Day

### **Meeting**

Board of Directors Meeting  
Tuesday, 6/11, 9:30 AM-11:30 AM  
Family Resource Center, Pittsburg

### **Meeting**

District Council Meeting  
Tuesday, 6/15, 9:30 AM-11:30 AM  
Zoom

### **60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration**

SVdP of Contra Costa County  
Friday, 6/28, 6:00 PM-10:00PM  
St. Isidore Church & Hall

## **Transition - Growth & Progress**

**By Ruben Rodriguez, District Council Vice President**

My Vincentian journey began nine years ago at a conference in decline, where I was enriched with invaluable and diverse experiences. As my term as Conference President comes to an end, I eagerly anticipate new leadership to continue our mission of supporting those in need within our community.

Embracing change and transitioning to new leadership is essential for the growth of our conference. Through my learnings and spiritual journey, I feel prepared for this transition, as my encounters with those in poverty have profoundly transformed my Vincentian spirituality. As Saint Vincent de Paul aptly said, 'The more we know and love the poor, the greater our love for God.'

Throughout this journey, I've been reminded of the importance of spiritual virtues such as simplicity, humility, gentleness, and non-ego. These virtues, along with embracing all aspects of charity and social justice, have been guiding principles for me. Divine Providence has taught me patience and the power of prayer, providing for our needs in times of uncertainty.

Our patroness, the Immaculate Conception of Mary, holds a special place in our conference, celebrated every December. Her presence has been a blessing to both our conference and community, as we have served thousands over the years. Church teachings continue to inspire us, opening our minds to new ministries and expanding our Vincentian spiritual journey.

Ruben Cont.

In the words of Saint Vincent de Paul, 'Give me a spiritual person, and that person will be capable of all.' This sentiment resonates deeply with me as I reflect on the transformative power of spirituality in our work."

The transition period marks a reflective time in which we review Vincentian life's accomplishments, successes, and challenges. Throughout this journey, I've been immensely blessed with prayerful experiences and have found guidance in scripture to nourish me during times of stress and when addressing the needs of our neighbors. My focus has centered on community development and providing opportunities for those in need, and I am committed to continuing this ministry as I embrace the next chapter.



I find solace in reflecting on what has been accomplished and am deeply grateful to my mentors and fellow Vincentians for their unwavering support and creativity. Transition, however, can be challenging and does not adhere to our preferred timelines. Yet, I am confident that Divine Providence will continue to provide for our conference, just as it has for the past nine years.

The best advice I can offer is to relinquish control and allow new leadership to shape and organize the conference's future. Current Vincentians will assess and offer recommendations to support the launch of the next conference team, facilitating a smooth transition and providing time for individuals to discern where to direct their time and energy.

In the words of St. Vincent de Paul, 'Serving the poor, you serve Jesus Christ.' As I step into this transition, I am reminded of our profound privilege and responsibility in serving others.

**Ruben Rodriguez**

## **Continuous Improvement**

**By Bob Liles**

As a young engineer, the first day I started working at a production plant, my boss gave me three things to do: Make more products, make it cheaper, and make the plant safer. Despite the fact that the plant was built the year I was born and had been modified many times, I found many opportunities to do what my boss asked of me. This is called the "Continuous Improvement Process."



I challenge everyone to practice "Continuous Improvement" as a Vincentian. Your goal is to improve your spirituality, the spirituality of those you interact with, and your ability to help our neighbors in need.

**Bob**

# SEASON OF SHARING CHANGES

In January, Season of Sharing modified its guidelines and application. For the latest documents, please go to the District Council's website, <http://www.svdp-cc.org/>, and then to Assistance Applications in the Members section.



## CONFERENCE MEETINGS

### Spiritual reading or meditation

The Spiritual Advisor should read something and **allow the members to comment** as a means of sharing their faith. This should last at least 10-15 minutes and is the most important part of the meeting. If you feel that your conference cannot spend that much time on this due to other important business, then your conference is not properly prioritizing its business, and some business should be done outside the meeting.

When Mother Teresa was asked by her assistants to reduce her time in adoration before the Blessed Sacrament from one hour a day to 30 minutes so that she could personally meet with more people, she increased her devotion to two hours a day.



## THE RULE 4. RELATIONSHIPS WITHIN THE VINCENTIAN & CATHOLIC NETWORK OF CHARITY

### 4.1 Twinning

Conferences and Councils help others in need, both at the national and international level. This is one of the activities most cherished by the Society. The awareness of acute poverty in a great number of countries and the Vincentian preferential option for the poor spurs Conferences and Councils to assist others with less resources or in particular situations.

This direct link between two Conferences or Councils, consisting of sharing prayer, a profound friendship and material resources, is called twinning. This activity contributes to world peace and to understanding and cultural exchange among peoples.





## **2024 PHOENIX NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

***August 14 - 17, 2024***

### **Sheraton Phoenix Downtown Hotel**

**340 North 3rd Street  
Phoenix, AZ 85004  
(602) 412-6498**

Overnight guest rooms are available at the Sheraton Phoenix Downtown Hotel; the guest room rate is \$159 per room per night, plus taxes. To book a room at the Sheraton Phoenix Downtown, you can use this booking link: <https://book.passkey.com/e/50619219>.

Once you've completed your registration, you will automatically be directed to the Sheraton Phoenix booking page.

The Sheraton Phoenix is located in Downtown Phoenix, just 3.8 miles from Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport (PHX). Transportation is available from the airport to the Sheraton Phoenix via taxi, Uber, Lyft, or [Phoenix Lightrail System](#)

**Southwest Airlines** is pleased to offer 2024 Phoenix National Assembly attendees discounted fares. To utilize the discount, book via [SWABIZ](#) using Company ID 99114153. The discount is valid for travel from

8/10/2024 to 8/20/2024. National Council Staff, please contact Michele Schurk for the [Employee Booking Link](#).

## **FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TO ATTEND THE SVDP NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

At its May meeting, the Board will be discussing stipends to help people who have never attended the National Assembly to attend the one in Phoenix this year from Aug 13<sup>th</sup> through the 17<sup>th</sup>. Start planning for it now. You can book flights for \$200 roundtrip; if you are looking for specials, you can get them for as little as \$100. While it is a 12-hour drive, I have done it several times. Get a car full of people and share the driving. Better yet, make it one stop on a vacation.

**Bob**



## **RESOURCE FOR VINCENTIANS EVERY TUESDAY AT 10:00 AM**

**WHERE: ZOOM VIRTUAL MEETING**

### **1<sup>ST</sup> TUESDAY- FRED TALKS**

**The first of our Monthly Fred Talks  
will be “For Love Alone”**

**So... What are Fred Talks?** Fred Talks are short videos that offer information on topics like Vincentian Heritage, Traditions, and Spirituality. Each video is five minutes or less!

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.

Join us on this meaningful journey of exploration and sharing. Your presence and 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.

***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**

## ADVENTURE ALWAYS AWAITS. SEIZE IT! By Julie Wegner

As Vincentians, we often prioritize the needs of others over our own, even as we strive to care for ourselves. At St. Patrick's Church, Rodeo-Hercules, we embarked on a new approach in the new year. Our goal was to infuse joy into our service throughout the year, nurturing our Conference through retreats, day trips, and shared meals.

With an enthusiastic response to our Invitation to Serve, we decided on a unique adventure: a railway expedition to Yosemite National Park. It was a first for our conference and an opportunity to build community amidst the grandeur of God's creation. Making time for our well-being and our conferences can be challenging. But Madeline Machado had a plan. She introduced us to the adventure of taking Amtrak to Merced and then transferring to the local bus system, YARTS. It was an adventurous, easy, and economical mode of travel.



Following an itinerary Madeline and her son had enjoyed for years, I took up planning our trip. Many of us hadn't visited Yosemite in over two decades, so anticipation ran high. We lodged at Valley River Lodge, enjoying community dinners with a view of the Merced River. On our first day, guided by Bill, an extraordinary docent with thirty years of experience in Yosemite, we embarked on a Valley Floor bus tour. We witnessed a stunning rainbow at Bridalveil Fall at dusk, a breathtaking consolation for missing the famed Horsetail Fall's seasonal glow. The next morning, we savored the ambiance of the historic Ahwahnee Hotel over a spectacular brunch before

indulging in a bit of relaxation by the grand fireplaces. Afternoon activities included shopping, visiting the Ansel Adams Museum, and learning about Native American history.

However, our return journey hit a snag. Due to Yosemite Park's closure, our bus transportation to Merced was canceled. For a moment, it seemed we were stranded. But providence intervened: a YARTS bus pulled into our hotel's parking lot, offering us a way home. This experience reminded us of a fundamental truth: sometimes, in our busyness and desire to help others, we forget who's truly in charge. God orchestrated our safe return, exceeding our expectations with a radiant rainbow and ensuring our safe journey before an impending snowstorm.

Renewed in faith and uplifted in spirit, we returned home, ready to continue our service after a few days of rest and reflection on the grace of our Almighty.

**Julie**





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**Still time to register! Don't miss this first meeting of the newly reorganized West Region, now covering Washington, Oregon, California, Alaska & Hawaii!! This is going to be a great meeting hosted by our Vincentian family in Sacramento -- register today!!**

*Join us for this two-day regional meeting, featuring General Session Presentations, Breakout Sessions, Vincentian Spirituality, Friendship and Sharing. Hope to see you there!*

Overnight accommodations are available at a rate of \$159 per night, plus tax. Cut-off date for booking is has been extended to May 3, 2024! Book today!! To book your guest room, go to: [Doubletree by Hilton Hotel Sacramento](#).

Self-Parking is available at the Doubletree Hilton Sacramento at a discounted rate of \$5 per day.

Meeting will begin with a special welcome reception on Thursday evening hosted by the National Foundation Board & the Ozanam Legacy Society. Friday's program begins at 9:00 AM with a Spiritual Reflection presented by Fr. Patrick McDevitt, followed by workshops on Formation, Home Visits, Fundraising, Disaster Preparedness and so much more! Check out the full agenda and register today! Full Registration fee is \$175, includes registration, materials and all group meals.

**Registration now open! Click here to register: [2024 West Regional Meeting Registration Link](#)**

If you have any questions regarding registration, please contact [Michele Schurk](#),  
all other questions, please contact [Judy Dietlein](#)



**[Doubletree by Hilton Hotel Sacramento](#)**

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