



January 2025

Vincentian **Wisdom**
Quotes • Charism



Meeting

Vincentian Zoom Call

Tuesday – Each Tuesday

<https://bit.ly/TuesdayZoomForum>

Training

Ozanam Orientation

St. David of Wales, Richmond

Friday 1/17, 9:15 AM-3:30 PM

Meeting

Board of Directors Meeting

Family Resource Center, Pittsburg

Tuesday 1/21, 9:30 AM – 11:30 AM

Deadline

First Quarter Reports Due

Wednesday, 1/22

Diocesan Event

Walk for Life

Saturday, January 25, Oakland

Training

Home Visit Workshop

The Old Homestead, Crockett

Wednesday, 2/5, 1:30 PM-4:30 PM

Event

Dine for a Cause Fundraiser

Virtue + Vice Restaurant

Wednesday, 2/12, 5:00 PM - 8:00 PM

Call (925)406-4867 for reservations

Bob Liles Corner

BOOK REVIEW – SCARCITY

by Mullainathan & Shafir – Part 2

Who is the better shopper: you or the poor? Multiple studies have shown that when most people go to the store to replace their broken microwave oven and find one for \$125 that if someone mentions to them that if they can go across town they can buy it for \$75, that they will drive 15 minutes out of their way to save \$50. Only the very wealthy would pay the extra \$50, because for them money is not a scarcity and there is no trade off in paying an extra \$50.

But what if you are buying a car, which is going to cost you tens of thousands of dollars. If you are at the car lot and see the car that you want and someone tells you that another dealer 15 minutes away is selling it for \$50 less would you drive there to get it? Turns out only the very poor will do that and everyone else figures that \$50 is not worth it considering the thousands that they are paying. Yet just a week ago they did decide that driving 15 minutes to save \$50 on a microwave oven was worth it.

This book presents a lot of information like this that makes you understand better how people think and makes you a lot less judgmental in deciding that the poor are poor due to their bad decisions.

Bob

CONFERENCE MEETING AGENDA

Secretary's report (including correspondence received, information about the Society or training points) Keep it short and sweet. Only mention things that the entire conference needs to know. Other things can be emailed to the officers prior to the meeting. And many things that are just informational in nature and do not require any discussion can be emailed to everyone prior to the meeting.

BOB

FRÉDÉRIC OZANAM AND THE HEART OF CHRISTMAS: CARING FOR THE POOR

As the Christmas season draws to a close, we find ourselves drawn to the warmth and generosity of this time of year—a spirit deeply rooted in our faith and the mission of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul. For Vincentians, this season is a reminder of Frédéric Ozanam's profound call to "go to the poor" and bring Christ's love to those in need. Ozanam's legacy of compassion, justice, and selfless service invites us to renew our commitment to helping our neighbors, especially during this sacred time.



Who Was Frédéric Ozanam?

Born in 1813 in Milan, Frédéric Ozanam grew up in a family that instilled a strong Catholic faith and a love for learning. As a young adult, he witnessed the profound social struggles of his time—an era when poverty and inequality seemed insurmountable. Inspired by these challenges, Ozanam, alongside a group of fellow students, established the first Conference of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul in 1833. Their mission was simple but radical: to provide compassionate and direct aid to the poor while building a community rooted in Christian values.

Uplifting the dignity of every person and offering friendship, respect, and hope. Today, his spirit continues to guide the work of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul worldwide, and Christmas offers a powerful opportunity to carry on this legacy.

Christmas: A Season of Compassion and Connection

Christmas is a time when the needs of the less fortunate are especially poignant. Families struggle with extra expenses, the homeless endure cold and isolation, and many feel the emotional weight of financial hardship. For those who are lonely, grieving, or facing uncertain futures, the holiday season can be a painful reminder of what they lack.

Yet, as followers of Ozanam, we understand that Christmas is also a time of profound grace. In the Christ Child, God chose to come among us in poverty and vulnerability. This season invites us to meet the poor as Christ did, to reach out with warmth and generosity, and to be present with those who are alone or suffering.

How We Can Serve as Vincentians This Christmas

1. Home Visits and Personalized Care: Following Ozanam’s model, let us visit our neighbors personally, bringing not only material assistance but also the gift of companionship. Every gift of time, every act of kindness, speaks to the heart of Christmas.
2. Providing Essentials with Dignity: Many of the poor lack the basics—food, clothing, shelter—yet these can become treasures of hope when shared with love and dignity. A warm meal, a holiday gift, a coat to fight the winter cold—all these gifts are opportunities to recognize the dignity of each person we serve.
3. Offering Prayer and Presence: For Ozanam, caring for the poor was a journey in faith. As Vincentians, let us offer the peace of prayer, whether in words or silent presence, reminding those we serve that they are not alone, even in their struggles.

Keeping Ozanam’s Spirit Alive

This Christmas, let us be inspired by Frédéric Ozanam’s vision—a vision where each act of kindness creates a ripple of love that reaches far beyond one season. As we celebrate the birth of Jesus, may we see Christ in the faces of the poor, and may our hearts be renewed in compassion, hope, and faith.

In Ozanam's words,

“The earth has grown cold. It is for us Catholics to rekindle the flame of human warmth which is going out, and restore the world.” May this Christmas season be a time for all Vincentians to rekindle the flame of compassion and carry the light of Christ to those who need it most.

A NEW YEAR FILLED WITH HOPE

As I look at the past seven years that I have been the Executive Director of SVdP of Contra Costa, I am overwhelmed with the amazing works that our Vincentians, volunteers, partners, and staff do every day to help our neighbors in need. What always gives me joy is that I see how our neighbors, regardless of their specific circumstances, are treated with respect, dignity, care, and compassion.

I know that sometimes we can feel that we aren’t doing enough – if we could only pay two months of rent or have a car to give to a neighbor or help with that overdue utility bill – but it’s not only about the material things that we give – it’s about giving of ourselves. A listening ear, a warm smile, a hug or hands clasped in prayer, it is when we let down our guard and reach out to our neighbor that we feel that tug at our heart and are reminded why we are here at SVdP.

In this new year, I am filled with the hope that our service to our neighbors will continue to give them, and us, hope for a better and brighter future.

Blessings, Claudia



1ST TUESDAY- FRED TALKS

Discover Fred Talks: Concise, Insightful Videos on Vincentian Heritage, Traditions, and Spirituality

Explore *Fred Talks*—a series of brief, impactful videos, each under five minutes, designed to deepen understanding of Vincentian heritage, traditions, and spirituality. Perfect for sharing with conference members or parishioners interested in the mission of St. Vincent de Paul. Produced by Tim Williams, National Vincentian Formation Director.

The upcoming February 4, Session Will Focus On Our Vincentian Virtues III.

*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

3RD TUESDAY- RESOURCES FOR OUR NEIGHBORS

Upcoming Resources Workshop – January 21, 2025

Join us for our January Workshop, where we'll dive into the local resources available through the St. Vincent de Paul Contra Costa County website. This session will also cover accessing services offered at the St. Vincent de Paul Family Resource Center in Pittsburg. Don't miss this opportunity to learn about essential community support tools and ways to connect those in need with valuable assistance.

*Resources Every Third Tuesday at 10:00 AM. Come by with a Question, or just come by –
You May be the Answer for Someone.*

<https://bit.ly/TuesdayZoomForum>

Meeting ID: 925 439 5060

Passcode: Ozanam

HOW CAN WE ANSWER THE CALL TO
SEE THE FACE OF CHRIST IN ALL PEOPLE?

"We preach mainly by
good example."

- St. Vincent de Paul



PLEASE JOIN US FOR AN OZANAM ORIENTATION
FRIDAY, JANUARY 17, 9:00 AM-3:30 PM

ST. DAVID OF WALES
5641 ESMOND AVE. RICHMOND, CA 94805

PARTICIPANTS ***MUST*** REGISTER BY JAN. 13, 2025
REGISTER AT: <https://bit.ly/OzanamJan17> OR SCAN QR



JOIN US FOR MASS AT 8:15 AM, SIGN-IN AT 9:00 AM
CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST & LUNCH ARE INCLUDED
QUESTIONS? CALL STEPHEN KRANK AT 925.635.3202



Wednesday, February 5, 2025

Home Visit Workshop

WHEN WE SHOW UP...GOD ALWAYS SHOWS UP

PLEASE JOIN US AT:

THE OLD HOMESTEAD

995 LORING AVENUE

CROCKETT, CA 94525

OUR WORKSHOP WILL TAKE PLACE FROM 1:30 – 4:30 PM

This interactive workshop will help you see how BLESSED ROSALIE RENDU taught our founders to SEE THE FACE OF CHRIST IN THOSE WE SERVE.

Use the link below. Registration will close Friday, January 31, 2025



<https://bit.ly/HomeVisitFeb25>

A SIGNIFICANT SYMBOL OF VINCENTIAN SPIRITUALITY AND SERVICE GREET VISITORS TO THE FAMILY RESOURCE CENTER IN PITTSBURG

The relic of St. Louise de Marillac is prominently mounted in the lobby of the Family Resource Center in Pittsburg. This cherished relic, installed by District Council President Bob Liles, is a testament to the Society's enduring mission of faith and service.



**Relic of St. Louise de Marillac:
A Sacred Connection to Vincentian Heritage**

The relic of St. Louise, a small bone fragment, has a fascinating history that intertwines with the legacy of Bishop Joseph S. Glass of the Vincentian Order. Vincentian Terry O'Meara donated it to the Contra Costa District Council in April of this year. Terry inherited the relic from her mother, who had received it from Bishop Glass himself around 1915.

Ordained in 1897, Bishop Glass was deeply rooted in the Vincentian Order and served as the president of Vincent's College in Los Angeles.

When the college closed in 1915, he was appointed the second bishop of Salt Lake City.

Throughout his life, Bishop Glass was a devoted steward of faith and education, passing on treasured relics like this one to family members who would safeguard their spiritual significance.

This relic also holds a special connection to the 60th Anniversary Mass of St. Vincent de Paul Contra Costa, where it was displayed alongside the relic of St. Vincent de Paul. The presence of this relic at the altar symbolized the unbroken chain of Vincentian service from its founding saints to the present day.

We are blessed to have this sacred reminder of St. Louise de Marillac, whose life exemplified compassion and action in service to the poor. Her legacy, now enshrined in our Family Resource Center, continues to inspire Vincentians and all who walk through our doors.

Let this relic remind us of our Vincentian heritage and call us to serve Christ in the poor with the same fervor as St. Louise and St. Vincent de Paul.





SERVERS NEEDED
Dust off your apron and help serve
our dinner guests!
No experience necessary and
training provided! Contact Barb
Hunt at 925-330-6732 to volunteer!

St. Vincent de Paul of Contra Costa County & Virtue+Vice Restaurant

A fundraising dinner to benefit
RotaCare Pittsburg Free Medical
Clinic at St. Vincent de Paul!

February 12th, 2025
5-8pm

Virtue+Vice Restaurant
267 Hartz Ave, Danville

**When making a reservation please
note "SVdP" or "Dine for a Cause"**

10% of sales and 100% of tips will go
toward helping families in need!

Enjoy an amazing meal while providing free
medical care to your neighbors in need!

For RESERVATIONS: Call (925)406-4867, or
virtueandvicedanville.com

To learn more about how SVdP helps to
feed, clothe, shelter and heal those in
need, visit svdp-cc.org.



“WRITTEN GUIDELINES - PART TWO

THE HOW By Ron Costanzo

Conference members should attend an Ozanam Orientation and be familiar with The Rule. It gives members an understanding of what is important and what should be stressed in our ministry. The guidelines we develop for a Conference should be reflective of our call to ministry.

The Conference should establish a committee of about three people who will create the first draft. The draft will be reviewed, updated, and hopefully approved by the Conference for their use. Your Conference may also get a copy of the guidelines of a neighboring Conference. Do NOT adopt someone else’s guidelines. You should make sure your guidelines fit the needs of your Conference and those in need in your parish community. Come to a consensus among the members the reasonable expectations in dealing with those you serve. Your Conference may have some unwritten guidelines already in place.



“Guidelines” should be just what the word means. These are possible ways to approach fulfilling the requests for help. *They are not intended to define how people are to be turned away.* The Conference can agree to override a guideline.

This process may take two or three meetings to complete. This review and approval process is a Conference process and should not be left to only a few people. Once consensus has been reached by the Conference, the document should be published and each member should be given a copy. The Secretary will keep the guidelines with the Conference records. All new members should receive a copy of the guidelines when they join the Conference.”



RULE 5.1 RELATIONSHIP WITH THE CHURCH HIERARCHY

Faithful to the clear intentions of Blessed Frederic Ozanam and his companions, the Society has a close relationship with the hierarchy of the Catholic Church. Respect of the members for the hierarchy provides the foundation for harmonious reciprocal cooperation.