



October 2025

Vincentian **Wisdom**
Quotes • Charism



Event

Friends of the Poor Walk
Saturday, 10/4, 9:00 AM
Vincentians of the Arc (VOTA),
St. Joan of Arc, San Ramon

Scan to support a walk or walker:



Meeting

Board of Directors Meeting
Family Resource Center
Tuesday, 10/21
9:30 AM – 11:30 AM

Meeting

Board of Directors Meeting
Family Resource Center
Tuesday, 11/18
9:30 AM – 11:30 AM

Event

Advent Spiritual Retreat – led by
Sr. Paule Freeburg, DC
Saturday, 11/22
8:30 AM – Noon
St. Perpetua Catholic Church
Lafayette, CA

Bob Liles Corner

THE PROCESS TO ELECT A NEW DISTRICT COUNCIL PRESIDENT IS STARTING

“There is an old monastic saying that in a faithful monastery, those who are given advancement are those that do not want advancement.”

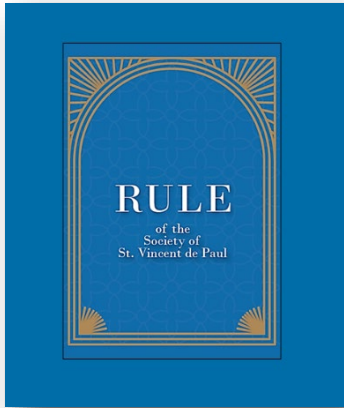
Many Vincentians are reluctant to volunteer to be an officer. Not only are they very humble and think that they will not be as good at the job as others, but administering takes time away from doing face-to-face work with the poor, which is why they joined the Society. But someone has to follow me as president. There is a nominating committee headed up by Karen Glen that will be searching for people that are willing to be my successor. Please contact her (kareng@stcmtz.org) and let her know who you think would be a great president, and if possible, nominate yourself. Show that you are willing to serve in whatever capacity God leads you.

“Cast yourself into the arms of God and be very sure that if He wants anything of you, He will fit you for the work and give you strength.” - St. Philip Neri.

Bob

THE RULE 6.5

PRESERVING THE CATHOLIC CREDO AND ETHOS



The Catholic beliefs and ethos of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul must be preserved. The President, Vice-President and Spiritual Adviser should, therefore, be Roman Catholic. They may, in certain situations depending on national circumstances, and after consultation with the local diocesan Bishop, be members of churches and ecclesial communities which share the Catholic belief in, among other issues, the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist, the seven Sacraments and devotion to Mary.

DO NOT DOUBT YOUR VINCENTIAN VOCATION

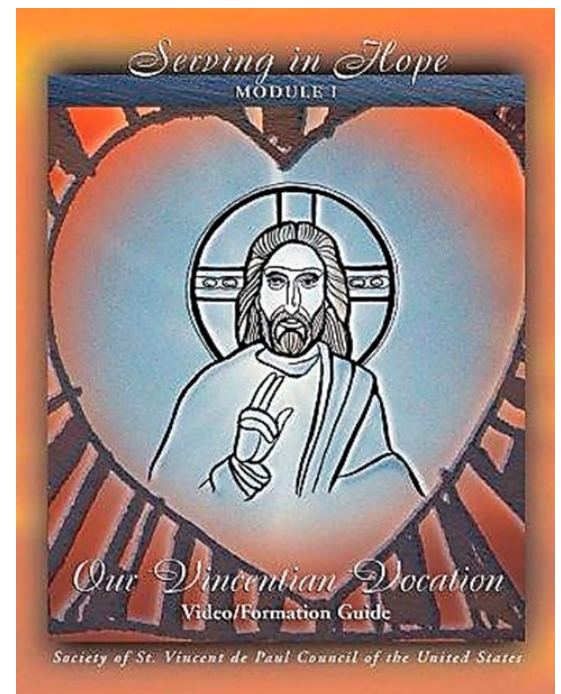
By Tim Williams, Senior Director, Formation & Leadership Development, National Council of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul

The word vocation, as we know, is from the Latin *vocare*, meaning “to call”. A vocation, then, such as our Vincentian vocation, is a calling, specifically a call from God. If you have heard the call, it is for you. What matters most to our own salvation, then, is not the call, but our answer to it.

God’s call can come to us in many forms — a nagging feeling that we cannot shake, a pang in our conscience, an event in our lives that seems to hold deeper meaning, or a person who raises new ideas. It is in times of reflection and prayer that we may feel most attuned to God’s voice, but His call is not bound by our attention to it. If you hear His call, it is for you.

Nevertheless, even having heard the call, we often question our fitness to answer it. “Am I holy enough?” we wonder, when asked to consider serving as a spiritual advisor. “Am I really a leader?” we wonder when the nominating committee asks to consider us as a future president. “Do I have the compassion, or the knowledge, to be a home visitor?” we wonder, especially as new members.

If you hear His call, it is for you, and if He has called you, He will give you the graces you will need to fulfill His will. With our friends, we can offer all the well-considered reasons why we cannot do things; we can list out our other obligations, our shortcomings, or our self-doubts. All these things may be reasonable and true, and they may be quite convincing to our friends, but God already knew all of those things before calling.



OCTOBER 2025 SESSION



Our Monthly meeting, designed to share RESOURCES for our Neighbors.

2ND TUESDAY RESOURCES FOR OUR NEIGHBORS

Join us on Tuesday, October 14, to meet our new team member, Marco Ceballos. Marco recently stepped into the role of Vincentian Services Coordinator, ready to help our 700+ Vincentians live out our mission and serve our neighbors in need. He has hit the ground running and already attended a National Assembly (see his story in this newsletter). Bring your questions and get to know Marco!

<https://bit.ly/TuesdayZoomForum>

Meeting ID: 925 439 5060

Passcode: Ozanam

STATUTE 7 - MEETING AGENDA – New Business

This is initiated by someone making a motion and then another seconding it. It is not done by a big open discussion and then someone making a motion. The motion is done first so that everyone knows exactly what they are discussing. It is perfectly acceptable to have the motion modified as the discussion proceeds. The motion can even be tabled for further discussion at a later meeting.



Advent Retreat for Vincentians

Opening our Hearts to Christ

Date: Saturday, November 22, 2025

Time: 8:30 AM – Noon

Location: St. Perpetua Catholic Church, 3454 Hamlin Rd, Lafayette, CA 94549

Join us for a morning of reflection, fellowship, and spiritual renewal as we enter the season of Advent—a time to deepen our relationship with Christ.

Led by **Sr. Paule Freeburg, D.C., West Region Spiritual Advisor**, our retreat will include:

- Guided reflections
- Quiet time for personal prayer
- Opportunities to share insights and connect with fellow Vincentians
- Why Purple?

This gathering will help us prepare for the gift of Christ and recognize His presence in our daily lives.

Come as you are—no matter where you are on your spiritual journey.

Together, we'll prepare our hearts for the joyful season ahead.

Hospitality: Breakfast provided

RSVP: Please register by Wednesday, November 19, 2025

Click <https://bit.ly/AdventRetreat2025> or Scan to register



Questions? Contact Vincentian Services at m.ceballos@svdp-cc.org

ST. VINCENT DE PAUL FEAST DAY CELEBRATIONS THROUGHOUT CONTRA COSTA COUNTY

FRIENDS OF THE POOR WALK IN WEST COUNTY by Charisse Wan

I wanted to thank all the participants and volunteers who attended Saturday's West Contra Costa County SVDP FOP walk event. It was great to meet Marco and reconnect with so many of you at this annual event.

I wanted to give several shout outs: first to St. Callistus for hosting the FOP walk site and having Carol Brazil and Bill Lujan capably set/clean up while Audrey was sick. Audrey had her daughter bring down the Starbucks coffee, ice and ice chests, and the granola/energy bars. Have to appreciate Fr. Dante as well for starting our walk with a blessing.



Second, to Carol Mansinne-Shafer from St. John's, who dropped off 2 cases of water and 2 large packs of granola bars to my house since her youngest son will be getting married in San Diego this weekend.

Third to Julie from St. Pat's for distributing the FOP water bottles.

Fourth, to Luis from St. Paul's for bringing his family to join our walk and to Maria who stayed as well to walk.

Fifth, to Peter, Larry, Patti, and Lolis from St. David's who raised a whopping \$3,000 in FOP walk pledges—so amazing!

Sixth, to Mike Sommers and his two dogs who represented Our Lady of Mercy. Mike, Inez, Steve K, and I go back for over a decade with planning and participating in the annual FOP walks on the West Contra Costa County side.

Seventh, to Marco for bringing the sandwich boards, extra water, and cooler. Welcome to your first but by far, not your last FOP walk event on the West County side!

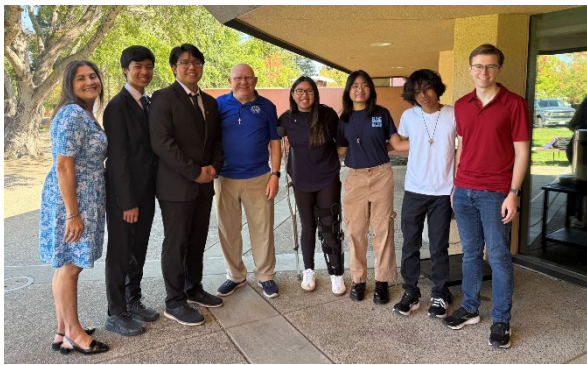


Last, to my St. Joseph SVDP conference, parishioners, and friends who brought fruit, manned the first aid station, supplied security, assisted with registration and donated pledges. Despite the early chilly wind and power outage in El Sobrante to start the morning, it was a great walk event and a blessed feast day of St. Vincent de Paul. We hope to meet you all again at next year's FOP walk event.

RECOMMITMENT AND COMMISSIONING AT ST. ANNE

by Dicki Lulay

We had our Renewal and Commissioning Ceremony at the Church yesterday during our largest Mass service (10:30 Mass). Fifteen of our members were able to attend. Father Ron Schmit conducted the ceremony after the Homily. He also spoke about the contributions that SVdP makes to our parish and surrounding communities.



ST. VINCENT DE PAUL FEAST DAY MASS AT ST. JOAN OF ARC by Claudia Ramirez

It was a pleasure and privilege to celebrate our patron Saint's feast day with the Vincentians at St. Joan of Arc and our Vincentians of the Arc Youth conferences. Fr. Johnson and Deacon Fred Seril, the adult conference's Spiritual Advisor, led the Mass, and conference president, Frank Wnuk, gave a homily that included history and the calling of our vocation to be a

Vincentian. As per usual for most Vincentian events, there was time for food and fellowship following the Mass.

SPIRITUAL ADVISORS – SERVANT LEADERS WITH A SPECIAL ROLE

Our spirituality is personal AND communal. Blessed Sr. Rosalie Rendu found hers in the slums of the Mouffetard, visiting the poor. She surely was a Spiritual Advisor and confidante to those young college students. Louise de Marillac was led to Fr. Vincent de Paul to guide her spiritually, be her mentor, and then they collaborated to form the charity & justice models for the whole Vincentian family.

Conferences continue to benefit from spiritual guidance. Spiritual Advisors are the people who lead us to reflect on the Word and how our actions intertwine, who bring us back to our goal of holiness when we stray, who help us connect with the suffering face of Christ when we grieve for our neighbors, and encourage us to see the face of Christ in our fellow Vincentians. These Spiritual Animators work with their Presidents and fellow Vincentians for us all to grow in holiness. I invite you to consider attending the yearly Spiritual Advisor training offered in February by the National SVdP via ZOOM. The Holy Spirit may be asking you to never cease praying. Will you answer the call?



Sixteen Vincentians from Contra Costa County, representing 10 Conferences, sharing a breakfast in Louisville!

MY 1ST NATIONAL ASSEMBLY by Marco Ceballos

It's an amazing feeling, finding yourself amongst hundreds of individuals who come from all over, all united with the same mission and values. It was truly a pleasure to meet my fellow Vincentians. To spend time with them, sharing testimonies and what we've learned along the way. I've never been prouder to be a part of this ministry.

I thank God for the opportunity to attend, especially after two denied requests from my previous employer, but God has his ways. I was brought on as the new Vincentian Services Coordinator and on my second day on the job, I was shipped out to Kentucky for my first National Assembly, His will be done!

The workshops were full of information, insight, and amazing stories. One workshop on gaining new members shared their story about a chance encounter with NFL player Jon Runyan and how asking him to be involved with SVdP has had such an impact and the rippling effect that has come from it. The power of simply asking, don't underestimate it. Another workshop that comes to mind is the one on the formation of young Vincentians. It's always inspiring to see the Vincentian spirit at work, especially with the youth. I'm proud of the progress they have made and look forward to seeing/hearing more of their work.

I'd like to take this opportunity to also give a shout-out to Gabriel Seril, who received the Young Vincentian Excellence Youth award, and to Andre Navarro for his recognition as an emerging leader. Great work, gentlemen, and thank you for all your hard work and dedication.

Lastly, I'd like to talk about the workshop that resonated with me the most. It was the last talk given by James Davis and Tim Williams on servant leadership. As Vincentians, we are all servant leaders, and this talk served as a reminder of that. It led to a time of self-reflection on how I could be a better servant leader and inspired me to grow in the areas that I struggle with. There was one statement that I still think about to this day, it was about having the wrong mentality that we need to be extraordinary people to do extraordinary things. With God, we can all accomplish the extraordinary. Lean on God, Trust in Him to see us through.

Overall, it was a great experience. I had the chance to meet and talk with some amazing people, I learned a lot, and got the chance to explore Louisville a little. I'm grateful for the opportunity to have attended and am so looking forward to attending the next one in Salt Lake City, September 9-12, 2026!