



March 2026

Training

Tuesday Tips & Training - Zoom
Tuesday, 3/10, 10:00am – 11:00am

Meeting

Board of Directors
Tuesday 3/17 9:30am – 11:30pm

Training

Treasurer's Training
Saturday 3/21, 10am – 12pm
St. Jerome, El Cerrito

Training

Ozanam Orientation
Saturday 3/28, 8:30am – 3:30pm
St. Joan of Arc, San Ramon

Meeting

Board of Directors
Tuesday 4/14 9:30am – 11:30pm

Training

Ozanam Orientation
Thursday 4/16, 8:30am – 3:30pm
St. John Vianney, Walnut Creek

Meeting

District Council
Saturday 4/18 9:30am – 11:30pm
Location TBD

Feast Day

Ozanam Sunday, Sunday 4/26
*For the complete calendar go to the
Members section of www.svdpc-cc.org

Vincentian **Wisdom**
Quotes • Charism



Bob Liles Corner

Book Review – Answers behind the RED DOOR Battling the homeless epidemic – Michele Steeb

The author was the head of St. John's Shelter in Sacramento for 13 years. It serves homeless women and their children. 77% are drug addicts. 58% have mental health challenges. 52% have been arrested. St. John's rejects the official government mandate of Housing First and Harm Reduction. The author makes a very good case that to really help the homeless you cannot simply give them housing and allow them to continue to use drugs. You must get them clean and give them classes on how to survive in the real world. It can take an entire year, but when they leave St. John's Shelter, they have a job, custody of their children and full life to look forward to. Unfortunately, when the HUD went full in on Housing First a lot of shelters like St. John's shut down due to the loss of federal money. And the homeless problem has only gotten worse because the root problem was not addressed. However, it appears that a shift may be coming and programs like St. John's Shelter will once again be supported.

Bob

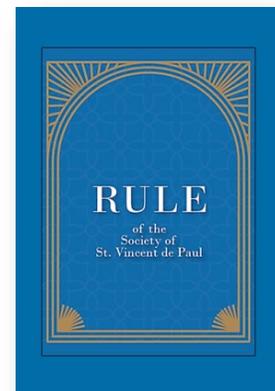
"Yours must be a work of love, of kindness, you must give your time, your talents, yourselves. The poor person is a unique person of God's fashioning with an inalienable right to respect. You must not be content with tiding the poor over the poverty crisis; You must study their condition and the injustices which brought about such poverty, with the aim of a long-term improvement."

Frédéric Ozanam

RULE 7.2 A vision of the civilization of love

Affirming the dignity of each human being as created in God's image, and Jesus' particular identification with those who are excluded by society, Vincentians envision a more just society in which the rights, responsibilities and development of all people are promoted.

As citizens of one world, Vincentians listen to the voice of the Church which demands their participation in creating a more equitable and compassionate social order, promoting the culture of life and the civilization of love. In this way, the Society shares the Church's mission to evangelize the world through visible witness, in both actions and words.



Tuesday Tips and Training March 2026 SESSION Tuesday, March 10, 10:00am – 11:00am



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

2ND TUESDAY- Rice Bowl Grant

Join us on Tuesday, March 10th, for this month's Tips and Training. For this session we are blessed with guest speaker Kiona Medina, the Coordinator of Respect Life and Social Justice Ministries at the Diocese of Oakland. The topic is how your conference can qualify for the \$2k grant through the Rice Bowl Campaign with the Diocese of Oakland and how the office of Respect Life and Social Justice can support you!

<https://bit.ly/TuesdayTipsTraining>

Meeting ID: 890 0345 5047

Passcode: Ozanam

Hope on the Sales Floor

Looking for another hands-on way to live out the Vincentian mission? Volunteering at one of our SVdP Thrift Stores is a powerful way to serve neighbors in need while being part of a welcoming, mission-driven community.

Whether you're helping sort donations, assisting customers, or supporting daily operations, every shift directly supports our programs and outreach to those most in need. It's meaningful work, flexible, and a great way to connect with fellow Vincentians and volunteers who share a heart for service.

Come lend a hand, share a smile, and see how even a few hours can make a real difference. Your time truly helps transform generosity into hope. Hear for yourself from our conference at St. Anne who has been very active, dedicating time, multiple days a month working at the Brentwood SVdP Thrift Store, "We enjoy the Fellowship and have a lot of fun. It always makes us feel good to see the piles of clothes in the bins, the boxes of books and stacks of electrical appliance reduced and out on the store floor."



Pictured Pat Weber, Suzy Cook, Toni Schneider, Georgie Mendonca, Bernadette Van Slambrook, Terry and Dicki Lulay.
Not pictured Norine Dolyniuk (manages volunteer team and books) and Bill Dolyniuk (electrical goods)

A Place of Hope and Healing: SVdP's Family Resource Center



At the Family Resource Center in Pittsburg, neighbors encounter more than services — they encounter dignity, compassion, and a community that walks with them. The Center offers essential resources for individuals and families facing hardship, including an Emergency Food Pantry and daily warm meals provided in partnership with Loaves and Fishes of Contra Costa, ensuring no one has to face hunger alone.

Compassionate healthcare is available to uninsured neighbors through the RotaCare Pittsburg Free Medical Clinic at St. Vincent de

Paul, offering urgent care, treatment for common chronic conditions, lab and diagnostic testing, and prescriptions at no cost. In addition, the John Muir Mobile Clinic comes to the Family Resource twice a month, on the first and third Thursdays. Preventive and restorative dental care is also provided through Dentists on Wheels.



The Family Resource Center is also home to the Oasis Daytime Homeless Shelter, a partnership with Winter Nights Family Shelter. Oasis is a welcoming and safe space where guests can rest, shower, access educational toys, and use phones and computers for medical coordination, job searches, and communication.

Through collaboration with community partners, neighbors can access hot showers, clean clothes, and meals, while the Workforce Development Program provides training and hands-on experience to help participants overcome barriers to employment and move toward long-term, living-wage work.



Together, these services reflect the heart of the Vincentian mission: meeting immediate needs while walking alongside our neighbors toward stability and hope. Conferences are warmly invited to tour the Center, learn more about the programs, and witness this work firsthand. We would be happy to coordinate the visit and welcome you.

Contact Vincentian Services Coordinator, Marco Ceballos, m.cebillos@svdp-cc.org, to schedule your conference's visit!

My Spiritual Journey by Alexandria Gerrick

About 3 years ago, I had an unexpected and unexplainable pull to start diving further into my spirituality. I immersed myself in books by CS Lewis, “Imitation of Christ” by Thomas à Kempis, St. Augustine’s “Confessions,” St. Teresa of Avila’s “The Interior Castle” and many more (I counted- it was over 35 books in the first year alone). I expanded to online lectures, in-person trainings, joined my local SVDP conference, and during this past jubilee year participated in a Pilgrimage to France and Italy, that culminated with walking through the Holy Door at St. Peter’s Basilica!

My thirst for spiritual understanding has become unquenchable (and, at times, exhausting). The more I read, the more questions I have. The more I learn and pray, the more my values and beliefs are challenged.

During a night in December 2024, while searching for the next book to read, I began to ask: why did I have this great thirst in the first place? Why was I being pulled to learn everything I did, and, why at this particular moment in time? What was the point of all this knowledge if I didn’t have an outlet to share it with anyone? Was this thirst just for my ego-driven mind or was there another purpose, a greater plan? I closed my eyes and began praying. I asked for answers, direction, and next steps- and before I could even finish my prayer, my phone rang; it was my conference’s SVDP president, wanting me to become the new spiritual advisor for our local conference!

For the last year, it has been truly a blessing to share my newly granted spiritual knowledge and experiences with fellow Vincentians. Interestingly, it was no book, no lecture and no pilgrimage across the world, but through the opportunity to lead fellow Vincentians in community prayers and reflections that I was quickly gifted with a spiritual understanding I had been seeking to attain: that whether we are conscious of it or not, there is a powerful pull in each one of us, to strive and grow in holiness in our own unique ways. And, though our individual souls and the choices we decide will put us on different Earthly journeys, through our Vincentian promises, we ultimately intersect and are fully united through our love of God, and our neighbors.



Alexandria Gerrick Spiritual Advisor
St. Catherine of Siena



See the face of Christ. Be the face of Christ.

**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
THURSDAY, APRIL 16, 9:15 AM-3:30 PM**

**ST. JOHN VIANNEY CHURCH – MULLEN COMMONS
1650 YGNACIO VALLEY RD., WALNUT CREEK, CA 94598**

**JOIN US FOR MASS AT 8:30 AM
REGISTRATION AND A LIGHT BREAKFAST - 9:00 AM-9:15 AM
OZANAM ORIENTATION FROM 9:15 AM-3:30 PM (LUNCH INCLUDED)
QUESTIONS? CALL SHAWNNA AT 925.200.5952**

**PARTICIPANTS *MUST* REGISTER BY APRIL 13
REGISTER AT: [HTTPS://BIT.LY/OZANAMAPRIL16](https://bit.ly/OZANAMAPRIL16) OR SCAN QR CODE**



“Fat Friday”: Fellowship with a Vincentian Flavor

The Mardi Gras–inspired “Fat Friday” celebration at Immaculate Heart of Mary was a joyful reminder of the importance of fellowship within the Society of St. Vincent de Paul. It was a wonderful opportunity for Vincentians to gather, share laughter, and express appreciation for the many unseen hours of love and service that go into helping our neighbors in need.

The event was made even more special by the surprise attendance of Carmela Tota, a deeply loved and cherished Vincentian whose presence brought smiles and heartfelt gratitude from all who know her. The food was amazing, the company even better, and the spirit of joy unmistakable.

Moments like these remind us that fellowship is not just an extra part of our Society — it is essential. As Vincentians, we are called not only to serve together, but to support and uplift one another along the way. Fat Friday was a beautiful celebration of that call and a joyful expression of our shared Vincentian friendship.



Looking Ahead: Ozanam Sunday

As we look ahead to the spring, we invite Conferences to begin preparing for Ozanam Sunday, celebrated on the last Sunday of April – this year on April 26. This special feast day commemorates the founding of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul on April 23, the birth of Frédéric Ozanam on the same date, and the birth of St. Vincent de Paul on April 24.

Ozanam Sunday is a wonderful opportunity to celebrate our Vincentian roots, give thanks for our vocation, and share the story of the Society with our parish communities. Whether through prayer, fellowship, reflection, or outreach, we encourage Conferences to begin thinking now about how they might mark this meaningful occasion.

West Region Meeting Reminder!

As we continue inviting one another to grow more deeply in our Vincentian vocation, we want to share a helpful way to think about becoming more engaged in the life of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul.

The West Region Meeting is a wonderful first step for those within the region. It offers inspiration, fellowship, and a chance to experience the Society beyond one's local Conference in a setting that is engaging and approachable. We are especially honored that the keynote speaker this year will be John Berry, President of the National Council. His leadership and Vincentian insight promise to make this a meaningful and energizing experience.

If that experience feels enriching, the next step is often attending the National Assembly. The Assembly is larger and more dynamic, and while it can feel overwhelming at first, it also offers a powerful sense of the breadth and depth of our Vincentian mission.

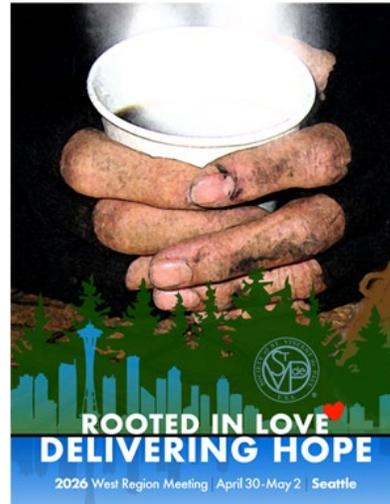
With that, we are excited to share info on taking that first step with this year's West Region Meeting, taking place in Seattle, Washington, from April 30 – May 2, 2026.

To help make attendance possible for first-time attendees, the Board of Directors has approved two \$1,000 stipends to support Vincentians who wish to attend the meeting. This is a wonderful opportunity for those who feel called to deepen their understanding of our mission and bring that inspiration back to their Conferences.

If that does not motivate you, see what our Vice President, Ruben Rodriguez, from the District Council Board has to say about his experience: "Attendance at Western Regional Conference was my first introduction to the SVdP network. I attended ten years ago and began my journey with SVdP. I was in my second year as President of St. Peter Martyr Conference. The following year I attended National Conference in San Diego and my experience with the Society blossomed. Attendance at Western Regional gave me an initial introduction to the SVdP network of conferences in California & West. When I attended the National conference, I had a better orientation of SVdP nationwide network and the diversity across the country. Attendance at conferences has been uplifting and exciting and for new Vincentians they can navigate the different venues and meet new colleagues, share ideas and spirituality." This year's National Assembly will be in Salt Lake City, UT, Sept. 9-12.

If you have ever considered attending a regional meeting—or if you are looking for a moment of renewal and encouragement in your Vincentian journey—this is a beautiful opportunity. We hope you will prayerfully consider joining us in Seattle!

2026 West Region Meeting-Mark your calendar!



**Rooted in Love
Delivering Hope**

***Hope Starts with One
Cup of Coffee!***

**Hosted by the SVdP Seattle
Archdiocesan Council**

When:
April 30-May 1-2
Thursday to Saturday

Where:
Hilton Seattle Airport &
Conference Center
17620 International Blvd.
Seattle, WA 98188

Keynote Speaker
SVdP National Council President
John Berry

Standing with Our Vincentians in Hawaii – A Letter from Judy Dietlein

Last June, I reached out on behalf of our small but steadfast Conference on Oahu, which has been serving its local communities while also responding to families impacted by the Maui fires. Thanks to the generosity of several West Region Councils, they were able to continue their ministry without interruption. Your support truly reflected our Vincentian spirit of solidarity and was greatly appreciated.

Eight months later, the need has not diminished — but their funds have.

Melodie Sasaki, former President and now Treasurer, wrote to me last week: “I am pained to tell you that we are out of funds for Oahu’s poor. The twinning support we received last summer, along with a few local donations, carried us until now.”

Despite outreach to 37 parishes, little local funding has materialized. Yet the calls continue.

They are assisting families displaced from Maui, including a wounded veteran who lost his business in Lahaina and is rebuilding his life after the trauma of the fires. They are helping families across the islands keep utilities on and secure housing. While \$89,000 remains in restricted Maui funds, their general funds for Oahu’s poor are exhausted.

This small Conference of 4 active members and a few volunteers continue to serve far beyond what its size would normally sustain.

As Vincentians, we know charity is not a moment — it is a commitment. When one part of our organization is strained, we respond as One Society.

I am once again asking our West Region Vincentians to prayerfully consider a Twinning contribution to help stabilize and sustain this vital ministry. Ensuring a strong Vincentian presence in Hawaii means ensuring that families in need are not left without hope.

Thank you for your continued leadership and solidarity. Anyone interested in Twinning with the Oahu Conference can send funds directly to:

Society of St. Vincent de Paul Windward Oahu Conference
c/o St. John Vianney Parish, 920 Keolu Drive, Kailua, HI 96734

Your support will help sustain this vital conference in Hawaii. Thank you for all you do in service to our neighbors in need.

Yours in Christ,

Judy Dietlein

National Vice-President, West Region

Board Chair, Disaster Services Corporation

National Council of the U.S., Society of St. Vincent de Paul, Inc.



*The Society of St. Vincent de Paul
of Contra Costa County*

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

A fundraising dinner benefiting
the RotaCare Pittsburg Free Medical
Clinic at St. Vincent de Paul!

April 1, 2026

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 people 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**

Thank you for reading

Thank you for taking the time to read this issue of Vetera Monumenta. We are grateful for your continued interest, support, and commitment to the Vincentian mission.

If you would like to revisit past issues, they are available on our website at www.svdp-cc.org/vetera-monimenta .

We hope these reflections and stories continue to inspire and encourage you in your Vincentian journey. If you want to contribute an article, share the good works of your conference or have a particular topic that you would like to see covered in future issues of Vetera Monumenta, please contact Marco Ceballos, Vincentian Services Coordinator at m.ceballos@svdp-cc.org

