



April 2026

Training

Tuesday Tips & Training – Zoom
Tuesday, 4/14, 10am – 11am

Meeting

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

Training

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

Meeting

District Council Meeting
Saturday, 4/18, 9:30am – 11:30am
St. Callistus, El Sobrante

Feast Day

Ozanam Sunday
Sunday 4/26

Event

West Region Meeting
Thursday – Saturday, 4/30 – 5/2
Hilton Seattle Airport & Conference
Center

*For the complete calendar go to the
Members section of www.svdpc.org

Vincentian **Wisdom**
Quotes • Charism



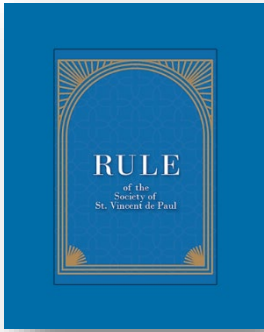
Bob Liles Corner

Last month I attended the City of Antioch's Homeless Services Think Tank. Unfortunately, it got a little out of control when the moderator opened the floor to comments. It was like the story of the six blind men and the elephant. Everyone saw a different facet of homelessness and wanted the resources to address that facet. There are many reasons for someone being homeless, so it has to be tackled by many different methods. The person in charge of removing homeless camps gave a good talk. He said that for a period of time he too was homeless, so he approaches the homeless with empathy and charity. No encampment is closed when it is cold and raining. Everyone is given plenty of warning prior to it happening and given a place to store items that they don't want thrown away.

When I was president of the Antioch Youth Sports Complex, I had to bring in the police to remove several camps. I didn't want to do it. I would try to work with them to keep the fields safe for the children, but they ignored my requests. They would set their tent on the other side of a fence that was just 20' away from 1st base. They would then cut a hole in the fence so that they could easily go into the complex and use the restroom. Unfortunately, that hole allowed children to go out to the railroad tracks to retrieve foul balls. They also left needles laying around everywhere.

Bob

7.3 Vision of the Future



The Society's vision goes beyond the immediate future, looking towards sustainable development and protection of the environment for the benefit of future generations.

"I praise God for the zeal He gives you for the advancement of His glory and the public good."

-St. Vincent de Paul

Ozanam Sunday: Celebrating Our Vincentian Roots

Each year, Vincentians have the opportunity to observe Ozanam Sunday on the last Sunday of April. This special day invites us to reflect on the origins of our Society and the spirit of charity that continues to guide our mission today.

Frederic Ozanam was born on April 23, 1813, in Milan, Italy. Twenty years later, on April 23, 1833, Frederic and his six companions, with the guidance and direction from Blessed Rosalie Rendu, founded the Society of St. Vincent de Paul in Paris. Their goal was simple yet powerful: to put their faith into action by serving those most in need with compassion, humility, and love.



This time of year, also marks the birthday of St. Vincent de Paul, born April 24, 1581, whose life of service to the poor inspired the name and spirit of our Society. The closeness of these dates reminds us that the Vincentian charism spans generations, linking the example of St. Vincent with the vision and courage of Blessed Frederic Ozanam.

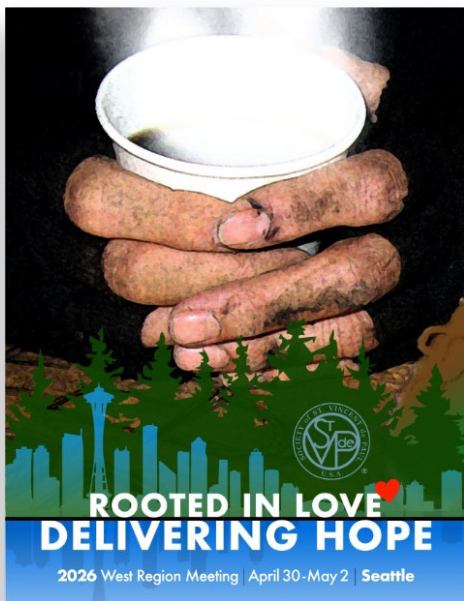
To commemorate these important moments in our history, the Society of St. Vincent de Paul celebrates the last Sunday of April as Ozanam Sunday. It is a time for Conferences and Councils to gather in gratitude, celebrate our shared mission, and renew our commitment to serving Christ in the poor.

We encourage Conferences to consider marking Ozanam Sunday in a special way—perhaps through a Mass intention, a moment of reflection on our Vincentian heritage, or a gathering that celebrates the work of Vincentians in your community. However it is observed, Ozanam Sunday is an opportunity to remember where we began and to re-commit ourselves to the mission that Frederic and his companions started nearly two centuries ago.

A Call for HELP with the Micro Loan Program in Contra Costa County

Many SVdP Councils and Conferences across the country have Micro Loan Programs available, so this is not really something new, only new to us. Since it is “new to us” we need more Vincentians on the committee as well as others to be Financial Mentors. Without help, this program could fall by the wayside. If interested in joining the committee or becoming a Financial Mentor, please contact Anne Crisp 925-787-0857 annecrisp@yahoo.com.

Contra Costa County Micro Loan Program provides Neighbors who are stable enough to repay a loan, an effective alternative to high interest loans and those awful “pay day loans”. Neighbors who need a loan, possibly to consolidate other loans, not only receive a low interest loan but can learn more about money management and at the same time improve their credit score. Really a win-win situation. However, we need Vincentians on the committee to make this work.



2026 West Region Meeting Attendance *Stipends*

Seattle, WA, April 30-May 2, 2026

Our service is rooted in spirituality, and the West Region Meeting will offer several opportunities to deepen that foundation. Through reflection, prayer, and workshops focused on Vincentian spirituality, we will explore how our faith strengthens our mission of service. If you haven't registered yet, now is the perfect time to join us! These generous stipends have been made possible by the Contra Costa County SVDP Board of Directors for FIRST-TIME West Region Attendees only.

The Contra Costa County District Council will offer up to \$1,000 per Vincentian in stipend funds. Unleash your passion for growth and exploration of our Society. You can use this amount to cover the Meeting Registration Fees, Lodging, or Transportation. Embrace this extraordinary opportunity. Any expenses beyond the awarded amount will be the responsibility of each scholarship recipient.

Click [HERE](#) to Apply for a Stipend and join you fellow Vincentians in Seattle!

Thought for the Day

You are the perfect mix of talents and abilities to fulfill the mission that God has in mind for you. There is no point worrying about what talents and abilities other people have. If you don't have them, you don't need them for your mission.

Tuesday Tips and Training
April 2026 SESSION
Tuesday, April 14, 10:00am – 11:00am



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

2ND TUESDAY- White Pony Express

Join us on Tuesday, April 14th, for this month's Tips and Training. For this session we are blessed with guest speaker Eve Birge, CEO of White Pony Express, a nonprofit on a mission to eliminate hunger and poverty by delivering surplus and abundance to those in need—with love. Eve has over 25 years' experience in federal government and nonprofit leadership positions administering programs and policies that protect and advance the public health, education, and rights of people who are underserved. Her passion for supporting and uplifting our most vulnerable neighbors has been an ongoing theme throughout her career, overseeing one of the largest food rescue and delivery organizations in California, ensuring over 130,000 community members are food and nutrition secure and have access to clothing and essential items.

<https://bit.ly/TuesdayTipsTraining>

Meeting ID: 890 0345 5047 Passcode: Ozanam



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

**FEED, CLOTHE,
SHELTER, and HEAL**

**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 MARCO AT 925.783.0879**

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



Lenten Retreat Reflection by Alfred Ma, St. Joan of Arc Conference Treasurer

In the Lenten retreat, what struck me was like St. Paul in his second letter to the Corinthians (Chapter 5, verse 20) said, we are called to be an ambassador for Christ. Based on the spirit of Lent, let's take a look at the deeds of Blessed Ozanam, to see what he did to live out the calling to be an ambassador for Christ.

- A. Prayer. Ozanam began every day with Scripture meditation. Before his lectures at the university, he prayed so that he would speak only for the glory of God, not his. Prayer provided energy for Ozanam's charity work so that his actions remained focused on God, instead of public praise. Ozanam was humble, knowing that he was to serve and love God. He was a servant.
- B. Fasting. Ozanam took fasting as discipline and self-denial. His commitment included "fasting of personal sacrifice, by using his time and resources to serve people". Blessed Ozanam fast for others, to "loose the chains of injustice" and "to share his food with the hungry". Ozanam fast to "tame" his personal passions, to leave more room for compassion and empathy toward those in need. He sacrificed himself for the sake of others.
- C. Almsgiving. Ozanam observed reciprocity of gratitude between recipients and givers. He strongly believed that alms should not humiliate. Note that Ozanam pioneered personal home visits, extending personal contacts. He saw that people needed personal contacts besides materials.

In conclusion, Ozanam connected with God through his prayers to give glory to God. He was humble by doing God's will. From his connection with God, he sacrificed himself to serve others as a servant. Besides giving people materials, he extended his love to people by contacting them physically. He loved God and he loved people. Blessed Frederic Ozanam is truly an ambassador for Christ. Ozanam knew too well that when he did something to a person, he was doing it to Jesus Christ. Let's heed the calling of St. Paul, to be an ambassador for Jesus Christ, like Blessed Frederick Ozanam.



Yours must be a work of love, of kindness,
you must give your time, your talents,
yourselves.

- Frédéric Ozanam

"We must do what is agreeable to God. We must do what Our Lord Jesus Christ did when preaching the Gospel. Let us go to the poor Let us learn of Him."

- Frédéric Ozanam



A Call to Serve: Join the Hope Conference by Mark Schlitt, Hope Conference

We could use your prayers and thoughtful consideration in joining our Hope Conference team.

The SVdP Hope Conference acts as a blueprint for preventing homelessness for our neighbors in Contra Costa County. It works with the other 26 Conferences in the County to assist families experiencing a one-time crisis with financial aid and support tools to provide for long term, self-owned sustainability. Within the past 2024-25 fiscal year, Hope has funded 132 families, utilizing over \$200k in grants and private donations as a lifeline for those most in need.

Working with our devout Vincentian partners who make in-home visits and help our neighbors complete applications, Hope Conference reviews and assesses the crisis to develop a plan to get to "yes" for meaningful support. Cases are presented by individual Vincentian Case Managers at our Conference meetings, and a consensus is reached by all members as to the appropriate path forward. Our community network is widespread, with key areas within Richmond, Pittsburg, Antioch and Oakley.

The Hope Conference Vincentian spends 5-10 hours a week in their research and assessment assignments, with Conference meetings every other Wednesday from 9am to Noon (typically via Zoom). Skillsets include a Vincentian heart and a creative, analytical mind. No in-home visits are required. Helping our neighbors change lives, not just for the family impacted, but also for the in-home and Hope Conference Vincentian team involved. We see Jesus in every request.

We welcome all inquiries as you pray and discern the possibility of joining in our fellowship. We are seeking 2+ additional Vincentians, with a special emphasis on women and minorities to better reflect the neighbors we serve. We recommend "shadow"- attending one of our upcoming meetings should the Spirit move you towards this calling.

May God bless you always!

Questions?

Mark Schlitt
Hope Conference Vice President
svdphopeconf.mark@gmail.com
925-216-1709



Hope conference members Joe Rivello, John Taillac, Robert Porter, Rick Richardson, Adriana Fusaro, Dominick Scibilia, Pat Fitzpatrick, and the late Dick Gilpin. Not Pictured: Mark Schlitt

Join Our Stores Committee by Monica Perez, Thrift Store Area Manager and Workforce Development Program Coordinator

Our thrift stores are more than places to discover great finds — they are vital lifelines that help sustain the programs through which we serve our neighbors in need. Every donation, every purchase, and every act of kindness in our stores becomes part of the good we can do together. Behind the scenes, our Stores Committee plays a crucial role in supporting this mission. We are seeking individuals who feel called to serve in this important role. Whether you have experience in retail, merchandising, customer service, organization, or hospitality — or simply a desire to help our stores grow and strengthen the sustainability of our community — we would love to hear from you. Your insight and talents can make a meaningful difference as we plan, support, and enhance our store operations. The guidance and encouragement our committee members provide to staff is truly invaluable.

A dedicated Stores Committee has a profound impact on the daily life of our thrift store teams. Members offer ideas across various areas, lend a helping hand with special projects, and share expertise that strengthens overall operations. They help build community connections, promote the mission of St. Vincent de Paul, and uplift the staff who work tirelessly to serve our neighbors in need. With their partnership, our stores can run more smoothly, grow more sustainably, and continue to be a source of hope and support for the community.

If you feel called to contribute or would like to learn more about the committee’s work, please reach out directly at m.perez@sudp-cc.org.

Thank you for your continued support and for sharing your God-given gifts with our St. Vincent de Paul family.

Blessings,
Monica Perez

Serving with Purpose: Students Embrace the Vincentian Call

Joanna Negrete, a member of St Vincent de Paul (SVdP) St. Anne Conference, Byron has spearheaded a win-win project for Faith Formation students. She is coordinating her efforts with Wendy Munter, Director of Faith Formation at St. Anne, and the SVdP Brentwood Thrift store, to recruit and chaperone students to volunteer their time at the Thrift Store.

Joanna stated, “As a member of the SVdP (conference) at St. Anne Parish and a parent of a teenage daughter preparing for Confirmation, I felt inspired to help organize volunteer opportunities for our CCD students at the Society’s Thrift Store. Through their work behind the scenes—sorting, pricing, and stocking items—they contribute to the mission of the Society while learning responsibility, teamwork, and a sense of pride in doing a job



Joanna Negrete



Wendy Munter

well. By giving their time and effort, they are serving their local community, and I hope this experience is just the beginning of a lifelong commitment to helping others.”

The students have a requirement of completing 10 hours of community work. Students under the supervision of Joanna can work at the Thrift Store two times per month from November through April for a 2-hour period at a time to meet this requirement. In all, students contributed over 110 hours of service.

Students participating include Jacob Cruz, Olivia Negrete, Janessa Meade, Lola Ehrich, Mateo Garcia, Eunice Castaneda, Chloe Alcata, Brooke Tocci, Anali Juarez and Khian Sabalvaro. The project has created buzz beyond Faith Formation and three of the volunteers came from local schools.

All students go through an orientation sharing the life of St. Vincent de Paul, the origins of the Society of SVdP, what SVdP does at the district level, the impact our three Thrift Stores make on our communities, insights into what the St. Anne SVdP Conference does and why their contribution as volunteers is important.

All students completing their service receive a letter from the President of the St. Anne SVdP Conference recognizing their contributions to their community and serving as an inspiration to others which can be used for college admission applications and/or job applications.

Students were asked as to why they volunteered and what they have gotten out of the experience. Contribution to their community was the universal response.

They also stated that volunteering at the Thrift Store:

- It is important to be involved in our community and make an impact.
- Made them feel good about helping others
- Improving the condition of customers that come to the store
- Supporting the work of their Church
- Working with other volunteers to aid people who can't afford things at other stores
- By keeping the store organized we will make it easier for customers to shop
- Experience for a future job setting

Note that not one of them said they volunteered for the service hours.
Some of the students in action at the Thrift Store...



Olivia Negrete



Mateo Garcia



Jacob Cruz



Chloe Alcata