



August 2026

Training

Tuesday Tips & Training - Zoom
Tuesday, 8/11, 10 am–11 am – [NEW LINK](#)

Training

Spiritual Advisor Training
Friday, 8/14, 9 am–3:00 pm
St. Stephen, Walnut Creek

Event

Spiritual Retreat led by Tim Williams
Saturday, 8/15, 8:30 am–2:30 pm
St. Stephen, Walnut Creek

Meeting

Board of Directors Meeting, Zoom
Tuesday, 8/18, 9:30 am–11:30 am

Event

National Assembly
Wednesday – Saturday, 9/9 – 9/12
Hyatt Regency, Salt Lake City, UT

Event

The Big La Bocce
Saturday, 9/19, 10 am–3 pm
Martinez Bocce Courts, Martinez

Meeting – Date Change

Board of Directors Meeting, FRC
Tuesday, 9/22, 9:30 am–11:30 am

Training

Officer Training, TBD
Saturday, 10/3, 9:00 am-Noon

*For the complete calendar visit the
Members section of www.svdpc-cc.org

Vincentian Wisdom

Quotes • Charism



Bob Liles Corner

WHO IS THE DISTRICT COUNCIL?

It is easy for conference members to understand that the District Council has a free medical clinic, free dental clinic, free dining room, workforce development program, three thrift stores and a microloan committee. What is hard for some Vincentians to understand is that every Vincentian is part of the District Council and must help the DC's programs.

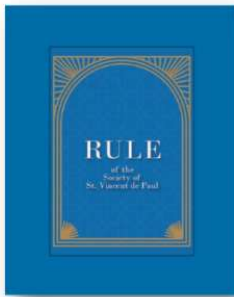
When I became conference president the outgoing president gave me these words of advice, "Don't get involved with the District Council or attend their meetings. It will just complicate things for you." Though I considered her a living Saint, I ignored her advice and never regretted it. While the DC has staff, the staff are only there to help the Vincentians serve their mission.

No conference is big enough to run the programs that the DC operates, so its programs are supposed to be the collaborative effort of all the conferences. Some district councils operate only with volunteers, including their thrift stores. While I know everyone is busy with their conference work, try to find a little time to help the district programs.

Don't you think it is odd that we have a free dining room, but most of the volunteers are not Vincentians or even Catholic. We have people from Jewish synagogues and protestant churches that live over the hill driving to Pittsburg to help our dining room.

Bob

THE RULE: 7.7 Striving to change attitudes



Vincentians oppose discrimination of all kinds and work to change the attitudes of those who view the weak or those who are different with prejudice, fear or scorn, attitudes which gravely wound the dignity of others.

The Society strives, with charity, to foster new attitudes of respect and empathy for the weak, so that all are able to understand, recognize and defend the right of each person to be responsible for his or her own life. The Society promotes understanding, cooperation and mutual love among people of different cultures, religions, ethnic origins and social groups, and so contributes to the peace and unity of all peoples.

- St. Vincent de Paul

Blessed with Seminarian Guests *by Marco Ceballos*

The Family Resource Center in Pittsburg was blessed to have three Seminarians - Eric Ruiz, Dorian Coronado, and Omar Lara - come and volunteer for their Oakland Seminarian Summer Outreach. It was a pleasure to have them offer their time and get to know a little more about the Society of St. Vincent de Paul. They got to experience a little of what goes on here and go through a bit of the history and core values of the Society. Following are some reflections on their experience.



Eric Ruiz (Left), Omar Lara (Right),
Dorian Coronado (Bottom)

“This summer I was assigned to serve at the Contra Costa County Family Resource Center of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul. During my time there, I witnessed the words of our Lord in Matthew 25:40 come to life: “Whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.”

I saw firsthand how the Vincentians live out this Gospel by providing food, financial assistance, medical support, and many other resources to those in need. Their witness has inspired me to serve as they do—seeing Christ in the least, the poor, the vulnerable, and all those in need. Thank you for being such faithful witnesses of Christ and for living out your vocation with such generosity and love.”

— Dorian Coronado

“The Society of St. Vincent de Paul of Contra Costa County aided my understanding of the Vincentian way of life. It has provided a fruitful exposure to walking with those in need. It was a reminder of Christ’s words, “For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many” (Mark 10:45). I too, am called to serve God’s children and to become a bridge to his people as I continue my vocational journey of the priesthood.”

– Eric Ruiz

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



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

2ND TUESDAY - C.O.R.E.

Join us on Tuesday, Aug 11th, for this month’s Tips and Training. For this session we have special guest, Misty Webb with C.O.R.E., which focuses on stabilizing and engaging with our neighbors in need that are experiencing homelessness.

We ask that each conference send at least one Vincentian to represent your conference. These sessions are an important opportunity to stay connected as a Society and to grow together in our mission. Your voice and experience are important. Whether you have something to share, a question to ask, or simply want to listen and learn, we encourage you to join us. Looking forward to seeing you there!

An Important Note!!! Links to Tuesday Tips and Training found in past newsletters will not work. The old link is no longer valid. To gain access to the session, you must follow the link provided below or use the Meeting ID and Passcode.

<https://bit.ly/TuesTipsTraining>

Meeting ID: 822 2861 5994

Passcode: ozanam

BACKPACK INITIATIVE - ST. ANNE CONFERENCE

by Dicki Lulay, Conference President at St. Anne, Byron

Two conference members, Agnes Arokiaraj and Miena Thokkadam, teach at a Title 1 school and described the financial challenges faced by some parents. I previously ran backpack programs through my parish in New Jersey and recognized the need at St. Anne's.

We set the initiative's scope to support Title 1 schools serving St. Anne parishioners and nearby District 3 communities with high poverty rates. Our goal was to provide "on-trend" backpacks that matched those purchased by students' peers so they would blend in.

I met with the Byron and Knightsen District Superintendents, who endorsed the plan and connected us with the principals at each targeted school. We learned that all local Title 1 students receive school supplies from the state, and students in poverty at Knightsen (not a Title 1 school) receive supplies from the Knightsen Community Chest—backpacks being the only unmet need. Each school provided its projected backpack needs for the 2026–27 school year.

Agnes and Miena created four backpack categories based on size, functionality, and gender, and surveyed students to identify which styles were currently on-trend. To stretch SVdP funds, we purchased the 75 needed backpacks during Amazon Prime Days, saving up to \$30 per bag. The initiative was funded through our \$1,500 Holiday Fund Grant, parishioner donations, and additional grant support.



Here are some photos and statements from school administrators:

We are a Title 1 school, so we have a significant number of our students who are economically disadvantaged. For some of their kids a backpack is something they can't get. These kids want to come to school and be like everyone and join in. So having these backpacks reduces stress and not having them feel like they are lacking something. - Tracey Morse, Principal at Iron House Elementary School

Thank you so much for your generous donation of backpacks to support our students here at Discovery Bay Elementary School. We are a Title One school and we pride ourselves in keeping academic rigor high. The gift of backpacks means that all our students will have the materials they need to keep their school supplies and homework together. Knowing that we can help fill in these gaps and anticipate needs of our students helps us foster belonging among our students, increase student pride and confidence, and show all our students that their education is meaningful. - Creston Higgs, Principal at Discovery Bay Elementary School.





Thank you so much for your incredible support through the School Backpack Program. Our school community is deeply grateful for these backpacks, and we are excited to see the immediate, positive difference they will make as we kick off the new school year. Starting a new school year can bring significant financial stress for many of our families. Buying high-quality school supplies is a major expense, and these backpacks provide immediate financial relief. By ensuring that every student has a sturdy, reliable backpack, we are able to ease that burden on parents

and ensure our students start day one on an equal footing with their peers.

Having the right tools is essential for academic success, but the psychological impact of these backpacks is just as profound. A Boost in Confidence: Walking into school with a brand-new, high-quality backpack gives our students a sense of pride and belonging. They feel valued and cared for by the community. School Readiness: When students arrive organized and fully prepared, anxiety drops. They can focus entirely on learning rather than worrying about missing supplies.

Last year, I remember a family who struggled to provide basic school supplies for their kindergartener. When we called to notify them that a backpack was ready for her to come and choose for first grade this school year, they were beyond grateful and overjoyed that this was one less thing for them to worry about. We cannot thank your donors and organizers enough for making this possible. Your partnership is invaluable to Lammersville Elementary and we look forward to another successful school year together. - Heidi Beck, Principal at Lammersville School.

4th of July Celebration with our Neighbors

by Precy Galang, Treasurer, Conference at Good Shepherd, Pittsburg

The best dogs on Independence Day were the ones grillin' at the Church of Good Shepherd, where we spent midday celebrating America with our neighbors during food distribution hours. Those who showed up were blessed with the grace of our chef volunteers and an abundance of food to take home. Our neighbors and volunteers alike enjoy each other's company, as it is nothing more than an exchange of smiles, laughter, conversation, and fellowship with one another.





Spiritual Advisor Training August 14, 2026

Led by **Tim Williams, SVdP USA Senior Director, Formation & Leadership Development**, this event will be held on the campus of St. Stephen Church, 1101 Keaveny Ct, Walnut Creek, CA 94597.

Registration and Check-In 8:30 AM

Mass 9:00 AM

Training 9:30 AM – 3:00 PM

(Lunch will be provided)

Our Training, an exclusive Spiritual Advisor Training session, is designed for existing Conference and Council Spiritual Advisors of Contra Costa and neighboring counties **as well as those considering stepping into this most-important servant leadership role.** *If your Conference currently needs a Spiritual Advisor, this is a perfect opportunity for interested Vincentians to “Taste and See” the important role that a Spiritual Advisor plays.*

St. Stephen Church, 1101 Keaveny Ct,
Walnut Creek, CA 94597

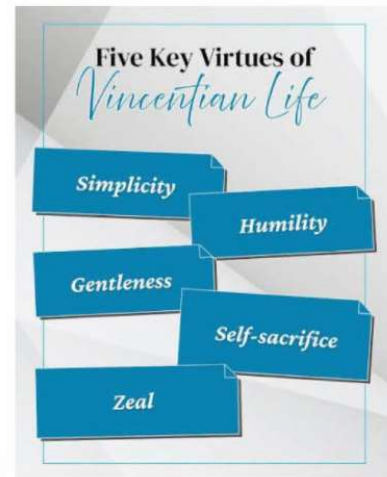
REGISTRATION REQUIRED

To Register click below or scan the QR Code
<https://bit.ly/SVdPSATrainingAug14>



A Day of Reflection We Become By Doing: Practicing Our Vincentian Virtues August 15, 2026

Our Day of Reflection will take place on the campus of **St. Stephen Church, 1101 Keaveny Ct, Walnut Creek, CA 94597**. We will be guided on this Vincentian journey by **Tim Williams, SVdP USA Senior Director, Formation & Leadership Development**,



8:30 AM – Registration and Light Breakfast
9:00 AM-11:30 AM – Retreat Part 1
11:30 AM-1:00 PM – Mass / Lunch
1:00 PM-2:30 PM – Retreat Part 2

Vincent calls us to love God "with the strength of our arms and the sweat of our brows," and teaches us the five Vincentian virtues. We'll begin with an examination of those virtues, and how they guide us in our vocation.

But how do we move from doing to being? How do we become what God calls us to be? Through prayer, sharing, and friendship, we will grow in holiness together, reflecting on how each of us can be the instrument of the other's salvation.

Together, we will leave refreshed, renewed, and ready to serve!

To Register click below or scan the QR code
<https://bit.ly/SpiritualRetreatAug15>



WR meeting Tidbit #4 – The Importance of Accuracy

The Society's lobbyist in Washington wanted to impress some congressmen with the impact the Society had in their state. She picked a conference annual report at random and it said that the conference helped six people with clothes and spent \$20,000,000. She decided that she needed better numbers and would appreciate it if everyone gave more accurate numbers in their annual reports.

Thought of the Month by Marco Ceballos

Last month's reflection was, 'What does humility in service look like to you?' We have a thoughtful response from the Vice President of St. Jerome in El Cerrito, Juelann 'Juels' Klotz! Thank you Juels for sharing. Next month we will have a new reflection, and I am looking forward to receiving any and all responses. It's a blessing to hear what reflections you have to share. It could open eyes / provide new perspectives, be just what a fellow Vincentian needed to hear, or inspire so thank you. Your time is appreciated. Without further ado, Juels' reflection

Reflection Response - Humility in service turns into a gift of grace.

by Juelann (Juels) Klotz, Vice President, SVdP Conference at St. Jerome, El Cerrito

As a Vincentian who participates in numerous home visits, I speak on my own behalf and, hopefully, for those brothers and sisters Vincentians who accompany me, about what humility in service means.

As with many Vincentians who take part in a home visit and sit shoulder to shoulder with a Neighbor in need, they most likely witness deep humility. Hopefully, every visiting Vincentian recognizes, even before shaking their hand hello, the immense amount of courage it takes our Neighbors to open themselves up to strangers. Understanding that by doing so, the Neighbor admits their limitations or frailty; essentially humbling themselves.

Even before we Vincentians take part in a home visit, we have to remind ourselves that in our service to others, we are to practice the principle of humility, knowing that humility does not harbor selectivity, nor does it place judgment. Understanding that when our critical tendencies are set aside, kindness and empathy are allowed to flourish. Remembering that we are only the conduit by which grace from God comes. Seeing that, by setting aside our critical tendencies, we exhibit our own humility and find ourselves walking our Neighbor's path of need with them. And, while listening to our Neighbor's pleas, our own humility meets us where we are, in the eyes of God.

Although every home visit differs from the others, I venture to say that many are successful in our Neighbors' eyes. The fact that someone listens with deep interest to their needs, treats them with dignity, and shows them care gives them hope. And in that hope, their spirits are lifted, even with the slightest possibility of access to the resources they need; they offer deeply humble thanks.

What often comes of a home visit is that the glimmer of hope and the extension of humble thanks that lifted the spirits of the Neighbor are soon seen in the eyes and felt in the hearts of the visiting Vincentian, turning a simple act of service into a gift of grace. Witnessing the effects of such home visits provides all involved with evidence that, when serving others in deep humility, they are offered the unique and treasured opportunity to see the face of Christ in those whom they serve.

SATURDAY
SEPTEMBER 19
10AM- 2PM

Martinez
Waterfront Park
Bocce Courts
245 N Court St,
Martinez, CA



THE BIG

LA BOCCE 2026

Bocce Ball Tournament

REGISTER TODAY

This event benefits:

St. Vincent de Paul of Contra Costa County
& Loaves and Fishes of Contra Costa and our
safety-net programs to help our most vulnerable
neighbors in Contra Costa.



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



SINGLE
TICKET
\$75

SVdP of Contra Costa County, 2210 Gladstone Dr., Pittsburg, CA 94565

Phone: (925) 439-5060 | www.svdpc-cc.org

Loaves and Fishes of Contra Costa, 835 Ferry St., Martinez, CA 94553

Phone: (925) 293-4792 | www.loavesfishescc.org

This is a newsletter for Vincentians, by Vincentians.

If you would like to contribute, feel free to email tips, news, and stories from your Conference and life as a Vincentian to Marco Ceballos at

m.ceballos@svdp-cc.org



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

