

**Voice of the Poor Planning Committee
Meeting Notes for December 10
3:30 p.m.
Vincentian Support Conference Room**

Attending: Ron Meyer, Kathy Jorgensen, Chris Quintenz, Inge Casey, Walt Gray, Fr. Fitz, Julie Douglas, Frank Barrios, Tom Finnerty, Lucy Howell

The meeting was opened by Father Fitz and those present praying, “Winter” written by Father Fitz.

VOP Communication and Feedback:

The e-mail network (VOPNET) currently includes 207 Vincentians from 73 Conferences (13 Conferences of the 86 total in northern and central AZ have no representation), 30 SVdP employees and 35 community organizations. Some Conferences have multiple members – one has 12 – ideal to have at least 2 members receiving VOP information due to the time sensitive nature of alerts. Lucy screens, edits and Inge Casey sends using VOP@svdp-phx-az.org

VOPNET members currently receive the following:

- Weekly Legislative Briefing by Tom Finnerty (Jan through May or until adjourns)
- VOP 1 page newsletter in Vincentian Support Newsletter (mailed to 3,000)
- Information Items and Action Alerts
- Monthly written reports to Phoenix Diocesan Board
- Occasional information from National VOP
- Time sensitive material submitted to Up to Date (Conf/Dist Presidents)

Concerns expressed:

- Some say this is too much material; others complain that it is too simplified
- Very little response from the Conference reps
- Not know if VOP reps are reporting about VOP at Conference meetings; time at meetings is an issue
- Each year there is turnover in Conference leadership requiring re-contacting (new Conference roster due out soon from VSS)

Committee Discussion/comments:

- We need to nurture the 207 reps. (Fr. Fitz)
- Sell VOP by communicating successes (Frank Barrios)
- We need to ask VOP reps to DO something to help VOP (Walt Gray)
- A spiritual element needs to be incorporated regularly in VOP (Inge Casey)
- Need to help members connect VOP advocacy with concrete examples of Vincentian direct service - utility assistance/LIHEAP; healthcare outreach/KidsCare (Julie Douglas)
- Not all Vincentians will be active in VOP but need is to promote AWARENESS (Ron Meyer)

Suggested VOP Outreach:

- VOP report at every quarterly General Membership Meeting (Ron will talk on Dec. 15)
- Monthly one page summary of VOP activities sent out to VOPNET beginning in mid-January (Julie Douglas volunteered for this)
- Contact new presidents; confirm VOP participation- Job Description
- Change perception; will not be successful by sending out more information (Ron Meyer)
- VOP Committee members visit District meetings; 10-15 minutes max – confirm participation in Conferences, summarize what we are doing this year; solicit input
- Father Fitz will offer a retreat for Vincentians on 2/16 at St. Raphael's drawing from his new book, North American Contemporary Prayer Book as well as VOP
- VOP should be incorporated in Ozanam Formation Experience for new members