



St. Vincent de Paul Society NEWSLETTER



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"It is for your love alone that the poor will forgive you the bread you give them." St. Vincent de Paul

Imagine

By Steve Attwood

John the Baptist was someone who knew who he was. More importantly, he knew who he was not. What was most extraordinary about John was his insistence, to his personal detriment, on declaring who he was and who he was not.

"I am not the Messiah." "I am the voice of one crying out in the desert, make straight the way of the Lord." When John saw Jesus walking by, he said to his own disciples, "Behold the Lamb of God." Immediately, his disciples left John and followed Jesus.

My daughter Sarah was educated by Jesuits at Santa Clara University, and later at Boston College, where she earned her Masters in Divinity degree. She is currently a Spiritual Director at Ignatius House in Atlanta. St. Ignatius of Loyola was the founder of the Society of Jesus, more commonly known as the Jesuits. When meeting with those she ministers to, Sarah frequently challenges them to engage in "Imaginative Prayer" as a means to draw closer to God. Imaginative prayer is one of the tenets of Ignatian spirituality. As you read scripture, you imagine yourself as a character in the scene being described. Perhaps as John the Baptist, or one of his disciples. Or perhaps as simply someone on the way to market who overhears John's conversation with his disciples. Suddenly, you are no longer simply rereading the loosely translated words of some long forgotten scribe. You are immersed in the moment, in a foreign, yet surprisingly familiar, culture. Your senses are overwhelmed with the sights, sounds, and smells of the moment. Are you frightened? Are you curious? Do you feel compelled to follow this stranger John declares to be the Lamb of God, or do you feel more comfortable continuing on to market?

We are now in the season of Lent, 40 days in which we journey with Jesus in the desert. Are our hearts attuned to the voice crying out to us? Or are we simply listening to those voices that conform with what we want to hear; what we want to believe? In today's world of fake news and conspiracy theories, there is something very refreshing about John's honesty. It's hard to imagine any public figure today saying, as John said, "I must decrease, so that He can increase." Yet, St. Ignatius, and certainly St. Vincent, would tell you that is exactly the response God is looking for from each of us.

Continued

Imagine ...

Imaginative prayer has application beyond scripture. Imagine yourself as a single mother of young children who can't afford her cancer medication. Imagine yourself as a twelve-year old boy from El Salvador dying on the banks of the Rio Grande because his lack of US citizenship allows us to self-righteously ignore his cries for help. Imagine yourself as someone saying, "We can't afford universal healthcare" or "Illegal immigrants are criminals." In recent years, we've become more polarized, within our culture and within our church. Social media platforms filled with unimaginative platitudes and sound bites exacerbate that division. Imagination can help bridge the divide between us. Imagination leads to reflection which, in turn, can lead to constructive dialogue and the sensibility to appreciate perspectives other than our own.

Lent is a season of repentance. Repenting for when we've failed to be who God called us to be. Lent is a time for honesty; to stop rationalizing why we do what we should not do and fail to do what we should do. Imagine yourself, not as someone who is self-serving, but as someone capable of saying, "I must decrease, so He can increase."

At President Biden's inauguration in January, Amanda Gorman, a young African-American poet, ended her remarks by saying, "The new dawn blooms as we free it. For there is always light. If only we're brave enough to see it. If only we're brave enough to be it." Imagine yourself being that light. Imagine our country being a "light to the nations" as Isaiah said. Perhaps then, as Lent gives way to Easter, you can imagine yourself being a witness to the Resurrection. ♦

General Membership Meeting

Please join us on March 20, 2021 at 9:00 am by following the instructions below. Mass will begin at 9:20 am.

Please click the link below to join the webinar:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87587219139>

Or iPhone one-tap :

US: +12532158782,,87587219139# or +13462487799,,87587219139#

Or Telephone:

Dial (for higher quality, dial a number based on your current location):

US: +1 253 215 8782 or +1 346 248 7799 or +1 669 900 6833 or +1 301 715 8592 or +1 312 626 6799 or +1 929 205 6099

Webinar ID: 875 8721 9139

International numbers available: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87587219139>

The Little Conference That Could

In reviewing the Annual reports of the conferences that applied for the 2021 Diocesan Council (Twinning) Aid program, the sub-committee charged with the task of reviewing and approving the applications was amazed at the services provided last year by so many of our small inner city conferences. Most of the conferences that apply for these funds each year are from Districts Seven & Eight. These conferences operate in areas of high need and poverty, have a limited number of members and little if any financial support from their parishes and, yet day after day, they work tirelessly to serve those in need.

One such conference with only six members provided 1,199 home visits helping 2,123 individuals last year. They delivered over 1,200 food boxes, gave out more than \$27,000 in financial assistance and provided spiritual aid 1,115 times. If you look at the six members as comprising three home visit teams, each team had to make 399 visits during that year or an average of 7.6 visits a week to reach their total number.

It is so humbling to see how much these conferences are able to do with so little. During their in-person interview, the president of this conference said, "We are small but we just do what we have to do to help those who need us." The joy and humility with which she made her presentation were as powerful as her conference's numbers. Every Vincentian needs to be proud of what our inner city conferences including this one are able to do on a regular basis for the sake of the poor.

Many of these conferences are struggling to get new members as many in their congregations are elderly, raising grandchildren or are working multiple hourly jobs just to make ends meet. Their parishes don't allow for SVdP collections because they cannot even meet the parish's financial needs through their regular weekly donations. These conferences would love to have you and your conference twin your time and service with them.

The next time you or your fellow conference members start complaining about being overworked, reflect on the story of the little conference that could. The conference of six Vincentians that, in spite of many obstacles and limited resources, just found a way to do more visits than most of our larger conferences. If they could find a way, so can we and we can certainly find a way to lend them a hand. ★

By Shirley Smalley

Answering the Call

“For surely I know the plans I have for you...”

Jeremiah 29:11

If you ask Vincentians what is the greatest challenge that their conference or council faces, many if not all will respond *recruitment of new members*. However, if we look deeper into the working of the Society an even greater challenge facing us is trying to find Vincentians who are willing to step forward and hold office in their conference or councils.

The Rule of the Society states, “For a specific period of time the Society chooses qualified members for the various Council and Conference leadership positions who will carry out their tasks with the same dedication with which they work within their own Conference.” These leadership roles are of vital importance to the growth and survival of the Society. Conference and councils cannot function without leaders

God in His Divine Providence provides everything a conference or council needs to succeed but often times the members that are called by God to serve as officers choose not to respond to that call. Sometimes members feel unworthy, believe that the job is too overwhelming or think that being an officer is being less a Vincentian or servant to the poor. Too many times I have heard Vincentians comment, “I did not join the Society to fill out paperwork!” Seriously. Without people who are willing to do the behind the scenes work, the Society would cease to exist.

This hesitancy to lead is not unique to the Society or even new. The Bible is full of hesitant or reluctant servants of God. Throughout history many of those who were called by God to serve through leadership resisted their call. For example, King Saul tried to hide, Moses gave a list of excuses, Esther hesitated, and Jonah ran away. Despite their hesitancy once they answered their call, God was able to use each of them in significant ways. The same is true for Vincentians.

Once we understand that God is in charge, there is no reason not to step forward in faith and trust that He and our brother and sister Vincentians will help us in answering our call to leadership. Over the years, I have served as a conference president, secretary and treasurer. I have also been blessed to have served as a District President, a Diocesan Council Vice President and chair of several Diocesan committees. God enabled and supported me in all of those roles. Each has brought me joy and growth. Every time I serve in a position of leadership, I grow in my understanding of the Society, of the poor, and of other Vincentians. By being a servant leader, I get inspired and challenged by those whom I serve with and for and find myself moving closer to our Vincentian vocational call and to my Lord. Although I am but a small part of the Vincentian family, God still remarkable finds ways to use me.

Continued

Answering the Call

During a one day retreat, the priest facilitator asked the attendees to offer him some examples of ways to express what it means to offer your life to God. One attendee stepped forward and handed him a piece of paper with only the words "My Life" at the top and his signature at the bottom. When asked what this paper meant, the man responded that his signature indicated his consent for God to fill in all the blank space. In other words, he was offering his entire life to the will of God.

Conference and council elections are just around the corner. Are you willing to listen to see if God is calling you? If He is, are you willing to trust Him to fill in the blanks for you? Remember that even reluctant leaders accomplish great things not because of who they are but because of who God is. Over the next few months, spend some time in prayer discerning where God might be calling you to serve and to lead. •

*By Shirley Smalley
District 11 President*

What Does the Rule of the Society Say

Over the past several months, several conferences and councils have asked the Conference Resources committee if they are permitted to donate funds to other groups or charities that also work with the poor in their area. The Rule is very specific about this subject. The Manual of the Society page 27 reads:

Funds donated to the Conference (Council) must be used only for the works that involve personal service of members of the Society. As generous as the conference should be to needy individuals, it cannot provide funds to causes outside of the Society, except, occasionally, for other branches of the Vincentian Family. **(Rule: Part III, Statute 26)** The Society does not raise money for activities in which its members are not personally and substantially involved. Above all, the intention of the donor, who chose to give to the Society, must prevail.

Jubilarians Honored at St. Joachim and St. Anne



Kathleen Gengler –

Has been involved with our Conference with our food pantry, office help, past experience at Santa Teresita dining room, and our activities that are on hold right now due to COVID. Kathleen's experience with working with Job Corps helped with her decision to join us.

Jim Gnotta –

Before COVID Jim was involved with home visits, Santa Teresita Dining Room, office help, and Vice-President. Jim has received friendship, enjoyed teamwork and patience while involved with SVdP. Jim also was able to hear from a guest who was helped from SVdP and was returning that help with food to help others.



SVDP St. Pius X Conference Honors Jubilarians



Jubilarians were recently honored with a ceremony presided by Fr. Salvador Guzman, in Dallas.

Submitted by

*Mary Scharr, Conference President
St. Pius X SVdP Conference
Dallas, Texas*

Volunteers Needed

Our Thrift Stores are always in need of Volunteers. If you are interested, please contact the store in your area.

We also opened a new store at Tatum and Greenway. Its called the Hope Chest, 4857 E. Greenway Road, Scottsdale.

NOW IS THE TIME

By Joe Riley

The late Cardinal Francis Xavier Van Thuan of Vietnam, former president of the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, described a Christian as the “man of now.” He saw every Christian as a person who lives in the present, who acts to make a difference in his life and the lives of others without delay or deferral.

It is inherent in our vocation that Vincentians are “now” people. We deal with the needs of our suffering brothers and sisters in Christ on a daily basis and seize those moments to serve them as best we can.

Our Vincentian Endowment provides the Vincentians of the Phoenix Diocesan Council with an extraordinary opportunity to **support St. Vincent de Paul not just for a lifetime, but forever**. It is intended to create a permanent and substantial source of funding for our Conferences and to be a vital part of our Council’s financial foundation. We recently reached a significant milestone in the Endowment’s growth, topping the \$2-million mark.

Our outstanding Development team under the leadership of Shannon Clancy, Ryan Corry and Shane Moon will tell you that the extent of Vincentian participation in building your Endowment is crucial in persuading businesses, foundations and large donors to contribute to it. I like to think that we can always count on ourselves to make a difference, especially when it comes to the sacred mission we have committed to accomplish. Nine Districts and 20 Conferences contributed to the Vincentian Endowment last year and 194 Vincentians are making monthly contributions. That data suggests a significant potential for additional support from within our ranks.

The four annual distributions to date from the Endowment authorized by the Diocesan Council Board total over a quarter of a million dollars and more than \$3,000 to each Conference. That is a tip-of-the-iceberg indication of future financial aid as the fund grows. The \$952 check sent to the Conferences last year was based on a fund balance of \$1.54 million. If the balance had been \$3 million the check would have been for \$1,852, and \$5 million would have produced a payout of \$3,086. I invite you to think bigger because that is what the Vincentian Endowment promises us as more people contribute to it.

The Diocesan Council’s newly-launched LIFT campaign has a goal of an \$80-million endowment by 2026, our 80th anniversary in Phoenix, that will allow us to assist more individuals in need, families in crisis and communities at risk. LIFT envisions raising the level of funding in the Vincentian Endowment to \$10 million. Given the many opportunities Vincentians have to inspire the support of family, friends and neighbors, I wanted to share a suggestion from a recent donor: a gift made to the campaign and restricted to the VE will benefit both.

Perpetuating the indispensable, life-changing activities of our Conferences is the sole purpose of the Vincentian Endowment. As the basic unit of our Society they form the enduring foundation of our service to the poor. The pandemic provides a stark reminder that we must preserve our ability to serve our neighbors in need.

Continued

NOW...

Your exemplary caring and compassion in this time of unprecedented challenges produced countless uplifting stories of hope, perseverance and unwavering commitment to continue serving the most vulnerable in our communities. You can and should be very proud of these heroic achievements which epitomized the innate goodness and generosity of the human spirit.

When we look back on this devastating period I believe that what you and our incredibly dedicated employees accomplished – by God’s grace and your flexibility, innovation and resilience – will be seen by many as our finest hour.

St. Vincent de Paul is committed to fostering a community in which we all look out for each other, in which we have faith in each other, as brothers and sisters. The outpouring of love and support for our Society in the past year is powerful proof that the term “human family” is an inspiring reality, not an abstract concept. Your ceaseless and selfless efforts to provide help and restore hope to those who desperately need it validate the trust placed in us by our fellow citizens.

The beautiful Latin phrase I look at every day on my Fordham diploma – Ad Majorem Dei Gloriam (For the Greater Glory of God) – brings to mind the spiritual foundation of our Vincentian calling. Many of you have heard me say that my three favorite letters of the alphabet are ROI. That is true in the secular sphere, but not when the real reason we are on this earth is considered. AMDG guides our stewardship of the blessings bestowed on us. The best return on investment we can gain in this life is when our focus is on the greater glory of God.

The ultimate bottom line is that our resources are gifts from God to be used in serving Him. Being able to give them back in a way that directly benefits His beloved poor is a privilege and a blessing.

I hope you will join Charlotte and me in promoting and supporting the Vincentian Endowment. It is a source of great joy for us to know that our financial resources will help sustain the wonderful work of our Conferences. We cannot think of a better way to show our love and admiration for our fellow Vincentians. You are our family and one of our greatest blessings.

Organizations like St. Vincent de Paul need to dream. The Vincentian Endowment will make it possible for many wonderful dreams to come true in our service to the poor on the front lines of our mission of mercy.

The future belongs to those who prepare for it...to those who act – who do – and who have that special sense of urgency which says do it now. Too often we are tempted to put off our good ideas or best efforts until some later date. That is often a big mistake. If we use the present as fully as we can, the future will offer even more possibilities for us and those we serve.

Psalm 37 tells us that “The steps of good men are directed by the Lord. He delights in each step they take.” The Lord will surely be delighted by the steps we take together to endow our Conferences with unprecedented resources for generations to come. Now is the time!

Adopt A Family

A Huge Success



Fate whispers to the warriors, "You cannot withstand the storm."

I confess that we veteran volunteers launched the 2020 Adopt a Family Program with some apprehension. Could we modify the program to match sponsor to family interaction while allowing for safe social distance? Would we have enough sponsors to support the increased number of families expected to seek help during this pandemic year?

In addition to those suffering from coronavirus and related illnesses, many of those who typically adopted families are struggling. Restaurant, travel, hospitality, small business and other industry workers found themselves furloughed or unemployed this season. Would we have to turn families away? Would we be forced to say "**sorry, we have no sponsors**" to the very people who for years have divided up family wish lists, pooled resources, held gift wrapping parties and led decorated car parades to deliver gifts to the families they were adopting?

Happily – the answer was a resounding **NO!**

The warriors whisper back, "We ARE the storm." (author unknown)

Similar to angels swooping in from all sides, **1340 sponsors** delivered Christmas to **1340 families** in the Diocese of Phoenix. Amazingly (and unexpectedly) this represents an increase from 900 families in 2018 and 2019. A special anonymous benefactor even donated 100 bikes to be given to young children.

Safety protocols were put in place every step of the way from initial interviews to socially distant gift deliveries. Preferred grocer gift cards replaced the uncooked Christmas meal makings, on-line shopping replaced in-store shopping, and curbside deliveries of big trash bags filled with wrapped gifts replaced sponsor visits to the family home. What did **not** need replacing, however, was the joy that sponsors felt as they shared talent and treasure with those who needed a special boost this year.

With a humble and grateful heart, **we thank each and every warrior** who touched this program in any way. **You did it!** Peace and blessings to all.

Submitted by Dottie Sullivan



Blessed Frederic Ozanam Intercession Prayer Line

O God, our Father, You alone have the power to bestow those precious gifts of Yours which we rightly call miracles. If it be Your will, be pleased to grant such a gift on behalf of...

ALL SAINTS MESA

Tom Margalski
Judy Allard
Nancy Hackert
Veronica Nord
Maureen Julian

CHURCH OF THE RESURRECTION

Caroline Steele
Bob Bruce

HOLY CROSS

Rose Burmich
Sharon Smith
Martin (Lefty) Wolf

IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

James Reed
Mike Vize
Barbara Reed
Lindsey Plas
Lynn Treimer
Lee Martearler
Al and Regina Gilson
Pam Willis
Diane McCann

MOST HOLY TRINITY

Jackie Hennings

OLPH SCOTTSDALE

John Corcoran
Forrest Dougherty
Dale Nickekl
Mary Zarlengo

OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE

Joe DiGiovanni

OUR LADY OF THE DESERET

Richard Gordon

OUR LADY OF THE LAKE

Cindy Smith

OUR LADY OF LOURDS

Carol Voit

QUEEN OF PEACE

Susan Petrie
Mary Kay Dunlevy
Martina Bonilla

SACRED HEART—PARKER

Karen Rath
Mary Gonzales
Sandra Woulms
Dora
Gloria Lopez

ST. ANTHONY OF PADUA

Dennis Orr

ST. BRIDGET

Cheryl Crame
Sandra Jarr
Joe Fellhauer
Vince Gutierrez
Bill Cowperthwait
Terri Lyn Gardner

ST. DANIEL THE PROPHET

Phil Murphy

ST. JAMES

Diane Stofko
Abel Noble

ST. JOHN VIANNEY SEDONA

Betty Winick

SACRED HEART—PRESCOTT

Richard Howell
Herb Bourgault

ST. THOMAS THE APOSTLE

John Winters

ST. TIMOTHY

Karen Wilson

ST. LOUIS THE KING

Ed & Esther Escarcega
Raul & Elvia Lujan
Mario & Mary Fierros

ST. CLARE OF ASSISI

Joyce Murphy

ST. GERMAINE

Pat Caldwell
Joe Zambito
Sue Christian
Freda Jeffries
Fred Widmer
Kathy Ferguson
Sandy Smith

ST. MARGARET MARY-BHC

Rev. Peter Dobrowski

ST. MARTIN DE PORRES

Sammy Valencia

ST. MARY—KINGMAN

Patty Couch
Roger and Rita Gaumont
Diane Schatz

ST. MARY MAGDALENE

Nancy Weise

ST. JEROME

Nancy Barnes
Yvonne Hurley

ST. MATTHEW

Evelyn Guerra

ST. JOACHIM & ST. ANNE

Gene Harmeling
Irene Sosnicki
Lucia Mastroianni
Terry DeYoung
Al LaRocque

ST. JOAN OF ARC

Paul Parent

ST. STEVEN'S

Pat Krause

ST. FRANCES CABRINI

Andre Carrillo
Rosemary McClair

SVDP EXECUTIVE OFFICE

Jimmy Walker
Lisa Eicher
Jagger Michael Diem
Nancy Phalen
Tom Van Boven
Jim Novotny
Joyce Zabalski
Evan Arriola
Ray Daoust
Barb Daoust
Cathie Nelson
Jayden Southern
Jake Doyle
Dr. David Goldfarb
Alice Ehmann
John Jakubczyk
Peter McQuaid
Kathleen Nageotte
Sharon Ehmann
Paul Joseph DeMuro
Gabrielle Chung
Ed Koval
Josephine Salazar
Frank Labriola
Laura Grafman

**REQUIESCAT
IN PACE**



Tomas Felix

St. Martin de Porres

Maria O Guerrrero

St. Matthew

Barbara Whelan

San Francisco de Asis

Alice Gary

St. Bernadette

Betty Verner

St. Bridget

Stan Lovre

St. Catherine Laboure

Isobel Yunker

St. Philip the Apostle

Jan Golba

St. Helen

Karoline Johnson

St. Joseph Mayer

Alice LaRocque

St. Joachim & St. Anne

***May the Angels lead them into Paradise,
may the martyrs receive them at their coming
and lead them into Jerusalem, the Holy City.
May the Choir of Angels welcome them
and, with Lazarus, who was also poor,
may they have everlasting rest.***

Remembering our friend Tomas



Sadly, we had a loss due to COVID last week. Our dear Tomas Felix lost his battle to COVID at 3:00am Tuesday December 29th.

Tomas was a faithful Vincentian and gladly served as our Spiritual Advisor. Tomas was a US Veteran and led the Pledge of Allegiance at some of our General Membership meetings. He was a quiet soul yet never hesitated to roll up his sleeves to stock our shelves, hand out food boxes, work the food drives and toy drives. He was Hope Torres' right hand taking her to doctor appointments, prayer meetings and any place she needed to go.

He will be greatly missed!!!

Words of Inspiration From Our Founder Bl. Frederic Ozanam



The question which is agitating the world today is a social one. It is a struggle between those who have nothing and those who have too much. It is a violent clash of opulence and poverty which is shaking the ground under our feet. Our duty as Christians is to throw ourselves between these two camps in order to accomplish by love, what justice alone cannot do.

Frederic Ozanam



THE VINCENTIAN ANNUITY

Supporting
St. Vincent de Paul
not just
for a lifetime,
but **forever.**

SAMPLE ANNUITY RATES

	SINGLE LIFE	TWO LIVES
AGE 60	4.4%	3.9%
AGE 70	5.1%	4.6%
AGE 80	6.8%	5.7%
AGE 90	9.0%	8.2%

A gift through the Vincentian Annuity will give you the security of a fixed income over your lifetime and provide support for St. Vincent de Paul that will last forever.

As an example, Helen, an 80-year-old widow and St. Vincent de Paul volunteer, recently established a \$50,000 Vincentian gift annuity. For her age, the annuity rate is 6.8%, meaning she'll receive \$3,400 annually for the rest of her life. And, she may take an income tax deduction of about 50% of her gift this year. Best of all, her gift will support St. Vincent de Paul's work for generations to come. Annuity gifts start at \$10,000.

TO SEE IF AN ANNUITY IS RIGHT FOR YOU
visit plannedgiving.stvincentdepaul.net.

Take a look at our planned giving tools, including a benefit calculator. To discuss giving options, contact Donna Rodgers at 602-261-6884 or plannedgiving@svdpaz.org.

P.O. Box 13600 Phoenix, AZ 85002 | stvincentdepaul.net



**THE SOCIETY OF
ST. VINCENT DE PAUL**

FEED. CLOTHE. HOUSE. HEAL.



1st Quarter Wish List

Help support those we **serve** each month.

Just as your own needs change depending on the **season**, so do ours!
 We're asking for specific **food** items and **personal items** for all ages and sizes.

- | Feed. | Clothe. | House. | Heal. |
|---|---|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cases of water • Canned meats • Canned tuna • Dry rice/beans • Cereal/oatmeal • Canned chili w/ beans • Pasta noodles • Pasta sauce • Canned fruit • Peanut Butter | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Men's underwear (XL-XXL) • Men's socks • Men's sneakers/boots • Men's jeans (27- 68) • Men's clothes (XL-XXL) • Rain panchos • Winter jackets | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clean backpacks • Gently used yoga mats • Laundry soap/pods • Bike U-locks • Twin bed sheets • Blankets • Rolling luggage | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shaving razors • Shampoo/conditioner • Toothbrushes/paste • Body wash • Lip balm • Lotion • Deodorant • Combs/brushes • Shaving cream • Diapers (sizes 5,6,7) |





St. Vincent de Paul Society
Vincentian Support Services
P.O. Box 13600
Phoenix AZ 85003

NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION
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Phoenix, ARIZONA
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Save the date
General Membership via Zoom
March 20, 2021
