



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

St. Vincent de Paul – A Saint for Today!



Tuesday, September 27th, is the feast of our patron saint, St. Vincent de Paul. All Vincentians are called to celebrate the feast of our Society's patron saint. St. Vincent de Paul is my hero not because he nearly single handedly reformed and revived the Catholic Church in France or because he brought new meaning and organizational form to the corporal works of mercy, but because he was flawed and gradually grew in holiness.

Little is known about St. Vincent de Paul's early life but historical sources note that his desire to enter the priesthood was self-serving. He was so ashamed of his family that once as a seminarian he refused to even greet his own father because he was embarrassed by his appearance. In becoming a priest, Vincent hoped to escape poverty and to live a more comfortable life. By his own admission, he was impatient, irritable, and easily moved to anger.

After a short time in service of the King of France, St. Vincent de Paul was assigned to the di Gondi family. In so many ways, this assignment was his dream job. He was in the service of an influential family, lived in luxury, tutored their children, and was even invited to serve as the spiritual director to the Countess herself.

So, what changed the trajectory of Vincent's life and moved him from being self-centered to becoming a reformer, advocate, and servant to the poor? The answer is simple. Vincent's heart was transformed through his personal encounters with the vulnerable and needy people of his day.

One day, the Countess di Gondi brought Vincent to the beside of one of her elderly servants who was terrified of dying without making a good confession. St. Vincent de Paul was touched by the man's desperate need for someone in the clergy to be able to offer him a last confession. This encounter eventually made him aware that the local priests were uneducated and this led Vincent to provide seminaries for priests that served in areas where only peasants lived. A later request by a parishioner to help a poor family where everyone was seriously ill, inspired him to form the Confraternities of Charity, later to become the Ladies of Charity.

As Vincent encountered the poor, the needy, the disenfranchised, the prisoners, the slaves, the elderly, and those in need of spiritual assistance, he began to see the face of Christ. These experiences and service to the poor helped him to grow in holiness. They provided him with a means to develop the virtues of sacrifice, humility, simplicity, gentleness, and zeal. He became more loving, even tempered and kind.

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St. Vincent de Paul – A Saint for Today!

Vincent understood that we cannot do this work alone or even travel on the road to holiness by ourselves. We need one another. St. Vincent de Paul often said, "What must be done? Charity must be done collaboratively, with planning, adequate resources, and professionalism but most of all with great love and respect for those being served". The word that he used for his outreach ministries was confraternity which literally means a society devoted especially to a religious or charitable cause.

We are a society organized in conferences that is devoted to a religious cause and for charitable works. We work together. We organize and plan. We secure the resources necessary to serve the poor. We strive to treat everyone with respect and dignity. We focus on seeing the face of Christ in all people but most especially in the poor and needy. We are changed by our encounters with the poor. Just like Vincent we too can move closer to the heart of Jesus through those encounters.

As Vincentians, we are called to follow the same path to holiness that led Vincent to sainthood. Growth takes time. It took Vincent thirty-three years to write the Rule for his priests and a lifetime to become a saint. As we celebrate his feast day, let us celebrate his life and his legacy. Let us think not just about the end of Vincent's journey but of the journey itself. If St. Vincent de Paul were with us today, he would ask each one of us, "What does God ask of you today?" May God grant us the ability to hear His voice, to see what needs to be done, and the strength to answer His call.

Please note that under the following conditions, Vincentians can obtain an indulgence on the Feast of St. Vincent de Paul (September 27) - Members of the Society may gain a plenary indulgence when participating in a Festival Meeting, provided they make their Confession, receive Communion, pray for the intentions of the Pope, and promise to observe faithfully the Rule of the Society. The Feast of St. Vincent de Paul is one of the festival dates that Vincentians can use to obtain an indulgence. The Festive meeting must include mass and a meeting.

*By Shirley Smalley
Board Member*



THE FIRE OF VINCENTIAN CHARISM

PRAYER SERVICE

Leader:

**O God, your love ignites our hearts, captures our imaginations, shapes our dreams, and awakens possibilities.
Make us disciples on fire with your love so that we can become true followers of St. Vincent de Paul.**

Help us, O God, to enkindle in others a sense of hope that transformation is possible...and give us the grace to transmit to others the fire of the charism of St. Vincent.



Leader: Let us pray (alternate sides)

**When the heart is on fire, light comes from within.
With the eyes of an enlightened heart we can see
the hope to which we are called.
By responding to the call to be a Vincentian,
we proclaim that the quest to be a servant of the poor
is the fire of our lives.**

**The path to seeing with the eyes of the heart is discovered
in the journey of discipleship. It is not an easy journey.
It is an ongoing effort to live the gospel with integrity—always trying, sometimes succeeding, often failing,
recognizing the need for patience, and then trying again.**

**Discipleship is a way of being in the world
that affects every relationship.
Disciples shape one another according to the action
of the Spirit in their lives.
The energy of the disciples flows from faith
in what is unseen yet believed.
At its very core, discipleship is a call to a love so radical
that it never gives up on God, one's neighbor, or one's self.**

**Disciples are called to love well, as Jesus did,
with hope, truth, fidelity and compassion.
This leads inevitably to taking a stand with
the Christ of the paschal mystery who willingly
laid down his life in love
so that all may have life in abundance.**

Leader: **We remember the times of our lives,
when we felt God's warmth within us
and we were on fire to do his will.**

All: God of Fire, burst into flame in our lives.

Leader: **We remember the people of Faith gone before us, ...
messengers of a gracious God.**

All: God of Fire, fan our faith into flame.

Leader: **We remember those in our lives today,
whose flaming hearts have encouraged
and touched us on our journey.**

All: God of Fire, fuel us into thankfulness.

Leader: **We remember our journey,
and how we need to trust in God's love
and to pray to live as illuminators
in our world.**

All: God of Fire, empower us to trust.

Leader: **God of fire, send your sparks to enlighten our lives
and fill us with your passionate life.
Transform us with your love and touch us
with your goodness.
May the truth we seek and accept,
fuel all we are and do.**

All: **May God the Father who made us, bless us.
May God the Son send his grace among us.
May the Holy Spirit move within us and give us
eyes that see, ears that hear, hearts that love,
and hands that do God's work.**

**May the God of peace watch over us
and lead us as we walk together,
as Vincentians, into the future.
Amen**

THE ALICE GARVEY 2022 EXCELLENCE IN YOUTH NOMINEES



The SVdP Diocesan Council of Phoenix happily nominated River Vogelsang, a past president and former member of our ACS Vibrant Vinnies Youth conference, for the first Alice Garvey Excellence in Youth Award. Although River was not selected for the award, his bio was featured in a recent E-Gazette. River is a young Vincentian with a heart for service and the poor and we are so proud that he is a part of our Council. Thank you for all that you and the other young Vincentians do to help those in need.

Please see his bio below.

River Vogelsang — Diocesan Council of Phoenix

River Vogelsang is currently a sophomore at Notre Dame Catholic High School. He first joined the ACS Vibrant Vinnies in fifth grade at Annunciation Catholic School in Cave Creek and served as his Conference's president for two terms. Under his leadership, his Conference doubled in size and expanded service projects and activities. They participated in food serving, ministering to the homeless, food drives, and much, much more.

River was the featured speaker at two Phoenix Diocesan Council board leadership retreats. Last year, River represented his District Council at the National Assembly in Houston. His dedication and commitment to serving the poor has touched the hearts of many long-time Vincentians. Few people his age have so fully and ardently embraced the mission and works of the Society. In the endearing spirit of our youth, he quietly emulates the essential virtues of St. Vincent de Paul. You only need to meet River to know that he is a true Vincentian, and to believe that, because of his efforts, and those of his youthful compatriots likewise infused with Frederic's zeal, the future of our Society will be in good hands.



From the Desk of the Conference Resources Committee

The Society's Two Person Policy:

Interviews with those in need require two Vincentians, whether in their home, in an office, or at a mutually agreed upon location. Person-to-person member visits with those we serve should always be done in twos. This also includes the occasional times when members provide transportation to those seeking help (i.e., taking someone to a doctor's appointment).

From the very start of the Society, members went out in teams of two or more. While we now think of this requirement as a form of legal protection, the real basis for this practice was to follow the model used by Christ when He sent out his apostles two by two. When we interact with the poor in teams, we have a deeper sense of community and a clearer understanding that the work we do is not our own. Of course, this requirement does also protect everyone involved from various types of accusations, and it helps to reduce any misinterpretations that may occur during conversations.

Qualified Conferences & Voting:

In order to vote at the District and Diocesan Council levels, a conference must be in "good standing". To be in good standing a conference must have a full slate of officers that are fully enhanced, active members, be in compliance with the Catholic Diocese of Phoenix Safe Environment Training requirements, hold at least two meetings a month, submit timely quarterly and annual reports, tithe to their District Council, and be represented at a minimum of 80% of their District Council and 50% of the General Membership Meetings (GMM) for the past twelve months. Remember, attending your District Council and Diocesan General Membership meetings is an important part of being a conference.

Safe Environment Training Renewals Are Now Available:

All Vincentians and Vincentian volunteers associated with the works of a parish-based conference must complete and renew their Safe Environment status as required by their Diocese. This applies to all members and volunteers even if they have no contact with minors. For the Diocese of Phoenix, annual renewals are required. Everyone must renew at the beginning of the SET year which begins on July 1st regardless of when they took their initial foundation class or last renewal. Renew now and avoid having your file archived.



BRICKS to build the foundation

Gifting the Vincentian Way

Gift giving is a natural human behavior. If you watch toddlers at play, you will often see them offering their toys and/or food to other children and adults. Giving gifts is a way of showing love and appreciation to others. Giving is a joyful and gratifying activity for both the giver and the receiver. A gift is often the best and most concrete way for us to show how much we care. Because Vincentians have giving hearts, conferences and councils are often tempted to use conference or council funds to provide gifts and/or contributions to the clergy or to their parishes.

On the surface, giving gifts or funds looks like a great way for conferences and councils to contribute to our individual parishes and to show our appreciation for the support of our clergy. However, if we look deeper into such practices, we see they fall well outside the mission of the Society and the intent of our donors. The Rule of the Society is clear that the funds donated to the conference are for the poor. Our funds are given to us by donors who want us to use those funds for the direct benefit of the poor. Giving away the donations that we receive from others to show our appreciation is not appropriate as this money was not ours to begin with. Certainly few if any of our donors would step forward to contribute to us if they knew we were simply passing on their funds in the name of the Society as gifts to clergy or in support of other parish programs or projects. If they wanted their funds to be used in that manner, they would have donated directly to that cause.

Conferences and councils are free to give gifts to the clergy for their support and encouragement, but they must come directly from donations of members. The best way to collect funds for such gifts is to take up a special collection before or after the meeting so that members understand it is for a specific purpose other than the works of the Society.

If conferences or councils want to support a parish project, program or campaign, they can do a separate fundraiser designated for that purpose and donors need to be informed in advance where the funds are going so that they have no expectations that the funds will go to serve the poor and needy. For example, one conference in our Diocese wanted to help fund the Capital Campaign of their Parish's Building Fund so they compiled, published and sold Community Cookbooks. The project was clearly marketed as benefitting the parish and the index page of each cookbook indicated where the profits would go. Several of our area conferences participate in their annual parish or school auctions. When participating in these fundraisers, they are careful to make sure that all items donated come directly from their members and a written disclaimer saying that no funds from the conference were used to secure the auction items is clearly displayed.

It only makes sense that we cannot express our gratitude or support by using other people's donations. We must give from our own pockets, our own talents and our own hearts, for if we do anything else it is really not a gift from us at all.

Please note that paying for things such as rent, electricity or copies is an operational expense and is not considered a gift/donation.

Bike Drive



Did you know on Saturday, September 17th, during the General Membership Meeting, SVdP staff will be collecting gently used bikes for our ABC 15 Bike Drive across the Valley at Earnhardt Auto Centers? If you have a gently used bike you wish to donate, Earnhardt Auto Centers are accepting them now thru the 30th. Since our main collection event is during the general membership meeting, we invite you to drop off your bike early at one of the Valley locations. Click the link below to see your nearest Earnhardt deal location.

<https://www.nobull.com/earnhardt-family-dealerships-in-phoenix-az-and-las-vegas-nv>



Sacred Heart Conference

The Vinny Skinny



Parade volunteers from left: Marilyn, Jim, Rod, Patrick, and Dean.



Jim and Patrick keep an eye peeled for coupon takers. 575 coupons were handed out during the parade.

Thrift Store/Conference get exposure at Frontier Days Parade

The recently re-wrapped Sacred Heart Conference Thrift Store truck along with a handful of energized Vincentians made its first appearance in Prescott Frontier Parade July 2.

The truck's message provided plenty of promotion along the well-attended parade route. As well, five apron-clad volunteers distributed 575 store coupons to parade patrons.

As the truck rolled down the parade route, Vincentians could hear shouts of "Thank you!"; "Thank you for what you do!" and "That's my favorite thrift store!"

Six different public address announcers along the parade route touted the Thrift Store as well as the works of the conference.



Marilyn finds some coupon takers early on the parade route.



Rod and Jim offer coupons to the crowd.

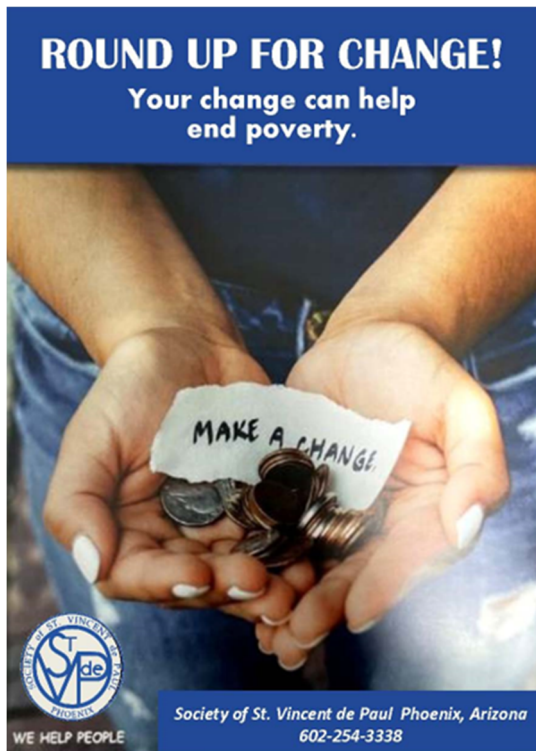


Dean manned the wheel of the Thrift Store truck. Many shouts of "Thank you for what you do!" were heard by the Vincentian parade volunteers.



The recently "re-wrapped" Thrift Store truck provided great promotion for the store as well as the conference.

SVdP Thrift Stores



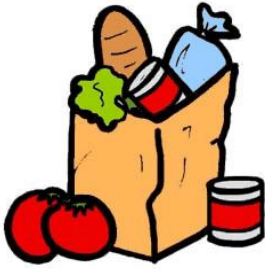
YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Did you know that our Diocesan Council Thrift Stores are participating in a “Round Up for Change” program? This program is an inventive way to increase the profits in our area stores so that more funds can be generated in support of our conference and council activities and works. The program is simple. When you check out at any of our stores, the cashier simply asks if you would like to round up to the nearest dollar. This concept is not new. McDonalds and several other companies do the same thing in support of their own charities or charities they support.

Now is the perfect time for you, your family and friends to go into one of our stores and make a purchase or two and “Round Up”. Our stores are a wonderful source of great items. Whether the merchandise your purchase is new or gently used, it is nice to get things at an affordable price while helping the poor and needy at the same time. Every time I go into one of our stores, I find things that I never knew I needed.

Remember us when it comes time to get rid of things you no longer want or need. Tell your friends about us and better still bring them in for a wonderful shopping experience. We are always looking for caring volunteers. There are so many ways that you can support our stores directly or by referring others to us. We can round up volunteers, shoppers, donations, and change all in support of helping others.

Lets Celebrate Vincentian Life on September 17, 2022 at the General Membership Meeting. Mass is at 8:30 am, followed by celebration and Business Meeting.



ANNUAL CONFERENCE FOOD DRIVE

If your conference is participating in the Annual Food Drive, please contact **Lucy Meraz (602-850-6761)** if you have not already done so already.

Please note that this year you will need to pick up your supplies in Food Reclamation, and not in the Hall of Banners. Please pick up after the General Membership Meeting on Saturday, September 17, 2022.

Thank you.



Newsletter Articles

If you or your Conference would like to submit an article for the October Newsletter, please submit your article to Sandy Edwards by September 15, 2022.

Great News:

*We now have a dedicated email for your newsletter articles!
Please Email your articles to:
newsletter@svdpaz.org*

OZANAM FORMATION EXPERIENCE (OFE)

UPDATED

IN-PERSON

**Sacred Heart – Prescott – Saturday, October 1 – 9am – 3pm (OFE 1 & 2)
Sunday, October 2 – 9am – 3 pm (OFE 3 & 4)**

**Church of the Ascension – Fountain Hills – Saturday, October 8 – 9am – 3pm
(OFE 1 & 2) Saturday, October 22 – 9am – 3pm (OFE 3 & 4)**

Pre-registration required as class size will be limited

Register by text, email, or phone by sending your name, email, phone number, address, conference name, and class date/dates to

Mary Ann Hunter

maryannhunter44@gmail.com

928-699-9232

Attending both classes is one qualification for acceptance as a full member of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul.

