



U.P. VINCENTIAN

NEWSLETTER MARQUETTE DIOCESE COUNCIL, ST. VINCENT DE PAUL

SPRING 2017

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~ Anything worth doing is worth preparing for ~

I'd like to challenge you with this. Imagine that this Lent is going to be different from any Lent we've yet experienced. Imagine that the Lord is going to be offering us many graces this Lent. Let us look at how God can and will transform our lives, with greater freedom, greater joy, and a deeper desire for love and service.

I believe that if we really want something, we will choose it.

So let this Lent be a wonderful season of grace for us; if we allow ourselves to accept it. We will accept it to the degree that we really want it. So, in these days before Lent, we need to prepare our hearts. We need to prepare by realizing how much we want to grow in His love, how much we need to lighten our spirits and experience real joy, and how much some parts of our lives really need to change.

So, let us begin now to prepare our hearts in a process of getting ready for what our heart really desires - a closer relationship with our Savior. In the action of preparation we need to anticipate and not see Lent as an 'ordeal' or a time to dread it in some way. Once we do that we have already pre-disposed ourselves not to get anything out of Lent. So these days before Lent are a time to start anticipating something wonderful is about to happen.

Our focus is on what God wants to give us.

Our sense of excitement and anticipation will grow more easily as we begin to imagine what God wants to give to us. There is really something coming that we can truly look forward to. If we get too focused on ourselves, and what we are going to do or not do, we risk missing the gift that God wants to give us. We need to be keenly aware of the fact that grace comes from God. This is about God's great desire to bless us. Then, it is much easier for us to imagine what we really 'want' to do is to place ourselves in a space to 'receive' what God wants to give us.

St. Ignatius throughout "Spiritual Exercises" suggests that before we pray we prepare ourselves. As Lent approaches, the same idea of preparation can be helpful. Some ways we can prepare are:

- Have we physically set aside a prayer space for our Lenten journey?
- What time of day will we pray during Lent?
- What are the 'exercises' or prayer methods will we be using during Lent?

Let this be the beginning for us. Let this be the Lent that we ask our Lord Jesus, "What is the grace you desire to deepen within me over these next 40 days?"

In His love,
Roger G. Krebsbach
DCM President



— 2017 Calender of Events —

March 23-25	Mid-year meeting – St. Louis MO
May 6	Ozanam Orientation – Iron River
May 8	DCM Meeting 10:30 a.m. Eastern – St. Peter Cathedral
June 22-24	North Central Regional meeting St. Charles, IL
Aug. 9-13	Invitation for Renewal – St. Louis, MO
August 14	DCM Meeting 10:30 a.m. Eastern – St. Peter Cathedral
August 18-20	Annual SVdP Retreat at Marygrove Retreat Center
August 29-Sept. 2	National Assembly – Tampa, FL
Sept. 19-20	Annual Store Managers/Store Committee Mtg. – Mqt.
Oct. 14-15	Mini Convention and Corporate Communion – Mqt.
Nov. 13	DCM Meeting 10:30 a.m. Eastern – St. Peter Cathedral
Dec. 6-10	Invitation for Renewal – St. Lewis, MO



Lenten Journey ~ Spiritual Advisor’s Insights

We are soon approaching the special blessing of the Lenten Season where we can take time to surrender everything to Jesus so that He can work miracles through us.

Through our St. Vincent de Paul Society and being Vincentians, we can be the Light of the World and the salt of the earth to our friends that we serve. We need to trust our Lord Jesus and His Holy Spirit to provide the strength and energy we need to serve others and take us through each day's journey.

No matter what happens each day, we need to practice the discipline of thanksgiving so we may experience the Light of Jesus' Presence in our lives. If we keep our eyes on Jesus, He will never lead us to do anything without equipping us for the task.

This beautiful season of Lent gives us the time to pray, fast and sacrifice for our families, friends, our country, its leaders and about everything that happens to us. Then we must leave the out-comes up to Jesus, trusting Him to accomplish what is best for us.

May our God, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit bless us throughout this Blessed Lent.

Joanne Stefl
DCM Spiritual Advisor

Accepting ALL Neighbors in Need

Late last year, an individual contacted area media, a special interest group, the U.S. National Council – SSVdP, SVdP in another region and eventually one of our thrift stores claiming he and his spouse had experienced discrimination from one of our members. It was a serious charge and created a flurry of emails and phone calls to Vincentians in several states and law enforcement to determine the facts and how to respond to his allegations.

After a thorough review of the records, there was no basis for his claim but that would not matter if the allegations were made public. Everyone reads or hears of unsubstantiated charges against a person or organization and remembers them but seldom does the other side of the story carry the same weight when heard or recalled. Not knowing what was going to occur in the next day or two left all of us gravely concerned.

Our saving grace was our faith – the Vincentians all turned to our Blessed Mother Mary by praying the rosary for the protection of SVdP as well as for forgiveness and healing to the individual making the false claims.

In 1617, Vincent had proposed Mary as the patroness and protector of charitable works. Frederic insisted that the Society take Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception as its patroness. *“To this day, Vincentians implore Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception, their patroness, to intercede for their Councils and Conferences, and their lives and ministry.”* 3.4 Devotion to Mary - The Manual

Our prayers were answered and the matter went away with no further contact from the individual. This incident is being shared for two reasons - each of us must show love and concern to everyone who seeks assistance from SVdP and in all trials we should turn to our Blessed Mother to intercede on our behalf.

Vincentians must live by the words written in The Manual and A Vincentian Guide to Diversity/Multicultural Issues.

Organized locally, Vincentians witness God’s love by embracing all works of charity and justice. The Society collaborates with other people of good will in relieving need and addressing its causes, making no distinction in those served because, in them, Vincentians see the face of Christ.

The Manual

The Society’s Bylaws approved by National Council members for every level of the Society in 2005 include the following nondiscrimination statement: the Society “actively seeks to recruit and retain volunteers without regard to race, creed (with the exception of active members), color, gender, sexual orientation, disability, marital status, veteran status, national origin, age or physical handicap.” The Society also makes no distinction in those who are served.

A Vincentian Guide to Diversity/Multicultural Issues

Our primary goal as Vincentians is to grow spiritually and secondly to offer person to person service. This situation helped all involved to grow spiritually because we were delivered from what could have been a huge public media disaster for SVdP both locally and nationally due to our Blessed Mother’s intercession. It also served as a reminder that we must see each person who comes to us as a child of God with no judgment on their appearance, lifestyle or status.

Thank you for your work in serving one another and our neighbors in need.

Double Duty Not Permitted

By Mike Syslo

One of the main principles that has been promoted within the Society is that this is a “we” organization - not a “you” or “me” one. All of the works of the Conference, all of the responsibilities, all of the decisions are to be made by all of the members - not just one or a minority few of the members.

On page 58 of “The Manual of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul in the United States” (2002 version) will be found the following statements: *“The President is, as it were, the soul of a Conference; but should not, however, absorb, through excess of zeal or dedication, the activity of the Conference to oneself. The President should see to it that every member of the Conference is given a sufficient amount of charitable work to perform, ensuring also that the various tasks are distributed evenly among the members and carried out in the spirit of the major objectives of the Society.”*

One of the areas that is ignored in this respect is that of Conference Officer. We come across this issue often. A Conference is supposed to have a minimum of four officers: President, Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer. But many times we find a President/Treasurer or a Vice-President/Secretary or a Secretary/Treasurer. Double duty is not permitted. This is contrary to the RULE and Spirit of the Society.

It is easy to blame the President for not appointing officers. It is easy to blame the Rule because brand new people cannot be officers. It is easy to blame the RULE because non-Catholics and employees of the Society cannot be officers. Yes, that is in the RULE in Part III Statutes 3 and 14. The real blame, however, falls on the existing Active (Full) Members of the Conference for not coming forward. The responsibility for officer-ship falls to the existing members and we should not be dependent on finding someone new in the parish to take the job.

The President has a lot of responsibilities and a lot of things to just keep track of. It gets very frustrating when members are unwilling to come forward to help with those responsibilities. There is an old escapist adage that says something to the effect that if you leave it long enough someone else will come forward and take care of it. Look in the mirror, folks. Someone else is you.

Yes, the President has the responsibility to appoint the other officers. But she/he can only appoint people who show an interest in helping. Do not expect the President to do everything. Do not let the President do everything. The full responsibility for the actions of the Conference falls to the members regardless of who actually caused the action or made the decision. Non-participation gives you a heavier responsibility since you could have made things better and didn't bother.

Do not allow one or a few to do what everybody should be doing together.

2015-2016 ANNUAL REPORT TOTALS

Summary of Income and Expenditures of Conferences

Beginning Balance	\$259,166
Receipts	
Donations from Members	\$75,122
Church/Poor Box Collections	\$243,021
Fund Raising Proceeds.....	\$284,181
Other SVDP Units' Contributions	\$480,299
Other.....	\$73,044
Total	\$1,155,667
Cash Available (Beginning Balance and Total Receipts)	\$1,414,833
Expenses	
Those We Serve.....	\$904,879
Disaster Contributions	\$1,325
Domestic Twinning	\$9,220
Foreign Twinning	\$6,600
Sub Total	\$922,024
Solidarity Contributions.....	\$6,700
Operating Expenses	\$121,954
Other.....	\$40,177
Sub Total	\$168,831
Total	\$1,090,855
 Ending Balance	 \$323,978

"In Kind" Goods & Services Provided

Value of Food, Furniture, Clothing, & Other	\$531,970
Value of Professional Services.....	\$34,194
Total "In Kind".....	\$566,164

No. of Persons Helped.....33,593

Number of People Served

A. Home Visits	1,666
B. Prison Visits	20
C. Hospital Visits.....	149
D. Eldercare Visits.....	1,676
E. Other In-Person Visits.....	8,737
F. Telephone Contacts	6,320
G. Jobs Obtained.....	73
H. Referrals.....	1,810
I. Travel Aid	523
J. Spiritual Aid/Sacraments	783
K. Other	1,984
 Total Persons Contacted (A to F).....	 18,568
Total Hours of Service.....	55,010
Estimated Total of Unreimbursed Miles	134,792

**Society of
St. Vincent de Paul**

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District Councils
Established 1982

Copper Country – Tom Vichich
Escanaba – Patricia Gartland
Ironwood – Patricia Niksich
Iron Mountain – Bob Peters
Ishpeming – Steve Perucco
Marquette – Michael Gschwind
Eastern UP – Open

Conference Presidents

St. Cecilia & St. Agnes.....Jo Callovi
St. Christopher.....Jacy Williams
St. Peter.....Open
St.Rita.....Gerald Pierce
Sacred Heart of Jesus.....
.....Geraldine Franz
St. John & St. Joseph.....
.....Sydney Edington
St. Paul.....Kathleen Carlson
St. Francis.....Fran Gundlach
St. Anthony.....Brenda Tregembo
Holy Family (Ont.)..Carol Yakovich
Guardian Angels.....Louise Holmes
St. Anne (Esc.)...Mary Lu Gaudette
St. Sebastian.....Al Gaiss
St. Louis the King.....Charles Hillier
St. Michael.....Karen Reese
St. Stanislaus Kostka..Cindi Jenkins
All Saints.....Gale St. Martin
St. Francis de Sales.....Julie Burrell
St. Thomas.....Robert Caron
St. Mary & St. Barbara.....
.....Maxine Meneghini
Our Lady of the Snows.....
.....Fred Hurban
St. Augustine.....Carol Kellow
Holy Family (Flat Rock).....
.....Karen Berbohm
Immaculate Conception – St. Mary
.....Candace Dott
Sacred Heart (L’Anse).....
.....Georgia Schmidt
Our Lady of Peace.....
.....Martin Celeski
Resurrection.....Joe Masini
Precious Blood.....Glenda Keiran
St. Joseph & St. Patrick.....
.....Les Yeip
St. Anne (Chassell).....Open
Sts. Martha & Mary...Doug Slowik
St. Elizabeth Ann Seton...Ray Viau

Vincentian Q and A

National Council Website

The following article is from the National Council's website: www.svdpusa.org. Click on Members and go to Documents: Governance in a Box: Q & A Master Index. There is a wealth of information on many topics that come up in SSVdP.

Vincentian use of Society's resources:

Are Members allowed to use any of the Society's resources (food, clothing, etc.) for their own personal use?

In every set of nationally approved bylaws, the following paragraph exists: **Compensation:** *"No part of the property belonging to this entity, nor its net earnings or income shall ever inure to the benefit of any member or individual, or any person having a personal or private interest in the activities of the entity. There shall be no fee or honorarium for Conference service beyond reimbursement of expenses."* One example of the above is that members cannot receive a financial benefit from their involvement in the works of the Society. Some people think this refers to money only, but it does not. It refers to any resources that belong to the Society. Whether it is food, clothing, furniture, medications, or money, the members of the Society are not to take any for their personal use. The fact is that the members are not to benefit from the availability of any resources purchased or received as donations for the poor. For example, a member or volunteer may not take merchandise donated to a store for their own personal use. Another example, a member cannot go to the Conference food pantry and simply take food for their own use or use Conference gift vouchers to get things for their personal use. This also refers to using the Society's name or accounts in order to acquire something that will benefit an individual member. For example, a member cannot go to a food bank and under the name of St. Vincent de Paul purchase food for their own use.



Conferences, Stores and Special Works

As Vincentians, we take pride in being part of the large, Society of St. Vincent de Paul family. We have “family” members throughout the U.S. and around the world – many of you have traveled and met some of them. We are blessed to have a shared history, similar work (financial assistance, food pantries, material help, etc.) and common goals – to grow spiritually, in friendship and in service to one another.

Much like families where several generations live together, oftentimes our conferences and special works reside in one location – the SVdP Thrift Store. As in households with parents and children (toddlers to teenagers) and sometimes grandparents (plus a cat or dog), people have different habits – eating, sleeping, cooking, cleaning, noise levels, political views, morning people and night owls. We can get on one another’s nerves and it can get messy but in the end we are all still family. Each individual is unique and important to the strength of the family.

The same can be said for our conferences, stores, financial aid offices and food pantries. Every entity has a role in our Vincentian family and we are stronger for it. All of the special works have been developed by the Vincentians – food pantries, thrift stores, transitional housing, soup kitchens, RX assistance, holiday programs and more. Vincentians, employees and volunteers serve our neighbors in need through every special work.

SVdP Thrift Stores are the most readily recognized part of SVdP in the community. They are an important part of our Vincentian family because they provide space for food pantries, financial aid offices and supply clothing, household goods and furniture for vouchers.

The conferences are our ministry while the stores are the business side of our organization. Sixteen of our seventeen stores have employees and all have volunteers. Store managers work very hard to ensure the stores are profitable and cover all of the expenses (wages, insurances, utilities, supplies, vehicles, snow removal, waste disposal, etc.) so the excess profits can go to the Districts to fund some of the other special works and conferences if needed.

Generally, the Vincentians serving in the financial aid offices are the first to meet our neighbors in need and will help with food, store vouchers or requests to the conference for financial assistance. Two areas where our Vincentian family members experience stress are sharing close quarters in the store and handling store vouchers.

Many of the food pantries are feeding more people than ever so the amount of groceries needed to meet the demand requires more space. It is difficult to find storage areas for food when the stores are sometimes bursting at the seams. Space is needed for donations, sorting, pricing, recycling, storing priced and seasonal merchandise, the manager’s office and the conferences’ special works – financial aid office, reception area and the actual food pantry. Everyone sees it from their own perspective - that their endeavor is the most important which is why relations may become a bit strained between one another. As a Vincentian family, we must remain flexible and willing to look at it from another’s point of view. Between all of us, it can and will work out to benefit everyone.

Another source of stress is store vouchers. There are only a couple of stores that receive compensation from the conferences on the items vouchered by the financial aid office; the others absorb the cost which can have a large impact on their bottom line. Some neighbors in need may present their requests one way to the Vincentian but once they go to the store their attitude changes and they become demanding to the employees and volunteers. Two ways to reduce the stress of dealing with vouchers is to have the Vincentians explain that vouchers are written for needs – not wants (basics such as bed, dresser, kitchen table, chairs, etc. and not an entertainment center, computer desk, artwork, etc.) and then accompany them when they are selecting their items in the store. The stores have a limited number of employees and volunteers who do not have the time to assist people using vouchers. Because furniture is a big ticket item, many stores limit store vouchers for those items to once a year. The store managers and store committees should work together to create a policy that works for all of them – that’s what families do.

Every family member (special work) is needed in the Vincentian family. We are all in this together serving others and one another. It is during those stressful moments when a smile, a kind word and allowing a little leeway will help keep peace in the family.

Seasonal Blessings and Activities

Sacred Heart Conference - L’Anse, MI

Sacred Heart Conference and its food pantry were very busy and blessed with volunteers and donations in November and December. God is so good.

Our monetary donations from November 11, 2016 to January 4, 2017 totaled \$12,251.52. These funds, in addition to food donated to the pantry (1,902 pounds) and TV6 Can-A-Thon donations (6151 pounds) helped to make Christmas bright. L’Anse, Baraga and other local communities donated over 8,050 pounds of food to help SVdP help others. On Wednesday, December 7th - TV6 Can-A-Thon Day, we kept 30 volunteers busy - eight students and one teacher from Sacred Heart School, Knights of Columbus members, Vincentians, food pantry volunteers and community members.

On December 16th, our Christmas Basket Day, we gave out 171 baskets which served a total of 488 individuals. The work was done by 32 volunteers – Vincentians, the Knights of Columbus and community members. We are truly blessed by our donors and volunteers!



OBITUARIES

Our condolences to:

Fran Ricci, member of Resurrection Conference in Hancock, on the death of her husband, Ted, on June 29, 2016.

Liz Merchberger, member of Our Lady of the Snows Conference in Hessel, on

the death of her brother-in-law, Paul, on December 22, 2016.

The family of Walter Maslanka who died July 3, 2016. Wally started and ran the St. Vincent De Paul Store in Bessemer for seven years alone. He bought an old store and was able to obtain used radiators through a donation from the old Grand View Hospital that was being torn down. Wally built shelves and painted the entire store.

The family of John Colantonio who died August 21, 2016. John was an associate member of St. Louis the King Conference in Marquette and a regular volunteer in the Marquette District food pantry.

Deacon Tom Corrigan, member of St. Anne Conference in Chassell, on the death of his father, Thomas F. Corrigan Sr., on January 25, 2017.

Connie Baldwin, member of Our Lady of the Snows Conference in Hessel, on the death of her brother, Patrick Gallagher, in Escanaba on January 25, 2017.

Chris Tippet, volunteer at Ironwood Store, whose husband died on February 10, 2017.

Judy Orn

Judith A. Orn, 76, of Hamilton Lakes, passed away on August 23, 2016 at

Dickinson County Hospital System. She was born August 23, 1940 in Kingsford, grew up in this area and was a 1958 Graduate of Kingsford. Judy married Emil Orn in 1963 at American Martyrs Church and worked as a Customer Representative for Wisconsin Electric for many years retiring in 2000. She was a member of St. Barbara's Church in Vulcan and president of the St. Barbara's St. Vincent DePaul Society.

Judy is survived by her husband, two sons and a daughter, a brother and sister in law, several nieces and a nephew.

Fr. Timothy Ekaitis offered the Mass of Christian Burial on August 29th at St. Barbara Catholic Church in Vulcan. In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made in her memory to St. Vincent DePaul.

Carol Biehl

Carol J. Biehl, 80, of Iron Mountain, died December 13, 2016 at her home. Carol was born in Dearborn, MI on March 29, 1936. She married Dennis Biehl and together they had five wonderful children. She was the operating room secretary for 28 years. In her retirement she managed a laundromat for the next 11 years. She was a member of St. Mary & St. Joseph Catholic Church in Iron Mountain where she served as a Eucharistic Minister. She was also a Vincentian - a member of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul - for 40 years. Carol loved spending time in the Adoration Chapel praying her rosary for all those she loved.

Carol is survived by her five children and their families. She was preceded in death by her husband, Dennis.

A Mass of Christian Burial was held on December 16th with Fr. Janusz Romanek presiding. No Vacation for Poverty

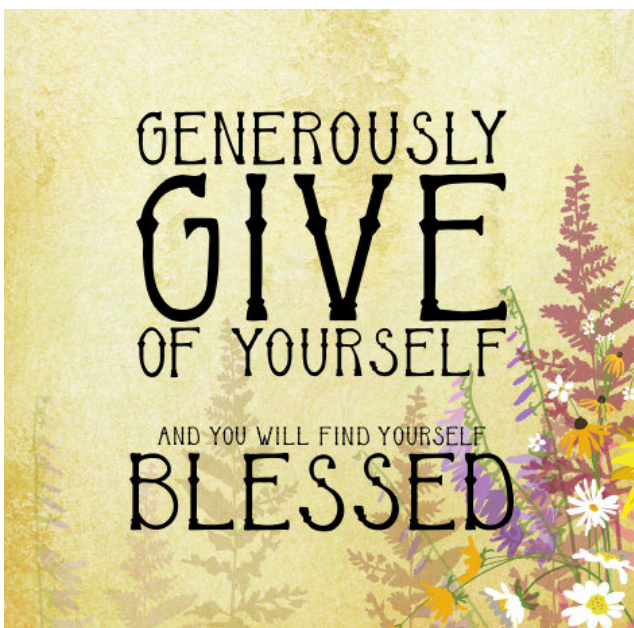
No Vacation for Poverty

We are soon to move from the Easter Season to ordinary time in our Liturgical Calendar. Like life, our prayer has highs and lulls, time to feast (Easter), time to fast (Lent). Ordinary time is part of this ebb and flow, and it coincides with the beginning of summer, vacation season, time off from school, perhaps some more leisurely days and weeks.

Every year I have a tussle with my choirs, small tussle; they want to take the summer off. I remind them we don't take the summer off from the Eucharist, and we need good music to lead us in prayer at every Eucharist. I accept that we will often be smaller, and that we won't try anything much too demanding, but we will sing, and they will lead each time we meet to celebrate the paschal mysteries in our Sunday worship.

As you know, poverty doesn't take a vacation either. In fact, often as children are not receiving nutrition while at school, family budgets get stretched even more tightly. Our Vincentian commitment to service for better or worse is a 365 day a year commitment. We may be smaller, and need to schedule our home visits less immediately, but we will need to be sure we remember that we don't take the summer off from our compassionate service.

Please let there be an ebb and flow in your life; it is a sign and necessity of healthy living. At the same time, please be ready to serve also. Enjoy the warmth after this long winter, glory in the beauty all around as nature blossoms and grows, get away for a while, and come back refreshed, and give thanks always for the opportunity to be the hands, and voice, and heart of Christ Jesus for those who come in need, asking and needing our compassionate service.



Fr. Jim Cormack cm
(This article is from the National Council's website.)

St. John and St. Joseph Conference, Ishpeming, provides a Food 4 Kids program in the summer. Families with school age children receive additional food to help stretch the budget since the children aren't receiving lunch at school.

**Diocesan Council of Marquette, MI
Society of St. Vincent de Paul**

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**Announcing our
National President-Elect**

The time of discernment is over and our Conferences and Councils have cast their ballots.

Ralph Middlecamp is our National Council president-elect. His six year term begins October 1, 2017. Please pray for Ralph as he prepares to assume office.



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