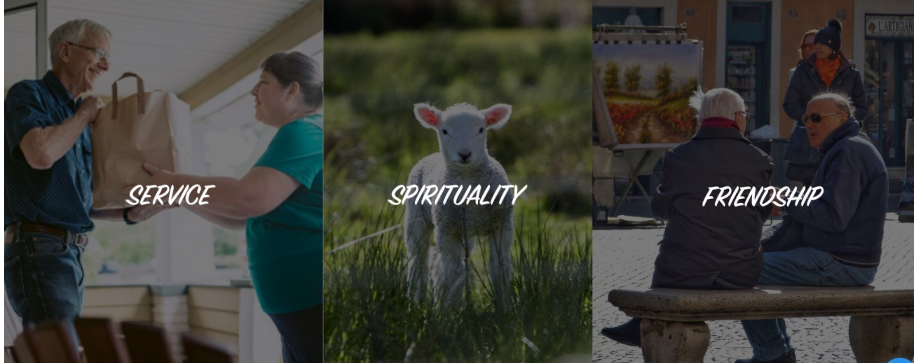


# Faith in Action



## A Message from our President

Dear Vincentians,

I would like to take this opportunity to pay tribute to Jacques and Helen Brunelle for their Vincentian charism, and for introducing the FIA Newsletter to the Worcester Diocese. The newsletter has connected all of us to the great work being done by conferences throughout the diocese. Thanks to their vision, dedication, and commitment, we are even more unified in our mission work, conferences can reach out to one another and engage in meaningful dialogue to assist with programs, fundraising, and collaboration, and to offer support.

Just recently, I had the great pleasure of attending a meeting with Blessed Sacrament, Immaculate Conception, and St. Mary's of Uxbridge. Blessed Sacrament and Immaculate Conception met with St. Mary's to discuss the annual Friends of the Poor Walk that St. Mary's very successfully holds every fall. In this meeting, I found myself reflecting, on the fact that we have one conference sharing information on fundraising activity, and two conferences working together to raise funds to benefit each conference, and it warmed my heart. Personally, I thank the newsletter for making us all aware of what's happening in the SVdP Diocese of Worcester.

Saying goodbye is difficult, but for Jacques and Helen, moving to be near their children and grandchildren is an exciting new chapter in their lives. Helen told me, "The church where we will register as parishioners has an SVdP conference – imagine that!" The conference soon to meet Jacques and Helen, without a doubt, is very blessed.

We assured Jacques and Helen, that we will continue the newsletter. And, we have successfully accomplished putting out the summer edition. We hope you enjoy reading it and we welcome any suggestions that you may have regarding content. Please contact me, if you would like to join the FIA Newsletter Committee at [fianewswdc@gmail.com](mailto:fianewswdc@gmail.com) or call at 508-556-0559.

We wish Jacques and Helen all the best in their new home and would like to thank them for touching all our hearts with their friendship, spirituality, and service.

God Bless,

*Susan Treveloni*

### Inside this issue

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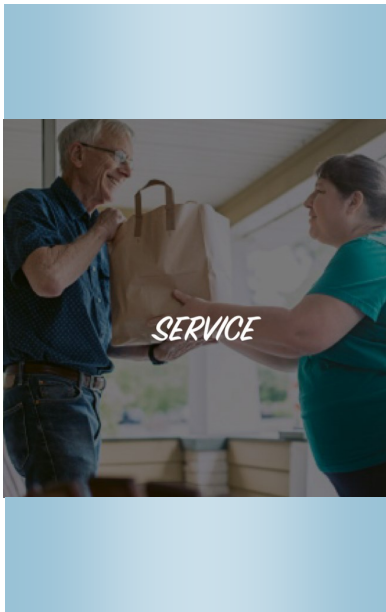
### Spirituality, Friendship and Service

Since its founding in 1833, the Essential Elements of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul have been Spirituality, Friendship and Service.

In this and future issues, we will explore those three Essential Elements and provide stories, profiles, information, and examples of how we can practice all three and grow in our shared Vincentian journey.

#### To Reach the Diocesan Council:

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## Friends of the Poor Walk

St. Mary's of Uxbridge has been participating in the SVDP "Walk For The Poor" since 2015. The walk has been a wonderful way to build friendships, increase awareness within the community, and raise funds to help St. Mary's conference with their mission work, helping our neighbors in need. From all aspects it's a win-win situation.

This fall, Blessed Sacrament and Immaculate Conception have joined together for a walk in Worcester. The three conferences met, and the St. Mary's team provided a lot of helpful information about how to organize the walk and a timeline to keep everyone on track.

With the help of St. Mary's, Blessed Sacrament and Immaculate Conception are well on their way to a successful "Walk For The Poor" this September.

For your information our National website has all the information to organize a walk. Just go to [svdpusa.org](http://svdpusa.org) and click on "Members," then scroll down and click on "Documents and Resources," then click on "Fundraising and Development," scroll down and you will see "The Friends Of The Poor Walk/Run".

*No work of charity is foreign to the society. It includes any form of help that alleviates suffering or deprivation and promotes human dignity and personal integrity in all their dimensions.*

*Rule I: 1.3*

### St. Joseph's - Fitchburg

St. Joseph conference in Fitchburg distributed 196,065 lbs. of food in 2021. That's 98 tons!

All this is possible thanks to donations of their many benefactors and the hard work of volunteers at St. Joseph and St. Bernard.

With the cost of food rising this year, demand will rise as well. We are blessed to have St. Joseph's, and the many food pantries throughout our diocese so successfully feeding our neighbors in need.

Thank you!



Project Just Because, located in Hopkinton, MA helps struggling families by supplying basic necessities such as warm clothing, food and school supplies for the past 24 years. They serve over 40,000 people in Massachusetts and run 13 different programs. They do not provide financial support or support with rent.

New and gently used clothing is provided to those in need. In addition, a free thrift store carries other small household items and books that have been donated.

Project Just Because also runs a Free Grocery store where those in need can "shop" fresh fruits and vegetables, dairy products, dry goods and fresh bread from local bakeries. One of their more unique offerings is a Gluten Free Food pantry for those with special dietary needs.

There are also a number of special holiday drives that are available in addition to their year round programs.

While Hopkinton is outside of the Worcester Diocese, many of the programs are available to Massachusetts residents. There are times when our neighbors in need have moved out of our area into Middlesex county. This is an excellent resource for those needing assistance with basic supplies.

For more information, please see their website: [www.projectjustbecause.org](http://www.projectjustbecause.org) or call them at 508.435.6511. They may also be reached by email at: [office@projectjustbecause.org](mailto:office@projectjustbecause.org).

## Changing Perspectives

### *What we thought...*

We received a call from a mom who is struggling to support herself and her thirteen-year-old daughter. She said that she previously lived with her parents, but due to both parents being ill, the house was sold. Her parents are now living in North Carolina with her sister, from whom she is estranged. She needed \$800.00 for her May rent. She went on to say that due to unfortunate circumstances she is also behind \$1,100.00 for her daughter's dance classes. In order for her child to participate in the upcoming dance recital, she needed to be current in her payments.

We started the intake process to get her history, and she was very forthcoming. She said that she was living in the basement of a house and provided us the names and telephone number of two people to whom she pays rent. She went on to say that her daughter is struggling with her gender identity and wants to become a male. Her struggle was so severe she even attempted suicide on Christmas night. As a result of her child's suicide attempt, she enrolled her daughter into a program supported by Community Health Link. She said the program is excellent and her daughter is currently on medication for depression and anxiety.



The mom said that Community Health Link told her they would pay her daughter's dance lessons. At the time the outstanding balance was \$2,140. We spoke with Community Health Link and discovered they paid \$500.00 through a Grant called "One Can Help," leaving a balance of \$1,640. The dance studio said they needed to receive the full payment in order for the daughter to attend the upcoming dance recital.

The mom told us her monthly income is approximately \$2,000 to \$2,200. She has a job and she also makes between \$150.00 – \$400.00 a month walking dogs. Her expenses are \$1,281 per month.

### *The Big Lie...*

As is the case for all matters, we needed to verify the owner of the property before we could consider paying the rent. We discovered the address did not exist. We called her back to verify the street number and she gave us another street number. That number also did not exist. We called her back and informed her that our research revealed that both addresses did not exist. However, we sensed that she really needed assistance and wanted to give her an opportunity to come forward with the truth about her situation. We reached out to her again and asked what was really going on. This time she gave us the address of her parents' house, where she is still living. She said she really didn't need the rent money; she needed the money for her daughter's dance studio. A home visit was made. She showed all the paperwork for the dance studio. She shared with us all of the albums of her daughter in dance costumes, beginning when she was 5 years old. She said she didn't know how to go about getting the money she needed to pay the studio so that her daughter could participate in the recital. She said she didn't think we would consider paying a dance studio, so she lied to get the money.

We then contacted the owner of the dance studio who verified for us that this mom was indeed telling us the truth about the outstanding invoice. They said it was \$2,140, and that they did receive \$500.00 from CHL, leaving a balance of \$1,640. We asked who would pay the remaining \$540 if we were able to assist with the \$1,100.00. The studio owner said they would forgive the remaining balance. The studio told us the mom had taken dance with them when she was young. The owner explained that the kids in her group are good kids and good role models for the daughter.

### *Looking through a different lens...*

During the home visit with the mom, through verification of the information with the dance studio and CHL, the mom's real agenda became apparent. We felt conflicted and did not know how to present this matter to our conferences or councils because we do not typically use conference or council funds toward extracurricular activities such as dance lessons. Or do we... and why can't we? We are asked to assist a teenage girl who has been in dance since she was 5 years old, has gone through a tough seven months and is still adjusting. She has one activity that she loves and it's about to be taken away. It's the one activity that allows her to express herself freely and be around other kids her age socially who also share her love of dance. Looking into the mom's eyes it was easy to see the need was real. God brought us together for a reason and everything was pointing to us helping.

### *God's answer...*

Two Vincentians stepped forward to pay the dance studio. The donation did not come from any account, but from the heart. The mom was so excited, she offered to pay the money back. The arrangement is \$100.00 a month for 11 months. God not only helped the mom and her daughter, He paid us back.



### In Memoriam

*O God, the bestower of forgiveness and the lover of human salvation, we beseech Thee, of Thy tender love, to grant that our sister and brother Vincentians, with their relatives and benefactors, who have passed out of this life, may, by the intercession of Blessed Mary, ever Virgin, and all thy saints, come to the fullness of eternal bliss, Through Christ our Lord.*

*Amen*

Let us remember all our past members whom God has called home.

Names of deceased Vincentians may be submitted to [FIANews-WDC@gmail.com](mailto:FIANews-WDC@gmail.com) for inclusion in future editions.



## Bringing All into our Vincentian Circle

During a conversation with our conference members at St. Mary of the Assumption in Milford, we began to look for ways to encourage members of the Brazilian community there to join as Vincentians. We had materials in English and Spanish and needed to acquire those materials in the Portuguese language. A call to National proved fruitless, as they only print SVdP information in English and Spanish. We then contacted Irene Frechette, Regional Vice President, and asked for her help. Within a few weeks, we received nine crucial SVdP documents in Portuguese from Mr. Renato Lima De Oliveira, SVdP International President of Sao Paulo, Brazil.

Our sincere thanks to Irene Frechette, such a good friend to our conferences, and to Mr. Renato Lima de Oliveira, for their help in trying to bring more members into our Vincentian circle.

Please contact us if you would like copies of these Portuguese materials.



*Mr. Renato Lima de Oliveira,  
International President St. Vincent de Paul*

## Vincentian Profile

### **A Vincentian Calling**

I remember being asked by a dear friend and fellow parishioner if I would attend an SVDP meeting and consider becoming a member of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul. At that time, I didn't know much about the Society, but I thought there was no harm in going along to listen. At that first meeting, I found myself drawn to the mission of the Society: a Catholic lay organization, serving those in need as well as helping our own spiritual growth. I reflected on my early years of growing up poor; I thought that I might have something to share and perhaps this is where God wants me to be.



In helping those in need, we show our love for God and for our neighbors. I am thankful for that friend: I know God sent her to me.

Susan Treloni

## SVdP Spirituality Resources

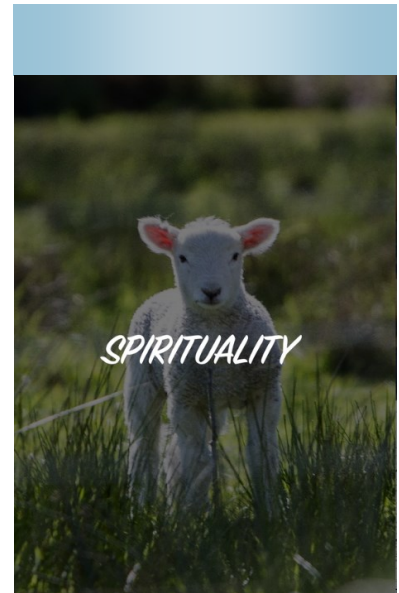
St. Vincent told us that we should “love God with the strength of our arms and the sweat of our brows”. We are called to be members of conferences which are “genuine communities of faith and love, of prayer and action”.

The SVDP National website (<https://ssvpusa.org>) contains many resources to aid conferences on their spiritual journey. One of those resources is Vincentian Reflections.

Vincentian reflections are based on the Sunday Gospel and feast days of the saints associated with the Vincentian family and are an excellent tool for spiritual growth and discussion.

Each reflection provides a short Gospel reading and reflection, along with a Vincentian Meditation that ties the Gospel message to our mission as Vincentians. There is a Discussion question for the group that provides a chance to share our experiences as Catholics and Vincentians. The Vincentian Reflections ends with a brief closing prayer.

To find the reflections, go to the SVDP website under the Members section. The reflections are mid-page, sorted by quarter years, and can be easily downloaded.



## “Never have I prayed so well as in the streets” – Blessed Rosalie Rendu

### Blessed Rosalie Rendu

Jeanne Marie Rendu was born in France, in 1786, the eldest of four girls. Her parents were simple living but well respected people who lived in the mountains. When Jeanne was only three years old, the French Revolution began. At this time, many faithful priests were forced to flee because people wanted to hurt them, and the Rendu family home became a refuge for many of these priests.

Following the death of her father and baby sister, Jeanne helped her mother to look after the family. Jeanne was sent her to boarding school to get a good education. While there, she discovered a hospital where the Daughters of Charity cared for the sick. Her mother gave her permission to spend some time at the hospital, and Jeanne soon felt called by God to become a Daughter of Charity.

When she was nearly 17 years old, Jeanne entered the Motherhouse of the Daughters of Charity and received the name Rosalie. She

took vows to serve God and the poor and spent over 50 years living out those vows. She opened a free clinic, a pharmacy, a school, an orphanage, a childcare center, a home for the elderly and a youth club for young workers. She became known as the “good mother of all”, and helped **Frederic Ozanam** and his friends to do good works, which is how the St Vincent de Paul Society started.

Although her health was always fragile, Sister Rosalie never rested; she preferred to keep serving the poor and managed to overcome fatigue and illness. Eventually, however, her huge workload – combined with her age and increased frailty – broke her resistance, and she became progressively blind during the last two years of her life. She died on 7 February 1856. Her Feast Day is celebrated on February 7<sup>th</sup> each year.

(From <https://www.vinnies.org>)

### Vincentian Saints, Blesseds and Venerables

*Since the foundation of the society in 1833, thousands upon thousands of men and women throughout the world have become holy through the practice of Vincentian Spirituality. Some of these persons have been recognized by the Church and raised to the altar. More will be so honored in the future. The Vincentian Family of St. Vincent de Paul includes a large number of saints, blessed and venerables.*

- excerpt from National Council of the United States, Society of St. Vincent de Paul, Inc. Manual , page 89.

For a deeper understanding of our Catholic and Vincentian history, we will feature a Saint, Blessed or Venerable in each edition of our newsletter.

## Annual Commitment Ceremony

On Sunday, April 24, Devine Mercy Sunday, the Society of St. Vincent de Paul Worcester gathered to recommit themselves to faithfulness as they carry out their mission as Vincentians. Reverend William E. Champlin celebrated the Annual Commitment Ceremony during a special mass held at St. Leo's in Leominster. Fr. Champlin gave a heartfelt and moving homily about how important the work of the Society is, particularly during the challenging times in which we live in today. Fr. Champlin also gave a special blessing for new Vincentians as they embark on their journey of faith.

Following the mass, a luncheon was held. Our guest speaker (who chooses to remain anonymous) gave a beautiful talk on "Why He Became a Vincentian." The talk touched all our hearts as it explored the true meaning of our core values, which are friendship, spirituality, and service. The mass, coupled with the talk, gave true witness to our journey of faith in this beautiful ministry.

The date of the ceremony mass holds symbolic meaning;

St. Vincent de Paul was born on April 24, 1581 and Blessed Frederic Ozanam was born on April 23, 1813. In 1833, at 20 years of age, Blessed Frederic Ozanam founded and established the first conference in Paris, France. Soon after, Blessed Frederic placed the conference under the patronage of St. Vincent de Paul, who had spent his life in 16<sup>th</sup> century France serving the poor. Today, there are 800,000 Vincentians worldwide dedicated to serving Christ by tending to those around them. On November 20, 1845, the United States Society of St. Vincent de Paul was established in St. Louis, Missouri at the Basilica of St. Louis, King of France, popularly called "The Old Cathedral." Today, in the United States, there are 4,400 conferences.

In the words of St. Vincent de Paul, "Give me a person of prayer and that person will be capable of everything" A list of 23 conferences in the Worcester Diocese can easily be found by visiting our website:

[www.svdpworcester.org](http://www.svdpworcester.org)

## Homelessness Workshops

In an effort to support our conferences, the Diocesan Council held two workshops. The workshops specifically targeted two areas of great concern: families and individuals about to become homeless, and families and individuals that are homeless.

Virginia Kamiri-Mwangi, Director of Housing Counseling & Eviction Prevention at CMHA (Central Mass Housing Authority), graciously offered to present the Zoom workshop on "How to Complete the Online Application for ERMA/RAFT". Since the workshop was held, the two applications are now called RAFT/HAF. RAFT (Residential Assistance for Families in Transition) is for people in danger of becoming homeless due to falling behind on rent. HAF (Homeowners Assistance Fund) is for homeowners in danger of losing their home. Both can be found on [www.cmhaonline.org](http://www.cmhaonline.org). On the website, go to the top of the page and click on "Emergency Housing Assistance Is Available" (highlighted in yellow).

Then click: <https://www.mass.gov/applying-for-rental-assistance-in-massachusetts-to-avoid-eviction>.

It will take you to a page where you will click on the appropriate application. The three choices you will see are:

Renters – Apply Now

Landlords – Apply Now

Homeowners – Apply Now

If you are helping an individual who is behind on rent, click Renters. It will take you to: **How to Apply for Emergency Housing Payment Assistance**. Then click: **Apply Now for Assistance**.

You will then be shown a choice of different languages. Choose your language and you will be taken to the application.

If you choose landlord, click on "Landlord", and follow the above process.

If you are helping an individual that has missed at least three mortgage payments (payments do not need to be consecutive, but three missed payments is a requirement), click on "Homeowners". The screen will take you to "Find Out if You Qualify" and "Apply Now". Click on **Apply Now**. The next screen will request that you **Log in or Register**. The applicant will need to register. Click on "Register" and enter your name, email address, and password. Passwords must contain 8 letters, a number and special character. Be sure to click the box that says "I am not a robot". You will be sent a confirmation code. Enter your code number, and you will now be able to Sign In. When you sign in, "Household Eligibility" will appear. Click "Continue". The next screen will be the application.

If you have any questions, please contact the Diocesan Council at [svdpworcestercouncil37@gmail.com](mailto:svdpworcestercouncil37@gmail.com).

## Ozanam Orientation



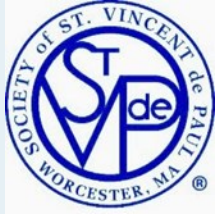
**Please join us on July 16, 2022 for the Ozanam Orientation hosted by:  
Blessed Sacrament Church  
The Phelan Center  
551 Pleasant St.  
Worcester, MA 01602  
8:30 am – 2:30 pm**

**Vincetians are required to attend at least one Ozanam Orientation.  
At the Orientation you will find answers to these questions:**

**Who we are and what we do?  
What Is our history?  
What Is Vincentian spirituality?  
How are we organized?  
Why do we have a Rule and what is it?  
Why and how are we accountable?  
Where are we going?  
What is poverty?  
Why do we make Home Visits?**

**Coffee & Pastries will be available at sign-in.  
The Orientation will begin at 9:00 am and will include lunch.**

**Please contact your District President by July 8<sup>th</sup> with the number of individuals that will be attending from your conference.**



# Faith in Action

## St. Vincent de Paul Conferences of the Worcester Diocesan Council

### North District

Parish	City/Town	Website
Annunciation Parish	Gardner	<a href="http://www.annunciatingardner.org">www.annunciatingardner.org</a>
St. Cecilia Parish	Leominster	<a href="http://www.stceciliachurch.net">www.stceciliachurch.net</a>
St. Denis Parish	Ashburnham	<a href="http://www.saintdenisashburnham.org">www.saintdenisashburnham.org</a>
St. Francis of Assisi Parish	Fitchburg	<a href="http://www.saintfrancis-fitchburg.com">www.saintfrancis-fitchburg.com</a>
Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish	Winchendon	<a href="http://www.heartofmary.net">www.heartofmary.net</a>
St. Joseph Parish	Fitchburg	<a href="http://www.stjosephfitchburg.org">www.stjosephfitchburg.org</a>
St. Leo Parish	Leominster	<a href="http://www.stleoparish.org">www.stleoparish.org</a>

### Central District

St. Brigid Parish	Millbury	<a href="http://www.stbrigidparish.org">www.stbrigidparish.org</a>
Blessed Sacrament Parish	Worcester	<a href="http://www.blessedsacrament.us">www.blessedsacrament.us</a>
Immaculate Conception Parish	Worcester	<a href="http://www.icworc.com">www.icworc.com</a>
St. George Parish	Worcester	<a href="http://www.saintgeorgeparish.org">www.saintgeorgeparish.org</a>
St. John the Guardian of Our Lady Parish	Clinton	<a href="http://www.stjohnsclinton.org">www.stjohnsclinton.org</a>
Our Lady of Good Counsel	West Boylston	<a href="http://www.goodcounselma.com">www.goodcounselma.com</a>
St. Mary & St. Philip Benizi Parishes	Grafton	<a href="http://www.stmarysgrafton.org">www.stmarysgrafton.org</a>
St. Stephen Parish	Worcester	<a href="http://www.ststephenworcester.org">www.ststephenworcester.org</a>

### South District

St. Anne—St. Patrick Parish	Fiskdale	<a href="http://www.stannestpatrickparish.com">www.stannestpatrickparish.com</a>
St. Augustine Parish	Millville	<a href="http://www.staugustinesmillville.com">www.staugustinesmillville.com</a>
St. John Paul II Parish	Southbridge	<a href="http://www.stjp2parish.org">www.stjp2parish.org</a>
St. Mark's Parish	Sutton	<a href="http://www.saintmarkparish.org">www.saintmarkparish.org</a>
St. Mary of the Assumption	Milford	<a href="http://www.stmarymilford.org">www.stmarymilford.org</a>
St. Mary Parish	Uxbridge	<a href="http://www.stmaryuxbridge.org">www.stmaryuxbridge.org</a>
St. Paul & St. Theresa Parishes	Blackstone	<a href="http://www.stpaulblackstone.org">www.stpaulblackstone.org</a> <a href="http://www.sttheresablackstone.org">www.sttheresablackstone.org</a>
Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish	Webster	<a href="http://www.sacredheartwebster.org">www.sacredheartwebster.org</a>

#### To Reach the Diocesan Council:

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