

Faith in Action



A Message from your Servant Leader

I hope all of you had a blessed and Merry Christmas.

The Advent Season is a season of hope and expectation. In the church, it's the beginning of a new liturgical year that prepares us for the birth of our Savior, Jesus Christ. It is a beautiful time to share the love and joy of family, friends, and community.

Vincentians know all too well that for many who are experiencing difficult times, just getting through the day is a struggle. They may be estranged from their family, or their friends have moved on. They might be disconnected from their community. When we receive the call for help, we become their lifeline to hope and the possibility of a new beginning, much like Advent.

Vincentians also know the power of faith and the grace of God. As difficult as our times have become, with our faith and support of fellow Vincentians, we can help our neighbors begin again. Let 2023 be a year of Spirituality, Friendship and Service.

- A New Year is God's Gift**
- In the joyful moments-
Thank Him**
- In the busy moments-
Bless Him**
- In the trying moments-
Trust Him**
- In the quiet moments-
Praise Him**

Roy Lessin

In Vincentian friendship,

Susan Treveloni

Inside this issue

- From your Servant Leader1
- Conference Activities2
- Seeds of Hope2
- National Election Results.....3
- Vincenian Profile3
- Spirituality Resources4
- Voter Voice5
- Getting the Word Out6
- Past & Upcoming Events7

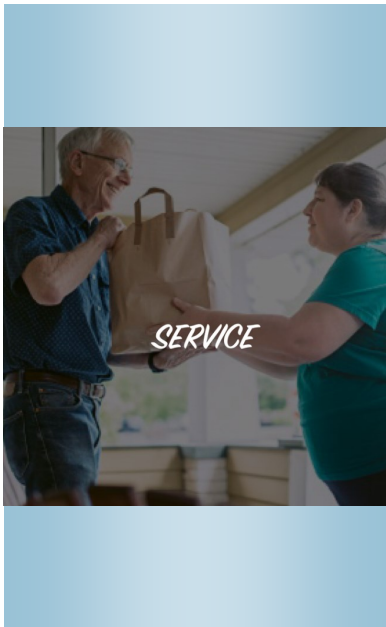
Spirituality, Friendship and Service

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:

Phone: 508-556-0559
 Fax: 508-839-1225
 Address: P.O. Box 319
 Grafton, MA 01519
 Email: svdpworcestercouncil37@gmail.com
 Website: www.svdpworcester.org



Saint John Paul II—Southbridge

Saint John Paul II's St Vincent de Paul conference in Southbridge delivers flowers to shut-ins and nursing homes a week before Easter and Christmas each year.

Along with the plants, which typically number about 150, the conference includes a current church bulletin, church calendar and a personally addressed card.

The conference members find that this is a wonderful way to keep in touch with those who can no longer attend mass in person and let them know that they are not forgotten.



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

Poverty Statistics

- ◆ Central Massachusetts Housing Alliance conducted a count in March and April and found 551 homeless people total in Worcester County
- ◆ By comparison, a year ago, 347 homeless people were counted in the city of Worcester.
- ◆ About 50% of Worcester renters are paying over 30% of their income on rent and utilities.
- ◆ 13.5% of Worcester's housing stock is designated affordable for low- to moderate-income households.

Source: GBH News June 22, 2022
www.wgbh.org/news

“Seeds of Hope”

Blessed Sacrament Church is throwing a net out to house the homeless. Located at Blessed Sacrament's Phelan Center, Seeds of Hope at Bethlehem opened its doors on December 19, 2022, offering 60 beds on a first come/first serve basis to homeless individuals seeking shelter.

Open Sky Community Services is operating the shelter 24/7 and providing services, such as: housing navigation, behavioral health and medical resources, substance-use counseling resources, and career readiness services in an effort to contribute to long-term solutions.

The shelter provides three meals a day: breakfast and lunch are provided by vendors, while evening meals are supplied by volunteers. To help support the shelter in its efforts to feed the homeless, the following have signed up to deliver meals on these dates:

Blessed Sacrament Conference: 3/22 and 3/31
 St. Mark's Conference: 3/11 and 3/27
 SVDP Diocesan Council: 3/4, 3/18., and 3/25

We have partnered with Goretti's Supermarket in Millbury to prepare the hot meals. If your conference would like to participate, there are still openings. The shelter has open dates for: 2/7, 2/14, 2/21, 2/28 and 3/7. Also, you can join the Diocesan Council on one of their dates to deliver and serve meals.

Please contact Sue Treveloni for details if you are interested in either option at 508-826-5737.

Matthew 25:40
'Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.'





In Memoriam

Frank J. Catalfamo - St. Francis, Fitchburg

Ruth Dube - St. Leo, Leominster

Florence Dugan—St. Mary of the Assumption, Milford

Sandra Goodchild - St. Joseph, Fitchburg

David Harvey - St. Leo, Leominster

Marie Simms - St. Leo, Leominster

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

Names of deceased Vincentians may be submitted to FIANews-WDC@gmail.com for inclusion in future editions.



National Presidential Election Results

The results of the National Presidential election were announced at the Board Meeting held in St. Louis on January 13, 2023. The new president-elect of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul of the United States is John Berry. John will work with Ralph Middlecamp from now through September 30th, and on October 1st, he will officially step into his new position as President.

Please keep John in your prayers during the next several months as he works along with Ralph to assume his new responsibilities. Thanks to everyone who participated in this very important election.

“For leadership there is only one road: service. There is no other way. If you have many qualities , the ability to communicate, etc. , but you are not a servant, your leadership will fail, it is useless, it has not power to gather [people] together... Leadership must enter into service, but with a personal love for the people.” – Pope Francis

Vincentian Profile

Fr. William Champlin—SVdP Diocesan Spiritual Advisor

MY VINCENTIAN JOURNEY

When I was ordained a priest in 1993, I was assigned to Notre Dame Parish in Southbridge. Shortly after I arrived in Southbridge, I learned that Notre Dame had a St. Vincent de Paul conference. Although I had heard of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, I had never had the opportunity to work with them before.

My lack of exposure to the Society of St. Vincent de Paul was soon to change. I learned of the wonderful work that the Vincentians were doing in ministering to the poor and struggling. A food pantry in the church basement provided food to those in the community who were hungry. Motel rooms were provided for those who needed a place to stay for a few days. Food baskets were given to families at Thanksgiving and Christmas. I was also struck by the attitude in which this ministry was done, with discretion and compassion for our neighbors in need.



When I was transferred in 1996 to Our Lady of the Angels Parish in Worcester, I was pleasantly surprised to see that St. Vincent de Paul was active there also. Once again, I met faith-filled people who were looking to help others in need. During those years, the St. Vincent de Paul Thrift Store was right around the corner on Young St. There I met those who led the Society of St. Vincent de Paul on the diocesan level.

In 2002 I was asked to become the spiritual advisor for the Society of St. Vincent de Paul on the diocesan level. During those twenty years as spiritual advisor, I have continued to meet many faith-filled people who follow the model created for us by Fredric Ozanam by serving those who struggle.

SVdP Spirituality Resources

“The Spirituality of the Home Visit, A Journal”, is an important guide for each of us on our own spiritual journey and collectively as a conference of believers in service to others.

Section 1, Our Vincentian Heritage, uses the words and actions of St. Vincent de Paul and Blessed Frederic Ozanam to illustrate the importance of the home visit as part of our ministry.

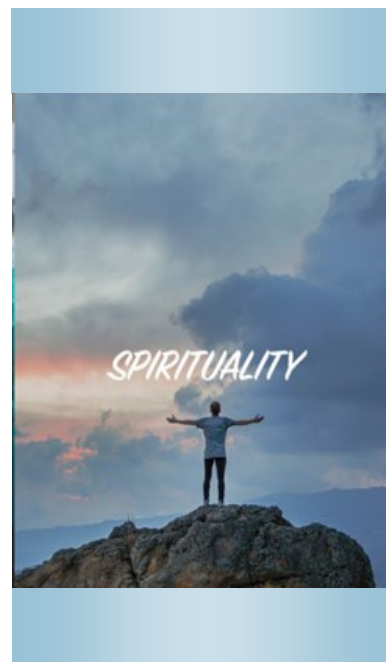
In Section 2, Our Vincentian Spirituality, we are encouraged to grow in each of the Vincentian virtues of Humility, Simplicity, Gentleness, Selflessness, and Zeal.

The last section leads us on prayerful reflection after a home visit with suggested questions and reflections.

The Diocesan Council believes in the importance of the home visit as part of our ministry and is purchasing a copy of “The Spirituality of the Home Visit, A Journal” for each St. Vincent de Paul member throughout the diocese.

“As we return after a home visit, we realize that the reward of faith is an encounter with the God of love and our hearts grow in selflessness and generosity.”

- The Spirituality of the Home Visit, A Journal



“Put your trust in Him and, following His example, always act humbly, graciously, and in good faith.” - Saint Vincent de Paul

Saint Vincent de Paul

Vincent De Paul (24 April 1581—27 September 1660), was a French Catholic Priest who dedicated himself to serving the poor. He was renowned for his compassion, generosity, and humility and is the patron saint of all works of charity.

With the help of Louise de Marillac, Vincent organized wealthy women of Paris to collect funds for missionary projects, establish hospitals and gather relief funds for victims of war and ransom 1,200 galley slaves from North Africa.

In 1617 this participation of women would eventually result in the Daughters of Charity of the Saint Vincent de Paul. In 1622, Vincent was appointed chaplain to the galleys. After working in Paris among the imprisoned galley slaves he returned to be the superior of what is now known as the Congregation of the Mission or the “Vincentians”. Vincent also spent 28 years serving as the spiritual director of the Convent of St. Mary of Angels.

Saint Vincent was canonized in 1737 by Pope Clement XII. His feast day is the 27th of September.



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.



The Voice of the Poor’s mission is based on Catholic social teaching.

*Our mission is to break the cycle of poverty by inspiring Vincen-
tians to be effective servants of the poor and voices for just policies
and systems. We put our mission into action by supporting legisla-
tion that will help our neighbors in need and proactively opposing
legislation that will make life harder for them.*

What is Voter Voice?

- Voter Voice is an online website that allows members and supporters of the society to reach out to lawmakers regarding legislation and other issues that affect those living in poverty.
- After signing up, you will receive action alerts via e-mail which will contain a link that will allow you to send an email to your federal or state legislators.

Why Sign Up for Voter Voice?

- The National Voice of the Poor Committee believes our Vincentian voice can make a difference. Elected officials in Washington, D.C., in our state capitols and in our city and county governments are there because of voters like us. Their central focus is to respond to voter concerns, and they need to hear from us.
- The more interest generated by constituents, the more likely they will respond!

How do you sign up for Voter Voice?

- Go to [Action Center \(votervoice.net\)](http://Action Center (votervoice.net)) to sign up for Action Alerts and find out how to look up and find your elect-
ed officials.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, OR IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS, PLEASE CONTACT:

Toni Raczowski, NE Regional Representative to the National Voice of the Poor Committee atla@charter.net



Getting the Word Out in Three Languages

For about the last 8 years, the conference at St. Mary of the Assumption in Milford has been using a brochure they created to get the word out about the St. Vincent de Paul Society. The brochure was made available at church and through the Milford Area Humanitarian Coalition.

Recently the members of the conference took a collective look at the brochure that they were using and decided that while it contained some good information it was not drawing people in to look at it. They decided a change was in order. After some contemplation they felt the brochure needed:

- ◆ To “pop”, something appealing so that people would want to pick it up and read more;
- ◆ To highlight the roots of our mission of service to others in the spirit of St. Vincent de Paul and Blessed Frederic Ozanam;
- ◆ To reflect the diverse culture of Milford’s Spanish and Portuguese speaking populations by being printed in all three languages. This would further demonstrate our inclusive nature of serving all in need;
- ◆ To highlight the many other resources in the Milford area, many of whom the Conference worked closely with when serving others; and
- ◆ To list events and fundraisers held through out the year.

It was a large task indeed, but members reviewed and revised and have developed an excellent brochure for which they can be proud. The design can also be easily adapted to any conference. St. Mary’s Conference has graciously have shared the brochures with us.

Our newsletter is distributed quarterly via email. A copy of this brochure will also be included as a separate attachment. Please feel free to use it as a model to create one of your own if you wish. This is a wonderful opportunity to share our talents with each other. If you have trouble opening the attachment, please contact a member of the newsletter committee for assistance.

Ozanam Orientation

The councils held an Ozanam Orientation on October 1st at St. Cecilia's Parish Center in Leominster. We had a great turnout. We will continue to hold the Ozanam Orientations in the fall and spring, alternating between locations in the three districts.

The group was very engaged, asked a lot of great questions, and we had a lot of great discussions. We also really appreciate everyone's patience with the few technical glitches we experienced.

A special thank you to Irene Frechette, VP of the northeast region for facilitating the Orientation along with co-facilitator, Sue Treloni and to our district presidents Elaine Murphy and Colleen Resca, and our Diocesan Secretary Kim Lambert for all their help with preparation, management of the sign-in table, and coordination of breakfast and lunch. Their servant leadership is remarka-

ble!

A special thank you as well to Colleen's husband Arthur for delivering a spare laptop from Holden to Leominster early on a Saturday morning.

These orientations are an excellent example of our pillar of friendship within the society. Being able to share experiences with one another helps to reinforce the work that we do.

Our next Ozanam Orientation is scheduled for May 20th at St. Mary Church in Uxbridge. We hope to see you there!

"Be kind and love, for love is your first gift to the poor. They will appreciate your kindness and love more than all else you can bring them." - **Blessed Rosalie Rendu**

Upcoming Webinars

Spiritual Advisor Training

February 28, March 1, & March 2 at 7:30 PM Eastern [Register here](#)

Spiritual Advisors, Associate Spiritual Advisors, or those thinking of becoming Spiritual Advisors - join us for this three-part training and formation program. Whether you are new or experienced, if you have never previously attended, please register and attend this program led by Tim Williams, National Formation Director, and James Davis, South Central Region Spiritual Advisor.

Leadership Training — Finding Servant Leaders: Recruitment & Succession

Wednesday, February 15, 7:30 PM Eastern [Register here](#)

We need a new President for our Conference or Council – how do I find one? Join the Leadership Task Force as they discuss succession planning, recruitment of new Conference and Council Leaders, and guiding potential new leaders in discerning their personal call to servant leadership.

Ozanam Orientation



Please join us on May 20, 2023 for the Ozanam Orientation hosted by:

St. Mary Church
77 Mendon Street
Uxbridge, MA 01569
8:30 am – 2:30 pm

Vincentians are required to attend at least one Ozanam Orientation.

At the Orientation you will find answers to these questions:

What is our history?
Who we are and what we do?
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 let us know if you have any dietary restrictions)

Please contact your District President by May 12th 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	www.annunciatingardner.org
St. Cecilia Parish	Leominster	www.stceciliachurch.net
St. Denis Parish	Ashburnham	www.saintdenisashburnham.org
St. Francis of Assisi Parish	Fitchburg	www.saintfrancis-fitchburg.com
Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish	Winchendon	www.heartofmary.net
St. Joseph Parish	Fitchburg	www.stjosephfitchburg.org
St. Leo Parish	Leominster	www.stleoparish.org

Central District

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

South District

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

To Reach the Diocesan Council:

Phone: 508-556-0559
 Fax: 508-839-1225
 Address: P.O. Box 319
 Grafton, MA 01519
 Email: svdpworcestercouncil37@gmail.com
 Website: www.svdpworcester.org