



# NATIONAL COUNCIL OF THE US SOCIETY OF ST. VINCENT DE PAUL

## Contemplation: Right Where We Need to Be

“This isn’t where I thought I’d be at 40,” she sighed from the depth of her spirit, a tear running down her cheek. The home visitors welled up a little bit, too. They had listened to her story and knew how long and hard she had worked in low-paying jobs, raising her kids as a single mom, then putting herself through college so she could stop living paycheck to paycheck. But her career path just hadn’t worked out the way she’d hoped so far, and right now she was unemployed, and asking for help with her rent – no closer to her goals, it seemed, than she’d been before all those efforts.

“This isn’t where I thought I’d be,” the home visitor thought to himself. It’s easy to pay the rent, or to bring a bag of groceries, and people are so happy when you lift those burdens from them, but this was something more – something deeper. He knew what material assistance his Conference could give and knew where to refer people for the support they couldn’t offer. But the Conference wasn’t on the home visit. It was two Vincentians, sitting with a woman whose world had caved in, who felt like a failure. They would help with the rent, of course, but right now, that didn’t seem like the most important thing.

“I’m so sorry,” he said. Not knowing what to say, he let his heart speak first. “That must be so hard. But I’m really glad you called us, and I’m really glad we could be here with you right now.”

Her tears came down a little harder, but they began to change a little bit. She was no longer alone in that apartment, wondering how things had gone so wrong. She was with friends, whose hearts reached out to hers, who felt what she felt. They sat and listened and talked and shared, offering words of consolation, and slowly turning despair towards hope.

“Where did my words today come from?” he thought. He had felt himself unprepared for a visit or a conversation like this. But he knew it was God who had given him the words, God who had placed them in that room, and God who had used them as instruments of His peace. They had seen in her the suffering Christ, and like Veronica along the *via crucis*, had offered a cloth to dry her tears, reassuring her by their presence more than their words that God had not abandoned her.

“May we pray with you?” he asked. She nodded, standing up with hands outstretched. The three of them clasped hands and he offered her needs to God, reassuring himself as much as her that God loved her, and because of His love he had sent two Vincentians to be with her in her hour of need and poverty of spirit. He had called them, and He was there, too, and all of them knew it.

“[This is exactly where I said I would be,](#)” said Christ, in the midst of the three as they offered prayers for each other in His name.

### Contemplate

Do I trust God to give me the words I need, and trust Him enough to speak them?

### Recommended Reading

[The Spirituality of the Home Visit](#)

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