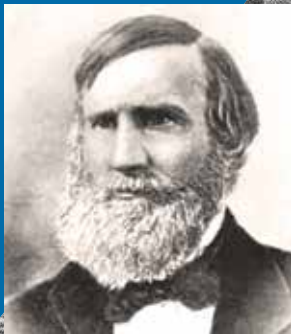
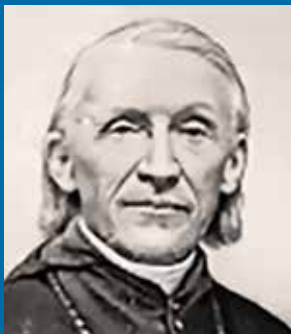
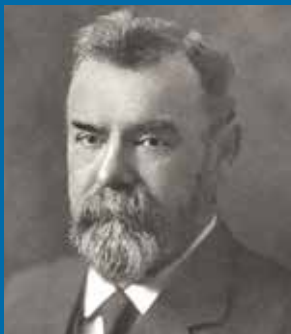


A Medallion in the Mosaic of Vincentian Works



The Society of
St. Vincent de Paul
in the United States
1845 – 2020



Introduction
From
Our
Current
President

All Saints Day

November 1, 2020

The Society of St. Vincent de Paul was formed by young men in Paris in 1833 to serve the poor of that city. The principal founder of the Society, Frédéric Ozanam, had a vision to embrace the world in a network of charity. He could hardly have imagined that 12 years later, half way around the world, others would be moved by the Holy Spirit to embrace and promote that vision. In the past 175 years, thousands of people have stepped forward to be part of that network of charity here in the United States.

How did the Society spring up in the middle of the United States and continue to flourish for the past 175 years? That is a story of dedicated Catholics who believed their faith called them to bring material aid and comfort to their suffering neighbors. The Society's reliance on local control and the founders' conviction that "no work of charity is foreign to the work of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul" provided a structure that would meet the needs of St. Louis in 1845 and facilitate the Society's rapid expansion in the United States.

This commemorative book highlights significant leaders such as Bryan Mullanphy, Moses Linton, Thomas Mulry, George Gillespie and Dudley Baker. Their efforts provided the solid foundation upon which our Society has been built. We owe them and all who came before us a debt of gratitude.

Thank you to Dr. Raymond Sickinger for his work to capture this story of an organization that has served millions of people in need for the past 175 years. It is not just a story of service. It is also a story of men and women who have strengthened their Christian faith by working together to live the Gospel in their communities.

I hope that by appreciating our past, we will be inspired to build upon this wonderful heritage. The Rule of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul provides this wisdom: "Faithful to the spirit of its founders, the Society constantly strives for renewal, adapting to changing world conditions." Two years after the Society was founded, Blessed Frédéric Ozanam wrote this to a friend about its accomplishments: "Charity must never look behind it, but always forward, because the number of its past benefits is always very small, and the present and future misery it comforts is infinite." Let us accept this challenge and always seek to strengthen our network of charity.



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ST. LOUIS IN 1845

The Society's Birthplace in the United States

William Baraby Faherty, S.J., Ph.D.

In 1845, the year the first unit of the St. Vincent de Paul Society in America started in the Cathedral parish downtown, St. Louis was in the midst of its most fantastic decade of growth. It numbered only 16,469 residents in 1840 and would grow to 77,860 in 1850, becoming the eighth largest city in the nation. It was the only city of any size west of the Mississippi. The Diocese of St. Louis covered a third of the country in area and boasted 75 priests, 33 churches, a theological seminary, a university, a college for men, a preparatory seminary, two novitiates for religious men, a boy's academy, eight girls' academies, a number of schools for younger children, a school of law, and a school of medicine at Saint Louis University.

Father Thaddeus Amat, C.M., later to be bishop of Los Angeles, directed the seminary. Father James O. Van DeVelde, later bishop of Chicago, headed the Jesuits, and Father George Carrell, who would finish his career as bishop in Covington, KY, presided at Saint Louis University. Father Hector Figari, C.M., was present of St. Vincent's College in Cape Girardeau.

Few dioceses in the country were as large as St. Louis at the time. Only Baltimore, New York, and Cincinnati had more priests. A few years later, in 1849, St. Louis would be the second archdiocese, after Baltimore, within the organized states of the Union.

James Polk took the oath of office as President on March 3 of that year. Thomas Hart Benton was still in the Senate and the other Missouri senator was David R. Atchison of Platte City. The mayor of the city was Bernard Pratte, the only member of a colonial French family to be elected mayor.

Archbishop Peter Richard Kenrick had succeeded to the Diocese of St. Louis on the death of Bishop Joseph Rosati in 1843. In the beginning, he worried about the heavy debt that burdened the diocese because of the building of the cathedral. To wipe out the debt, he leased sections of the church property for 100 years. Father John Timon C.M, later bishop of Buffalo, was vicar general and Provincial of the American Vincentians. He had previously been named coadjutor to Bishop Rosati in 1836, but had turned down the appointment. His superior had just assigned him to newly independent Texas, and he felt the missions there needed his help more than St. Louis did. By 1845, he had returned to St. Louis to continue his administration of the Province.



Portrait of Archbishop
Peter Richard Kenrick

St. Louis Riverfront, 1845

Sketch by
Norbury Wayman

Many religious orders had already located in St. Louis. Twenty-eight members of the Ladies of the Sacred Heart, the Congregation of Mother Duchene, ran a school and orphanage. The Sisters of Loretto opened three academies in Southeast Missouri, one at Bethlehem in Maries County, one at Cape Girardeau, and one at Ste. Genevieve. The Visitation Sisters came from Menard Academy in Kaskaskia, Illinois in 1844, and opened a school on Menard in the Soulard District, near St. Vincent de Paul Church. Twelve Sisters of Charity served at the hospital, and others conducted homes for orphans. In Carondelet, the Sisters of St. Joseph had set up a School for the Deaf, with a state subsidy. Many religious worked in St. Louis, and showed the great concern of the Church for all classes of people.

Fifteen philosophy students and one theology student attended the Seminary in Soulard under Father Amat's direction. Father John B. Smedts, S.J., was Master Novices of the Jesuits in Florissant, where there were four scholastic novices and twelve brother postulants.

For a long time, the St. Louis Cathedral had been the only parish in the city. St. Mary of Victories, a small national church, served southsiders of German background, under the direction of Father John Fisher. By 1845, three new parishes had opened up: St. Vincent de Paul in Soulard, St. Patrick on North Broadway, and St. Francis Xavier at Ninth and Christy. This last parish opened four schools, one for boys and one for girls, in both English and German. Jesuit Fathers had Sunday Mass and a sermon in German in a Chapel at the University next door to the Church.

The city of St. Louis boasted extensive commerce, with fur trade prominent. The 1840s saw a great westward movement with wagon trains leaving western Missouri and moving across the Great Plains, looking for homes in Oregon or California. The "Gold Rush" would begin later in the 1850s, and St. Louis merchants prospered by supplying local residents, soldiers of the western forts, travelers going West, and many settlers on the rich farmland of the Mississippi Valley who grew wheat, corn, hemp, cotton, and flax. Besides the five or six businessmen who had amassed fortunes earlier, 20 to 25 other merchants became relatively rich during the 1840s.



Irish Catholics came to St. Louis because of the city's warm welcome, one unmatched in the English-speaking world. Germans read the letters of Gottfried Duden, a civil servant from Cologne who had come to Warren County, Missouri, some years before. Returning to Germany, he wrote glowing reports that compared lands along the lower Missouri with those along the Rhine.

The longstanding Santa Fe trade brought silver and gold from Mexico to St. Louis in return for the many supplies needed by the people of New Mexico and northern Mexico. Supplies were carried over the Santa Fe Trail in wagons built in St. Louis by Joseph Murphy or Joseph Espenschied. Murphy wagons were six times as big as the Conestoga wagons built in the East.

The mood of St. Louis at the time was expansive. Truly, St. Louis was the gateway to the west, and would remain so until the railroad period after the Civil War.

Industry grew. Local factories began to produce many products: plows, stoves, tools, furnaces, pipes, guns, saddles, furniture, clothing, barrels, and steamboats. Beer was to become a prominent commodity on the St. Louis market.

The first steamboat arrived in St. Louis in 1817. Twelve years later, specially-built, more rugged boats were able to breast the current of the Missouri, eventually going all the way to Montana. Steamboats lined the wharf. St. Louisians celebrated major holidays with banquets on the palatial Mississippi steamboats. Among great river captains, Henry Shreve gained national recognition for clearing the rivers of sunken logs and other obstacles.

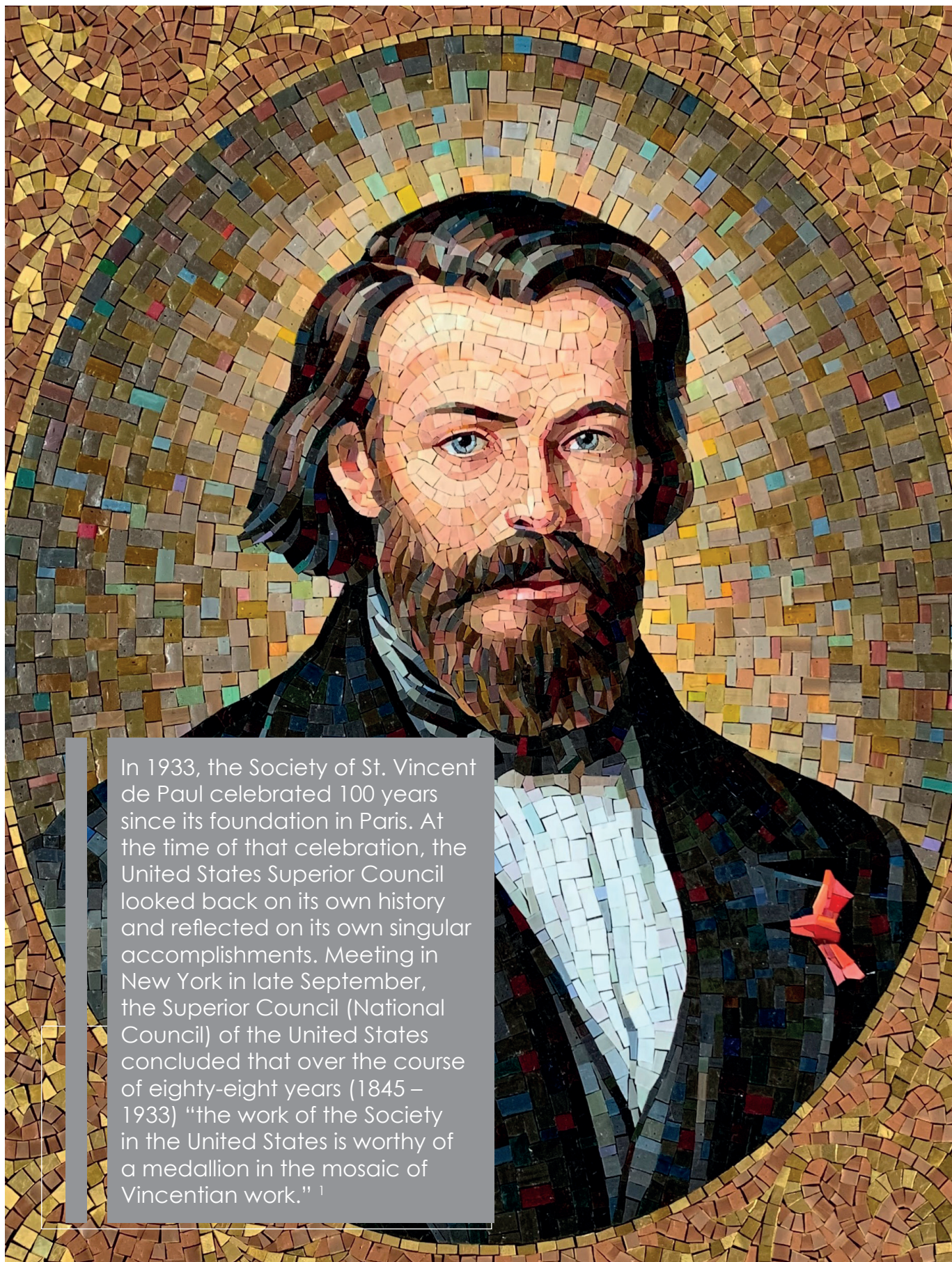
Eighteenth Street marked the western boundary of the city. The built-up area stretched about 60 blocks along the Mississippi from Dock Street eight blocks beyond north Market on the north, to Louisa Street two blocks beyond Sidney on the south.

In 1843, a young newcomer, Erastus Wells, had launched St. Louis' first public transportation, a horse-drawn stagecoach-type vehicle, traveling from Third and Market to the ferry at the foot of North Market Street.

That was St. Louis in 1845: A vibrant city that matched the vision of the wide land.



St. Louis' first church was little more than a shed.



In 1933, the Society of St. Vincent de Paul celebrated 100 years since its foundation in Paris. At the time of that celebration, the United States Superior Council looked back on its own history and reflected on its own singular accomplishments. Meeting in New York in late September, the Superior Council (National Council) of the United States concluded that over the course of eighty-eight years (1845 – 1933) “the work of the Society in the United States is worthy of a medallion in the mosaic of Vincentian work.”¹

A MEDALLION IN THE MOSAIC OF VINCENTIAN WORK

A Brief History of the Origins of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul and the National Council of the U.S., 1845 – 2020

Raymond L. Sickinger, Ph.D.

INTRODUCTION

In the midst of the political, social, religious, and economic turmoil of early 19th century France, the Society of St. Vincent de Paul originated. Born on April 23, 1813 in Milan Italy, Antoine Frédéric Ozanam was the principal founder of the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul, a Catholic lay organization intended to help members increase in holiness by loving service to those in need. As a student at the Sorbonne, Ozanam was appalled by the conditions he saw in Paris. He sought out other young men of like mind, and together they formed the first Conference of Charity.

According to the Rule of the Society, “The St. Vincent de Paul Society is a worldwide Christian community, founded in Paris in 1833, by a group of young Catholic laypeople and an older person, who joined together to create the first Conference. The Society wishes to remember them all with gratitude, as they set an example of dedication to the poor and to the Church. From Le

Taillandier, who received the first inspiration, to Blessed Frédéric Ozanam, Paul Lamache, Francois Lallier, Jules Devaux, Felix Clave, all of them knew, in their humility, how to seek the wise advice and support of the one who would become the first President General of the flourishing Society, Emmanuel Bailly... Among them, Blessed Frédéric Ozanam was a radiant source of inspiration.”

Although we recognize Ozanam as the principal founder, history is a bit more complex. All of the members, as well as Sister Rosalie Rendu, who mentored the young men, were instrumental in its foundation. Starting with only seven men on April 23, 1833 in Paris, France, membership soared to more than 100 by 1834. By 1835, the young group had its own official Rule and a new official name: The Society of Saint Vincent de Paul.

By 1852, the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul could boast of 2,000 Conferences, 500 of which were outside France.² Today, the Society continues to reinforce the

vision of a network of charity and justice in more than 150 countries throughout the world.³

SAINT LOUIS 1845 – 1900

After its founding, the Society of St. Vincent de Paul quickly spread to other countries, including the United States. The first American Conference was officially formed in St. Louis in 1845. In 1764 the Parish of Saint Louis was established in a simple, one-room log cabin. It served as the first Catholic Church of Laclede's Village, which would later become the city of St. Louis. Before 1845 it was the only parish church in St. Louis, Missouri. It was enlarged in 1776, and in 1818, was replaced by a newer and sturdier brick church. The building of the edifice that is now referred to as the “Old Cathedral” began 13 years later in 1831. Completed by 1834, it served as the first Cathedral west of the Mississippi River. Pope John XXIII designated the Old Cathedral of St. Louis, Missouri in 1961 as the “Basilica of Saint Louis, The King.”⁴



St Louis' Cathedral in 1833



St Louis' Historic Old Cathedral Today

It was here in the Old Cathedral on November 20, 1845, that the first official meeting of the U.S. Society of St. Vincent de Paul took place. Present on that evening were some of the city's most prominent Catholic laymen. The newly formed Conference was officially aggregated (or joined together) by the International Council in Paris less than three months later on February 2, 1846.⁵ According to Rev. Daniel T. McColgan, "It was fitting that the first American foundation of this Parisian-born society should occur in the city of St. Louis, named after a great saintly son of the capital city of France."⁶

But how did the Society of St. Vincent de Paul find its way from Paris to St. Louis? A number of accounts suggest that the Reverend John Timon, C.M., appointed the first superior ("Visitor") of the Vincentian community in America in 1835⁷ and who would later become Bishop of Buffalo, New York, was responsible for planting the initial seed that eventually bloomed into the first U.S. Conference.

Returning from Dublin, Ireland in 1845, Reverend Timon carried with him a copy of an English translation of the Rule.⁸ He was passionate about the spread of the Society. According to the Society's *American Manual*, Father Timon provided Bishop

Peter Richard Kenrick of St. Louis with a copy of the Rule, encouraging him to open a conference of charity. According to another account, "Bishop Kenrick had agreed to consecrate the new St. Vincent de Paul Church on South Eighth Street in St. Louis on November 16, 1845. Father Timon preached, discussing at length the St. Vincent de Paul Society. Many in that crowded church answered his challenge by attending an organizing meeting four days later, November 20."⁹ Kenrick then selected Reverend Ambrose Heim, a diocesan priest stationed at the Old Cathedral, to establish a



Father
John Timon, CM



Bishop
Peter Kenrick

The most significant founders of the first conference were the St. Louis laymen who willingly accepted the initial invitation offered them to become members and who rose to the challenge of living out the Rule.

Conference of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul. Father Heim “was known by the people of St. Louis for his extraordinary zeal and ministry with the poor.”¹⁰

Both Timon and Heim have been credited with the actual foundation of the Society in the United States. Rather than referring to either of them as “principal founder,” it would be more appropriate, and accurate, to refer to Father Timon as the person who advocated for the Society, inspiring the idea of founding the first Conference, and to Father Heim as the spiritual advisor and the essential “Spiritual Animator” of the first Conference.

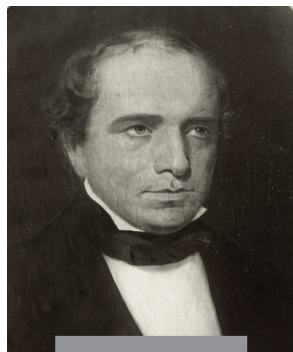
The Society of St. Vincent de Paul is first and foremost a lay organization. The Conference would never have opened without the dedicated laypeople willing to serve in this new role. The most significant founders, therefore, of the first Conference were the St. Louis laymen who willingly accepted the initial invitation to become members and who rose to the challenge of living out the Rule. Among those early members, two can be singled out as the key leaders or principal founders: Moses Linton, the first elected President, and Bryan Mullanphy, the Conference’s first Vice President.

Dr. Moses Linton (1808 – 1872), a medical professor at St. Louis University, started the famous St. Louis medical journal in 1843. A convert to Catholicism, Linton arrived in St. Louis from Kentucky in the fall of 1842 when he was 34 years old. A cholera epidemic decimated St. Louis in late 1848 and well into 1849; some 60,000 people fled the city to escape the disease. Dr. Linton was on call day-and-night. He was responsible for the medical care of the Jesuit staff and students of St. Louis University. Under his watchful eye, not a single person died from cholera. According to one account, the doctor’s efforts were honored “in an engraved stone tablet, which still can be seen in the vestibule of the College Church.”¹¹ According to one source, “The high standard of medical education in St. Louis owes a great deal to that farmer’s son in Kentucky.”¹²

Moses Linton was present that night in November when some of St. Louis’ best and brightest gathered for a historic moment in the Society’s history. At that first meeting, his name was suggested for the position of President, and he was duly elected by those present. He would serve in this capacity until 1847, and again served as President beginning in 1849. (There were as yet no specific terms or term limits for leadership.)



Dr. Moses Linton



Bryan Mullanphy

Bryan Mullanphy (1809 – 1851) should be singled out for special recognition. His organizational skills, influential connections, and philanthropic generosity were vital to both the establishment and the initial growth of the fledgling Conference.

Born in Baltimore in 1809, Bryan Mullanphy was educated in France and England, studying at a Jesuit educational institution in France and then at Stoneyhurst College, Lancashire, near Liverpool, England. The son of a wealthy merchant and philanthropist, he spoke four different languages. From 1798 to 1804 his family resided in Kentucky. They moved numerous times before finally settling in St. Louis, making it their permanent residence in 1819.

Mullanphy returned from abroad to St. Louis in 1827 at the age of 18. He attended St. Louis College for two years and was admitted to the bar. In 1835 he was awarded a Master of Arts degree from St. Louis University.

Mullanphy served as a member of the board of aldermen in 1835 and 1836. He had a successful career as a judge in the St. Louis Circuit Court from 1840 – 1844 and became the tenth Mayor of St. Louis from 1847 – 1848, running as an independent candidate. Like Frédéric Ozanam, Mullanphy died at an early age on June 15, 1851. He was only 42. His burial plot is located in Calvary Cemetery.¹³

Bryan Mullanphy was an essential participant in the first meeting on November 20. He chaired that first meeting and conducted the process of electing officers. Mullanphy had already been actively engaged in other philanthropic projects, and because of his connections and influence, in all likelihood, he was instrumental in bringing together the men who formed that first Conference.

When Dr. Linton stepped down from the presidency in 1847, Mullanphy was duly elected to succeed him. Because of his facility with the French language, Mullanphy was charged with writing the Society in Paris to obtain official aggregation. And there is little doubt that his great generosity with his own wealth provided the young Conference with the required wherewithal to do much good in relieving the needs of the less fortunate in St. Louis. According to one commentator, the late Judge Mullanphy's "liberality should enshrine his memory in the affections of every member of the Society,"¹⁴ Judge Joseph O'Neill, himself a member of the first conference, was even clearer about Mullanphy's financial contributions: "To (the) unbounded charity of Bryan Mullanphy the Society was greatly indebted for its early success...At our weekly meetings he gave generously."¹⁵

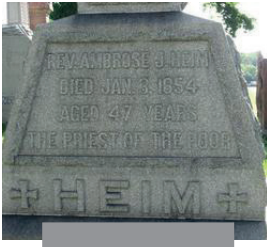
Mullanphy was a "man of medium size, rather heavy set, not very large but robust." He was a "fine logician, and a fluent, ardent, and impressive speaker who seldom failed to rivet the attention of both court and jury." One of his contemporaries characterized him in this fashion:

"His mind was quick and active, and his thoughts flowed so rapidly, one upon the other, that at times it gave his utterance the semblance of hesitation...He had just enough of the Irish accent to give his voice a pleasant and agreeable sound, and unlike many advocates, seldom indulged in repetition or useless verbiage. He was thoroughly grounded in the principles of law, and quick to detect the weak points of his adversary's case. He wasted no time in the discussion of trivial matters... He was as well versed in the civil as in the common law, which gave him a great advantage in his practice, and proved highly serviceable to him when on the bench. He was also a fine belles-lettres scholar, and his reading and learning were varied and extensive. It was impossible to converse with him on any subject which had not elicited more or less of his attention."¹⁶

Mullanphy was indeed a force to be reckoned with.

There was a genuine desire to help others that underlay all of Mullanphy's actions. His concerns for emigrants traveling west caused him to leave money in his will to the city of St. Louis to create a fund "to furnish relief to all poor emigrants and travelers coming to St. Louis." On one occasion he purchased a cow from a widow desperate to support her family. After purchasing it, he gave her money to watch over it until he would come to collect it. He never claimed the cow. On another occasion he found a woman living in one of his tenement houses without his knowledge; she, too, was widowed. He indicated that she could pay him back by doing sewing for him, then made arrangements with a friend to provide her with sewing and to

pay her double; he covered the extra costs without the woman's knowledge. His intention was not only to help her, but to allow her to feel that she was earning her rent by her labor.¹⁷ In December 1845, Mullanphy actively served on a committee to determine exactly how to relieve the sufferings of people caused by the harsh winter conditions that prevailed.¹⁸



Grave of
Reverend
Ambrose Heim

Although Linton and Mullanphy can be considered the principal founders, a word must be said about **Reverend Ambrose Heim (1807 – 1854)**, who served as the “Spiritual Animator” of the Conference. Heim was known affectionately as “the Priest of the Poor.” Born on April 3, 1807 in the diocese of Nancy, France, he arrived in St. Louis on July 20, 1832 at the age of 25 to attend the seminary at St. Mary’s of the Barrens. Once his studies were concluded, he was ordained in July 1837.

His first parish assignment was as pastor of St. John the Baptist Church in New Madrid, Missouri. He served faithfully there for four years. After a short term as pastor of another parish, he was assigned as chaplain of the Sisters of the Visitation in Kaskaskia, Illinois. Because of a terrible flood in 1844, he brought the Sisters to St. Louis. He was noticed for his good work and soon became Secretary to Bishop Kenrick in 1847.¹⁹ Bishop Kenrick most likely chose Ambrose Heim as the spiritual advisor of the first conference because of his “extraordinary zeal and unstinted energy in behalf of the underprivileged of St. Louis.” Heim was “ever attentive, amiable, and gentle,” and his

presence lit up the Thursday night member gatherings.²⁰

Father Heim was a talented and resourceful priest who looked out for the welfare of his flock. At one point, he actually took on the role of banker to help workers in his care: “Father Heim received for deposit and safekeeping the savings of mechanics, laborers, and servant girls who had no confidence in many of the incorporated or private banks of St. Louis.” Bishop Kenrick was aware of this effort, using some of Heim’s methods to improve the financial situation of the Cathedral and the diocese.²¹ In the words of one of Heim’s dear friends, “When you called at the parochial [Cathedral] residence he was surrounded by those he loved to serve. He visited the sick. Was hailed as the dear comforter. The needy were his constant care.”²²

In 1849 a severe cholera epidemic plagued St. Louis. With a death toll of 6,000, Father Heim never hesitated to help. He “spent night and day among the sick and dying, distinguished for his devoted priestly solicitude, zeal, and courage.” A compassionate confessor, people lined up at his confessional to receive his words of counsel and comfort. Because he was fluent in French, German, and English, as well as some other foreign tongues, Heim was able to serve an immigrant population well. Father Heim dedicated himself to “relieve distress, to assuage sorrows, to comfort and console the afflicted...” This was “the aim and object of his life.”²³

Bishop Kenrick most likely chose Ambrose Heim as the spiritual advisor of the first conference because of his “extraordinary zeal and unstinted energy in behalf of the underprivileged of St. Louis.”

Once established in St. Louis, the Society gradually grew. Between 1845 and 1861, 12 parish Conferences were founded in the city.²⁴ The Society formed a Particular (District) Council to organize and support these parish Conferences in March 1860.

During the Civil War, members regularly visited both prisons and military hospitals. They helped to start and sustain schools for boys and young men at night. Members also distributed food, coal, and other supplies to those in need. The Society's help proved "indispensable during the cholera epidemics of the 1860s, and tornados and floods of the late 19th to early 20th centuries." Continuous expansion of the Society to other American cities led to the formation of another authoritative body, the Superior Council of St. Louis, to direct regional activity in St. Louis, Alton, and Leavenworth in 1863. St. Louis applied to be instituted as a Superior Council like New York; its request was granted in August of that year.²⁵

In 1896, a central office was opened to oversee the administrative work of the Society, helping to free parish Conferences to more active service. In 1898 the "Central Office formed an employment bureau" and in the following year, the Society "purchased a large plot at Calvary Cemetery to bury the deceased poor, regardless of race." From 1899 to 1945, "over 3,800 persons were laid to rest at Calvary." By 1900, St. Louis could boast of 50 Conferences and 1,500 members.²⁶

Dr. Timothy Papin became the Particular Council's first elected President. Dr. Papin was "a great-grandson of Pierre Laclede Lequest, the founder of the city of St. Louis, had received his medical education in St. Louis and Paris. He was a protégé of Dr. Moses Linton, the first President of the St. Louis Cathedral Conference of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul."

From 1846 to 1847, Dr. Papin studied medicine in Paris, France. Although it appears he never met Ozanam or the other founding members of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, "we do know that after his return to St. Louis in 1848, while he was gaining exalted prestige in his chosen profession, he was achieving an enviable reputation as a man of charity." His obituary recorded that he "was of a very mild, kind disposition and greatly loved by all with whom he came into contact...He did a great amount of charitable practice for which he never received one cent...He was a man of unceasing and large charities...none was more beloved by the poor of the city who were for so many years familiar with his ever ready benefactions."²⁷

EXPANSION OF THE SOCIETY, 1845 – 1910

St. Louis may have been the site of the first U.S. Conference, but it was not the only one for long. In fact, according to Jules Gossin, International President in 1846, "One more Conference in a Protestant land is indeed a conquest, but our desires and hopes do not stop there. We have larger and greater ambitions for the Society in the United States because we not only have faith in your efforts, but also (and this is the firmest foundation and richest font of our ambitions) because we have faith in God Who has already overwhelmed us with most precious and unexpected gifts."²⁸

By 1854, the Council General International pointed out that "America, even more than Asia, seems to be a hospitable and fertile ground for our Conferences...Under the care of a venerable prelate, a Conference was founded in the principal city of this country, New York. Twenty-one members practice charitable works, and have already Sadded to the visitation of the poor, the sponsoring of orphans."²⁹

The second U.S. Conference was founded in St. Patrick's parish in New York City in 1847. Thirteen men gathered together on April 25 to learn about the Society. Agreeing to form a Conference, they met again in the following week and elected officers. Before the end of 1847, the Conference could report to Paris that "We now number twenty-one active members. We have already visited and consoled many poor families. We have brought many young men back to the practice of their religious duties and have sent many children to Sunday School whose



Old St. Patrick's Rectory,
Site of New York's First
Conference Meeting

parents had neglected to do so. Our Conference meets every Sunday at 5 p.m. at the Bishop's House, 263 Mulberry Street, New York City, except the first Sunday of the month."

On December 11, 1847, the Conference of St. Patrick's applied to Paris for aggregation, receiving final confirmation on March 27, 1848. Just as the St. Louis Conference had received the full support of Bishop Kenrick and was blest with a talented Spiritual Advisor in Rev. Heim, so too, St. Patrick's Conference had a patron in the Bishop of New York, John Joseph Hughes, and a dynamic priest as a spiritual mentor in the person of Rev. John Loughlin.³⁰

Because the Society grew quickly in New York, on November 24, 1856, a Particular (District) Council, composed of the leaders of the already aggregated Conferences, was started, in the hope that this Council would set up correspondence with all the dioceses in the United States. This system of correspondence provided for "the gradual extension of the Society into all Catholic centers of population." The Particular Council of New York was officially instituted with approval from Paris on March 16, 1857. By 1862, 15 Conferences actively were engaged in Vincentian work in New York City.³¹

By the late 1850s, the "increasing number of Conferences in the country, together with the great probability of many further accessions, was adding so much to the already great labors of the Council General in Paris that the time had arrived for the placing of the government of the Society in the United States under the care of an American Superior Council." The Particular Council of New York was chosen by the Council General in Paris "to consult the other American Conferences about the establishment of an 'Upper' or Superior Council in New York which would be invested with the supervision of the Society... under the direction of the Council General in Paris." Most Conferences agreed, but Brooklyn objected. The Particular Council of Brooklyn, instituted in the year 1857, voted to remain independent of the Superior Council of New York. They would answer directly to Paris. In 1860, the Superior Council of New York came into existence.³²

This table provides a glimpse of the Society's growth in New York City, reflecting work done in the boroughs of Manhattan and the Bronx over the six-month period from October through March 31, 1904:

Members on Roll September 30, 1903.	1,167
Members on Roll March 31, 1904.	1,214
Average attendance at meetings.	768
Families relieved.	5,024
Number of persons in families relieved.	15,592
Number of visits made.	29,593
Situations procured (not included in Employment Bureau report).	175
Total Receipts.	\$38,947.00
Total Expenditures.	\$36,354.00 ³³

The Society's expansion did not stop with New York City. As the following list demonstrates, the Society quickly found many homes throughout the United States. The U.S. cities in order of official aggregation of their oldest Conference over the 46 year period from 1846 – 1892³⁴ were:

St. Louis, MO • February 2, 1846
New York, NY • March 27, 1848
Lockport, NY • October 28, 1848
Buffalo, NY • November 28, 1848
Utica, NY • September 17, 1849
Milwaukee, WI • March 25, 1850
New Orleans, LA • June 20, 1853
Brooklyn, NY • May 26, 1856
Seneca Falls, NY • January 25, 1858
Rochester, NY • January 25, 1858
Philadelphia, PA • February 22, 1858
Albany, NY • July 12, 1858
Jersey City, NJ • July 12, 1858
St. Paul, MN • October 4, 1858
Chicago, IL • November 1, 1858
Cincinnati, OH • January 3, 1859
Dubuque, IA • April 11, 1859
Newark, NJ • June 27, 1859

Washington, DC • January 16, 1860
Louisville, KY • August 25, 1861
Pittsburgh, PA • April 22, 1861
Boston, MA • April 18, 1862
Baltimore, MD • February 27, 1865
Providence, RI • November 27, 1865
Parkersburg, WV • November 26, 1866
Cleveland, OH • June 3, 1867
Hartford, CT • March 1, 1869
Richmond, VA • April 19, 1869
Omaha, NE • June 20, 1870
Fall River, MA • late 1871
Toledo, OH • March 8, 1875
Springfield, MA • May 5, 1879
San Francisco, CA • July 23, 1883
Manchester, NH • August 31, 1891
San Antonio, TX • December 26, 1892

THE FIRST NATIONAL ASSEMBLIES

On September 8, 1864, during the Civil War, the Society of St. Vincent de Paul in the United States conducted its first General [National] Assembly in New York City.³⁵ It was held for “the purpose of purifying ideals and incentives, and of reaffirming allegiance to tested principles, the better to assure a concerted attack on the problems of peace once hostilities had terminated.” Both “American ecclesiastical and Parisian Vincentian authorities” approved and supported the gathering.³⁶

Meeting in St. Patrick’s Cathedral School, distinguished members of the clergy and lay representatives of the Society came from all parts of the country to discuss “various topics of pressing practical importance.” We can too often and too easily think that the concerns of those early members of the Society were very distant from ours; but a review of the topics discussed in 1864 will quickly dispel any such notion. A list of some identified problems and issues seems all too modern and will resonate with today’s Vincentians:

1. “The proper manner of proceeding in the establishment of Conferences has been either disregarded or unknown.”
2. “Sufficient care and discrimination has been lacking in the admission of members.”
3. “The Rules, the spirit, and the objects of the Society have been neglected or a matter of ignorance.”
4. “Weekly meetings of the Conferences are an absolute necessity if the Conferences are to wax strong and remain faithful to the Rule.”
5. “The collections at the meetings have not been responded to properly by the members.”
6. “The necessity of every member being initiated in the visiting of the poor must be constantly reiterated.”
7. “Political influences are to be totally ignored by the Conferences.”
8. “Notoriety or outward public display (participation in civic displays such as processions on various occasions, the use of banners, the wearing of badges and scarfs, etc.) are to be avoided by members and Conferences.”
9. “Members should avoid using the Society as a means of temporal advancement.”

10. "An evident great lack of system in the discharge of secretarial duties and record keeping by the Conferences should be obviated by the use of a plain, uniform, simple system of recording...."
11. "While it is important to maintain unimpaired the intimate connection of the Reverend Clergy with our Conferences, still the management of Conference affairs has been thrown too frequently and to too great a degree upon the shoulders of the Spiritual Directors. This has fostered a lack of initiative on the part of too many Conference Presidents. . . ."
12. "In discussing the manner of increasing the funds of the Conferences, the President of the Superior Council stated that . . . the Rule is very explicit in stating that none but strictly Christian modes should be employed . . . [I]t was observed that it might perhaps be prudent to leave the matter of replenishing the treasury of the Conference to the wisdom of its officers, according to the custom of the different localities."
13. "In response to the query — "Has the Conference power to strike lax members from the roll?"—it was conceded that the power was present but a most sparing and reluctant use of the power was counseled. Great care in admitting members should be employed. Inquisitorial or dictatorial measures should be avoided in the conduct of Conference affairs. Mildness, firmness, and a conciliatory spirit would be more in harmony with the spirit of the Society."
14. "A topic to which the assembled Vincentians addressed long and conscientious attention was — "The Care of Destitute Catholic Children."³⁷

According to McColgan, "From the extent and intensity of the discussion on the point at their first General Assembly it was apparent that for the members of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul the care of children was a customary and favorite occupation of the Conferences throughout the country." He also concluded that "the pioneer Vincentians were deeply conscious of and scrupulously attentive to the demands of fraternal correction and charity, as well as to the more obvious obligations of true Christian brotherhood."³⁸

"[T]he pioneer Vincentians were deeply conscious of and scrupulously attentive to the demands of fraternal correction and charity, as well as to the more obvious obligations of true Christian brotherhood."

The Second General [National] Assembly proved to be "a much more elaborate affair." Held again in New York City from September 5 – 7, 1865, the Assembly "was honored by the active participation of the bishops of Newark, Brooklyn, and Chicago, other eminent clerics, and representatives from Conferences the country over." Among the topics discussed was the importance of avoiding partisan politics. The Society was "to remain noncommittal in matter of party politics."³⁹ Certainly this was particularly relevant at this tumultuous time in history at the end of the Civil War.

In the 50 years spanning 1864 to 1914, 15 National Assemblies were held in New York, Washington (D.C.), Louisville, St. Louis, Chicago, Richmond, Boston, Philadelphia, and Lake Champlain. Starting in 1915, with the official institution of the National Council of the U.S., an annual National Assembly of members has normally been conducted and held in various locations around the country.⁴⁰

FORMATION OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF THE UNITED STATES, 1885 – 1915

By the late 1850s, the Society in the United States needed a supervising structure beyond a simple local organization. New York's Particular (District) Council was officially instituted by the Council General of Paris on March 16, 1857.

The Council General International then decided to ask New York if it would "consult the other American Conferences about the establishment of...[a] Superior Council in New York which would be invested with the supervision of the Society in this country under the direction of the Council General in Paris and subject to its rulings."

At first, all but Brooklyn agreed to this arrangement. By 1863, however, the St. Louis Council informed the New York Superior Council that it would apply to Paris to form its own Superior Council. Its application for institution was received and approved by the Council General in August 1863. Despite the need for a larger supervising structure, up to 1913, "the Superior Council of New York from time to time found it desirable to relinquish part of its authority and to recommend the establishment of independent jurisdictions."⁴¹

The desire for greater supervision continued to surface at various points in the Society's history. At a national gathering in Washington in 1886, Joshua Huntington presented a paper suggesting one Superior Council for the United States. According to Huntington, "Under the present organization of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul in the United States there is little or no union of action. Even the existence of the western branches of the Society is unknown to many of its members here in the East. That we should be obliged to go to Dublin or Paris to learn what they are doing in Louisiana or Missouri seems an unnatural arrangement, and one which should be changed if possible."⁴²

Another Vincentian leader who took up the cause for unity was the President of the Particular (District) Council of Boston, Thomas F. Ring. In August 1889, Ring argued the following:

"I believe our Society in the United States should have a national head at Washington and all the Councils through the country should report to it. As it is now there is about 76% associated with New York and the other 24% associated in irregular propor-

tions to St. Louis, Brooklyn and New Orleans. I don't believe this is the best way for our Society to be grouped; instead of a separation there should be a united solid body."

Eight years later, in October 1897, Ring addressed at the annual convention in Louisville, Kentucky, suggesting that large cities and their suburbs where three or more

Conferences existed should have a Particular (District) Council, that there should be a "Central Council in an archdiocese or in a diocese when the number of Conferences justified it," and that there should be a "Superior Council for the whole country, to which all Central Councils and scattered unattached Conferences should report." Unfortunately, no final action on the proposal was taken.⁴³

The idea was again mentioned in 1904 and 1908. However, it was not until the June 1911 assembly in Boston that any progress on the idea of a single Superior Council was achieved.⁴⁴ Here, the decision was finally made to institute a Superior Council of the U.S. with jurisdiction over the entire country. Details of the plan still needed to be worked out over the next few years.

The International Society had for some time favored the formation of Central Councils that brought Conferences and Particular (District) Councils together in a specific geographic area. Vincentian leaders in the United States, however, thought that the country's geographical structure would be better served by the creation of a jurisdictional entity placed between the Diocesan Central Councils and any proposed Superior Council of the United States.

In 1911, the Council General in Paris allowed the United States to institute "Metropolitan Central Councils" for each ecclesiastical province. The Metropolitan Central Councils of Boston and Philadelphia were officially instituted by the Council General on January 20, 1913. (This structure was eventually abandoned as unnecessary in the 1940s.) Diocesan Central Councils then became the official intermediaries between Particular (District) Councils and the Superior Council (National Council) of the United States.



Thomas F. Ring

As one historian points out, “when the time came for the inauguration of the Superior Council of the United States [in 1915], there existed seven independent divisions of the Society in this country: the Superior Councils of New York, St. Louis, New Orleans, and Chicago; the Metropolitan Central Councils of Boston and Philadelphia; and the Particular Council of Brooklyn.”

Brooklyn would not approve the Superior Council of the United States until an agreement was reached that it would remain independent from the New York Council and report directly to the U.S. Superior Council.⁴⁵ Brooklyn was considered to be “the most important diocese, numerically and materially in the country and it was therefore felt that in justice to its record and influential standing its identity could not be sunk and its individuality lost by making it, under the new scheme, a mere appendage of the archdiocesan division of Manhattan or New York.”⁴⁶

In 1914, President of the Superior Council of New York, Thomas M. Mulry, made the final case for the new national organization:

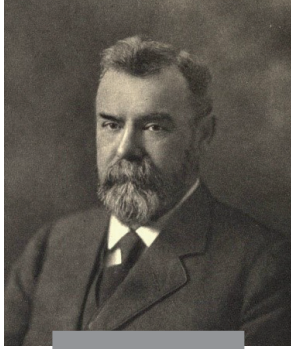
“Under the strain of modern life, our Society is subjected to many severe tests. If it has the spiritual and social vitality that we claim for it, it ought to be found vigorous and alert wherever the cry of poverty is heard. We know that we have not developed as extensively as the needs of our Catholic poor demand. Nor have we won over to the active service of the poor as many representative Catholics as we have a right to claim for the work in the name of God. The proposed reorganization promises active and constant local stimulation in the forming of Conferences and Councils. For this reason, the plan merits cordial support...We...have not yet a sufficiently large membership to do the work that falls to us. We hear complaints on all sides that the workers are too few. The plan of organization promises to discover for us, zealous and enlightened local leadership that will put new life into Councils and Conferences and will develop our resources.”⁴⁷

An agreement was finally reached “that when the Superior Council of the United States was instituted the Brooklyn division of the Society was to retain its independent status, and would report direct to that Superior Council as it had done to Paris, and would not merge its individuality as a subordinate council of the province of New York.” Once agreement was obtained, there was unanimous approval of the proposal for instituting the Superior Council of the U.S. on September 22, 1914, during the National Conference of Catholic Charities, held in Washington, D.C.

A formal request was sent to authorities in Paris, asking for the institution of a Superior Council of the United States, with Thomas M. Mulry as its first president. This request was signed by official representatives of the Superior Councils of New York, St. Louis, New Orleans, Chicago, and Brooklyn, as well as the Metropolitan Central Councils of Boston and Philadelphia.⁴⁸ Approval from Paris was received in June 1915.

The official inauguration of the new Superior Council of the United States, with Mulry as president, was held November 21, 1915 at the Catholic University in Washington, D.C.⁴⁹

Thomas Maurice Mulry (1855 – 1916), the first National President, was born in New York City on February 13, 1855. Son of an ardent Catholic family, Mulry was educated at Catholic schools. In 1872, at the age of 17, he joined the family excavation business in Manhattan; in that same year, he joined the Society of St. Vincent de Paul.



Thomas M. Mulry

As one biographer notes, “Mulry’s association with the Vincentians was characterized by extraordinary energy, probity, and geniality, and it earned him local and national leadership positions in the emerging area of charity administration.”

Mulry had a successful business career, becoming a trustee of the Emigrant Industrial Savings Bank of New York in 1901. From 1906 until his untimely death in 1916, he served as its president. As one account indicates, Emigrant Industrial Savings Bank was “the largest savings bank in the world and a vital institution in the development of the city’s immigrant communities.” Mulry also “served as a member and/or director of the boards of numerous companies and professional associations, including the Mutual Life Insurance Company, the Advisory Council of Real Estate Interests, the Prudential Real Estate Corporation, and the United States Title Guaranty Company.”⁵⁰

Mulry’s most significant achievements, however, were in the field of charity work. He became a member of the Society in New York in 1885 and was elected president of the Superior Council of New York 20 years later. He was largely responsible for the national organization of the Society. Because of Mulry’s “honesty and tact,” he was able to work with Catholics and non-Catholics alike. He was also influential in convincing “public authorities to continue to fund private, religious charities.” Mulry “secured the cooperation of a variety of Catholic charitable organizations in New York. On a national level, this process culminated in the creation of the National Conference of Catholic Charities in Washington, D.C., in 1910.” Under his presidency, a number of originally non-Catholic initiatives were adapted to Catholic purpose, including youth “fresh air” summer programs and “day nurseries” for working mothers.

His charity work won for him a number of awards. Pius X made him a Knight of St. Gregory in 1908.⁵¹ The University of Notre Dame honored him in 1912 with its prestigious Laetare Medal, which “is bestowed by the University of Notre Dame as a recognition of the work of Catholic men and women in religion, art, science, literature, and philanthropy.”⁵² In 1915 he received an honorary degree of Doctor of Laws from the Catholic University of America, just after he was elected as National President of the Superior Council of the United States. Unfortunately, within a year, Mulry contracted pneumonia and died unexpectedly in 1916.⁵³

One of the prominent non-Catholic workers with him for many years, Charles D. Hilles, who was the representative of the Juvenile Asylum, said of him:

“His self-control might have been mistaken for shyness. It was, however, a self-control that extended beyond countenance to heart and mind. I never heard unmeasured words or harsh judgment from his lips. Moderate as he was in expression, he knew his own mind thoroughly and he maintained his convictions with a wonderful sense of situation. He knew how to yield and how to compromise rather than accept defeat, but his first judgments remained unchanged. This unusual combination of intelligent opinion, moderation in expression, willingness to see the other side and surrender non-essentials when necessary, together with a warm heart and entire fearlessness were features of Mr. Mulry’s character which won friends in every walk of life and gave him marvelous influence as advisor or arbitrator in affairs.”⁵⁴

Mulry was indeed a true “leader in charitable work in and out of the Catholic Church.”⁵⁵

Once formed, the National Council of the United States was served by the following elected Presidents between 1915 and 2020:

1915 – 1916 • Thomas M. Mulry

1916 – 1952 • George J. Gillespie

1952 – 1956 • Edmond B. Butler

1956 – 1969 • George E. Heneghan

1969 – 1975 • T. Raber Taylor

1975 – 1981 • Howard E. Halaska

1981 – 1987 • John R. Simmons

1987 – 1993 • John F. Coppinger

1993 – 1999 • Joseph H. Mueller

1999 – 2005 • Eugene B. Smith

2005 – 2011 • Joseph D. Flannigan

2011 – 2017 • Sheila K. Gilbert

2017 – 2023 • Ralph Middlecamp

Beginning with T. Raber Taylor in 1969, the term limit for National Presidents was set at a single six-year term. Although Mulry favored establishing a permanent office in Washington, D.C., after his untimely death in 1916, this did not occur.

ST. LOUIS BECOMES THE HOME BASE

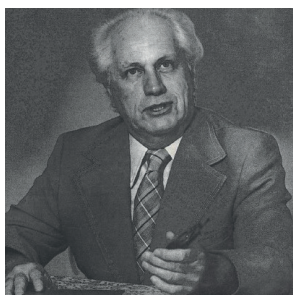
In 1957 the Society made its official home base in St. Louis, site of the first U.S. Conference. Until 1992, the Society's office in St. Louis was located on the 2nd floor at 4140 Lindell Boulevard.

The Society now had supportive staff, and Dudley Baker became its first National Executive Secretary in 1957. Baker served in this capacity for 28 years until his death from a heart attack at age 68 in 1985. Baker had a Master's Degree in Social Work from St. Louis University and had been employed by Catholic Charities in the Archdiocese of St. Louis before his appointment in

1957. Baker "was responsible for the codification of the rule and manual of the Society for use in the United States." He was also "actively involved in the St. Louis Archdiocese St. Vincent de Paul Society." As the first Executive Secretary, Baker directed the Society's activities in 100 dioceses across the United States.⁵⁶

Upon Baker's death, the position of Executive Secretary was offered to Rita Porter, who had also worked for the St. Louis Council; she assumed the role in September 1985. The only other staff person at that time was Laura Kamper, who remains on the staff of the National Office as Senior Director of Finance, Personnel, and Facilities.⁵⁷

Porter served faithfully for 14 years until her retirement in September 1999. During her tenure, the office moved from Lindell Boulevard to 58 Progress Parkway in May 1992. The National Council secured the property with an endowment fund to cover future expenses, and an official dedication of the



Dudley Baker



Rita Porter



Roger Playwin



David Barringer

new building was held April 16, 1992. When Porter retired in 1999, Richard Hennicke briefly served until January 2003.⁵⁸

At that time, the Society decided to look to new leadership for the 21st century. Roger Playwin, who had served as Executive Director for the Detroit Council, became Executive Director of the National Council in April 2007. He became its first Chief Executive Officer (CEO) in January 2012, in recognition of the changes in the “scope of job duties, functions, and responsibilities of this position.”⁵⁹

When Playwin retired in 2013, a national search resulted in the hiring of Dave Barringer as CEO. With over 25 years of experience in both nonprofit and for-profit management, Barringer remains in the CEO role today.

To meet the needs of a growing Society, the staff of the National Office has increased from a mere figure of two in Baker’s time to at least 22 in 2020, providing a wide range of support to Councils and Conferences throughout the United States. It is important to note that many of the developments discussed below were achieved because of the dedication and support of both Playwin and Barringer, as well as the dedication and support of their faithful and faith-filled staff of the National Office.

The 58 Progress Parkway location continued to serve as home base from 1992 until recently. On April 13, 2020, nearly 28 years after the move to 58 Progress Parkway, the Society again moved, this time two doors down to a larger building at 66 Progress Parkway as its new home base.⁶⁰ The new location provides additional office and meeting space, as well as a chapel that will serve the Society well in the foreseeable future.

CHANGES BETWEEN 1969 – 1976

During the 1960s, International President Pierre Chouard challenged the Society to renew itself with a program “based on considerations of spirituality, universality, extension, youth, training, adaptation, and cooperation.”⁶¹ Shortly thereafter, the directives of the Second Vatican Council issued from 1963 – 1965 made the need for renewal even more necessary. In light of these developments, the Council General International (CGI) introduced five-year experimental Rule embracing some important changes. One change was the introduc-

tion of term limits for presidents. A second was an emphasis on the importance of “embracing those serving and those served.”⁶²

A third change involved admitting women as members. When the Society was established in 1833, only males could join. This was, in fact, radical for the time because men (except perhaps for priests), rarely, if ever, went into the streets of Paris to do charitable work. Indeed, the University of Paris in Ozanam’s day was not a coeducational institution. Woman’s education, social, cultural, and political opportunities were extremely limited.

However, as the 1979 issue of the *Manual* emphasizes, “Vincentian men have always worked with women. Religious women helped start the Society... The Sisters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul gave both the addresses and entrée to the young men who formed the first conference.” They looked upon themselves as auxiliaries of the Sisters. Like a mentor, Sister Rosalie gave them advice, along with bread and meat tickets to distribute to the needy visited in the Rue Mouffetard. In the early days of the Society, “women participated by their prayers, inspirations, and encouragement.”⁶³

To discover how women became official members in 1969, one has to turn to a much earlier development. The first female Society of St. Vincent de Paul was founded in Bologna on January 10, 1856, by Celestina Scarabelli. Because of a serious outbreak of cholera in the city, members of the Society attempted to keep up with the increased demands caused by the disease.

The Rule of the Society at the time clearly discouraged men from visiting single women. To address this problem, President Antonio Costa, enlisted the aid of Celestina Scarabelli, “a very interesting woman of the time, with a vast literary and scientific culture, charity and virtue example in her time, according to the chronicles.” Scarabelli offered assistance to sick women. As a result of her response, Costa offered to create a women’s Conference, headquartered in Bologna.⁶⁴ From 1856 until 1960, this branch of the Society had its own Council General and “was entirely distinct from the men’s Society, although both followed exactly the same Rule.” This Women’s Society eventually became quite strong in Italy, Portugal, and Canada.⁶⁵

On October 21, 1945, Pope Pius XII gave an address entitled: “Women’s Duties in Social and Political Life.” The Pope described the vast field of

Today women are a major part of the leadership in the Society and have provided it with many leaders, including recent National President Sheila Gilbert.

activity open to women in areas such as education, direct participation, and collaboration in social and political activity. According to Pius XII, “Associated with men in civil institutions she will apply herself especially to those matters which call for tact, delicacy and maternal instinct. ...[O]nly a woman will know how to temper certain legislation with kindness, without detriment to its efficacy.”

Beginning with its Plenary Meeting in 1960, the International Society of St. Vincent de Paul had adopted resolutions that sanctioned mixed (male/female) Conferences. By 1963, a process of gradually integrating women’s Conferences into the SVdP structure was approved by the International Society. The United States was at first a bit reluctant to act, but that changed under the Presidency of T. Raber Taylor. In 1969, at the annual meeting held in Houston, Texas, the National Trustees (now referred to as National Council Members) approved women’s entrance into the U.S. Society. For a number of years, T. Raber Taylor “had championed the cause of women in the Society.” He now saw his efforts come to fruition, and women soon began to enroll as active members.

To enhance the process of assimilation, in 1976, “a committee of women was formed as a sub-committee of the National Extension Committee. Its basic purpose...[was] to encourage the recruitment of women.” Called Women in the Society (WIS), the committee was “composed of eight Regional Representatives, four women advisors, and a chairperson.”⁶⁶

Today women are a major part of the leadership in the Society and have provided it with many leaders, including recent National President Sheila Gilbert.

At the International Assembly held in Dublin, Ireland in 1973, the five-year experiment with the Rule was debated. Out of this meeting emerged a new expression of the Rule. The U.S. Council agreed to the changes suggested by CGI: “At its National Meeting in Cincinnati, September 1975, the Council of the United States adopted the General Council’s working model for Conferences and Councils and decided to create Commentaries to accompany it. A committee chaired by former National President T. Raber Taylor presented the proposed Commentaries at the National Meeting in Atlanta, September 1978. Revised and then adopted in Chicago at the Midyear Meeting in April 1979, this version of the Rule and Commentaries guided the Society until 2003.”⁶⁷

At the beginning of the 21st century, the International Council General again assigned an International Committee to study and review the Rule. The resulting Rule, approved in 2003, now consists of three parts:

Part I: The Rule of the International Confederation of St. Vincent de Paul

Part II: Statutes of the International Confederation of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul

Part III: Statutes of the National Council of the United States, Society of St. Vincent de Paul, Inc.

According to the American Manual, “Part III can be changed by the National Council of the United States with approval from the International Council. The entire Rule and Statutes in their three Parts must be treated as a single legal document; however, the first part, entitled ‘Rule of the International Confederation of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul,’ takes precedence over the other two.”⁶⁸

The year 1975 saw a significant revision of the Bylaws, creating the eight regions we know today. They were to be directed by “Regional Chairpersons” who were to be appointed by the National President in consultation with the Councils that constituted the region.⁶⁹ This change created a new and vital connection between the National Council and Councils/Conferences throughout the United States. In 2007, the National Council passed a resolution to change the title from Regional Chair to Regional Vice

President, because “the responsibilities of the office far exceed normal duties of a chair of a committee,” and “the use of the current title creates confusion to those the chair works with.” The resolution passed unanimously. Regional Vice Presidents have continued to be an important link in the Society, providing the National President with vital information and concerns of the region, while also providing the region with vital information and concerns of the National President.⁷⁰

NATIONAL COUNCIL INITIATIVES IN THE 20th CENTURY

Throughout the 20th century, “each U.S. National President has been associated with a particular phase of Vincentian organization or activity.”

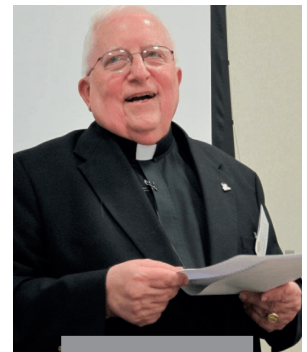
- **Thomas Mulry (1915 – 1916)** • Ecumenical Cooperation With Others
- **George Gillespie (1916 – 1952)** • Expansion of the Society
- **Borgia Butler (1952 – 1956)** • Introduction of Presidential Tenure
- **George Heneghan (1956 – 1969)** • Twinning Arrangements With SVdP in Third World Countries
- **T. Raber Taylor (1969 – 1975)** • Introduction of Women Into the Society in the United States
- **Howard Halaska (1975 – 1981)** • Council Leadership Development
- **John Simmons (1981 – 1987)** • Reorganization of National Committee Structure
- **John Coppinger (1987 – 1993)** • Establishment of Permanent National Headquarters
- **Joseph Mueller (1993 – 1999)** • Adherence to the Rule, Strengthening the Spiritual Life of Members of the Society, and Encouraging the Society to Be an Advocate for Those We Serve⁷¹

During Mueller’s term, the 150th Anniversary celebration was successfully held in St. Louis in 1995 and Frédéric Ozanam was beatified in a magnificent ceremony held in Paris at the Cathedral of Notre Dame in August 1997.⁷²

In that same year, Father Ronald Ramson, CM, who had a close association with the Society for more than 30 years, joined the staff of the

National Office. Ramson provided much needed guidance on formation, conducted a variety of workshops such as the National Council’s Charity Seminars, and even served briefly as Assistant Executive Director under Playwin until 2005, when Father Ramson left to minister in Kenya.⁷³

This same spirit of dedication and service has persisted in the 21st century.



Fr. Ron Ramson

PRESIDENT EUGENE SMITH (1999 – 2005)

In 1999, the Society elected Eugene Smith for a six-year term as National President. Under his direction, the Society undertook three key initiatives between 1999 and 2005. The first was the development of the first formal five-year Strategic Plan intended to prepare the Society for the upcoming 21st century.

The Society's First Formal Strategic Plan, Adopted Under President Eugene Smith

- Goal #1:** Promote greater spiritual growth at every level of the Society.
- Goal #2:** Enhance the image of the Society to become a more visible Sign of Christ.
- Goal #3:** Encourage greater unity at every level of the Society.
- Goal #4:** Develop greater solidarity with and care for people who are poor.
- Goal #5:** Build strengthened relationships with the Church, Vincentian Family, and other organizations, which serve people in need.
- Goal #6:** Prepare a Comprehensive Development Program for coordinated fundraising.⁷⁴

The strategic plan effort also resulted in the Society's first formal Mission Statement:

Inspired by Gospel values, the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, a Catholic lay organization, leads women and men to join together to grow spiritually by offering person-to-person service to those who are needy and suffering, in the tradition of its founder, Blessed Frédéric Ozanam, and patron, St. Vincent de Paul.

As a reflection of the whole family of God, members, who are known as Vincentians, are drawn from every ethnic and cultural background, age group and economic level. Vincentians are united in an international society of charity by their spirit of poverty, humility and sharing, which is nourished by prayer and reflection, mutually supportive gatherings and adherence to a basic Rule.

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.⁷⁵



Eugene Smith



Sister Kieran

Smith's second initiative was a renewed focus on spiritual formation, returning to the Society's fundamental roots. Over the next six years, many new resources and programs were developed with the help of Sister Kieran Kneaves, a Daughter of Charity, who became an integral part of the National Office staff. In 2002, the National Council welcomed her as National Formation Director.

According to Smith, "We needed, at that time, a gifted educator who was grounded in Vincentian Spirituality to develop a plan and related materials to assist Vincentians to know and live our Vincentian Spirituality...We found Sister Kieran by the grace of God."⁷⁶

One of the most significant resources developed was a special training/formation program for all members: the Ozanam Orientation. Working with trained formators and presenters, the program ensures that all members understand the Society's essential history and charism. In fact, by 2011, the Society recognized the proven "value of the Ozanam Orientation in preparing new and existing members of the Society to better understand the mission, spirituality, organization, history, Rule, accountability, strategic plan and home visitation aspects of the Society."

The program is considered so essential that the Society requires all new active members to attend Ozanam Orientation within one year, and all other members to complete Ozanam Orientation to reflect again on the "spirituality and heritage" of the Society. All Council and Conference officers and Spiritual Advisors were encouraged to attend an Orientation, if they had not already done so, and were expected to attend no later than one year after assuming office. In a decision that went into effect on January 1, 2012, all Executive Directors were also required to participate in an Ozanam Orientation within one year of being hired.⁷⁷

Another successful resource was the Serving in Hope Modules. Between 2003 and 2018, seven modules were developed to help Vincentians and Conferences deepen their commitment to the Society and explore Vincentian Spirituality more fully. The seven modules examined different themes:

- MODULE I: Our Vincentian Vocation**
- MODULE II: Our Vincentian Spirituality**
- MODULE III: Our Vincentian Heritage**
- MODULE IV: Our Vincentian Mission**
- MODULE V: Our Vincentian Rule**
- MODULE VI: Our Vincentian Conference**
- MODULE VII: Our Vincentian Home Visit**

The purpose of the series was "to root all members of the Society in the spirituality and heritage of its founder, Blessed Frédéric Ozanam, and patron, St. Vincent de Paul." The series uses videos with formation guides to enrich the minds of its members, allow them to discuss ideas, and deepen their understanding of the topics by providing enrichment readings. Modules can be used one session at a

time or combined in a day of retreat.⁷⁸ According to CEO Dave Barringer, Serving in Hope "is a consistent formation and governance top seller used at the Conference level."

An important part of the spiritual renewal process begun during Smith's administration was the institution of Invitation for Renewal, "a leadership formation program for current and emerging Vincentian leaders." It was developed "to help the Society return to its roots to better understand its mission and values," and to develop and strengthen "leaders to move the Society forward in ways that are true to both our spiritual foundation and the needs of those who are poor today."

The program provides leadership with "an immersion in the Vincentian spirit of Vincent and Louise, Frédéric and Rosalie." Leaders are "invited to deepen their understanding and commitment to the Mission, Vision, and Values of the Society" and are "called to renew the Society today and beyond."⁷⁹ Along with then-National Executive Director Roger Playwin, Sister Kieran Kneaves, Father Ronald Ramson, and Sheila Gilbert were all instrumental in developing and presenting this special leadership retreat. The first session of Invitation for Renewal was held on October 1, 2002. Since that date more than 700 Vincentians have attended this inspirational retreat.⁸⁰



Voice of the Poor Handbook

Smith's third initiative was the establishment of the Voice of the Poor Committee (VOP). Smith built upon former President Joseph Mueller's focus on advocacy for those we serve, and by 2001, the VOP had published its *Voice of the Poor Guide: Speaking in One Voice for Christ's Poor*. Its stated mission was: "to uphold Catholic social teaching by researching, validating, documenting, advocating, and promulgating issues related to the condition of the poor and disenfranchised."⁸¹

In February 2003, the Society met for its Mid-Year meeting in Washington, D.C. and to participate in the annual Catholic Social Ministries Conference. Since that date, the Society has played a significant role in this annual event. By September 2008, an official *Voice of the Poor Handbook* was published and distributed by the National Council.

Voice of the Poor workshops are currently offered at national and regional meetings, and available for Conferences and Councils. VOP has also developed and conducted a number of webinars. Its position papers on various topics such as immigration and payday loans have guided the Society on important social justice issues. Throughout its history, the Voice of the Poor Committee has encouraged all Vincentians to speak out clearly, and with one voice, for those who otherwise have no voice.



Joseph Flannigan

PRESIDENT JOSEPH FLANNIGAN (2005 – 2011)

The first strategic plan initiatives were continued by Smith's successor, Joseph Flannigan, who had previously served as Vice President. From 2005 – 2011, Flannigan continued to move the Society forward into the new millennium.⁸²

Until 2005 there had been no formal Board structure for the Society, but Flannigan changed that in 2006. At the annual meeting in Indianapolis, Indiana on September 1, the Board of the National Council of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul held its first official meeting. Because the National Council had final approval of any appointments, a resolution was sponsored at

the 2006 Mid-Year Meeting allowing all appointees to assume their official duties.⁸³ The new Board of Directors provided the National President with much needed advice and a body that could oversee the future direction of the Society in a more systemic fashion.

At that same Indianapolis meeting, a resolution was passed "to obtain an independent 501(c)(3) tax status for the National Council." Because of new IRS regulations, the U.S. Catholic Conference of Bishops had recommended that "separate corporations not directly connected to the Church... obtain their independent 501(c)(3) tax status." The resolution was approved by the National Board of Directors, who recommended its passage to voting members of the National Council.⁸⁴ It was soundly passed. This action began a long but necessary process of transition for many Conferences and Councils of the U.S. to become compliant with IRS guidelines.

The Society also took steps to protect its trademark and to reassert its Catholic identity. It wanted to ensure that the "name and the Logo of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul are protected and the exclusive property of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul Council of the United States." To use the name or logo, an organization needed to be "approved by the National Executive Director, who is the designated agent for Council of United States in this matter." It was necessary to submit a written request for such approval.⁸⁵ The Society has continued to protect itself against any infringement of its trademark.

Although the Society remained open to collaborating with people of other faiths and was also open to the possibility of non-Catholic Associate members, a decision was made not to allow the formation of affiliated Conferences in non-Catholic congregations: "We should share with people of other faiths what we do, how we do it, and most importantly why we do it. We must ensure throughout this process the protection of our name, logo, and material through copyright law. Encouraging members of other faiths to establish a similar program in their faith community is the preferred method of responding to requests to create a non-Catholic Conference in another denomination."⁸⁶

The Society also defined clearly who was authorized to speak for it. There was a recognized need "for the members to speak with one voice...." It was therefore decided that the "National President will

speak on all matters of controversy or public interest, Government inquiry, legal situations, relations with Clergy and Religious, and relations with other provider organizations.” It also decided that the “Executive Director [of the National Council] will speak on all business matters not involving public controversy, Board policies, or National Council policies.”⁸⁷

“We should share with people of other faiths what we do, how we do it, and most importantly why we do it...Encouraging members of other faiths to establish a similar program in their faith community is the preferred method of responding to requests to create a non-Catholic Conference in another denomination.”

Also under Flannigan’s presidency, a National Car Donation Program was officially initiated. A Task Force studied the program’s feasibility, and in 2010, the National Board of Directors recommended that the National Council authorize the National Executive Director to contract with a company to administer the Society of St. Vincent de Paul National Car Donation Program.⁸⁸ The National Council acted on the Board’s recommendation, approving the program in April 2010. The Vehicle Donation Program has been a great success, and to date, 328 Councils and Conferences have elected to participate.⁸⁹

One of Flannigan’s most important decisions was the establishment of an Ad Hoc Committee on Diversity Issues and Initiatives, as recommended to him by the Board of Directors in July 2006. The formation of this committee resulted from three sources:

1. The Identity Statement of the Society clearly mentions that “As a reflection of the “whole family of God, members, who are known as Vincentians, are drawn from every ethnic and cultural background.”
2. Flannigan had issued a Vision Statement affirming that “Because of the special Charism of the Society, we should be the Catholic leaders who welcome people of all cultures into the Society, and find ways to serve all cultures, and through that process evangelize.”
3. The National Strategic Plan (Objective 3.4) at that time continued to challenge the Society to “Increase multicultural membership and responsibilities.” Consequently, President Flannigan and the National Board of Directors decided that the Society should make these words a reality. In order to move forward, the Board of Directors outlined the following steps:
 - Establish an Ad Hoc Committee.
 - Develop a charge for this Ad Hoc Committee on Multicultural/Diversity Issues and Initiatives
 - Choose a membership for this Ad Hoc Committee composed of females, males, Hispanic/Latino members, African-American Members, Asian members, Native American members and other people with expertise in multicultural/diversity issues with a representation from all Regions.
 - Form a liaison for the Committee with Board through the current Vice President for Vincentian Services who would be a member of the Committee.

In April 2007, the first meeting of the Ad Hoc Committee on Multicultural/Diversity Issues and Initiatives was held in St. Louis. The charge of that Ad Hoc Committee was as follows:

- To advise the Board of Directors and National Council members on matters relating to diversity and to encourage both sensitivity to and understanding of diversity issues.
- To advise the Board of Directors and the National Council members on ways to increase the diversity of the Society.
- To suggest ways the Society might better provide for those we serve who are part of diverse communities.
- To suggest ways to serve better the needs of members of the Society who do not speak English as their primary language.
- To suggest ways to reach out to and to embrace as members all peoples of African-American, Hispanic, Asian, and Native American descent (based on the U.S. Government AHANA/ALANA categories).⁹⁰

To inform future planning, the Ad Hoc Committee on Diversity/ Multicultural Issues and Initiatives presented five goals to the National Board of Directors and the National Council members in 2010. Those goals and objectives were:

Goal 1: Increase the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul's understanding and acceptance of cultural, gender, and generational/intergenerational diversity.

Objectives

- Promote the formation of members around these issues in order that they may gain knowledge, motivation, and skills in ministering to a culturally diverse Society and to culturally diverse people.
- Identify and/or develop and disseminate educational resources on a wide range of topics regarding diversity/multicultural issues and initiatives.
- Develop increased competency in multi-generational and multicultural communication, empowerment, relationship building, and recruitment.

Goal 2: Establish a permanent National Multicultural/Diversity Committee.

Objectives

- Provide clear direction to Councils and Conferences on how to consistently include issues of diversity when developing policies, inviting new membership, conducting celebrations, and making Home Visits.
- Identify best practices and develop models for building and nurturing the society around cultural, gender, and generational/intergenerational diversity issues to be placed in the Ozanam News and on the National website.

Goal 3: Include diverse cultures in the life and leadership of SVdP Councils/Conferences in the United States.

Objectives

- Invite Vincentians of various cultures to collaborate in addressing issues and developing initiatives that affect the whole Society.
- Create affinity/family groupings such Hispanic/Latino, Native American, African American, Asian, European that will meet to discuss common interests and that will have representation on and will advise the National Committee.
- Identify best practices and develop models for building and nurturing multicultural conferences to be placed in the Ozanam News and on the National website.
- Strengthen the continuing formation of members to enable them to develop cultural competencies.
- Identify potential SVdP leaders in cultural and ethnic groups and provide them with appropriate leadership development.

Goal 4: Include women more deeply in the life and leadership of USA Councils/Conferences.

Objectives

- Invite more women to collaborate in addressing issues and developing initiatives that affect the whole Society, especially multicultural/diversity issues and initiatives.
- Identify best practices and develop models for building and nurturing women leaders to be placed in the Ozanam News and on the National website.
- Strengthen the continuing formation of members to enable them to develop gender competencies.
- Identify potential women SVdP leaders and provide them with appropriate leadership development.

Goal 5: Include youth more deeply in the life and leadership of USA Councils/Conferences.

Objectives

- Link closely the National Multicultural/Diversity Committee with the National Committee on youth and young adults in order for each to be aware of and support the other's activities.
- Identify ways to have youth and young adults collaborate in addressing issues and developing initiatives that affect the whole Society.
- Strengthen the continuing formation of members to enable them to develop multi-generational competencies.⁹¹

In April 2011, upon recommendation of the National Board of Directors, National Council Members approved a resolution that a permanent National Committee on Multicultural/Diversity Issues and Initiatives be established.⁹² One of the most significant contributions of this Committee was the development and publication of *A Vincentian Guide to Diversity/Multicultural Issues*, which has been referred to as “the first guide of its kind to be published by a Catholic institution.”⁹³ It was released in 2013, under the presidency of Sheila Gilbert, who noted, “We created the guide primarily to help our members better understand the people they serve, and it’s rooted in our extensive experience with people in need across a broad spectrum of the U.S. populace, which dates to 1845.”⁹⁴ The Society has continued to work towards achieving the above five goals.



*A Vincentian Guide to
Diversity/Multicultural Issues*



Sheila Gilbert

PRESIDENT SHEILA GILBERT (2011 – 2017)

From 2011 – 2017, Flannigan was succeeded as President by Sheila Gilbert, the first woman to be elected to that role in the Society's history. Gilbert had served as National Secretary under Flannigan.

Because more than 85% of the previous strategic plan under Flannigan had been achieved, a new strategic plan was unveiled, and six new goals were approved by the National Council in April of 2012.

The Society's Second Formal Strategic Plan, Adopted Under President Sheila Gilbert

- Spirituality Goal #1** Enable spiritual growth and leadership development throughout the Society.
- Communication Goal #2** Develop communication resources to serve persons living in poverty, members, donors, and collaborators.
- Unity Goal #3** Achieve unity at every level of the Society.
- Solidarity Goal #4** Embrace systemic change to deepen solidarity for and with those living in poverty.
- Collaboration Goal #5** Establish collaborative relationships with diverse organizations around issues of poverty.
- Development Goal #6** Execute a Comprehensive Development Program for coordinated national and local giving to fund the Society's Mission and Vision.

From the beginning of her term, Gilbert was clear that she wanted the Society to focus on how to eliminate debilitating poverty by encouraging Systemic Change (Goals 4 and 5).

Systemic Change required Vincentians to understand the nature and problems of poverty. It encouraged members to find remedies to poverty's root causes, and also created change throughout the Society, including a change in "attitudes, competencies, behaviors, processes, and programs."⁹⁶ Systemic Change "Goes beyond immediate needs; Partners with the poor; Transforms attitudes; Changes structures."⁹⁷

Gilbert understood that the Society's Rule said a great deal about Systemic Change. According to information supplied on the National Website: "The richness of...evidence from Part I of our Rule solidly confirms that Vincentians should neither accept nor support the persistence of severe poverty. Encouraged and inspired by their Rule, Vincentians must help people to transform their lives and build an authentic network of charity and justice. Moreover, our core values (PART III Statute 2) strongly support the dignity of every human person, the preferential option of the poor, concern with charity and justice, and solidarity, all of which call us to be true agents of change for the world in which we live."⁹⁸

In a document entitled "End Poverty Through Systemic Change," the U.S. Society has indicated

that it "is committed to ending poverty. Along with the entire Vincentian Family, the Society of St. Vincent de Paul sees systemic change as the means to this goal. The Society is attempting to build on its existing strengths and reach towards a deeper understanding of poverty and possible remedies to both the symptoms and the root causes using the constructs outlined by Bridges Out of Poverty and the Aha! Process."

The Society has also used to great effect the ideas, constructs, and materials developed by Donna Beegle, a known authority on poverty.⁹⁹ The Society has identified four fundamental parts of its effort to create change:

1. **Empowering** the Society's members through education in the realities of poverty and its solutions, as well as empowering those we serve to provide opportunities to identify and claim their ability to make positive change for themselves and their communities.
2. **Mentoring** as a key to gaining and maintaining the motivation and support for change.
3. **Collaborating** with others who share our commitment to end poverty and transform lives.
4. **Advocating** to change/adjust systems that are barriers to escaping from poverty for individuals and for communities.¹⁰⁰

The efforts begun by Gilbert have resulted in a number of new programs and achievements, including training workshops on the principles behind Systemic Change and a workshop on building sustainable communities entitled “Communities of Hope.”

In particular, the *Getting Ahead Program* has been very successful in helping people escape the clutches of poverty, while its counterpart, *Getting Ahead When Getting Out*, helps those being released from prison. Both programs and their instructional material were authored by Philip DeVol, with whom the Society has consulted and collaborated. These efforts have not replaced the Home Visit; rather, they have guided Vincentians on what needs to be done after the initial Home Visit, enhancing them in the process.

Under Gilbert’s leadership, the Society of St. Vincent de Paul has aspired to bring hope into action:

“When Vincentians encounter Christ in our home visits and service to the needy in our communities, we are inspired to put God’s hope into action through charity and justice. Through mentoring, we will walk with individuals on their self-directed journey out of poverty. Through advocacy and collaboration, we will remove barriers and create strong, sustainable communities. Together through Hope in Action, we will work to end poverty by creating Systemic Change one person, one neighborhood, one community at a time.”¹⁰¹

Under Flannigan’s administration, the Society had explored various ways to increase the funds available to the National Council. Besides exploring development opportunities, the Society began to look closely at the structure of solidarity contributions in order to develop a more just system of assessment that would increase Council and Conference support to the National Council.

This effort finally came to fruition during Gilbert’s administration, when, after much debate and discussion in September 2013, National Council Members agreed “to modify the current Solidarity contribution from \$150 per Conference to a graduated rate structure based on revenue for Conferences, Councils, and Stores.”¹⁰² This decision had four intended goals: to provide adequate support for the National Council; to strengthen regional support for Conferences and Councils; to fund the National Strategic Plan; and to provide adequate support for U.S. contributions to the Council General International.¹⁰³ After a two-year review, the National Council approved the solidarity contribution system for five more years in April 2015.¹⁰⁴

Throughout its history, the Society of St. Vincent de Paul has always been quick to respond to disasters — locally, nationally, and internationally. Historically, the National Disaster Committee functioned as a volunteer group, but in recent years, the Society has developed a much more sophisticated and well-organized response effort. The National Disaster Committee has formed a contingent of “active, trained, and passionate individuals from around the country with the ability and desire to become active by helping in areas affected by disasters on short notice.” This latter task was accomplished in order to “add a level of professionalism to our disaster response efforts.” It became clear that someone would need to direct disaster efforts, boosting the Society’s visibility, identifying and obtaining adequate funding, and increasing the Society’s effectiveness in dealing with disasters.

In May 2014, the National Board of Directors approved a resolution creating “a paid position to coordinate the Society’s Disaster efforts and develop funding sources that will allow the Society to respond to disasters in a Vincentian yet professional and effective manner provided, however, that the position will be funded out of disaster funds for a period of time not to exceed 18 months and provided further that such position will thereafter be funded by donations raised from funding donors who are fully aware that a portion of disaster donations will financially support such position.”

Dave Barringer and Sheila Gilbert were authorized to create a job description, set a salary, and begin the hiring process.¹⁰⁵ Within a short time, Elizabeth Disco-Shearer was hired for the position.

Just two years later, in June 2016, the Society took a momentous step when the National Board of Directors approved a resolution recommending that the National Council approve the formation of a “separate not-for-profit organization...to provide the Society’s Disaster Services, with separate reporting to the public, funders and government.”

The resolution was officially approved at the 2016 National Assembly. This new organization was to be “a subsidiary organization of the National Council of the U.S.” Its corporate Bylaws, Articles of Incorporation, Board of Directors membership, and other governance and financial relationships were made subject to the approval of the National Governance Committee and the National Board of Directors. It was to receive financial support from the Society’s Domestic Disaster Fund, as well as from funds raised from outside sources, for its operations and administration. It works “with the Society to coordinate any public fundraising campaigns for disaster purposes.”¹⁰⁶

Created by the Society in 2016, **Disaster Services Corporation (DSC)** “is a Catholic lay organization that helps people in situational poverty as a result of natural and man-made disasters to get their lives back in order.” The program “focuses on the Society’s efforts regarding long-term case management needs of impacted people after all of the first-responder agencies have departed. The Disaster Services Corporation work is focused on systemic change in long term recovery through person to person support services.”

DSC provides disaster case management to impacted families. Additionally, the group deploys Regional Rapid Response Teams, supports Parish Recovery Assistance Centers, represents at local Multi-Agency Resource Centers, assists with long-term recovery efforts, and furnishes homes through its innovative House in a Box™ program.

Nationally recognized, DSC not only helps those impacted by disasters, but also works to develop post-disaster economic recovery plans that help eliminate the roadblocks that prevent people from escaping poverty.¹⁰⁷

In 2016, the Society enhanced its communications outreach by forming a relationship with Eternal Word Television Network (EWTN). Barringer had pitched to EWTN a special program entitled, “Our Faith in Action: Today’s Society of St. Vincent de Paul.”

EWTN liked the idea, airing the program on August 16, 2016. Produced by the Society, the 30-minute program followed Vincentians from across the country on their spiritual journey through service to those in need. The program, developed with the advice and talent of Orlando SVdP’s Executive Director Trace Trylko, was a success. The Society proposed 13 more episodes to EWTN; the network agreed to air them in 2017, and the EWTN spotlight has brought valuable attention to the Society’s vital work throughout the United States.

PRESIDENT RALPH MIDDLECAMP (2017 – PRESENT)



Ralph
Middlecamp

In 2017, Ralph Middlecamp succeeded Gilbert as the 13th National President. His term began October 1, 2017 and will end September 30, 2023.

Middlecamp brings to the office the significant knowledge and talents that he had developed as Executive Director and CEO of the Madison District Council in Wisconsin, where he served from 1999 until his retirement on July 31, 2017. On the national level, Ralph Middlecamp “has served on National Council of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul’s Store Committee and Communication Committee, and on the presenting team of the Society’s national leadership development program, Invitation for Renewal.”¹⁰⁸

A new strategic plan was developed in the first year of Middlecamp’s term. Approved in September 2018, it pledges the following:

**The Society's Current Strategic Plan,
Adopted Under President Ralph Middlecamp in 2018**

- Expand and Strengthen Our Network of Friends
- Encourage and Support Vincentians on their Spiritual Journey
- Advocate for and Work towards a More Just World
- Promote Deeper and Meaningful Relations with Those We Serve
- Develop, Improve, and Expand Services¹⁰⁹

Along with the
new plan came
a new, succinct
Mission Statement:

**“A network of friends, inspired by
gospel values, growing in holiness
and building a more just world
through personal relationships with
and service to people in need.”**

This new statement was approved in April 2018 in advance of the completion of the strategic plan. The Society thought that a “Mission Statement for an organization should be brief enough as to be memorable” and that “the current Mission Statement of the National Council of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul does not comply with these current standards.” Moreover, the International Council General had revised its own Mission Statement and the U.S. Council thought the time was ripe to consider such a change.¹¹⁰ The older Mission Statement, however, was not abandoned. Because it stated clearly who we are, rather than what we do, it has now become our new **Identity Statement**.

At the end of Gilbert's term, in March 2017, the National Council voted in favor of establishing a new National Council Foundation. Many of the details surrounding this Foundation, however, were left to Middlecamp's administration.

Why was this Foundation created? There was sound justification. The National Council has had a “long-term objective...to end poverty through systemic change...and achieving this objective requires significant financial resources.” Moreover, such financial resources would best “be secured through a Foundation directed solely to support the charitable mission of the National Council.”¹¹¹ This is an exciting new step into the future for the National Council.

Under Middlecamp's administration, spiritual formation has continued to be a priority. One of the most significant achievements was the development and publication of a Member Handbook in early 2019. The Handbook introduces members to the Society and provides essential information that all members need to know. One of the Society's most successful publications ever, it gives them “a sense of belonging to the International Society of St. Vincent de Paul and the greater Vincentian Family.”¹¹²

Throughout its history, stores have always been an integral part of the Society's mission, providing both visibility and financial support. In August 2019, a resolution was passed to create a new nonprofit for National stores, opening a new era for stores in the United States.

A separate resolution passed at the same time provided for the "Protection and Oversight of SVdP Thrift Store Brand." Stores are so vital to the Society's work that it was prudent at this time "to protect the name and reputation of the Society" because there have been operations who have attempted illegally to pose as an SVdP store. The National Council "required that all operations of those who use the Society's Trademarks operate prudently, consistent with the Rule of the Society, and pursuant to a proper business plan when a business operation is a part of the Special Work." It was resolved that "any Council or Conference using or wishing to use a Trademark of the Society for a retail store must demonstrate that (1) it is in compliance with the Rule of the Society, and (2) it is in compliance with the Resolutions of the Society." It was further resolved that "any Council or Conference proposal for a new thrift store (1) must have a business plan in place: that plan must address the decision to use or not use an approved POS system, and (2) has had any such business plan reviewed by the National Stores Committee of the Society." Moreover, before any store is opened or closed in the future, "the National Store Committee should be consulted."¹¹³

As mentioned earlier, during Flannigan's administration, initial efforts were made to protect the Society's trademarks. Now, more legal and governance work was needed to preserve the trademarks to both the Society's name and images. The name and reputation of St. Vincent (and increasingly, Frédéric Ozanam) was so popular that parish programs and others groups working with the poor naturally gravitated to St. Vincent's name, unaware that it was protected for certain fields of work, including housing and stores. Other groups intentionally have used the name to profit from the Society's longstanding reputation. Over the past four years, the National Council has spent close to \$250,000 in various protection activities, money well-spent because these efforts will have long-term beneficial impact.

Since Gilbert's presidency, the Society has also worked to preserve its independence within the Catholic Church. The National Council has engaged in cooperative communications with the United States Catholic Conference of Bishops (USCCB) about tax and Canon law treatment, several difficult communications

to clarify issues with Bishops and Pastors, and the IRS 501(c)(3) tax status initiative to separate our corporate entities from the Church. This independent status was always clearly stated in the Rule of the Society, but it was neither always understood nor maintained appropriately. By 2020, the National Council has been able to reduce the National Council IRS Group Ruling numbers from nearly 1,800 participant groups to around 300 (mostly Isolated Conferences).¹¹⁴ The National Council has worked with both Councils and Conferences to ensure their proper 501(c)(3) status.



Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, D.C.

The year 2020 is an eventful one for the Society in the United States, marking the 175th anniversary of its founding in St. Louis. In preparation for that anniversary, a mosaic of Blessed Frédéric Ozanam was commissioned, with permission granted to place it in the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, D.C. A solemn Mass and dedication ceremony for the Blessed Frédéric Ozanam Mosaic was held Sunday, January 26, 2020.



Bishop Hying

Bishop John Hying, National Episcopalian Advisor, was principal celebrant and Homilist. The dedication, Mass, and following reception were well attended and a genuine success.

Located on the campus of Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C., the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception is North America's largest

Roman Catholic Church. The Ozanam mosaic, which is 30 inches high and 20 inches wide, was placed in the Miraculous Medal Chapel, also known as the "Vincentian Chapel." The mosaic mural, composed of approximately 4000 stones, was created by Trivisanutto Mosaics of Spilimbergo, Italy, near Venice. The company has worked for over 20 years with the National Shrine in Washington D.C and is famous for such mosaics as those in the Holy Sepulcher in Jerusalem, and the mosaic behind the altar in Knock Ireland, which displays the apparition of the Madonna.¹¹⁵

Much has been accomplished in Middlecamp's tenure as National President. Unfortunately, because of the Coronavirus Pandemic that erupted nationwide shortly after the mosaic dedication ceremony and recent significant social unrest over matters of racism, new and unexpected challenges have arisen for the Society.

These new developments raise important questions: How do we properly serve our brothers and

sisters in a time of pandemic and social distancing? How can we develop true friendships with those in need and with each other during this era of pandemic? How do we become more sensitive to issues of race? How do we eliminate racism in ourselves and in our country? What is the connection of racism and poverty? How can we insure justice for all?

The Society faces these vital questions as we celebrate our 175th Anniversary. We must answer them in a strong and positive manner, remaining faithful to our Vincentian Heritage and our Vincentian Charism.

CONCLUSION

In 1933, the U.S. Society of St. Vincent de Paul concluded that over the course of 88 years, "the work of the Society in the United States is worthy of **a medallion in the mosaic of Vincentian work.**"¹¹⁶

These words are as true today as they were 87 years ago. But we must never think that we have achieved all that we can as a Society.

Perhaps the words of Thomas Mulry, the first National President, are a fitting way to end this celebratory history and offer sound advice for our future: "The demands of poverty become more exacting daily because our understanding of it is becoming more and more acute. We need, therefore, to develop a still higher and more capable type of membership and of leadership in the Society. We must set more exacting standards before us and those who may claim without impropriety that we have done our best in the work must set a new and higher best before ourselves and strive to reach it."¹¹⁷

APPENDIX

Excerpts From the Original Record Book of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul in the United States

MINUTES OF THE FIRST MEETING IN THE UNITED STATES

Catholic School Room

Thursday Evening, November 20, 1845

The secretary of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul begs leave respectfully to present the following report of the proceedings of the initiatory meeting.

Meeting convened by requested Bryan Mullanphy to take the chair who complied and stated the object of the meeting.

The meeting then proceeded to a formal election for officers to serve for a term of one year according to the rules reported for the government of the Society which resulted as follows:

Dr. M.L. Linton	President
Bryan Lullanphy Esq.	Vice-President
Dennis Galvin	Vice-President
James Maguire, Jr.	Secretary
Patrick Ryder	Treasurer

The appointments were unanimously confirmed by the meeting.

A collection was then taken up and seventeen dollars and seventy cents reported to have been collected.

Resolved, that two visitors be appointed for each Parish in the city of Saint Louis, whereupon the President appointed:

For the Parish of St. Vincent de Paul	John Byrne
For the Parish of Saint Vincent de Paul	Dr. Anderson
For the Parish of Cathedral	Rev. Ambrose Heim
For the Parish of Saint Francis Xavier	George Ridener
For the Parish of Saint Francis Xavier	John Ennis
For the Parish of Saint Patrick	James C. Bury
For the Parish of Saint Patrick	M. O'Keefe

On motion it was resolved that a committee be appointed to wait upon the Bishop and request his approval of the officers of the Society, whereupon Dr. Anderson and Bryan Mullanphy and Mr. Everhart were appointed and on motion the President was added.

On motion the meeting was adjourned.

(Signed) James Maguire, Jr.

*The actual record reads "For the Parish of the Cathedral-Dr. Anderson." In view of the announced intention of assigning two visitors for each parish, this is an obvious mistake.

LETTER TO THE PRESIDENT GENERAL IN PARIS

Dear Sir and Confrere,

A Conference of the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul has been established in the City of St. Louis under the approbation of the Most Reverend Peter Richard Kenrick, Bishop of St. Louis, and under the spiritual direction of the Reverend Ambrose J. Heim. This Conference desires to be aggregated to the Society in Paris and thus secure the benefit of indulgences granted by our Holy Father to the faithful members of the Society. We have adopted your rules and regulations, also those of the Society in Dublin. All the members of the Conference join in this letter.

We the undersigned desire to form ourselves into a Society of St. Vincent de Paul in the City of Saint Louis — (in the handwriting of Bryan Mullanphy – 1845 – from the first pages of the original records following by the following signatures)

Bryan Mullanphy
Dennis Galvin
Thos. Anderson
Patrick Ryder
Martin E. Power
John Everhart
Thos. Masterson
Jas. Maguire, Jr.
J.J. Donegan
John Byre, Jr.
George Ridener

*Some names are illegible or the defaced manuscript prevents their identification.

M.J. Linton
A.J. Heim

APPROVAL OF BISHOP PETER RICHARD KENRICK

To the Members of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul,
established in the City of St. Louis:

Beloved Brethren —

I have learned, with great satisfaction, that you have formed yourselves into a Society, which takes its name from the apostle of charity, St. Vincent de Paul, and which has for its object to relieve the poor of Christ, whose spiritual or corporeal wants may render them subjects for the exercise of that charity which “loves not in word and in tongue, but in deed and in truth.” — 1 John iii, 18.

I approve most warmly of your holy undertaking, and cherish the hope that your Society, which as I am informed, has been aggregated to the Parent Society of St. Vincent de Paul, in Paris, will be the means, with the Divine blessing, of promoting the practice of Christian charity as successfully here as the other branches of that Society have proved themselves to be wherever they are established.

I have read the rules you have adopted for the government of your Society, and most cordially approve of them. They breathe a deep spirit of piety, and appear to be the result of much reflection and experience. They indicate the means most likely to rend your unified efforts efficient in aiding your fellow Christians. They are also well calculated to keep alive within you the spirit of holy fervor, which will not permit you to grow weary in doing good.

Invoking on you the Divine blessing, and cherishing the hope that God, who has inspired you to commence this good work, will enable you to accomplish it, I subscribe myself,

Yours, most devotedly in Christ,

+ Peter Richard,
Bishop of St. Louis

*Formally released to the membership of the Old Cathedral Conference November 27, 1845

BLESSINGS FROM PARIS

The application for admission into the Society received a warm welcome from the President General in Paris. Members of the First Conference in the United States received the following letter early in April, 1846. (The letter is a translation from the original French.)

Paris, February 10, 1846

The letter which you wrote to us on December 15, 1845, and which announced to us the formation of a Conference of the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul in Saint Louis, gave us great joy. We hasten to express it to you and to inform you at the same time that the General Council admitted your Conference into the Society on the second day of the present month (February). From that moment our new brethren are partakers of all the precious benefits and abundant indulgences which the Holy Pontiff has been pleased to grant our Society. Nor do we doubt but these great advantages will be a powerful encouragement for you in the way of charity which your zeal has opened before you.

We give thanks to God for this favor which permits the humble family of Saint Vincent de Paul to plant its root even in the New World. Even before He inspired you in the United States to establish the Conference, the admittance of which into our Society rejoices us today, from another part of that great continent, Mexico, we had also the happiness to receive new brethren. This we believe cannot fail to give you pleasure.

At the same time other blessings were accorded to the Society in Europe, by the establishment of a Conference in Protestant Geneva, whilst the foundation was laid of our institution in the heart of Islam at Constantinople.

This consoling spectacle to which your piety adds in some degree by your welcome into the Society, causes you and us legitimate hope for the propagation of works of Christian clarity; that after your example they will spread over the soil of America, where since some years, the spirit and practice of the True Church find reception under such providential dispositions. We have confidence that our wish will be realized when we consider what has been done around us. It will be a great honor to the city of Saint Louis, to which religion already owes much, for having been the cradle of the work of North America. We beg you not to be sparing in your communications to us, concerning your Conference. All that interests you will be of interest to us. At the same time we shall try to send you all that may be of interest to you, also all the publications.

It is this that will cement and fortify more and more the hearty and perfect union, which notwithstanding the great distance, must bind together the diverse branches of the great family of the Society. It is with delight that we place here the foundation of that union which nothing will be able to change. In virtue of a Brief of the Sovereign Pontiff dated January 10, 1845, a plenary indulgence is granted to those conferences newly received by the General Council. This Council has decided that this indulgence will be gained by the Conference of Saint Louis the Sunday after the first meeting after the reception of this letter.

Greeting, etc.

Jules Gossin, Pres. General

Names of the men who joined the First Conference at various intervals during the first years of its existence covers the first five pages of the record book. The total listing involved over 135 individuals. The number of names listed are according to the following intervals:

November 20, 1845 – November 5, 1851	89 Members
November 6, 1851 – 1855	14 Members
1856	2 Members
1858	11 Members
1859	8 Members
December 20, 1860	8 Members

Names listed here have been rearranged alphabetically.

CONFERENCE MEMBERS IN THOSE FIRST YEARS

John Amend	John C. Degenhart	John Innis	John Mullery	William Roche
Thomas Anderson	Francis Denning	D.G. Jones	William J. Mullin	D. Rodier
Rev. Father Badin	J.J. Donegan	John Joseph	John Mulligan	James Ryan
T.B. Bangaleyn	Peter S. Dowling	Philip Karst	Joseph Murphy	Patrick Ryder
J.C. Barlow	William Doyle	Frederick Kelly	Thomas Murphy	Francis Saler
Rt. Rev. Dr. Barron	James Duggan	Michael Kelly	John O'Brien	Philip M. Sandon
Peter Barsie	William Dunning	George Killian	Patrick O'Brien	Marshall P. Sanguinette
John Beakey	Joseph E. Elder	Bernard Korkan	Myles P. O'Connor	Christopher Shierman
Charles F. Blattau	John Everhart	John Kremer	Michael O'Fallon	Jeremiah C. Slattery
Andrew Breen	John Everhart, Jr.	Augustus Laufkotter	John O'Keefe	Timothy Slattery
David Breen	Hugh Ewing	M.L. Linton	M. O'Keefe	Bernard Slevin
George Brein	Philip Fitzsimmons	William Linton	Donat O'Laughlin	P. Slevin
Kaspar Brinkmann	Thomas Foley	Patrick Lynch	John H. O'Neil	P. Slevin
Joseph Broeken	John E. Fore	John D. Mack	Joseph O'Neil	H.J. Spaunhorst
Jacob Brookhouse	Dennis Galvin	James Maguire, Jr.	Joseph O'Neill	Singleton I. Stako
W.J.Brownsom	Dr. L.B. Ganahl	G.A. Manning	Robert O'Reily	Jerry Sullivan
J.C. Bury	Christopher Garvey	Thomas Masterson	Louis Ottenad	S. Summerville
John Byrne, Jr.	Joseph E. Gorman	Stuart Matthews	J. Pelloux	N. Tiernan
Peter Byrne	J. Gregory	John McEnnis	Christopher Pieper	Owen V. Timon
Christ J. Caffrey	Thomas Grey	John F.R. McEnnis	J. Pillsbury	Augustine Varty
J. Charleston	John Haverty	John McFaddin	Martin E. Power	James Verdin
James B. Clancy	John S. Healy	John F. Mitchell	George Redener	Edmund P. Walsh
Jame Conran	Rev. Ambrose G. Heim	M. Mitchell	James Regan	P. Walsh
Doctor Cornyse	Rev. J.T. Higginbotham	Robert S. Mitchell	James Reilly	M. Weis
Michael Coyle	William Holtermann	Stephen Moriarty	James Riordan	William Wheeler
William Crow	Graham S. Hughes	Bryan Mullanphy	H. Robinson	

FOUNDING DATES OF FIRST VINCENTIAN CONFERENCES IN VARIOUS COUNTRIES

YEAR	COUNTRY	CITY
1833	France	Paris
1836	Italy	Rome
1842	Belgium	Brussels
1843	Turkey	Constantinople
1844	England	London
1844	Ireland	Dublin
1845	United States	St. Louis
1845	Germany	Munich
1845	Mexico	Mexico City
1845	Edinburgh	Scotland
1846	Canada	Quebec
1846	Algeria	Algiers
1846	Netherlands	The Hague
1849	Austria	Innsbruck
1850	Poland	Posen
1852	Palestine	Jerusalem
1853	Egypt	Cairo
1854	Luxembourg	Luxembourg City
1855	Denmark	Copenhagen
1859	Spain	Madrid
1859	Portugal	Lisbon
1859	Yugoslavia	Agram
1862	India	Bombay
1862	Hungary	Odenburg
1863	China	Hong Kong
1876	Czechoslovakia	Prague
1881	Australia	Sydney
1905 (circa; exact year unknown)	Russia	St. Petersburg

THE UNITED STATES SOCIETY OF ST. VINCENT DE PAUL IN 1909

PROVINCE OF INCLUDING STATES OF	SUPERIOR COUNCIL	CENTRAL COUNCIL	PARTICULAR COUNCIL	CONFERENCES UNDER PARTICULAR COUNCILS	ISOLATED CONFERENCES	TOTAL NUMBER OF CONFERENCES	TOTAL NUMBER OF MEMBERS
Baltimore Maryland, Delaware, West Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, eastern Florida, District of Columbia			2	45	2	47	669
Boston Maine, Vermont, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut		2	5	91	11	102	1,387
Chicago Illinois	1	1	1	42		42	643
Cincinnati Ohio, Indiana, Kentucky, Tennessee, lower Michigan			3	41		41	921
Dubuque Iowa, Nebraska, Wyoming			1	21		21	266
Milwaukee Wisconsin, northern Michigan					1	1	17
New Orleans Louisiana, Alabama, Mississippi, Texas, Arkansas, Oklahoma	1	1	2	32	7	39	849
New York New York, New Jersey	1	2	9	176	3	179	3,933
Oregon Oregon, Idaho, Washington, Territory of Alaska							
Philadelphia Pennsylvania		1	7	147	2	149	1,730
St. Louis Missouri, Kansas	1		1	56	9	65	1,958
St. Paul Minnesota, South Dakota, North Dakota			*Unreported				
San Francisco California, Nevada, Utah			2	21		21	245
Santa Fe Colorado, New Mexico, Arizona					1	1	12
14 Totals	4	7	33	672	36	708	12,630

LOCAL COUNCIL INSTITUTION DATES

INSTITUTION DATE	DIOCESE	DISTRICT
1861	Archdiocese of Louisville	Council of Louisville
1863	Archdiocese of Dubuque	ADCC of Dubuque
1913	Archdiocese of Boston	ADCC of Boston
1913	Archdiocese of Los Angeles	ADCC of Los Angeles
1915	Archdiocese of St. Louis	ADCC of St. Louis
1915	Archdiocese of Chicago	ADCC of Chicago
1916	Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston	Council of Wheeling/Charleston
1916	Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis	Council of St. Paul/Minneapolis
1916	Archdiocese of Baltimore	Council of Baltimore
1917	Archdiocese of Cincinnati	ADCC of Cincinnati
1917	Diocese of Belleville	Council of East St. Louis - Belleville
1919	Diocese of Grand Rapids	Council of Grand Rapids
1921	Archdiocese of Hartford	Council of Hartford
1922	Diocese of Camden	Diocesan Council of Camden
1923	Diocese of Rockford	Diocesan Council of Rockford, IL
1925	Archdiocese of Omaha	Council of Omaha
1926	Diocese of Albany	Council of Albany
1926	Diocese of Kansas City - St. Joseph	Council of Kansas City
1930	Diocese of Baton Rouge	Council of Baton Rouge
1931	Archdiocese of Miami	ADCC of Miami
1933	Diocese of Pensacola - Tallahassee	Council of Pensacola
1933	Archdiocese of Mobile	Council of Mobile
1933	Diocese of Memphis	Council of Memphis
1933	Diocese of Brooklyn	District Council of Brooklyn
1933	Archdiocese of San Francisco	ADCC of San Francisco
1935	Archdiocese of Milwaukee	ADCC of Milwaukee
1935	Diocese of Trenton	Diocesan Council of Trenton

INSTITUTION DATE	DIOCESE	DISTRICT
1939	Diocese of Des Moines	Council of Des Moines
1942	Diocese of Saginaw	Bay Country Council (Saginaw Diocese)
1946	Archdiocese of Indianapolis	ADCC of Indianapolis
1946	Diocese of Lansing	Council of Lansing
1946	Diocese of San Jose	Council of Santa Clara County
1948	Diocese of Fort Wayne - South Bend	Council of Fort Wayne
1949	Diocese of Evansville	Diocesan Council of Evansville
1950	Diocese of Fall River	Diocesan Council of Fall River
1951	Diocese of Sacramento	Council of Sacramento
1951	Archdiocese of San Antonio	ADCC of San Antonio
1953	Diocese of Pittsburgh	Council of Pittsburgh
1954	Archdiocese of New York	ADCC of New York
1955	Diocese of Kalamazoo	Diocesan Council of Kalamazoo
1955	Diocese of Charlotte	Diocesan Council of Charlotte
1957	Archdiocese of Portland	ADCC of Portland
1957	Diocese of Peoria	Council of Peoria
1958	Diocese of Rockville Centre	Diocesan Council of Rockville Centre
1958	Diocese of El Paso	Council of El Paso
1959	Diocese of Santa Rosa	Diocesan Council of Santa Rosa
1960	Diocese of Corpus Christi	Corpus Christi Council
1961	Diocese of Greensburg	Diocesan Council of Greensburg
1961	Diocese of Wichita	Council of Wichita
1961	Diocese of Springfield - Cape Girardeau	Diocesan Council of Springfield - Cape Girardeau
1964	Diocese of Ogdensburg	District Council of Ogdensburg
1965	Diocese of Green Bay	Diocesan Council of Green Bay
1965	Diocese of Madison	Diocesan Council of Madison
1965	Diocese of Tucson	Tucson Diocesan Council
1966	Archdiocese of Detroit	ADCC of Detroit
1966	Diocese of Galveston - Houston	Diocesan Council of Galveston - Houston
1967	Diocese of Toledo	Diocesan Central Council of Toledo
1967	Diocese of Monterey	Council of Monterey, San Benito & San Luis Obispo (Monterey Diocese)
1967	Archdiocese of Philadelphia	ADCC of Philadelphia

INSTITUTION DATE	DIOCESE	DISTRICT
1968	Diocese of Cleveland	Diocesan Council of Cleveland
1969	Diocese of Puerto Rico	Council of Puerto Rico
1971	Diocese of Oakland	Diocesan Council of Oakland
1971	Diocese of Spokane	Council of Spokane
1972	Diocese of Wilmington	Council of Wilmington
1977	Diocese of Fresno	Council of Fresno
1977	Diocese of Arlington	Council of Arlington
1980	Diocese of Youngstown	Diocesan Council of Northeast Ohio
1982	Diocese of Baker	Council of Central Oregon
1985	Diocese of Austin	Diocesan Council of Austin
1985	Diocese of Sioux Falls	Diocesan Council of Sioux Falls
1986	Diocese of La Crosse	Council of Marshfield (La Crosse Diocese)
1986	Diocese of Biloxi	Council of Biloxi
1986	Archdiocese of Seattle	ADCC of Seattle
1986	Diocese of Houma - Thibodaux	Council of Houma - Thibodaux
1987	Diocese of Lafayette	Council of Lafayette
1987	Diocese of Honolulu	Council of Honolulu
1987	Diocese of Allentown	Council of Allentown
1987	Diocese of Birmingham	Council of Huntsville (Birmingham Diocese)
1987	Diocese of St. Petersburg	Central Council of St. Petersburg
1987	Diocese of Great Falls-Billings	Cascade County Council (Great Falls Diocese)
1987	Archdiocese of Washington	ADCC of Washington
1987	Diocese of Altoona - Johnstown	Council of Altoona - Johnstown
1987	Diocese of Orlando	Council of Orlando
1987	Diocese of Victoria	Council of Victoria
1988	Diocese of Gary	District Council of Gary, Inc.
1988	Diocese of Lincoln	Council of Lincoln
1988	Diocese of Lexington	Council of Lexington, Inc.
1989	Diocese of San Bernardino	Diocesan Council of San Bernardino
1991	Archdiocese of Santa Fe	ADCC of Santa Fe
1992	Diocese of St. Augustine	Jacksonville District Council
1994	Diocese of Joliet	Diocesan Council of Joliet
1995	Diocese of Orange	Diocesan Council of Orange County

INSTITUTION DATE	DIOCESE	DISTRICT
1998	Diocese of Marquette	Diocesan Council of Marquette
1998	Diocese of Charleston	Diocesan Council of Charleston
1999	Diocese of Phoenix	Diocesan Council of Phoenix
1999	Diocese of Buffalo	Diocesan Council of Buffalo
2000	Diocese of Metuchen	Diocesan Council of Metuchen
2001	Diocese of Worcester	Council of Worcester
2003	Archdiocese of Oklahoma City	Council of Oklahoma City
2005	Diocese of San Diego	Diocesan Council of San Diego
2007	Diocese of Beaumont	District Council of Beaumont
2009	Archdiocese of Atlanta	Atlanta Council
2010	Diocese of Little Rock	District Council of Arkansas
2010	Diocese of Venice	Diocesan Council of Venice
2011	Diocese of Columbus	Diocesan Council of Columbus
2011	Diocese of Covington	District Council of Covington
2011	Diocese of Gaylord	Council of Alpena
2011	Diocese of Owensboro	Council of Owensboro
2011	Archdiocese of Denver	Denver/Metro Council
2011	Diocese of Dallas	Diocesan Council of Dallas
2011	Diocese of Fort Worth	Diocesan Council of Fort Worth
2011	Diocese of Tyler	Council of Tyler
2011	Archdiocese of New Orleans	ADCC of New Orleans
2011	Diocese of Palm Beach	Council of Palm Beach
2011	Diocese of Shreveport	Diocesan Council of Shreveport
2011	Diocese of Boise	Diocese of Boise
Not Instituted	Diocese of Springfield, IL	Diocesan Council of Springfield
Not Instituted	Diocese of Manchester	Council of Manchester
Not Instituted	Diocese of Brownsville	Council of Brownsville
Not Instituted	Diocese of San Angelo	Council of the Permian Basin
Not Instituted	Diocese of Anchorage	Council of Anchorage
Not Instituted	Diocese of Juneau	Diocesan Council of SE Alaska

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY HOST CITIES SINCE 1915

1915	Washington, DC	1951	Detroit, MI	1986	South Bend, IN
1916	Washington, DC	1952	Cleveland, OH	1987	Omaha, NE
1917	New York City, NY	1953	St. Louis, MO	1988	San Francisco, CA
1918	Washington, DC	1954	Pittsburgh, PA	1989	Milwaukee, WI
1919	Detroit, MI	1955	Grand Rapids, MI	1990	Buffalo, NY
1920	Washington, DC	1956	Buffalo, NY	1991	Phoenix, AZ
1921	Milwaukee, WI	1957	Kansas City, MO	1992	San Antonio, TX
1922	Washington, DC	1958	Columbus, OH	1993	New Orleans, LA
1923	Philadelphia, PA	1959	Milwaukee, WI	1994	Portland, OR
1924	Des Moines, IA	1960	New York City, NY	1995	St. Louis, MO
1925	Washington, DC	1961	Toledo, OH	1996	Boston, MA
1926	Buffalo, NY	1962	Atlantic City, NJ	1997	Louisville, KY
1927	Los Angeles, CA	1963	Cleveland, OH	1998	Albuquerque, NM
1928	St. Louis, MO	1964	St. Louis, MO	1999	Orange, CA
1929	New Orleans, LA	1965	Philadelphia, PA	2000	Milwaukee, WI
1930	Washington, DC	1966	New Orleans, LA	2001	Detroit, MI
1931	Wilkes-Barre, PA	1967	San Francisco, CA	2002	Philadelphia, PA
1932	Omaha, NE	1968	Pittsburgh, PA	2003	Atlanta, GA
1933	New York City, NY	1969	Houston, TX	2004	Phoenix, AZ
1934	Cincinnati, OH	1970	Washington, DC	2005	Chicago, IL
1935	Peoria, IL	1971	Minneapolis, MN	2006	Indianapolis, IN
1936	Seattle, WA	1972	Miami Beach, FL	2007	Austin, TX
1937	St. Paul, MN	1973	Milwaukee, WI	2008	Louisville, KY
1938	Richmond, VA	1974	Boston, MA	2009	St. Louis, MO
1939	Denver, CO	1975	Cincinnati, OH	2010	New Orleans, LA
1940	Chicago, IL	1976	Des Moines, IA	2011	Dallas, TX
1941	Houston, TX	1977	Portland, OR	2012	Seattle, WA
1942	Kansas City, MO	1978	Atlanta, GA	2013	Madison, WI
1943	Buffalo, NY	1979	Green Bay, WI	2014	Atlanta, GA
1944	Brooklyn, NY	1980	Pittsburgh, PA	2015	Providence, RI
1945	St. Louis, MO	1981	Phoenix, AZ	2016	Columbus, OH
1946	South Bend, IN	1982	Hyannis, MA	2017	Tampa, FL
1947	New Orleans, LA	1983	San Antonio, TX	2018	San Diego, CA
1948	Boston, MA	1984	Detroit, MI	2019	Denver, CO
1949	Atlantic City, NJ	1985	Seattle, WA	2020	St. Louis, MO (virtual)
1950	Washington, DC				

NATIONAL EPISCOPAL ADVISORS

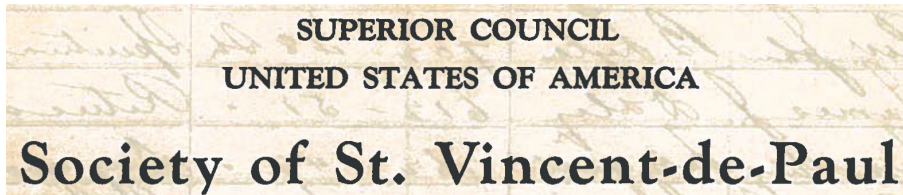
1915	Cardinal James Gibbons
1975 – 1981	Cardinal Humberto Medeiros
1987 – 1993	Bishop Lawrence J. McNamara
1986 – 1994	Bishop Thomas J. Murphy
1995 – 2003	Bishop J. Terry Steib
2004 – 2005	Bishop Edwin M. Conway
2006 – 2017	Bishop John M. Quinn
2018 – Present	Bishop Donald J. Hying

NATIONAL COUNCIL EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS

1957 – 1985	Dudley Baker	Executive Secretary
1985 – 1999	Rita W. Porter	Executive Director
1999 – 2003	Richard Hennicke	Executive Director
2003 – 2013	Roger Playwin	Executive Director/CEO
2013 – Present	Dave Barringer	CEO

LOGOS THROUGH THE YEARS

While our records do not include every logo used by the Society over the past 175 years, here's a sampling of some we have found in our archives.

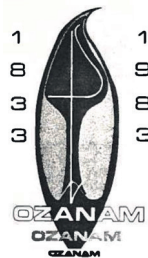


1931

1982



COUNCIL OF THE UNITED STATES
SOCIETY OF ST. VINCENT De PAUL



COUNCIL OF THE UNITED STATES
SOCIETY OF ST. VINCENT De PAUL

1983

1995



COUNCIL OF THE UNITED STATES
SOCIETY OF ST. VINCENT De PAUL
58 Progress Parkway • SAINT LOUIS, MISSOURI 63043-3706



Present Day

A TRIBUTE TO FELLOW VINCENTIANS

Dr. M.L. Linton, circa 1800s

*We are not banded to secure
Our ease and earthly gain;
We league together not to please
the senses proud and vain;
To dig for gold, nor dive to see
the treasures of the main.*

*We come together, not to build
the monuments of pride;
To speed the rushing ships of trade
Across the stormy tide,
Nor set up banks which twice a year
Large dividends divide.*

*We ask no charter from the state,
No privilege we claim
To take any easy road to wealth
We seek not earthly fame.
We have a nobler task than this,
A more exalted aim.*

*To wait upon the Lord of Heaven
Within the prisons' wall
To shield from cold His sacred form,
To answer hunger's call,
And make His bed of sickness soft
And share His sorrows all.*

*To seek Him out in squalid huts
And misery's wretched lairs;
To whisper to Him words of hope
To charm away His cares.
And sooth with genial wine and oil,
The bruises that He bears.*

*'Tis sweet to minister to Him
Who gives His life away,
To save us from eternal pain!
Thrice happy if we may,
According to our humble means
The debt of love repay!*

*And can we cheer and comfort Him,
Whom Prophets long'd to see?
Can we of the God-Man Himself
The benefactors be?
Hear Him! "What ye have done to these
Ye did it unto Me."*

*Such is our mission simply told
Though humble yet sublime
And for the rest — we trust that we
May reach the happy clime,
Which God has promised to the good
Beyond the tide of time.*

*Our faithful Chief presides tonight;
We thank him that he came.
The scholar ripe — the pious priest
The Bishop without blame —
From such as he, our Holy Church
Derives her glorious fame —
We render homage to his worth
And verable name.*

OUR VINCENTIAN HERITAGE

Lyrics and Arrangement by Raymond L. Sickinger, Ph.D.

Based on the 19th Century Shaker Tune "Simple Gifts" (in the Public Domain)

Verse 1

*Since eighteen forty five we have flourished and
grown / Saint Louis saw the first seeds sown. / We
seek holiness serving those in need. / We bring
hope to all of every creed.*

Verse 2

*Listen to the voices of all those served. / Their
dignity must always be preserved, / Trust in God's
Providence for he will provide. / Be compelled by
the love of Christ crucified.*

Chorus

*Celebrate our Vincentian Heritage / to follow Christ
is our solemn pledge. / Welcome the stranger.
Show compassion to all. / See the face of Christ
and heed his call.*

Verse 3

*In a world of dissension in a world of wars, / in a
world of hatred and in a world of scars, / let us vow
to be loving, let us vow to be kind, / let us vow to
break all chains that bind.*

Chorus

*Celebrate our Vincentian Heritage / to follow Christ
is our solemn pledge. / Welcome the stranger.
Show compassion to all. / See the face of Christ
and heed his call.*

Verse 4

*Justice and charity begin to rebuild / bonds of hope
that transform this weary world. / Called to embrace
ev'ryone in love, / we open our hearts to all gifts
from above.*

Chorus

*Celebrate our Vincentian Heritage / to follow Christ
is our solemn pledge. / Welcome the stranger.
Show compassion to all. / See the face of Christ
and heed his call.*

See the face of Christ and heed his call.

STRATEGIC PLAN

2018 – 2021

I. Expand and Strengthen Our Network of Friends



- Create a culture that encourages and values servant leadership
- Strengthen organizational capacity at Council and Conference levels
- Increase the number of members, Conferences, and Councils
- Promote Vincentian cultural beliefs of “One Society” and friendship

II. Encourage and Support Vincentians on Their Spiritual Journey



- Celebrate our essential element of Vincentian spirituality
- Enhance the formation, and grow the number, of spiritual advisors at all levels of the Society
- Increase opportunities for Vincentian spiritual formation

III. Advocate for and Work Towards a More Just World



- Inspire membership to embrace Catholic Social Teaching
- Establish St. Vincent de Paul as a thought leader on poverty and justice
- Be a Voice for the Poor at national, state, and local levels

IV. Promote Deeper and Meaningful Relationships With Those We Serve



- Deepen our understanding of the challenges of poverty
- Advance acceptance of those who are different from us
- Reinforce the importance of the Home Visit as a mutual transformational experience

V. Develop, Improve, and Expand Services



- Formalize a national process to share and promote model programs that can be replicated by member Councils
- Strengthen and expand retail operations
- Strengthen and support Councils in providing housing and services to those without shelter
- Promote efforts to fulfill unmet community needs using the talents of our members

VINCENTIAN CULTURAL BELIEFS



CELEBRATING OUR FOUNDER BLESSED FRÉDÉRIC OZANAM



The year 2020 signifies not only a new decade, but also a time of renewed faith and dedication to the mission started by Blessed Frédéric Ozanam 187 years ago in Paris.

During a 2018 visit to the U.S., SVdP International President General Renato Lima de Oliveria toured the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, DC. Looking around the Vincentian chapel, he wondered if it was possible to add a mosaic of Ozanam.

Nearly two years later, on January 26, 2020, a mosaic of the Society's founder was dedicated during a special Mass at the Basilica.

Measuring 30 inches high and 20 inches wide, the mosaic was created by Travanutto Mosaics of Spilimbergo, Italy. The mosaic is constructed from real gold leaf and approximately 4,000 stones of a tempered glass known as Smalti.

The Basilica allowed the Society to invite its own celebrant to say the Mass. SVdP National Episcopal Advisor Bishop Donald J. Hying gave a moving homily that lit a fire in the hearts of not only Vincentians, as well as the almost 3,000 people in attendance.

At the Mass's conclusion, Vincentians processed with Bishop Hying and other clergy members to the chapel, where the Bishop offered a blessing and prayer. Then, at last, the mosaic was revealed.

Bishop Hying noted that when an image of a holy person is put on display, "we must be properly disposed and have a clearer appreciation of the meaning of this celebration," adding, "When we look at the representation of those who have followed Christ faithfully, we will be motivated to seek the city that is to come. As that we will learn the way to complete union with Christ, that as we struggle along with our earthly cares, we will be mindful of the saints — our friends and co-heirs of Christ, who are our brother and sisters in Christ and our benefactors."

PRAYER FOR THE CANONIZATION OF BLESSED FRÉDÉRIC OZANAM

Lord, You made Blessed Frédéric Ozanam a witness of the Gospel, full of wonder at the mystery of the Church.

You inspired him to alleviate poverty and injustice and endowed him with untiring generosity in the service of all who were suffering.

In family life, he revealed a most genuine love as a son, brother, husband and father. In secular life, his ardent passion for the truth enlightened his thought, writing and teaching.

His vision for our Society was a network of charity encircling the world and he instilled St. Vincent de Paul's spirit of love, boldness, and humility. His prophetic social vision appears in every aspect of his short life, together with the radiance of his virtues.

We thank you Lord, for those many gifts and we ask, if it is your will, the grace of a miracle through the intercession of Blessed Frédéric Ozanam.

May the Church proclaim his holiness, as a saint, a providential light for today's world! We make this prayer through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Amen.

TODAY'S SOCIETY OF ST. VINCENT DE PAUL

2019 Snapshot

NEARLY 100,000
Vincentians Across the County

ALMOST 4,500
Parish-Based Conferences in the U.S.

12.5 MILLION
2019 Total Volunteer Service Hours

\$1,172,408,426
2019 Total Value of Vincentian Services

2,071,614 Visits With People in Poverty in 2019



577,542
Home
Visits



99,782
Eldercare
Visits



12,046
Prison
Visits



27,576
Hospital
Visits

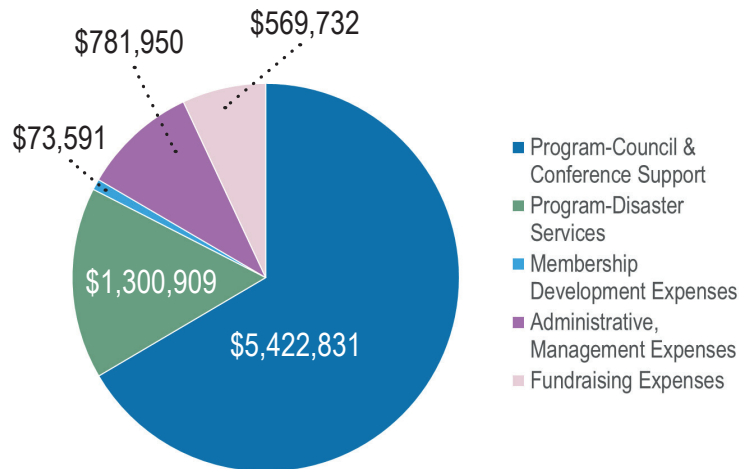


577,542
Other
Visits



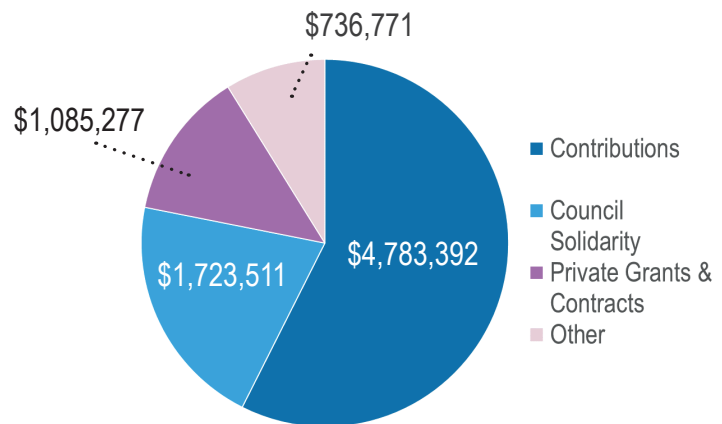
3,152,173
Additional
Services
Provided

5,223,787 Neighbors Served in 2019



\$8,149,013
Total Breakdown of Expenses

\$8,328,951
Total Support and Revenues



2020 – 2021 National Board of Directors

RALPH MIDDLECAMP
National President

LYNNE BETTS
East Region Vice President

KATHLEEN BRISSETTE
National Council Board

RAY DUPONT
South Central Region Vice President

JOHN HALLISSY
Western Region Vice President

CLAUDIA RAMIREZ
National Council Board

BARB SLAVEN
National Council Board

DAVE WINSLETT
Midwest Region Vice President

DAVID BARRINGER
Chief Executive Officer

JOHN BERRY
National Council Board

BRIAN BURGESS
National Vice President

THOMAS FAHL
National Council Board

PAMELA MATAMBANADZO
National Council Board

ANN SCHORNO
National Council Board

DIANE SMITH-MALLOY
National Council Board

BISHOP DONALD J. HYING
National Episcopal Advisor

BILL BRAZIER
Mideast Region Vice President

JIM DODD
National Treasurer

IRENE FRECHETTE
Northeast Region Vice President

TOM PELGER
North Central Region Vice President

RAYMOND SICKINGER
National Council Board

GUADALUPE SOSA
National Secretary

FOOTNOTES

- ¹ “Frédéric Ozanam Accepted the Challenge of 1833,” *Annual Meetings of the Society and The Superior Council of the United States in conjunction with the National Conference of Catholic Charities* (New York: New York: 1933), 59. (Emphasis added.)
- ² For further information on Ozanam see Raymond L. Sickinger, *Antoine Frédéric Ozanam* (Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 2017).
- ³ *The Rule of the International Confederation of St. Vincent de Paul* (2003), Part I: 1,1.
- ⁴ Sources: <https://www.oldcathedralstl.org/history.html> and <https://www.archcityreligion.org/two-cathedrals>
- ⁵ Rev. Daniel T. McColgan, *A Century of Charity: The First Hundred Years of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul in the United States* (Milwaukee: The Bruce Publishing Company, 1951), v.1, pp. 53, 56-57.
- ⁶ *Ibid.*, 53. It is interesting that during her time in the convent at Poissy as a young child, St. Louise is said to have been deeply moved and inspired by a stained-glass depiction of St. Louis kissing the wounds of a leper.
- ⁷ Charles Deuther, *The Life and Times of the Rt. Rev. John Timon*, DD (Buffalo, New York, 1870), pp. 55-56.
- ⁸ *Manual of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul in the United States*, revised edition (National Council of the United States, Society of St. Vincent de Paul, Inc., 2019), p. 12.
- ⁹ *150 Years of Service in the United States*, (National Council of the US, 1995), 29. This is the booklet that was produced to commemorate the 150th anniversary of the Society in the US.
- ¹⁰ *Manual of the Society*, revised edition, p. 12.
- ¹¹ Rev. John J. Killoran, S.J., “The Doctor’s Scrapbook: a collaboration of Linton and De Smet” in *Gateway Heritage* (winter 1985/1986): 4.
- ¹² Walter Barlow Stevens, *St. Louis, the Fourth City, 1764-1909* (St. Louis and Chicago: The S. J. Clarke Publishing CO, 1909), 604.
- ¹³ McColgan, *A Century of Charity*, v. 1, p. 54. See also “Mound City on the Mississippi: a St. Louis History,” https://dynamic.stlouis-mo.gov/history/people/detail.cfm?Master_ID=959
- ¹⁴ *History of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul in St. Louis, Mo.*, containing a detailed report of the proceedings on December 9, 1860, St. Louis Particular Council (LaSalle Press, Carondelet, Mo.), 1861. Quoted in McColgan, *A Century of Charity*, v. 1, p. 64.
- ¹⁵ McColgan, *A Century of Charity*, v. 1, p. 65.
- ¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 67.
- ¹⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 68-70.
- ¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 107.
- ¹⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 58-59.
- ²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 90.
- ²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 59.
- ²² *Ibid.*, p. 60.
- ²³ *Ibid.*
- ²⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 53, 56-57.
- ²⁵ “Historical Note,” *RG 11 Society of St. Vincent de Paul in St. Louis Records, 1860-2012*, Archdiocese of Saint Louis Archives and Records. The title of the Superior Council was changed to the Metropolitan Central Council in 1915. See also McColgan, *A Century of Charity*, v. 1, p. 238.
- ²⁶ “Historical Note”
- ²⁷ McColgan, *A Century of Charity*, v.1, p. 386-387.
- ²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 86.
- ²⁹ *Bulletin De La Société de Saint Vincent de Paul* (Paris, Au Secrétariat Général, 1854), t.1, 59.
 “L’Amérique, plus encore que l’Asie, paraît être, pour nos Conférences, une terre hospitalière et féconde....Par les soins d’un vénérable prélat, une Conférence a été fondée dans la principale ville de ce pays, à New-York. 21 membres y exercent les œuvres de charité, et ont déjà joint à la visite des pauvres le patronage des orphelins.”
- ³⁰ McColgan, *A Century of Charity*, v.1, p. 116.
- ³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 235.
- ³² McColgan, *A Century of Charity*, v.1, p. 238. As mentioned earlier, St. Louis decided to follow its own course as well. It applied to be instituted as a Superior Council and notified New York. Its request was granted in August of 1863.
- ³³ *The St. Vincent de Paul Quarterly*, Vol. IX, No. 3, (August, 1904), 274. \$1 in 1904 would be equivalent to \$29 in 2020. This would make both receipts and expenditures over \$1,000,000 in today’s dollars.
- ³⁴ The first twenty entries on this following list are found in Charles L. Souvay, C.M., “The Society of St. Vincent de Paul as an Agency of Reconstruction,” *The Catholic Historical Review*, 7: 4 (1922), 451. The last 15 entries are found in McColgan, *A Century of Charity*, v.1, pp. 209-210, 226, 260, 263-266, 273, 281-282, 285-286, 297-298, 303, 308-309, 451-452.
- ³⁵ September 8th is the Feast of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary and it is the day on which Frédéric Ozanam died in 1853.

- ³⁶ McColgan, *A Century of Charity*, v.1, p. 242.
- ³⁷ Ibid., pp. 243-244.
- ³⁸ Ibid., p. 248.
- ³⁹ Ibid., p. 249.
- ⁴⁰ I am grateful to the National Council of the U.S. for providing me with a complete list of the National Assembly meeting locations from 1864 to the present.
- ⁴¹ McColgan, *A Century of Charity*, v.1, pp. 238-239
- ⁴² McColgan, *A Century of Charity*, v. 2, p. 279.
- ⁴³ Ibid., pp. 280-282.
- ⁴⁴ Ibid, pp. 283-285.
- ⁴⁵ Ibid., pp. 277-278.
- ⁴⁶ Thomas F. Meehan, *Thomas Maurice Mulry* (New York: The Encyclopedia Press, Inc., 1917), p. 29.
- ⁴⁷ Ibid., p. 27
- ⁴⁸ Ibid., pp. 30-31.
- ⁴⁹ Ibid., pp. 32-35.
- ⁵⁰ Joseph M. Murphy, "Mulry, Thomas Maurice Q (13 February 1855-10 March 1916)," *American National Biography* (Published in print: 1999; Published online: February 2000): [https://doi.org/10.1093/anb/9780198606697 .article.0801058](https://doi.org/10.1093/anb/9780198606697.article.0801058)
- ⁵¹ Ibid.
- ⁵² *The New York Times* (May 14, 1912), p. 2.
- ⁵³ Joseph M. Murphy, "Mulry, Thomas Maurice."
- ⁵⁴ Meehan, *Thomas Maurice Mulry*, p. 23.
- ⁵⁵ *The New York Times* (May 14, 1912), p. 2.
- ⁵⁶ Obituary in Chicago Tribune (July 29, 1985). See also *The Ozanam News* (November, 1985), p. 24.
- ⁵⁷ I am grateful to Laura Kamper for some of these details about the move to St. Louis and Rita Porter.
- ⁵⁸ Rita Porter passed away on March 2, 2007: www.foreverfuneralhomes.com
- ⁵⁹ Resolution number: 1-28-2011/12 -97
- ⁶⁰ <https://svdpusa.org/Contact-Us>. See also Resolution number: 08-01-2019 – 176 Purchase of 66 Progress Parkway.
- ⁶¹ *Manual of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul in the United States*, February 2002, xi.
- ⁶² Ibid., xii.
- ⁶³ *American Manual*, Society of St. Vincent de Paul, 1979, pp. 39-40.
- ⁶⁴ Source: <https://famvin.org/en/2016/08/19/male-society-beginnings-anecdotesvf/>
- ⁶⁵ *American Manual*, Society of St. Vincent de Paul, 1979, pp. 39-40.
- ⁶⁶ *American Manual*, Society of St. Vincent de Paul, 1979, pp. 39-40. The information contained in the majority of the previous section was taken from this source.
- ⁶⁷ *Manual of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul in the United States*, February 2002, xii-xiii. See also *Manual of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul in the United States*, Revised February, 2019, p. 15.
- ⁶⁸ *Manual of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul in the United States*, revised edition 2019, p. 15.
- ⁶⁹ *Manual of the Society*, February 2002, p. 73. Regional Chairpersons are known today as National Vice Presidents for each of the eight regions.
- ⁷⁰ Resolution number: 4-25-2006/7 33
- ⁷¹ *United States Manual of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul: 150th National Anniversary Commemorative Issue*, Revised Edition June, 1999, p. 13.
- ⁷² Two Hymns were written at the time of the 150th celebration: *In the Arms of St. Vincent* and *To Lead a Better Life (Hymn to Blessed Ozanam)*. Both hymns were made the official hymns of the Society by a National Council resolution passed unanimously in 2003.
- ⁷³ I thank Tim Williams for the information about Father Ramson.
- ⁷⁴ *STRATEGIC PLAN FOR 2000-2005*, Restated March 10, 2003, National Council of the US.
- ⁷⁵ Ibid. This Mission Statement has now become the Society's Identity Statement
- ⁷⁶ *Frederic's E-Gazette* (April 9, 2020): <https://www.svdpusa.org/Portals/1/Frederic's%20E-Gazette%2004-09-2020.pdf>
- ⁷⁷ Resolution number: 6/16/2010-11 93
- ⁷⁸ *Serving in Hope Module I* (March, 2003), p. 2.
- ⁷⁹ Invitation for Renewal Brochure: <https://www.svdpusa.org/Portals/1/IFR%20Brochure%20November%202020.doc>
- ⁸⁰ Information provided by Sherry Brown of the National Office.
- ⁸¹ *Voice of the Poor Guide: Speaking in One Voice for Christ's Poor* (2001).
- ⁸² "Joseph D. Flannigan Obituary published in Home News Tribune on Jan. 31, 2018

- ⁸³ Resolution number: 12-2-2005/6 4
- ⁸⁴ Resolution number: 7-7-2005/6 15
- ⁸⁵ Resolution number: 12-2-2005/6 11
- ⁸⁶ Resolution number: 7-7-2005/6 13
- ⁸⁷ Resolution number: 12-2-2005/6 5
- ⁸⁸ Resolution number: 02/17/2009/10 78
- ⁸⁹ Figure provided by Nathan Martin, National Director of Fundraising Programs for the National Council of the United States.
- ⁹⁰ Vincentian Guide to Diversity/Multicultural Issues (January 2012: Council of the United States), p. 70.
- ⁹¹ Ibid., pp. 72-74. The goals and objectives are taken verbatim from the Vincentian Guide to Diversity/Multicultural Issues.
- ⁹² Resolution number: 01/14/2010/11 90
- ⁹³ "New Diversity Guide from the U.S. Society of St. Vincent de Paul Recognizes the Many Faces and Colors of Poverty," *Cision PR Newswire* (January 29, 2013): <https://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/new-diversity-guide-from-the-us-society-of-st-vincent-de-paul-recognizes-the-many-faces-and-colors-of-poverty-188823121.html>
- ⁹⁴ Ibid.
- ⁹⁵ Resolution number: 1-28-2011/12 -101
- ⁹⁶ "Systemic Change Overview." See <https://new.svdpusa.org/systemicchange/General-Information/Systemic-Change-Overview>
- ⁹⁷ Ibid.
- ⁹⁸ "The Rule and Systemic Change." See <https://new.svdpusa.org/systemicchange/General-Information/Systemic-Change-Overview>
- ⁹⁹ See Donna Beegle's "Overcoming the Silence of Generational Poverty." See <https://new.svdpusa.org/systemicchange/General-Information/Systemic-Change-Overview>
- ¹⁰⁰ "Systemic Change Vision." See <https://new.svdpusa.org/systemicchange/General-Information/Systemic-Change-Overview>
- ¹⁰¹ "Hope in Action Elevator Speech." See <https://new.svdpusa.org/systemicchange/General-Information/Systemic-Change-Overview>
- ¹⁰² Resolution number: 6/2/2012/2013 – 115
- ¹⁰³ Resolution number: 6/2/2012/2013 – 115
- ¹⁰⁴ Resolution number: 01-17-2015 - 134
- ¹⁰⁵ Resolution number: 05/01/2013/2014 - 123
- ¹⁰⁶ Resolution number: 01-16-2016-138
- ¹⁰⁷ Source: <https://www.svdpdisaster.org/>
- ¹⁰⁸ <https://www.svdpusa.org/Portals/1/Ralph%20Bio%20on%20Letterhead.pdf>
- ¹⁰⁹ Resolution number: 09-01-18 158
- ¹¹⁰ Resolution number: 04-14-2018 156
- ¹¹¹ Resolution number: 08-31-2016 144
- ¹¹² *Society of St. Vincent de Paul Member Handbook* (February, 2019), p. 2.
- ¹¹³ Resolution number: 06-07-2019 172
- ¹¹⁴ I want to thank CEO Dave Barringer for this information.
- ¹¹⁵ *Blessed Frédéric Ozanam Mosaic Fact Sheet*, National Council of the United States Council of the United States. See also Frédéric's E-Gazette (January 30, 2020): <https://www.svdpusa.org/Portals/1/Frederic's%20E-Gazette%2001-30-2020.pdf>
- ¹¹⁶ "Frédéric Ozanam Accepted the Challenge of 1833," *Annual Meetings of the Society and The Superior Council of the United States in conjunction with the National Conference of Catholic Charities* (New York. New York: 1933), 59.
- ¹¹⁷ Meehan, *Thomas Maurice Mulry*, p. 27

On November 20, 2020 a special Mass was held at the Old Cathedral in St. Louis commemorating the 175th Anniversary of the first meeting of the first Conference of the Society of St Vincent de Paul in the United States, which had occurred in that very building.

From these humble beginnings, the Society has grown to nearly 100,000 members across the United States. May our National Council continue to be a “Medallion in the Mosaic of Vincentian Works” as we seek to grow in holiness by humbly serving Christ in the person of His poor.



NATIONAL COUNCIL OF THE UNITED STATES
SOCIETY OF ST. VINCENT DE PAUL®, INC.